

“RAKE UP NO OLD STORIES OF EVIL”: MEMORY, CELEBRATION,  
AND ERASURE OF SETTLER VIOLENCE IN THE  
AMERICAN PACIFIC NORTHWEST

by

MARC JAMES CARPENTER

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Student: Marc James Carpenter

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Jeffrey Ostler	Chair
Lindsay Braun	Core Member
Brett Rushforth	Core Member
Priscilla Yamin	Institutional Representative

and

Andrew Karduna	Interim Vice Provost for Graduate Studies
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Original approval signatures are on file with the University of Oregon Division of Graduate Studies.

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## DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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This dissertation is both a new historical synthesis of pioneer violence within and beyond the wars on Native people in the mid-nineteenth-century American Pacific Northwest, *and* a new history of how these wars—and broader tides of colonial violence—were remembered, commemorated, and forgotten. Violence against Native people was even more frequent and more accepted across pioneer spaces than has typically been argued—indeed, I contend that most of the wars and associated violence were part of a single broad-based war on Native people across the Northwest. Early generations of regional history writers deliberately distorted the historical record to paint pioneer volunteer soldiers as heroes. But disagreements about which acts were heroic accidentally preserved archives of atrocity, from the mouths and pens of pioneers themselves.

I draw on numerous virtually unused archival sources from pioneer perpetrators to make a number of interventions into the history of the pioneer Northwest: reframing wars, uncovering acts of genocide, relating unrecognized instances of lynching and sexual violence, and unmasking murderers along with the people and politicians who supported and joined them, at the time and since. Proving the untruths deliberately propagated by pioneers and their historians weighs on the balance of historical narratives about key events. Stripped of the veneer of deceit added for posterity, pioneer memories often mirror Indigenous histories of the same events—with the differences crafted through the efforts of generations of history writers, who preferred gauzy tales to hard truths.

By delving into the work and specific mechanics of erasure and nostalgia, I demonstrate both deliberate intent behind the cover-ups and the failures of those who attempted them. This should not only reshape the history of colonialism and genocide in the Pacific Northwest, but suggest useful methodological and theoretical interventions in the history of American colonialism specifically and settler colonialism broadly. This dissertation affirms the existence of the structures of oppression that support colonial projects, but recognizes the fissures and cracks in those structures that Indigenous activists and their allies were able to use—sometimes in acts of difficult compromise—in their ongoing struggles for life, rights, and sovereignty.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME OF AUTHOR: Marc James Carpenter

### GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED

University of Oregon, Eugene

Pennsylvania State University, State College

Portland State University, Portland

### DEGREES AWARDED

Doctor of Philosophy, History, 2021, University of Oregon

Master of Arts, History, 2016, Pennsylvania State University

Bachelor of Arts, History, 2012, Portland State University

### GRANTS, AWARDS, HONORS

Charles A. Reed Graduate Fellowship, University of Oregon, 2020 – 2021.

Oregon Humanities Center Dissertation Research Fellowship, “Memory and Erasure of Settler Violence in Early Oregon, 1848 – 1928,” University of Oregon Humanities Center, 2019 – 2020.

James W. Scott Regional Research Fellowship, “Overwriting Pioneer Violence: The Fight to Forget Race War in the Early Northwest,” Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Western Washington University, 2019.

Mazie Giustina Fund for Women in the Northwest Research Grant, “‘Worthy of All Honors Accorded to the Brave’: Women’s Rights and the Sanctification of Race War in Oregon, 1890 – 1919,” University of Oregon Center for the Study of Women and Society, 2019.

Oregon Heritage Fellowship, “Reconsidering *The Pioneer* One Hundred Years Later,” Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, 2019.

Donald J. Sterling, Jr. Graduate Fellowship in Pacific Northwest History, Oregon Historical Society, 2018.

Richard M. Brown Summer Research Award, University of Oregon Department of History, 2018 – 2020.

## PUBLICATIONS

Aurand, Marin and Marc James Carpenter. *So the Future Will Have a Place: The First Century of Oregon State Parks*. Salem: Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, forthcoming.

Carpenter, Marc James. "Replaying Colonialism: Indigenous National Sovereignty and Its Limits in Strategic Videogames." *American Indian Quarterly* 45:1 (2021), pp. 33 – 55.

Carpenter, Marc James. "'Two Sides of the Same Story': Colonial Violence and Erasure in the University of Oregon's (Fallen) Pioneer Statues." *Center for the Study of Women and Society Annual Review* 11 (2020), pp. 30 – 33.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The American Pacific Northwest, particularly in the 1850s and 1860s, was a site of incalculable violence towards Native people. Although the earliest settlers had worked with Native communities as a matter of necessity, the vast majority of Euro-American migrants envisioned a future for the region as an exclusively White space. Euro-American people and policymakers might disagree on the best means to bring this about, but nearly all believed that the violent collision of settlers and Indians was inevitable—they differed primarily in whether this should be a spur for treaty-making or a necessary ethnic cleansing. While exceptional acts and massacres might make national news, quotidian Euro-American violence against Native people was recurrent and publicly recognized in early Oregon and Washington Territories. At the vanguard of this violence were volunteer troops drawn from the local pioneer population—often soldiers only in the loosest sense—who incited many of conflicts and committed many of the atrocities and acts of genocide. The violence of the volunteers presented a special problem for those who hoped to create a heroic history of the early Northwest in the decades that followed. The actions of volunteers were at the center of most efforts to celebrate, censor, or calculatedly critique the worst aspects of colonial violence in the Pacific Northwest. But they were not alone.

At the core of this project is an interrogation of how Euro-American pioneers and the historians who first recorded their stories remembered, commemorated, historicized, and covered up the wars and other violence they inflicted on Native people in the Pacific Northwest. I dredged through the records of the heritage organizations invested in pioneer narratives. I surveyed the published and unpublished writings of many of the early historians of the Pacific Northwest, and delved into their correspondences and

interviews. And I went through dozens of pioneer reminiscences and letters, published and unpublished, famous and obscure, to find their stories of what they had done and what they thought should be said about it.

At first, I thought this would be a history of cover-ups. And it is. I found many historians and history-minded organizations deliberately and sometimes explicitly obscuring truths about the pioneer conquest of the Pacific Northwest they deemed unsuitable for public consumption. Fortunately for my purposes, they seldom agreed on which acts of pioneer violence could or should be censured or censored. Certain acts of wanton violence, like the southern Oregon Lupton Massacre or the murder and mutilation of Walla Walla leader Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox, were famous enough that early histories had to be reckon with them. Other analogous events were celebrated, denied, or ignored—sometimes by the same author, in different settings. I was able to trace different and only somewhat successful strategies for silencing the most notorious acts, and a broader history of complicity in cover-ups.

But the deeper I got into the sources, the more I found evidence of murder, mayhem, and acts of genocide that did not appear in most history books. Many pioneers, I discovered, saw themselves as having fought in a long war against “the Indians” generally in the Pacific Northwest, rather than in a single conflict with a specific community spurred by a specific inciting incident. The stories of violence and war that pioneer men and women told looked different—sometimes very different—from those in the official Euro-American records. They led me back to more famous “official” sources from government figures with new eyes, seeing previously missed plans for attacks and dreams of genocide. Digging through the archives of pioneer historians sometimes led me

to suppressed Indigenous sources from a century or more ago, ignored but retained by those who preferred heroic narratives to hard truths. The cover-ups I had planned to discuss, it turned out, were *still* helping to create silences and distortions in the historical record.

This work is thus both a new historical synthesis of pioneer violence within and beyond the wars on Native people in the mid-nineteenth-century American Pacific Northwest, *and* a new history of how these wars—and the broader tides of colonial violence—were remembered, commemorated and forgotten by Americans in the years that followed. The wars, I argue, were more violent and more interconnected than they have typically been considered—indeed, I contend that most of these conflicts were part of the same broad-based war on Native people across the Northwest. Following the wars, early generations of regional history writers deliberately distorted the historical record to paint pioneers as heroes. But disagreements about which acts were heroic accidentally preserved archives of atrocity, from the mouths and pens of pioneers themselves.

The chapters herein fall in loose chronological order, beginning roughly in the 1840s and more or less ending in the 1910s. However, the narrative and discussion necessarily darts back and forth between decades, following themes and interrogating how and why records were created, shared, or suppressed. Every Native polity, ethnic, and person had their own experiences and strategies in dealing with the invasions I discuss. I have done my best to amplify Native voices past and present, and to underline Native dynamism and action in the stories I tell. But this is, primarily, a history of the American invaders whom the diverse Native peoples of the Pacific Northwest had to deal with.

Every choice of depth and breadth sacrifices something. Following the lead of my sources and interrogating the Pacific Northwest wars of the 1840s, 1850s, and beyond as an interconnected story has turned up useful insights and continuities. Stories of Native persons killed while “trying to escape,” for example, take on an even more sinister aspect when they pop up again and again and again across the region—occasionally with tacit omission that they were only a convenient excuse for outright murder. A regional approach to the early writers of pioneer history has been similarly useful, particularly as the historians and heritage organizations I discuss coordinated, clashed, and conspired with one another, across state lines. Zooming in to particular incidents and conflicts in even more detail than I do here would yield other insights; zooming out to connect the invasion of the American Pacific Northwest to broader regional, national, and global narratives would too. The stories herein deserve more space than they could be given. Some have already been well-told. Many still need to be.

In Chapter II, I argue for the utility of viewing the various wars in the Pacific Northwest between the late 1840s and the early 1860s as a single overarching conflict, which I dub the “War on Illahee.” I discuss the settler colonial norms and genocidal ideations many pioneers brought with them to the region, long before they could be effectively acted upon. I re-examine the “Cayuse War” alongside other war acts, demonstrating the extent to which it was a war on “Indians” generally, whatever the supposed *casus belli*. And I argue that an overfocus on inciting incidents, or the assumption that any given “Indian War” stemmed from this or that act of supposed Native aggression, risks underestimating Euro-American dedication to colonial conquest.

In Chapter III, I examine threats and acts of extermination in Oregon, as they related to treaty-making, land seizure, and war. This chapter covers the so-called Rogue River Wars, along with acts of war that are not always put under their mantle. Genocide was often threatened and sometimes pursued in the 1850s, viewed as a last resort by some Euro-Americans and long-term goal by others. I push back against a historiographical narrative that pits virtuous federal officials against wicked vigilantes, and against the assumption that the mayhem was restricted to southern Oregon. I underline the extent to which pioneer women, too, played a part in inciting and even carrying out killings and other violence (a theme continued in chapters 3 and 9). And I introduce an argument that continues through chapters 3 – 6: that Pacific Northwest Euro-Americans killed more Native people in the 1850s than has generally been assumed.

In Chapter IV, I expand my discussion of the War on Illahee in the Washington Territory, before and during what are typically labelled the Puget Sound War in northwestern Washington and the Yakima War in southeastern Washington. Both wars, I argue, were started by Euro-American aggression that preceded wartime, and both featured killings by volunteers that did not reach the official reports. The evidence from volunteers in the Puget Sound War, especially, suggests a sharp break from previous scholarship, much of which has asserted the conflict was almost bloodless. I examine and deconstruct the historical binaries of “friendly Indians” and “unfriendly Indians,” and how the former could quickly become the latter for most pioneers at the slightest provocation. I reveal new details about mass killings, both the (comparatively) well known and the extremely obscure. And I survey the understudied efforts, in Oregon and



Washington alike, to force nearly every Native person in the region—“friendly” or not—into often deadly internment camps in the mid-1850s.

In Chapter V, I look at the violence that immediately followed open war in the 1850s Pacific Northwest, focusing especially on the Oregon Trails of Tears, the thievish tyranny that punctuated early reservation life, and a case study exposing the sharp limits of Euro-American law and allyship in the era. My overview of the Oregon Trails of Tears uses new lenses and new evidence to demonstrate travails even deadlier than has been typically asserted (in those rare areas of the literature where forced removals in Oregon are discussed at all). I examine a few specific persons and places in the early reservation system to demonstrate specific instances of graft, theft, and quasi-judicial murder, implicating not only Indian agents but military officers and the regional Superintendent of Indian Affairs. And I interrogate one of the more famous murders of a Native person in 1850s Oregon, both to probe the limits of White justice in the period and to unpack what stories of justice said and were meant to say in the era. Complicity in the murder of Native people, I argue, was nearly ubiquitous among pioneers.

In Chapter VI, I discuss lynchings of Native people in the pioneer Pacific Northwest, focusing especially but not exclusively on judicial and military lynchings at the ends of the wars in Washington Territory in the 1850s. Lynching was a part of vigilante violence before, during, and after the War on Illahee—indeed, each of the previous chapters contains at least one account of a lynching. By removing the assumption that the involvement of a governor or a general automatically makes a hanging just, I suggest, we can see the hangings in aftermath of war in northwestern Washington and in the last steps of war in southeastern Washington as akin to the same

violence perpetrated by less official figures. Much as previous chapters draw on private pioneer accounts to show a bloody war much more similar to many Indigenous memories of events than the official reports, Chapter VI uses pioneer sources to show unjust killings in and beyond the courts extending through and past the wars of the era—just as some Indigenous oral accounts remember it.

Chapter VII connects the War on Illahee to the so-called “Snake” War of the 1860s, perhaps the least-known of the obscure wars of the Pacific Northwest. Although narratives of the war period often stop in the 1850s, I show that many of the same men fought the same war against Native people generally in the 1860s that they had in the previous decade—the targets and the terrain were sometimes different, but the actions and rhetoric remained the same. I also use a close reading of previously obscure military journals related to this war to work through the disjunctures—deliberate and otherwise—between what certain military men on the ground wrote and what they wanted their historical narratives to be.

In Chapter VIII, I examine one major method early histories of the pioneer Pacific Northwest used to deal with notorious war crimes: blaming them on a violent fringe, and leaving the rest of the colonizers honorably innocent. By creating what I call “settler colonial sin eaters,” historians like Herbert O. Lang, Hubert Howe Bancroft, and Frances Fuller Victor were able to absolve those parts of the pioneer community they identified with from any inconvenient guilt. This chapter also begins my exploration of the history business in the early Pacific Northwest. Particularly, I look at the difficulties of historians who were too accurate in their portrayals of pioneer violence, and thus struggled to find

publication or profits. Here and in the following chapters, I underline some of the ways in which money shaped pioneer history and memory.

As I show in Chapter IX, historians and heritage societies—especially the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast—significantly reshaped how the wars of the Northwest were remembered and honored. Responding to narratives that made virtually all pioneers *except* them blameless, some Euro-American veterans of wars of the Pacific Northwest insisted instead that they deserved special praise, posterity, and pensions—all of which they eventually acquired. Historians like Elwood Evans embraced full-throated denials of pioneer war crimes, and justified White violence with assertions of near-infinite Native perfidy. I survey some of the successes of those who fought to deform the historical record, including the procurement of federal imprimatur for acts of war previous generations of generals had decried as illegitimate.

Chapter X continues this theme, elucidating the “pioneer code”: an understanding that all stories of Euro-American pioneers must be heroic. I examine the interaction between this code and changing opinions on which stories needed to be suppressed. Pioneer rape culture, for example, had always been framed as a subject unfit for print, whereas there were disagreements about where and when the killings of Native non-combatants should be covered up. Even as regional historians in the 1900s strove for more rigorous scholarship, most still consciously avoided breaking the pioneer code as they saw it—and advised their fellow history writers to do the same. In some cases, this led to the diminution or exclusion of war acts, or even entire conflicts, that did not suit public tastes.

In Chapter XI, I consider the early creation of monuments to the pioneer period in the Pacific Northwest. Monuments arose alongside more ephemeral acts of memory-making, like pageants and parades, that collectively crafted a gauzier version of the pioneer past. Inflected by a rise in questions about American empire and increased fascination with “authentic” Native life, the popular history imbued in these monuments typically continued and furthered the erasures and celebrations of the texts they drew from. This chapter ends with a few instances where Native people cooperated with pioneer historians—suggesting a view on early twentieth century Native rights advocates that takes into account the decades of genocidal acts and policies they were struggling against. Native activists fighting for a future used the tools and allies that could get—which included, in some cases, playing along with nostalgic half-truths and pioneer puffery.

Putting the cover-ups and the crimes in the same narrative should shift conversations about credulity and complicity. There remains a tendency in most popular and some academic narratives of the pioneer Pacific Northwest to isolate violence to particular regions or particular actors. Colonial violence has been sometimes been portrayed as a problem particular to southern Oregon, southern Washington, or just plain transplanted Southerners. This dissertation demonstrates a continuity of violent intentions and genocidal dreams across the pioneer Pacific Northwest. Differences in the levels of support for colonial violence between different sections and Euro-American populations, though sometimes real, have been exaggerated. In this dissertation I demonstrate both the frequency of acts of wanton violence beyond official reports, and the near ubiquity of

pioneer acceptance of that violence. In the 1850s and 1860s, White murderers and serial killers of Native people would almost never face punishment from Euro-American law or society for their crimes. And they knew it.

Proving the untruths propagated by pioneers and their historians can also weigh on the balance of historical narratives about key events. Faced with vastly disparate stories from Euro-American and Native historical traditions, there can be an instinct to either report all stories with attempted neutrality, or to seek truth in the middle. Both stances might feel reasonable, and are sometimes appropriate. But as I demonstrate, many of the differences between Euro-American and Native narratives of colonial violence are latter-day impositions by pioneers and those who loved them, or distortions—wrought of racism—that became canon. Most of the new stories of violence and dreams of genocide herein come from the perpetrators and their allies, writing before changing mores rendered their actions retroactively repugnant to (some) other Euro-Americans. Stripped of the veneer added for posterity, pioneer memories of what happened often mirror Indigenous histories of the same events. In many cases, there are *not* disparate narratives, but rather two sides of the same story—rendered obscure by the efforts of generations of history writers, who preferred gauzy tales to hard truths.

Throughout this text, I predominantly and interchangeably use the terms “Native” and “Indigenous” to refer to the original peoples of the lands now claimed by the United States. I use the terms “Indian” and “Native American” historically but not pejoratively, typically indicating the language and/or perceptions of the persons or groups I am discussing. Occasionally but not usually, I put quotation marks around these terms to highlight their constructed nature. When quoting historical figures who used particularly poisonous racial slurs, I have replaced some or all of the internal vowels with underscores. I recognize that norms vary (and change) regarding what to do about offensive language in a historical text; this approach seemed like the best balance to me at time of writing.

Where possible, I have used more exact designations for Indigenous persons and polities. First and foremost, I privilege self-identification for historical Native persons; I have attempted to explain in the footnotes when orthography or tribal identifiers in the text are unusual as a result. I have erred on the side of caution, for better or worse, in ascribing specific Native identities for the people described herein. Pioneer killers only occasionally knew the identities of those they murdered, and the ubiquity of displacements and deaths from colonialism has made tracing a challenge in many cases.

“Nation” is a particularly tricky term of multiple contexts. One sense of “nation” is a group of people with a shared descent, history, and/or culture and a sovereign right to particular spaces, biota, and/or practices. By this sense there have been and are a multitude of Indigenous nations in the Pacific Northwest, since time immemorial, who passed their sovereignty and responsibilities on to their present and future heirs in

recognized and unrecognized Native nations. However, the web of reciprocal and/or personal relationships that characterized most Indigenous government structures in the Pacific Northwest before colonial invasion fits uneasily, at best, into the notion of “nation” as it is typically used in history and theory. The nation-state chauvinism in American and international law might require a recourse to the broad use of the term “nation” to affirm the sovereign rights of Native peoples. But I worry that excessive upstreaming of the notions of nation (in the narrow sense) might distort the past, hide the pluralities present in many traditional forms of government, and erase the work of nation-building by members of Native nations past, present, and future. My uses of the term “Native nation” in this text thus refer specifically to Native nations perceived, projected, and/or built as such.<sup>1</sup>

In general, I instead use the broader terms “Native polities/Indigenous polities” to refer to Indigenous governments or political units. In doing so I make no assertion as to whether the group so described was or was not a “nation” at the point in history I am discussing; in other words, I leave the work of determining the precise parameters and historicity of any given Native nation’s nationhood to other scholars and communities. I use the terms “Native ethnies”/“Indigenous ethnies” to refer to groups with shared history,

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<sup>1</sup> On Indigenous ethnogenesis and nation-building in the Pacific Northwest, see among others Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities around Puget Sound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Aeron Teverbaugh, “Tribal Constructs and Kinship Realities: Individual and Family Organization on the Grand Ronde Reservation from 1856,” Master’s thesis (Portland State University, 2000); Tracy Neal Leavelle, “‘We Will Make It Our Own Place’: Agriculture and Adaptation at the Grand Ronde Reservation, 1856 – 1887,” *American Indian Quarterly* 22:4 (1998), pp. 433 – 456; Patrick Stephen Lozar, “‘An Anxious Desire of Self Preservation’: Colonialism, Transition, and Identity on the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 1860 – 1910,” Master’s thesis (University of Oregon, 2013); Andrew H. Fisher, *Shadow Tribe: The Making of Columbia River Indian Identity* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), esp. chap. 2. I note, also, that the term “Pacific Northwest” privileges an American spatial and geographic perspective.

culture, and/or language, and with a shared identity therefrom. And of course, in the past as in the present, Indigenous polities *and* individuals often contained multiple ethnies.<sup>2</sup>

When discussing the invaders, I use the word *pioneer* in this dissertation to refer to the (mostly Euro-American) migrants to the Pacific Northwest who styled themselves as such, largely during the 1840s to 1860s. Many Americans in the nineteenth-century Pacific Northwest understood the term *pioneer* as reference to a foot soldier of colonialism (see Chapters 8 and 9). I use it here with that martial meaning foregrounded. I use the more general term *settler* to refer more generally both to the pioneers and the generations of migrants and descendants who have followed. Neither term is without flaws. To call the people who invaded the Pacific Northwest in this period *pioneers* risks conflating colonialism with innovation and discovery, the other valence of the term. To label them *settlers* risks evoking stereotypes of Indigenous people as unsettled wanderers, and risks reifying the false notion that Indigenous people and polities' rights to their land were somehow lesser. The term *settler* has been usefully problematized by scholars and theorists in recent decades; the term *pioneer* needs similar recontextualization, as a way to signpost the centrality of violence in the conquest of what became America.<sup>3</sup>

Euro-Americans unquestionably committed acts of genocide in the Pacific Northwest, as defined by the United Nations. My use of “genocide” and “genocidal” in

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<sup>2</sup> On the utility (and perhaps danger) of differentiating between ethnies and nation, see Scott Richard Lyons, *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), pp. 119 – 121, 139 – 140.

<sup>3</sup> For problematizing the term “settler,” see among many others Cora Snelgrove, Rita Kaur Dhamoon, and Jeff Cornstassel, “Unsettling Settler Colonialism: The Discourse and Politics of Settlers, and Solidarity with Indigenous Nations,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3:2 (2014): pp. 1 – 32; Lisa Ford, *Settler Sovereignty: Jurisdiction and Indigenous People in America and Australia, 1788 – 1836* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), and especially James H. Merrell, “Second Thoughts on Colonial Historians and American Indians,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 69:3 (2012), pp. 451 – 512. For my own work attempting the same for the term “pioneer” (from which this paragraph has been adapted), see Marc James Carpenter, “Pioneer Problems: ‘Wanton Murder,’ Indian War Veterans, and Oregon’s Violent History,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 121:2 (2020), pp. 156 – 185.



this text is narrow, describing the subset of physical acts of violence “committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial[,] or religious group” that appear in United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The U.N. Convention makes it a crime not only to commit genocide, but to conspire to commit it, attempt it, publicly incite it, or be complicit in it. The evidence exists to render a broad array of Euro-American leaders, government figures, newspaper editors, military personnel, and everyday men and women retroactively guilty under the Convention (see Chapters 1 – 6).<sup>4</sup> Even more pioneers and settlers could be found so under the section of the Convention making the forcible transfer of children and “measures intended to prevent births,” if committed with the intent to destroy, genocidal crimes.<sup>5</sup>

The U.N. Convention on Genocide is a useful baseline definition because it puts forward parameters for a punishable crime that a great number of nations, including the United States, have agreed to.<sup>6</sup> Adjectives might be a means of pushing past some of the definitional impasses that genocide studies and related fields are too often mired in. “Cultural genocide” (discussed briefly below) has been a useful means of discussing and differentiating certain acts of genocide that do not fall under the U.N. Convention. The Holocaust/Shoah and perhaps other modern acts of genocide that killed hundreds of

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<sup>4</sup> Under some readings of American jurisprudence, almost all pioneers could be found recklessly complicit in genocide, as most acts of genocide were committed as part of “common purpose” crimes in which almost all shared (trespass, land theft, etc.). But given the difficulties of convicting anyone of genocide, even in the face of strong evidence, it is unlikely such an argument would work, whatever its legal merits. On complicity based on general criminal intent, see Sanford H. Kadish, “Reckless Complicity,” *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 87:2 (1997), pp. 369 – 394. On the difficulties of actually trying people for genocide, see Alex Alvarez, *Native America and the Question of Genocide* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), pp. 36 – 37.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations, “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 9 December 1948,” *United Nations Treaty Series* 78:1021 (1951), pp. 278 – 322, quotations on p. 280.

<sup>6</sup> Benjamin Madley, “Reexamining the American Genocide Debate: Meaning, Historiography, and New Methods.” *American Historical Review* 120:1 (2015), pp. 98 – 139, esp. 107 – 108.

thousands of people over a short timespan can be differentiated from others by means of language—the political scientist Robert Melson suggests “modern genocide” as one possibility.<sup>7</sup> Gary Clayton Anderson is perhaps the most prominent historian of the American West to argue in recent years that the mass killings perpetrated in attempts to destroy Native communities do not rise to the level of genocide. He has demanded that they should instead be considered (and condemned) as acts of “ethnic cleansing.” Anderson hangs his argument on a definition of genocide that includes several elements not found in the original definition of the term in international law. I contend that Anderson’s additions to the concept of genocide might be more useful if considered as a particular variety of genocide, rather than as a (covertly) new definition that obliterates the one currently established in international law.<sup>8</sup>

The worthwhile project of determining when, how, and whether nations and/or governments pursued or were complicit in genocide should not obscure genocidal acts by individuals. It makes sense, in many contexts, to weigh and assess the guilt of nations

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<sup>7</sup> Robert Melson, “Critique of Current Genocide Studies,” *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 6:3 (2011), pp. 279 – 286.

<sup>8</sup> Gary Clayton Anderson, “The Native Peoples of the American West: Genocide or Ethnic Cleansing?,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 47:4 (2016), pp. 407 – 433. There are also some risible acts of inference in this text. Anderson argues that the large number of Native people in the 2010 census is in itself evidence that killings in the U.S. were “far less destructive than in other places around the world” (408)—by which logic every increase in the Jewish population of Germany would make the Holocaust/Shoah retroactively less destructive (!?!). He insists without evidence that most mass killings were isolated events, and asserts that there is some arbitrarily large number of deaths that have to be inflicted for an act of genocide to be counted—a common feeling, although no such stipulation exists in international law (411, 433). Anderson proclaims, without elaboration, that only acts of genocide against all American Indians rather than specific ethnies should be considered, and appears to claim that acts of genocide perpetrated with the help of Native allies should not count as such because of that alliance (410). Although the international laws governing genocide are all predicated primarily on prosecuting individuals, Anderson insists that only organized and apparently broad-based state policies should be counted as relevant (414). Here and in other works Anderson chides historians who use the term “genocide” for not explicitly making use of the 1998 “Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.” The Rome Statute (which, unlike the U.N. Convention on Genocide, was not ratified by the United States) did codify several categories of war crimes under international law, many of which have been inflicted on Native polities, ethnies, and nations by various organs of the United States. But the Rome Statute did NOT alter—but rather affirmed—the original definition of genocide. United Nations, “Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,” *United Nations Treaty Series* 2187:38544 (orig. 1998, rev. 2002), esp. p. 3.

and/or governments. If nothing else, all of the American people who committed acts of genocide in the nineteenth century are dead, but many of the societal and governmental structures they were supported by and embedded in live on. Whether, when, and in what ways the “United States” (defined variously as a set of governments, an array of beliefs, an imagined community, a military force, etc) pursued genocide is an important scholarly question.<sup>9</sup> But for better or worse, the law currently on the international books is primarily concerned with prosecuting “persons... whether they are constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals.” It is beyond question that people in the United States—sometimes with official roles in government—committed acts of genocide and related crimes as defined in the U.N. Convention. I describe several such acts herein.

My use of the term “genocide” to describe only acts that count as such under the U.N. Convention should not be taken to imply that no other acts should be considered genocidal. Rather, determining and applying extensions of parameters of the term “genocide” beyond what is explicitly stipulated in international law is not, by and large, an ambition of this work. I do make occasional reference in the text to cultural genocide—acts attempting to destroy a people by destroying their culture. This grievous category of crime was abrogated from the original U.N. Convention on Genocide, and remains uncodified as such in international law. Often co-occurring with or allowing for physical acts of genocide, I differentiate cultural genocide from other forms largely to

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<sup>9</sup> Jeffrey Ostler, *Surviving Genocide: Native Nations and the United States from the American Revolution to Bleeding Kansas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019); Alvarez, *Native America and the Question of Genocide*; Edward B. Westermann, *Hitler’s Ostkrieg and the Indian Wars: Comparing Genocide and Conquest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016); Carroll P. Kakel III, “Patterns and Crimes of Empire: Comparative Perspectives on Fascist and Non-Fascist Extermination,” *Journal of Holocaust Research* 33:1 (2019), pp. 4 – 21.

acknowledge the different suite of tools that can be used to resist it. I would additionally note that *every* act of physical genocide is also an act of cultural genocide. But aside from that stipulation, I have consciously avoided probing into or policing exactly what the edges of the concept should be.<sup>10</sup>

I also largely avoid the troubling term “attempted genocide,” which has sometimes been applied to campaigns of extermination in the Far West.<sup>11</sup> Nearly all genocides that receive historical attention were “attempted.” Many Armenian people in the Ottoman Empire survived the Armenian Genocide, and many Indigenous communities in the Pacific Northwest and elsewhere persevered past the organized attempts to eliminate them. My fear is that overapplication of “attempted” might dilute the heinous acts thereby described. I leave determinations about the boundaries of each of these terms to other scholars and eventually, perhaps, to the courts.

The term “massacre,” indicating a brutal and unjust mass killing, has been used for centuries as a rhetorical and ideological weapon against Native communities. In the Pacific Northwest, the most famous application of the term is in the so-called “Whitman

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<sup>10</sup> On the exclusion of cultural genocide from the original U.N. declaration, see among others Shamiran Mako, “Cultural Genocide and Key International Instruments: Framing the Indigenous Experience,” *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 19:2 (2012), pp. 175 – 194. On the patchwork of international law governing and attempting to prevent cultural genocide, see Elisa Novic, *The Concept of Cultural Genocide: An International Law Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), esp. chap. 4; Edward C. Luck, *Cultural Genocide and the Protection of Cultural Heritage* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Trust, 2018), esp. chap. 2. I depart from some scholars in insisting on the utility of “cultural genocide” as a framework somewhat separable from physical genocide, particularly in discussions of resistance. The strategies used to resist coercive assimilation and other attacks on culture are different—and sometimes broader—than the strategies used to resist groups or governments bent on physical extermination. Critiques of the use of term “cultural genocide” might more usefully be refigured as critiques of the *misuse* of the term. Differentiating different kinds of genocide does not make any of them *not* genocide. Cf. Andrew Woolford, “Ontological Destruction: Genocide and Canadian Aboriginal Peoples,” *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 4:1 (2009), pp. 81 – 97.

<sup>11</sup> Elliott West, “California, Coincidence, and Empire,” in *Global History of Gold Rushes*, eds. Benjamin Mountford and Stephen Tuffnell (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018), pp. 42 – 64, “attempted genocide” applied to the California Gold Rush era on p. 45. On the success of mass murderers in what became California, see Benjamin Madley, *An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016).

Massacre” of 1848 (a label I follow other scholars in rejecting), which is discussed in some depth in Chapter II. Some Native thinkers have called for the term “massacre” to be more or less retired; others have pushed for it to be redeployed as the most potent descriptor for unjust mass killings committed by White people.<sup>12</sup> Different norms across cultures and times about what constitutes a valid act of war further complicate use of the term. In this text, I have used the word massacre only to describe mass killings that *both* the perpetrators *and* their victims would recognize as beyond the rules of law and war if inflicted on their own communities. Mass killings that I might personally find abhorrent, but which may have been acts of legitimate reciprocal violence according to the legal culture of at least one side, I do not label as massacres. I have erred on the side of caution; it is likely that more mass killings were massacres, under this definition, than I describe as such here. But given the potency of the label, and the harms done by its promiscuous application to the actions of Native fighters, I have used it only when the evidence suggests a deliberate act contravening the rules of warfare as understood by both groups.

Quantitative research on pioneer violence within and beyond the wars of the Pacific Northwest is beyond this study. Such research would need to reckon with both under-reporting and over-exaggerating. Pioneer violence was differently reported in different settings, and certain kinds of violence (especially child murder and rape) were

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<sup>12</sup> Antone Minthorn, "Wars, Treaties, and the Beginning of Reservation Life," in *As Days Go By: Our History, Our Land, and Our People: The Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla* ed. Jennifer Karson (Pendleton: Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute and Oregon Historical Society Press, 2006), pp. 61 – 89, esp. p. 64; George B. Wasson, "The Coquille Indians and the Cultural 'Black Hole' of the Southern Oregon Coast," from *Worldviews and the American West: The Life of the Place Itself*, ed. Polly Stewart, Steve Siporin, C.W. Sullivan III, and Suzi Jones (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2000), pp. 191 – 210. More recent work from Minthorn suggests that the term should be used more carefully rather than eliminated outright. Blaine Harden, *Murder at the Mission: A Frontier Killing, Its Legacy of Lies, and the Taking of the American West* (New York: Viking, 2021), Minthorn quotation on p. 357.

seldom seen as part of a proud history—and thus appear less often in the records. Some pioneer killers undoubtedly exaggerated the killings they believed were righteous. On the other hand, killings of non-combatants, women, and children often went unenumerated and/or unreported, especially in official records (see Chapters 2 – 6 and 9). I have attempted to mark in the text or notes the relative closeness of the evidence (whether a story is from the supposed participant, from a family member, or part of broader community lore). I have tended to place somewhat more trust in stories of specific killings than of general mayhem, attempted to cast a skeptical eye on stories that smack of derring-do, and assumed most of the numbers given by those who bragged about killings were exaggerations.

But exaggeration is different from invention. The extent of violence in many of the reminiscences used here exceeds that in most official reports, but is not dissimilar from what was reported by Indigenous communities in the past (and often remembered to the present). And as historians of violence have occasionally noted, the standard used as “the most objective procedure available” to measure murder—the “drier prose of newspapers and court files”—are not suited for getting to the truth of wanton settler violence against Native people and communities. Typically such violence never saw a court of law, and newspapers would only report on that which was known and seen as newsworthy.<sup>13</sup> Most pioneers did not leave reminiscences. But there is little reason to think that those who died younger, or avoided the spotlight of history, were significantly less murderous than those who left a record of what they did. It is overwhelmingly likely that Pacific Northwest pioneers killed more Native people than we can count.

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<sup>13</sup> David T. Courtwright, *Violent Land: Single Men and Social Disorder from the Frontier to the Inner City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 81 – 83.

I have eschewed the terms “uprising” and “rebellion” to describe the wars of the 1840s – 1860s in the Pacific Northwest. Both terms imply an attack against an established government with previously recognized suzerainty. To claim (as many White people did in the period) that Native communities fighting against invasion were engaged in an “uprising” is to imply that they had previously been “down” in relation to American governance. This descriptor might be appropriate for certain later wars, but for most of wars of the period it is a problematic formulation. Independent polities fighting against invaders trying to conquer their lands are not rebels. To frame them as such risks naturalizing American assumptions of dominion over Native land, and even risks transforming American wars of conquest into police actions.<sup>14</sup>

The language of “tragedy” often attains in stories of the colonial conquest of the Pacific Northwest (as elsewhere). In the sense that tragedy indicates an enormity of suffering, destruction, and distress, this is apt.<sup>15</sup> But the term “tragedy” can easily acquire a valence from its more theatrical uses—indicating destruction that stems from the fatal flaws of heroic actors. This is dangerous. Particularly, scholars must be cautious of framing the Indian Wars of the region or murderous colonial conquest more generally as the result of tragic misunderstanding(s). As will be shown, the thieves, rapists, and murderers who served as the vanguard of colonialism in the Pacific Northwest often knew what they were doing.

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<sup>14</sup> For usages of the language of “uprising” and “rebellion” regarding independent Native polities at war, see Anne F. Hyde, *Empires, Nations, and Families: A History of the North American West, 1800 – 1860* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), p. 429; Harwood P. Hinton and Jerry D. Thompson, *Courage Above All Things: General John Ellis Wool and the U.S. Military, 1812 – 1863* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2020), p. 265; Gregory Michno, *The Deadliest Indian War in the West: The Snake Conflict, 1864 – 1868* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 2007), p. 84.

<sup>15</sup> Richard Kluger, *The Bitter Waters of Medicine Creek: A Tragic Clash between White and Native America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011).

Although history is a field somewhat different from literature, I take seriously Gerald Vizenor's call to pay heed to Native stories of survivance, including "renunciations of dominance, detractions, obtrusions, the unbearable sentiments of tragedy, and the legacy of victimry."<sup>16</sup> But I echo Scott Richard Lyons's gloss of Vizenor's "victimry" neologism: avoidance of victimry narratives does not and should not elide the acts of victimizers, nor diminish the harms they inflicted. The use of the descriptor "victim" in this text should be taken not as a totalizing label for the people so described, but as an indicator of the crimes committed by the victimizers.<sup>17</sup>

I attempt herein to prove pioneer norms of wanton and often horrific violence against Native people in the American Pacific Northwest, and to demonstrate some of the ways in which that violence was erased. To do so effectively, this text necessarily contains descriptions of numerous acts of violence, some of them graphic, and could thus be traumatic for some readers. I have attempted to be thorough and sensitive without being sensational, and to write in a way that is nuanced without being numbing. I expect there will be, perhaps inevitably, readers for whom I have not succeeded. A major goal of this work is to pierce through pioneer nostalgia and reveal the horrors it hides; I have thus erred on the side of demonstration rather than delicacy. There are reasons so many chose to cover up the crimes I discuss. The story I have to tell is an ugly one.

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<sup>16</sup> Gerald Vizenor, "Aesthetics of Survivance: Literary Theory and Practice," in *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence*, ed. Gerald Vizenor (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), pp. 1 – 24, quotation on p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> Lyons, *X-Marks*, 97 – 98. See also David A. Chappell, "Active Agents versus Passive Victims: Decolonized Historiography or Problematic Paradigm?," *Contemporary Pacific* 7:2 (1995), pp. 303 – 326.



CHAPTER II: “WE WERE FIGHTING INDIANS BEFORE WE JOINED THE  
ARMY”: SETTLER-SOLDIERS AND THE NORTHWEST INDIAN WARS  
AS A WAR FOR WHITE SUPREMACY

Many in the Pacific Northwest struggled in the hard times of the 1890s. One of the only avenues of government support was the Oregon Old Soldiers Home, a network of care facilities meant for indigent veterans who had served in the Union Army during the U.S. Civil War, for indigent veterans of the “war with Mexico,” and for “indigent soldiers and volunteers who served not less than thirty days in any of the Indian wars in Oregon, Washington Territory, or Idaho Territory.” Hundreds of applications poured in.<sup>18</sup>

In their applications to the Oregon Old Soldiers Home, veterans had to describe what war(s) they had served in. Many simply wrote “Indian Wars”—sometimes preceded by a location (like “Oregon”), sometimes followed by a year or set of years. Most of these years fell between 1847 and 1858, when the wars of conquest waged by Euro-Americans in the Pacific Northwest were fought by citizen “volunteers” more than by army regulars. The form asked veterans to list the specific war(s) they had been in. But the names since affixed to these wars—among others the Cayuse War, the Rogue River War, the Puget Sound War, the Walla Walla War, the Yakima War—were not the names used by most of those who had fought in them. Alexander York remembered two terms of service in the “Indian wars of 1855 – 1856.” Jesse A. Applegate referred to the “Indian War” of 1853, Andrew J. Wiley to the “1856 Indian war.” W. F. Tolmie referred to “Indian Disturbances in middle Oregon” in 1854, Elija F. Whisler to “the outbreak of

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<sup>18</sup> “An Act to Provide for the Relief of Indigent Union and Mexican War Soldiers, Sailors, Mariners, and Indian War Volunteers...,” Feb 25, 1889, in William Lair Hill, Compiler and Annotator, *The Codes and General Laws of Oregon, Vol. 2*, 2nd edition (San Francisco: Bancroft-Whitney Company, 1892), pp. 1841 – 1843.

the Indians” in 1856. They were writing answers on a form that asked for the name of the war in which they had been involved—but specific names eluded most of them. They had fought against “the Indians,” not in particular fights against particular groups. For these White settlers, they had simply fought in the “Indian Wars,” wars of extermination against any and all Native polities and people in a given place and time.<sup>19</sup>

In this chapter I argue that there is utility in considering the violent colonization of the Pacific Northwest from the late 1840s to 1858 (and in many places beyond) as a single period of “Indian War(s),” just as many of the perpetrators did, and just as they convinced multiple government bodies to do.<sup>20</sup> There were individual wars, supposedly with specific Native polities, within that period—the Cayuse War(s), the Rogue River War(s), the Yakima War(s), the Walla Walla War, and the Puget Sound War; one might (then or now) perhaps include the Coeur d’Alene War, the Fraser Canyon War, the “Snake” War(s), and others, perhaps even including the wars of the 1870s. But particularly in the middle of the 1800s, these wars were outgrowths of general invasion and attendant violence. Framing the Indian wars of the Pacific Northwest as many invading colonists saw them, as a continuous war on Indians generally, allows for a better understanding of the scope and reach of violence in the era.

Indian Wars, in the Pacific Northwest as in many other places, were an acceleration and consummation of existing threats and acts of violence, rather than a

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<sup>19</sup> Alexander York application to Oregon Soldiers’ Home, Nov 24, 1894, Folder: “Oregon Soldiers Home Applications: 1898 – 1933; Wren - York,” Box 29, Military Department Records 89-A12, Oregon State Archives, Salem, OR; Jesse A. Applegate application to Oregon Soldiers’ Home, Aug 18, 1903, Folder 6, Box 29, *ibid*; W. F. Tolmie Claim Record, Folder 9, Box 53, *ibid*; Elijah F. Whisler application to Oregon Soldiers’ Home, May 6, 1895, Folder: “Oregon Soldiers Home Applications: 1898 – 1933; Westall – Whitcomb,” Box 29, *ibid*. Some folders in this collection have numbers, others have names.

<sup>20</sup> For more on veteran successes in getting a broad period of Indian Wars recognized by various government organizations, see Chapter IX.

wholesale shift. As the settler-soldier Samuel Stewart wrote of the period, “we were fighting Indians before we joined the army just the same as we did in the army[;] a man did not ha[ve] to belong to the army in those days to fight Indians.”<sup>21</sup> Settlers committed innumerable acts of everyday violence before, during, and after the wars; indeed, the wars were often incited by just such acts. Viewing the Indian wars as a whole—as a structure rather than a series of events, one might say—better allows these everyday acts of violence to be legible as part of a greater whole. Many settlers dreamed of the day when they would be able to kill every Native person in the region. Nearly all shared a goal—and/or an assumption—that Native polities and land rights would be extinguished, with or without the reluctant consent of Native communities. Settlers and the state embarked on a campaign of extermination from roughly 1847 to 1858 (and beyond). The individual wars of this period were intensifications of that campaign.<sup>22</sup>

I refer to this campaign to destroy Native polities in the Pacific Northwest as the War on Illahee. The many Native communities struggling against settler conquest in this period used many different names in their own languages to describe their own lands. But most communities would at least have recognized the Chinuk Wawa/Chinook Jargon term that can be translated as “homeland.” My hope is that this title might thus adequately describe a shared experience of invasion using a term both the defenders and the invaders would recognize.

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<sup>21</sup> Samuel Stewart to T.A. Wood, Dec. 30, 1896, Folder 44, Box 4, Military Collection, Mss 1514, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>22</sup> Antone Minthorn, "Wars, Treaties, and the Beginning of Reservation Life," in *As Days Go By: Our History, Our Land, and Our People: The Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla* ed. by Jennifer Karson (Pendleton: Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute and Oregon Historical Society Press, 2006), pp. 61 – 89, esp. pp. 64-65. For the structure/event construction, see Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8:4 (2006), pp. 387 – 409.

The proposition of an overarching War on Illahee should not imply that individual conflicts were not important, or that each of the various wars does not deserve discrete analysis; indeed, many remain critically understudied. The sovereign governments of the United States and many Indigenous polities unquestionably dealt with the wars individually, with lasting effects on treaties and territory. Nor should the proposition that there was a War on Illahee between 1847 and 1858 exclude connections to later wars against Native polities and people in the region. The 1860s war against Great Basin Indigenous polities often called the “Snake War,” especially, was in many ways a continuation of the conflict, similarly a war on all independent Native people in a given region (see Chapter VII). And the same White violence, thirst for land, and disregard for Native sovereignty drove the somewhat more targeted Modoc War, Nez Perce War, and Bannock/Shoshone War[s] in the 1870s. There is utility in a more overarching frame, as suggested in a synthesis by Katrine Barber, that takes in [over] three decades of “[s]ettler-perpetrated rape, murder, and alienation of territory [which] instigated retaliatory violence, drawing forth the killing capabilities of volunteer militias and the authority of the U.S. military” across the region.<sup>23</sup>

What sets the War on Illahee somewhat apart from the rest of the violent campaign to seize Native land is the extent to which it was fought by Euro-American volunteers outside of the regular armed forces, *and* the breadth of the struggles over how it should be recorded and remembered. Because the seizure of Native land was a foundational part of the stories of Oregon and Washington, the war(s) of the era had to be

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<sup>23</sup> Katrine Barber, “‘We Were at Our Journey’s End’: Settler Sovereignty Formation in Oregon,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 120:4 (2019), pp. 382 – 413, quotation from 391 – 392. Barber’s broad category could be extended beyond the regions originally listed in the article to virtually the whole of the Pacific Northwest. See also Anne F. Hyde, *Empires, Nations, and Families: A History of the North American West, 1800 – 1860* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), p. 421.

addressed by early historians. There were sharp disagreements between Euro-Americans over the best means to take over Native land in the region, with some government figures loudly complaining about the inconveniently wanton violence inflicted by so many Pacific Northwest pioneers. The disagreements led to the creation of a record of contentions and crimes that had to be addressed—or silenced—by those writing histories of the period (see Chapters 7 – 10).

As a framing concept, the War on Illahee also highlights the devotion to colonial conquest shared between different Euro-American settlers, governments, and military personnel. Disputes over the efficacy, feasibility, and (occasionally) morality of attempts to murder groups of Indigenous persons in the Pacific Northwest were common. But there was a shared Euro-American goal of dismantling Indigenous peoples' power, control, and autonomy in their homelands. Historical Euro-American disputes over the best or cheapest means of dispossessing Native communities were typically disagreements about tactics, not goals. Some officials might have hoped to minimize the murders of Indigenous individuals (see Chapters 2 and 4). But they shared the goal of taking Native land and destroying Native sovereignty. Contemporary Euro-American disputes over how and when Native lands should be seized, and how orderly the invasion could be rendered, should not casually be read as disagreements about the ultimate pursuit of Native land by the American empire. White conscientious objectors were the exception.<sup>24</sup>

The War on Illahee was far from the first such general war on Native people in history of the United States. In some ways it was a zenith of a movement that predated the formation of the country. Many participants in the Pacific Northwest wars had been in

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<sup>24</sup> Katrine Barber, “‘We Were at Our Journey’s End.’”

“Indian wars” they saw as analogous—wars against Creek polities in the 1810s and the 1830s; military and paramilitary attacks on the Cherokee Nation in the 1820s and 1830s; the Blackhawk War of 1832 and the violence surrounding it; the wars on Seminole polities that stretched through the first half of the 1800s; and others. Nor was it the last, although most of the Indian Wars after the Civil War were conducted by regular soldiers.<sup>25</sup>

In contrast, much of the violence dealt out in the War on Illahee was done by “volunteers,” White settlers who were typically soldiers only in the loosest sense of the word. Men would organize into murderous bands of marauders at any hint of supposed “Indian perfidy,” real or imagined, and attack any Native person they could find nearby. If these attacks led to full-scale war, then the settler bands organized to do violence might be able to draw government pay. But for many “volunteers,” like Samuel Stewart, they “were fighting Indians before we joined the army just the same as [they] did in the army.” The wanton violence the “volunteers” inflicted was typically the same whether or not they were serving as soldiers when they killed. The only difference was when they might expect pay on top of the plunder they seized in their attacks. Money thus shaped disagreements over what counted as a war, and thereby which acts of violence might deserve remuneration from the government(s).<sup>26</sup>

The United States has typically defined wars with Native nations through peace treaties. Violence between Indigenous and Euro-American groups that led to signing of such treaties was more likely to be treated as war. Violence that did not was more likely

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<sup>25</sup> On the wars of Oregon being viewed as an extension of earlier conflicts, see among others Alphonse D. Boone to Eva Emery Dye, March 21, 1904, Folder 6, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers, Mss 1089, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>26</sup> Tom Pessah, “Violent Representations: Hostile Indians and Civilized Wars in Nineteenth-Century USA,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37:9 (2014), pp. 1628 – 1645.

to be seen as a “peacekeeping” or policing action. To the extent that Euro-Americans had a sense of what “war” meant in the 1850s, they saw it as organized conflict between nations.<sup>27</sup> “Seeing” the many Native polities of the Pacific Northwest through the lens of settler colonialism, many Euro-Americans did not typify them as nations or see them as states, framing them instead as “the Indians” collectively. Or perhaps, some chose not to see them as states: as the drafters of the Geneva Conventions a century later put it:

A State can always pretend, when it commits a hostile act against another State, that it is not making war, but merely engaging in a police action, or acting in legitimate self-defense.<sup>28</sup>

Euro-American treaty-makers, on the other hand, sometimes had to conjure suprapolitical Indigenous polities into being so that they could have those Indigenous leaders willing to sign treaties stand for a multitude of sovereign communities. They desired Native nations to exist only so long as they had the capacity to sign over their homelands, and no longer. This combination has meant that violence, even organized violence, which did not lead to treaties is often not considered war, and was (and is) thus often diminished or disappeared in the record—much to the consternation of those who needed “wars” to be counted as such for the purposes of profit and/or posterity.

If wars are defined by invasion, then the War on Illahee started before 1847. Most Euro-American pioneers who came to the region before then were still invaders, often claiming Indigenous land without permission from the polities that stewarded it and,

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<sup>27</sup> Carol Reardon, *With a Sword in One Hand and Jomini in the Other: The Problem of Military Thought in the Civil War North* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), chap. 1; John Fabian Witt, *Lincoln’s Code: The Laws of War in American History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2012), chap. 3.

<sup>28</sup> Jean S. Pictet *et al.*, eds, *The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1952), p. 32.

initially, without the veneer of a treaty. Many early Euro-American arrivistes into the Indigenous world of Illahee were treated kindly, even welcomed. Some Native polities valued them as new trading partners or allies, many Native polities tried to fold them into the existing network of kinship and alliance that defined intergroup diplomacy in Illahee, and most Native polities treated them with caution amidst the cataclysmic crises brought on by overlapping epidemics inflicted on Pacific Northwest residents, particularly in the 1830s and 1840s. But the fact that Native communities sometimes welcomed or aided Euro-American visitors should not erase the fact that many, eventually most, of the new arrivals were bent on invasion. And that fact must color historical interpretations of violence between Euro-American and Native groups.

The historian Gray Whaley has shown that in the fur trade era of the nineteenth century—a time before the full onset of American empire often portrayed as one of comity—there were still musings about genocide. Itinerant trapper Peter Skene Ogden responded to economic setbacks along the Snake River in 1828 by dreaming about mass extermination of “the whole Snake tribe” [in this case, the slur likely referred to Shoshone people; see Chapter VII]. Responding to the killing of two employees in 1832, John McLoughlin, Chief Factor for the Hudson’s Bay Company along the Columbia, instructed his agent LaFramboise to pursue retributive killings—standard practice among both Indigenous communities and communities of European descent in the area. But he also encouraged LaFramboise to threaten mass murder; to say that while Hudson’s Bay did “not wish to hurt the innocent,” they would “not spare one of the tribe” if the murderers were not given up. These were largely arguments for pursuing genocide against (somewhat) specific Indigenous polities, rather than universally against “Indians.”



That would change with American rush to Oregon in the middle of the nineteenth century. Folk imperialism, as Gray Whaley has termed the on-the-ground colonization effort in the Northwest, brought with it folk genocide: a popular, decentralized movement to murder Native people *en masse*.<sup>29</sup>

And even before the rush, plenty of newcomers were ideating genocide against Indians generally rather than specific groups. Nathaniel Wyeth, a speculator and ice industry entrepreneur, traveled along the Columbia River looking for business opportunities in 1835. He established a base on “Wappatoo Island” (Wapato Island, renamed Sauvie Island later in the century), from which he attempted to set up a salmon fishery, and sent out expeditions to recapture the unfree Hawaiian laborers who had escaped his expedition.<sup>30</sup> Wappatoo Island was not only centrally located along the river, but had recently been more or less emptied of people by the devastating epidemics of the early 1830s, which had been followed by a Hudson’s Bay Company sweep of the island’s remaining inhabitants a few years before Wyeth’s arrival. Taking in the recent history of catastrophic epidemics as he understood it, and possibly mistaking a longstanding

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<sup>29</sup> Gray H. Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee: U.S. Empire and the Transformation of an Indigenous World, 1792 – 1859* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 89 – 91, 136; Gray H. Whaley, “American Folk Imperialism and Native Genocide in Southwest Oregon, 1851 – 1859,” in *Colonial Genocide in Indigenous North America*, ed. Andrew Woolford, Jeff Benvenuto, and Alexander Laban Hinton (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2014), pp. 131 – 148.

<sup>30</sup> The extent to which the “Sandwich Islanders” working for Wyeth were unfree is difficult to determine, but several of his workers fled his employ, and Wyeth pursued them with armed men. Those who fled were framed as deserters and thieves in early histories of the Wyeth expedition. But it is notable that Wyeth was prepared to use severe measures to recapture his “workers.” Janice K. Duncan, “Minority without a champion: The Kanaka Contribution to the Western United States, 1750 – 1900,” Master’s thesis (Portland State University, 1972), pp. 32 – 35; Nathaniel J. Wyeth to “Friend Weld,” Apr 3 1835, taken from F[rederic] G[eorge] Young, ed., “The Correspondence and Journals of Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth 1831-6: A Record of Two Expeditions for the Occupation of the Oregon Country,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 1:3/6 (1899), p. 149; Robert Carlton Clark, “Hawaiians in Early Oregon,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 35:1 (1934), pp. 22 – 31; W. Clement Eaton, “Nathaniel Wyeth’s Oregon Expeditions,” *Pacific Historical Review* 4:2 (1935), pp. 101 – 113; Alexander Spoehr, “Fur Traders in Hawai’i: The Hudson’s Bay Company in Honolulu, 1829 – 1861,” *Hawaiian Journal of History* 20 (1986), pp. 27 – 66; Stacey L. Smith, *Freedom’s Frontier: California and the Struggle over Unfree Labor, Emancipation, and Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), p. 32.

funerary ground on the island for a fresh ruin, Wyeth proclaimed that “providence has made room for me, and without doing [the Indians] more injury than I should if I had made room for myself viz Killing them off.”<sup>31</sup> There is evidence that Wyeth took part in an attack on a Blackfeet polity in 1832; it is unclear whether he attacked any Native people along the Columbia River in 1834. But he evinced a readiness to kill to “make room for [himself]” if necessary. By necessity, many of his employees were Indigenous people. But this fact did not hinder Wyeth’s daydreaming about the inconvenience and feasibility of genocide.<sup>32</sup>

Missionaries arriving in the 1830s, whose minor role in the conquest of the Pacific Northwest would be magnified again and again in the twentieth century, saw genocide as inevitable. The missionary Samuel Parker, as part of a panygeric on American explorers and land claims, saw genocide as sadly inevitable:

The aboriginal population claim [this country] as their own, and say, they merely permit white men to reside among them.... But their claim is laboriously, extensively, and practically denied; for authorities, both of written law, and the opinion of living judges and expositors of law, sanction the principle that

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<sup>31</sup> Nathaniel J. Wyeth to “Friend Weld,” Apr 3 1835, taken from Young, “The Correspondence and Journals of Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth 1831-6.” What Wyeth perceived as “unburied bones” may have been longstanding remains, in keeping with local funerary practices.

<sup>32</sup> Most of the clashes with Native people Wyeth recorded in papers were with Blackfeet people. His wording in some cases made it unclear who the aggressor had been, but in at least one case Wyeth’s role as an attacker seems clear (“we observed 2 part[ie]s of Indians coming out of the pass about 200 in number with but few horses[.] [A]fter securing our camp our riders went out to meet them and soon found them to be Blackfeet a little skirmish ensued one of the Blackfeet was killed and his Blanke[t] and robe brought into camp[.] [O]n this the Indians made for the timber [and] the women and children were seen flying to the mountain.... We attacked them and continued the attack all day there were probably about 20 of them killed and 32 horses were found dead[.] They decamped during the night leaving most of their utens[i]ls lodges &c and many of their dead”). Quotation from “Journal of Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth’s Expeditions to the Oregon Country” [describing the event of June 18?, 1832], taken from Young, “The Correspondence and Journals of Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth 1831-6.” The violence inflicted by Wyeth’s expeditions tends to be ignored; see for example Kerry R. Oman, “Winter in the Rockies: The Winter Quarters of the Mountain Men,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 52:1 (2002), pp. 34 – 47.

“unsettled habitation is not true and legal possession, and that nations who inhabit fertile countries and disdain or refuse to cultivate them, deserve to be extirpated.”<sup>33</sup>

“Extirpate” (to root out and destroy completely) had been a word of choice used to call for genocide in the eighteenth century, and retained that meaning in the nineteenth.

Parker was summarizing a common gloss of a (mis)translation of Emmerich de Vattel’s *Droit des Gens/Law of Nations*, often drawn on by colonizers to justify their seizure of Native land.<sup>34</sup>

Samuel Parker professed regret (but not doubt) that pioneers would soon try to murder all of the Native polities he had been visiting. As he later wrote:

I am not able to discover why the nations who have, from time immemorial, occupied this country, and who, like other nations, have their territorial limits tolerably well defined among themselves, should not still possess the domain which our common Creator and Benefactor has kindly given them. It is a subject of increasing regret to every true friend of humanity, that unless the rapacious and acquisitive spirit, which urges our nation to appropriate these western territories, shall be restrained by the providence of God, these Indian nations will be

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<sup>33</sup> Rev. Samuel Parker, *Journal of an Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Ithaca, NY: Andrus, Woodruff, & Gauntlett, 1844), p. 269.

<sup>34</sup> Vattel implied three possible varieties of Indigenous nations in the America—“civilized empires” [“empires polices”] that should have been accorded the same rights as other nations, among which he placed Indigenous Mexico and Peru; people who “overrun rather than inhabit” [“parcouraient plutôt qu’ils ne les habitaient”] the land and thus may have “a part” [“une partie”] of their land taken by other nations “within just bounds” [“dans de justes bornes”], which status he assigned to most North American peoples; and polities that “prefer to live by rapine” [“aiment mieux de rapine”] and “deserve to be exterminated” [“méritent d’être exterminés”]. Emer[rich] de Vattel, *Le Droit des Gens, ou Principes de la Loi Naturelle Appliqués a la Conduite et aux Affaires des Nations et des Souverains* (Paris: Chez Janet et Cotelte, 1820, orig. 1758), p. 77. American translations tended to transform “civilized” to “uncivilized,” and colonialists of all stripes tended to embrace whatever part of the legal philosophy suited their ends. M. D. Vattel, *The Law of Nations*, trans. unknown (Northampton, Mass. Thomas M. Pomroy, 1805), p. 94; cf. Emmerich de Vattel, *The Law of Nations, or, Principles of the Law of Nature, Applied to the Conduct and Affairs of Nations and Sovereigns*, trans. unknown [“the Editor”] (London: G. G. and J. Robinson, 1797), p. 36.

compelled to yield their lands, their rights, and their lives to the merciless invaders of their country... they are inevitably doomed to extinction by the hands of enlightened and powerful men[.] The history of the past, and the operation of present causes, show that as soon as the Indians shall be induced to sell and cede the best portions of their country, there being no farther west to which they can be removed, the Indian race must expire.<sup>35</sup>

Because Parker was not given the funds to create a mission, it remains unclear how this mixture of just philosophy and grim diagnosis would have shaped his actions as a missionary. Many of his American compatriots spent at least as much energy seizing land for agriculture and profit as they did on their supposed mission to save souls. Perhaps with funding Samuel Parker might have matched his words with actions, or perhaps he would have ended up like Jason Lee, whose mission in what became Salem, Oregon, was critiqued for focusing more on land acquisition than Native conversion. Lee wrote of hoping to save “a remnant” of the Native people of Oregon as “trophies” for Christianity, but presumed the whole doomed to extinction—and managed to net a choice portion of Native land for himself and his institution.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Parker, *Journal of an Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains*, p. 270 – 271.

<sup>36</sup> Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee*, chap. 5; Jonathan W. Olson, “Apostles of Commerce: The Fur Trade in the Colonial Northwest and the Formation of a Hemispheric Religious Economy, 1807 – 1859,” PhD dissertation (Florida State University, 2014), pp. 284 – 297; cf. Robert J. Loewenberg, *Equality on the Oregon Frontier: Jason Lee and the Methodist Mission, 1834 – 43* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976), pp. 220 – 221; Albert Furtwangler, *Bringing Indians to the Book* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), esp. 4 – 7. On “extirpate,” see Norbert Finzch, “[...] Extirpate or Remove That Vermin’: Genocide, Biological Warfare, and Settler Imperialism in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 10:2 (2008), pp. 215 – 232. I depart from Whaley in two significant ways on Samuel Parker. First, I argue that Samuel Parker defined international law as unquestionably exterminatory (given the meaning of “extirpate” common at the time). Second, I make more of a distinction between what Parker saw as inevitable and what he saw as desirable. At least on the page, he regretted rather than supported the genocide he saw as all but guaranteed to occur.

The missionary Marcus Whitman, who seized land in what became Walla Walla, Washington, came to see colonialism as central to his mission. As he wrote to his in-laws in 1844:

It does not concern me so much what is to become of any particular set of Indians, as to give them the offer of salvation through the gospel and the opportunity of civilization, and then I am content to do good to *all* men as “I have opportunity.” I have no doubt our greatest work is to be to aid the white settlement of this country and help to found its religious institutions. Providence has its full share in all these events. Although the Indians have made and are making rapid advance in religious knowledge and civilization, yet it cannot be hoped that time will be allowed to mature either... before the white settlers will demand the soil and seek the removal of both the Indians and the Mission. What Americans desire of this kind they always effect, and it is equally useless to oppose or desire it otherwise... Indeed, I am fully convinced that when a people refuse or neglect to fill the designs of Providence, they ought not to complain at the results; and so it is equally useless for Christians to be anxious on their account.<sup>37</sup>

At most, Whitman like Jason Lee attempted a sort of salvage theology—like the salvage anthropology of later years a haphazard attempt to snatch a few Native souls before the pioneers forcibly removed them. Like Parker, Whitman saw Euro-American conquest of Indigenous land as inevitable. Unlike Parker, Whitman saw no point in desiring otherwise or feeling qualms about the impending attacks. Indeed, he viewed ministering to the White invaders more important than his attempts to proselytize to Indigenous

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<sup>37</sup> Marcus Whitman to Stephen and Clarissa Prentiss, May 16, 1844 (emphasis mine), in George H. Himes, Ed., *Mrs. Whitman's Letters, 1843 – 1847* (Portland: Oregon Pioneer Association, 1894), pp. 64 – 65.

communities, and seemed ready to write off the latter as refusing and neglecting “the designs of Providence.”<sup>38</sup>

And many of those invaders arrived ready to make war, at whatever scale. Elijah Bristow, a veteran of the 1812 Creek war who seized land in the southern Willamette Valley in 1846, described his conflicts with local and visiting Native communities as wars. When Bristow believed one of his oxen had been killed by a member of a local Klickitat band in 1849, “he declared war on the Klick[i]tat tribe generally,” stealing from and assaulting any Klickitat who approached his homestead. Bristow fatally wounded a visiting Klamath a year prior, and made it known “that the Klamaths must not come over into that country for he would kill every one he saw.” Many aspects of Bristow’s story of himself were questionable, not least his assumption that his authority was being listened to by people who outnumbered him. One might venture that future Klamath or other Native visitors to the region might have simply steered clear of the bloodthirsty pioneer. But there is little reason to doubt Bristow’s expressions of racial hatred or threats of White supremacist violence.<sup>39</sup>

Euro-Americans arrived primed for “Indian Wars.” Bristow was not terribly discerning in his threats, willing to attack Klickitats generally for suspected theft by one member of one band, and Klamaths generally for a perceived insult. Like many of his fellow Euro-American pioneers, he was sometimes even less so, seldom differentiating

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<sup>38</sup> This dedication to settler ministration continued among many missionaries of later years; see James V. Walker, “‘Providence will take care of me ... I will wear a crown’: Frontier Circuit Rider, James O. Rayner, and the Land Laws of Early Oregon,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 120:3 (2019), pp. 246 – 275.

<sup>39</sup> E[lijah] L[afayette] Bristow [Jr.], “E.L. Bristow’s Narrative,” June 13, 1878, pp. 1 – 3, Folder: E. L. Bristow, Box 5, Willamette University and Northwest Collection, WUA014, Willamette University Special Collections, Salem, OR.

between one Native ethnics and others—particularly in war time. Bristow called for the capture or killing (and scalping) of “the Indians” by 1856. Known Native individuals might or might not be exempted, but “Indians” generally were mistrusted.<sup>40</sup>

Writing decades later, Joseph Henry Brown opened his pioneer narrative by invoking a family history of conquest. “I sprang from pioneer stock,” he proclaimed, “both of my great-grandfathers being pioneers and participants in the war of 1812 and the Indian wars of the new country [Illinois] in which they had settled.”<sup>41</sup> Detailing his experiences on a pioneer wagon train in 1847—what he called part of “[t]he advance guard of civilization to the western shore, to wrest a beautiful country from barbarism”—Brown spoke of pioneers ready for a fight with Indians at any moment. When the pioneers sighted “50 Indians on the top of the hill” as they were travelling along the Umatilla River, “there [was] no doubt but they intended to charge,” and thus

the men formed themselves between the enemy and wagons, and for a few minutes awaited attacks, but [the Indians] gave some insulting signs and rode away, and we did not see any more Indians until we camped on the banks of the Columbia River some eight days afterwards. Across the river at this place was a large Indian village, and as soon as we camped, Indians came over being well armed, bringing wood and commenced to build a fire in the center of our camp, stating that they had come to camp and trade with us. My grandfather immediately seized a gun and ordered all the men to arms, which was promptly

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<sup>40</sup> Elijah Lafayette Bristow to Joseph Lane, June 12 (orig. June 9), 1856, transcribed in <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/jolaneletters.html>. The Southern Oregon Historical Society’s Ben Truwe curates an online collection of primary sources related to his region. Although I sometimes depart from Truwe’s interpretations, his accurate transcriptions and wide net make the site a boon to any historian of Oregon.

<sup>41</sup> Joseph Henry Brown, “Autobiography” [1878], p. 1, Folder 1, Box 1, Joseph Henry Brown Papers, Mss 1002, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

seconded by Bradshaw [the leader of the wagon train], who immediately placed himself at the head of the men, forming them in a line between the Indians and the families, and immediately advanced [on[] the Indians who quickly d[i]vined the intentions of the whites and commenced stringing their bows, and bringing their guns to bear upon us. For a moment or so there was imminent danger of bloodshed, when the ominous silence was broken by Bradshaw's clear ringing voice who said "puckachu" – clear out – and ordered the line forward, himself in advance.

The Indians remained in sullen silence until the men c[a]me within a few feet of them, then slowly began to withdraw, they were pressed to the river bank and got into their canoes.<sup>42</sup>

Both of these encounters were before any known war between Native polities and White polities was underway in the region. Both incidents underscore the expectation of war and violence Brown's family—and countless others—brought to Illahee.<sup>43</sup> The second

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<sup>42</sup> Brown, "Autobiography," pp. 14 – 15. On "Indian stories" as a standard part of pioneer reminiscences, Barbara Allen, "Shaping History: The Creation of a Collective Pioneer Experience," *Columbia* 7:4 (1993), pp. 6 – 13. I find persuasive Allen's argument that the genre of pioneer stories intimately shaped a collective notion of what pioneer stories should be, but I am more optimistic about the potential to glean historical truths from the specific stories pioneers told about themselves (as opposed to community-wide pioneer legends).

The journal *Columbia* is home to unique articles on Northwest history, but its editors chose from its beginning to "not compete with the footnote-heavy articles presented in the [*Pacific Northwest Quarterly*]," eschewing footnotes entirely in order to "inspire readers from the general public to taken an interest in their local, state, and regional history." Whatever the effectiveness and merits of this approach (particularly in a post-*Wikipedia* age), the lack of footnotes makes truly engaged scholarly discourse involving *Columbia* articles difficult; I have thus employed some care when drawing on pieces from this journal. On the decision to omit footnotes out of fear of popular backlash, see Robert C. Carriker, "John McClellan Jr., COLUMBIA Magazine's Founding Editor," *Columbia* 21:1 (2007), pp. 3 – 4. I am thankful to Patience for, among many other things, pointing out the potential change in public perceptions of footnotes from the promulgation of *Wikipedia*.

<sup>43</sup> A plurality of Euro-American settlers in the Pacific Northwest came from "border states" North and South—places where violence against Native people and polities had been (and continued to be) common in the 1800s. See Jason E. Pierce, *Making the White Man's West: Whiteness and the Creation of the American West* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2016), p. 130 – 132.



incident, especially, shows how pioneer norms shaped intergroup violence. No differentiation was made in Brown's reminiscence between the "Indians" threatened in each of the two incidents, although they were certainly from different Indigenous ethnies. The pioneers assumed perfidy and escalated to threats of violence immediately. Brown's grandfather and his compatriots responded to a peaceful overture by a Native polity along the Columbia by drawing guns and making threats. After this incident, there were insults and minor assaults from both sides in the days ahead.<sup>44</sup> The first Pacific Northwest "Indian War" considered as such by Euro-Americans would not start until December of 1847, but pioneers were ready to make war at the slightest provocation, real or imagined.

The War on Illahee expanded into something more organized with the advent of the so-called Cayuse War, a mustering of Euro-American "volunteers" to make war on Indians in the Oregon Territory, followed by the deployment of federal troops. The Cayuse War (and the formal creation of the Oregon Territory) were precipitated by killings at the Whitman mission, built on Cayuse land, in what is now Washington State. In what has sometimes been known as the Whitman Incident, the Whitman Tragedy, or the Whitman Massacre, a band of Cayuse people killed two missionaries, Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, and every adult male American ("Boston") in their household that could be found—probably thirteen people in all. The other survivors were held hostage, and some of them later testified that they had been abused.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Brown, "Autobiography," pp. 16 – 17. Joseph Henry Brown claimed service in what he labeled the "extensive" and "continual" Indian war of 1855 – 1856, as a courier.

<sup>45</sup> Minthorn, "Wars, Treaties, and the Beginning of Reservation Life"; Cassandra Tate, *Unsettled Ground: The Whitman Massacre and Its Shifting Legacy in the American West* (Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 2020), p. 8. Although not published through an academic press, Tate's book is a careful historical study. Two of the slain were male teenagers (15 and 17), sometimes portrayed as children in the literature but adults by Cayuse norms. By way of comparison, Joel Palmer (Commissioner of Indian Affairs in the mid-1850s)

The troubles that culminated in the Whitman killings had been brewing for years. The Whitmans were stingy squatters, who had settled without permission or recompense on Cayuse land and refused to participate in the gift-giving that defined and solemnized intergroup relations in the region.<sup>46</sup> Many sources suggest that Cayuse bands had been told by one or another person of Indigenous descent from the East “how they have been treated by the Whites as soon [as the Whites] got strong + powerful[--]their country was taken away from them and they had to submit.”<sup>47</sup> The first ripples of the rising flood of pioneers that came through the mission from 1842 on would have confirmed these warnings.<sup>48</sup> Pioneer and volunteer William D. Stillwell (see below) claimed privately that Narcissa Whitman had added to the trouble by dealing out violence to Native children in her care.<sup>49</sup>

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identified all Native men over the age of 12 as potential threats (see Chapter V), and White teenagers with guns killed Native people in war and peace, in the 1850s and beyond (see Chapters 2, 4, and 6).

There is an account from Lorinda Bewley, one of the captives from the attack on the Whitman mission, that she was sexually assaulted by at least two men—one of them a “husband” she was compelled to marry—in a deposition transcribed in William Henry Gray’s 1870 history of Oregon. Gray’s book is the only record I have found of the deposition cited. See William Henry Gray, *A History of Oregon, 1792 – 1849, Drawn from Personal Observation and Authentic Information* (Portland: Harris and Holman, 1870), chap. 59. In taking the potential reality of Bewley’s testimony seriously while maintaining skepticism towards more outlandish claims from the same set of sources, I echo Tate, *Unsettled Ground*, p. 169. See also Cameron Addis, “The Whitman Massacre: Religion and Manifest Destiny on the Columbia Plateau, 1809 – 1858,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 25:2 (2005), pp. 221 – 258.

<sup>46</sup> Tate, *Unsettled Ground*, 132 – 133, 136 – 137, and 151 – 152.

<sup>47</sup> Quotation from William C. McKay to Eva Emery Dye, Feb 1, 1892 (emphasis in the original), Folder 7, Box 2, Eva Emery Dye Papers. The exact role played by trappers of Indigenous descent in warning the Cayuse about colonial conquest is debatable (and debated). Early histories of Whitman massacre laid a lion’s share of the blame on what Hubert Howe Bancroft and Frances Fuller Victor called “half-breeds from the mountains to the east... whose wild blood was full of the ichor of hatred of religion and civilization,” some of whom may have been figments of settler imagination. This gloss makes it difficult to distinguish honest memories of the role of real people like “Delaware” Tom Hill from the historical reputation they gained. But the informed assumptions of people like McKay—and the broader patterns of Indigenous America—suggest that Cayuse communities would have heard about the nature of settler colonialism from one or another Native visitor. And of course, such warnings *were* accurate. Frances Fuller Victor [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Oregon, Vol. 1*, ed. Matthew P. Deady [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft (San Francisco: The History Company, 1886), p. 651.

<sup>48</sup> My use of the date 1842 here marks a difference between 24 immigrants in 1841 and 112 in 1842.

<sup>49</sup> Nina Lane, an early twentieth century historian, remembered William D. Stillwell saying “They hated her [Narcissa Whitman]. Every time an Indian girl passed in front of her, she would thump her on the side of

And then there were the poisonings. A visitor to the mission hoping to deter “thefts” from the fields the squatting Whitmans were growing crops on purportedly laced several melons with an emetic. He apparently joked later about the satisfaction of causing a few locals to fall ill, and those “jokes” made their way back to Cayuse communities. Marcus Whitman pursued a standard Euro-American practice of killing wolves with strychnine-laced meat, and the warning he claimed to have given did not prevent a few locals from eating some poisoned meat and nearly dying. According to the pioneer who told this story, Whitman reacted to the news of these accidental poisonings with a laugh, and thankfulness that perhaps now the local Native people would listen to him.<sup>50</sup> There are unconfirmed accounts that local Cayuse had been told the Whitmans planned to poison them all shortly before the killings. Whether or not this was true or a later historical imagining, local people would have been primed to believe such a rumor, given the long history of poisonings at the mission.<sup>51</sup>

The Whitman killings were primarily an execution, carried out after Marcus Whitman was found guilty of medical and spiritual malpractice—a capital offense under Cayuse law at the time. A measles epidemic that killed Native locals at a higher rate than Euro-Americans—while both were under the care of Whitmans—was the final bit of proof for a critical mass of people. Legally responsible for the deaths of his patients,

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the head with her thimble.” Nina Lane, “Biography of Joseph Lane” [n.p.], p. 88, Folder 3, Box 2, Joseph Lane Papers, Ax 183, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR.

<sup>50</sup> Tate, *Unsettled Ground*, pp. 134 and 255 n. 10.

<sup>51</sup> Euro-American memory and sources discussed a caricatured “half-breed” figure named Joe Lewis feeding the Cayuse dark lies about the Whitman’s plans to poison them all. Disputes maintain about nearly every aspect of this story, including the very existence of Joe Lewis in some cases. Given the other evidence, it is entirely possible that that Whitmans might have joked (?) about just such a poisoning. See Victor and Bancroft, *History of Oregon, Vol. 1*, pp. 652 – 653; Anon, “An Interview with a Survivor of the Whitman Massacre,” *Oregon Native Son* 1:2 (1899), pp. 63 – 65; Tate, *Unsettled Ground*, p. 165; Chelsea Kristen Vaughn, “Playing West: Performances of War and Empire in Pacific Northwest Pageantry,” PhD Dissertation, (University of California, Riverside, 2016), pp. 178 – 183.

culpable for shuttling new invaders into the region, Marcus Whitman and his household were condemned. The killings were carried out according to Cayuse common law but not necessarily committed with the consent of the many polities of Cayuse in the region, who shared cultures and interests but not a single overarching government. Tiloukaikt, presumed to be the leader of the group that had attacked, seems to have framed the killings as getting “even” after years of abuse and murder by the group of “Bostons” [Americans] who occupied his homeland. Euro-Americans responded by attacking Indians *en masse*, across the region they called Oregon.<sup>52</sup>

The Cayuse War was a war on Indians, not exclusively against the band that had killed at the Whitman Mission, nor exclusively against the Cayuse. Upon the news of the killings, and rumors of details real and imagined, the provisional legislature on Dec 9, 1847 authorized the raising and payment of a volunteer militia

for the purpose of punishing the Indians, to what tribe or tribes [what]soever they may belong, who may have aided or abetted in the massacre of Dr Marcus Whitman, his wife, and others.<sup>53</sup>

Many volunteers never got past the first clause. All Indians were seen as a threat until proven otherwise.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Tate, *Unsettled Ground*, p. 169; Minthorn, “Wars, Treaties, and the Beginning of Reservation Life,” esp. pp. 61 – 64; Clifford E. Trafzer and Richard D. Scheuerman, *Renegade Tribe: The Palouse Indians and the Invasion of the Inland Pacific Northwest* (Pullman: Washington State University, 1986), p. 26. I use the term “seems to” here as the message went through multiple translations by parties that had a stake in the outcome.

<sup>53</sup> “A Bill to Authorize the Raising of a Regiment of Volunteers &c,” *Oregon Spectator* [Oregon City], Jan 6, 1848. The announcement of the bill was the first item in this issue of the newspaper. Given the level of control provisional territorial governor George Abernathy wielded over the *Spectator* by 1848, there is reason to believe that the version of events it pushed matched the opinions of those leading the government. See Warren J. Brier, “Political Censorship in the Oregon Spectator,” *Pacific Historical Review* 31:3 (1962), pp. 235 – 240.

The memorial sent to the National Congress the next day, demanding federal support, was just as broad. They painted American settlers as under massive attack. As Jesse Applegate, the author of the memorial, put it

Our relations with the proud and powerful tribes of Indians residing east of the Cascade Mountains, hitherto uniformly amicable and pacific, have recently assumed quite a different character. They have shouted the warwhoop and crimsoned their tomahawks in the blood of our citizens....

[They] have formed an alliance for the purpose of carrying on hostilities against our settlements.... To repel the attacks of so formidable a foe, and protect our families and property from violence and rapine, will require more strength than we possess.<sup>55</sup>

The small band of Cayuse that had made the attack was spun up into a vast and undifferentiated conspiracy of “Indians.” And when the pioneers formed volunteer companies for counterattacks, they targeted all unfamiliar Native people.

One of William Stillwell’s favorite “Indian War” stories was about an arrow wound he sustained during the Cayuse War, on January 28, 1848. Stillwell was one of many Euro-Americans who had joined volunteer soldier companies that January, following the attack on the Whitman mission a few months prior. But when Stillwell and his party started a battle with a Native group on January 28, 1848, they had no particular evidence that the group they fought were Cayuse people—much less Cayuse people

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<sup>54</sup> Julius Wilm, *Settlers as Conquerors: Free Land Policy in Antebellum America* (Weisbaden, GE: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2018), p. 222 – 223.

<sup>55</sup> Quotation taken from Joseph Shafer, “Jesse Applegate: Pioneer, Statesman, and Philosopher,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 1:4 (1907), pp. 217 – 233, quotation on p. 228.

connected to the events at the Whitman mission. As he and his party traveled south along the Deschutes River, Stillwell explained decades later,

we suddenly came on a band of Indians, as [we] rounded a sharp ridge, charging straight for us... We received orders to reprime and recap our guns; this being our first engagement. There were several of the boys who could not get their guns primed or capped, so brought them to some of us. I remember I capped five guns before we had orders to charge. The Indians then changed their course and started south; we overtook them at the old emigrant road, and here the first Indian was killed in Cayuse War, by Bill Chick [William C. Smith].

These Indians proved to be a band, with a load of salmon, returning to their camp.<sup>56</sup>

Stillwell and his party bumped into a group of Native people who were returning from a fishing trip. When Stillwell and his men began loading their weapons, the Native group swerved to avoid them. The Euro-American volunteers fired on a group of Native fishers that had made no obviously hostile act. It was only after one of the fishers was killed by a volunteer that the Native group fought back, and defeated their attackers. Stillwell took the arrow to the hip, whose head he would carry for the rest of his life, as the White volunteers were retreating from a skirmish they had started and lost.<sup>57</sup> A few days later a larger body of volunteers from the same force attacked, looted, and burned a village along the Deschutes (most likely of Tenino, Celilo and/or Tygh Valley peoples), which

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<sup>56</sup> William D. Stillwell to Conrad C. Walker, Jan 21, 1915, Folder 20, Box 1, Military Collection, Mss 1514, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>57</sup> William D. Stillwell to Conrad C. Walker, Jan 21, 1915, Folder 20, Box 1, Military Collection, Mss 1514, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. The author has not been able to find an official name for the skirmish in which Stillwell was wounded. Whether this lack of a name is due to the small size of the conflict, the ignominious rout of Euro-American forces, or some other factor(s) is at this time unknown.

may or may not have been connected to the unprovoked attack the volunteers had made a few days prior.

The main body of Oregon volunteers, led by Black Hawk and Seminole Wars veteran Cornelius Gilliam, blundered through Indian country for several months, opportunistically attacking and robbing Native people without any obvious effort to ascertain involvement in the supposed inciting incident for the war. They attacked and robbed Palus (Palouse) bands, with the volunteers only barely keeping their defeat in the ensuing battle from turning into a rout. After Gilliam accidentally killed himself with his own gun, a splinter force headed into Nez Perce territory—arresting any “suspicious” Indian, looting Native property, and shooting anyone who tried to stop them. The main body of volunteers never came close to finding those Cayuse who had taken part in the Whitman killings. It is unclear how many Cayuse people of any extraction were among those they attacked. But they killed a lot of Native people.<sup>58</sup>

That was likely the point. Another volunteer group far from the locus of the conflict formed and killed Native people in 1848. In the Abiqua Creek region of the Willamette Valley (near present-day Silverton, Oregon), a self-organized militia formed and shot at any Indian they could find. Their main target ended up being Koosta’s band of Molalas, who were not affiliated with any party in the war. The volunteer soldiers murdered at least ten people, although the vagueness and unreliability of the records means it is possible they killed many more. It was later claimed by volunteer John Minto that the volunteer militia believed Koosta’s Band was, by one torturous feat of reasoning or another, in league with Cayuse and up to no good. It is unclear if this unlikely claim,

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<sup>58</sup> Tate, *Unsettled Ground*, pp. 176 – 182; George Guy Delamarter, *The Career of Robert Newell Oregon Pioneer* (Saint Paul, Ore.: Newell House Museum, 2005; orig. 1951), pp. 78 – 82.

made 30 years after the fact, was an accurate recollection of volunteer motivations or a post-hoc justification for vigilante murder. After the volunteers shot Molala men and women alike, as Minto decorously put it, “[n]one of [the militiamen] were quite certain whether the Indians killed were of those that should have been killed.” Minto was active participant in movements to clean up the historical reputation of the volunteer soldiers (see Chapters 8 and 9); his modest equivocation regarding the extent to which the volunteers wished to kill Indians should be read in that light. The true story was likely worse. But how much murder and for what cause was, perhaps, beside the point. As Minto explained, “killing the Indians was not the object, so much, as driving them off to their own country, which was done most effectively.” In all likelihood, Minto and his fellows drove many of those they attacked far *from* their own country, as they intended.<sup>59</sup>

John Minto, like many other pioneers, came to Oregon with exterminatory instincts. He had been reared on a diet of Indian-killing literature from childhood onwards. Reflecting on the books of his childhood as an old man, Minto remembered “[t]he first money I had to spare was invested in a book of adventure of frontier life... The title page had the following lines:

‘Who be you that rashly dare  
To trace in woods the forest child:  
To hunt the panther in his lair  
The Indian in his native wild?’”<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> 1878 John Minto quotation taken from Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee*, pp. 180 – 181. See also Colonel William Thompson, *Reminiscences of a Pioneer* (San Francisco: Alturas Plain Dealer, 1912), p. 12 [“Information had reached the settlers that the Indians contemplated a massacre—that they were going to break out... the settlers ‘broke out’ first”]; Everett Earle Stanard, “Many Descendants of Indian Fighters Live [i]n Linn County,” *Albany Democrat-Herald* Sept 7, 1948, p. 6.

<sup>60</sup> John Minto, *Rhymes of Early Life in Oregon and Historical and Biological Facts* (Salem, OR: Statesman Publishing Co., 1915 [?]). The remembered poem appears to be Charles Fenno Hoffman’s “The



With verses vivid enough to echo through decades of life, Minto was raised to think of Native people as “fiendish” (as the original poem describes “Mohawk” people in a semi-fictional 1700s battle, painting them as inhuman, murderous monsters). Small wonder Minto seems to have engaged without compunction in the expulsion and extermination of Native groups in Oregon, whom he saw as almost entirely beyond redemption. “Of course there was brave manhood and beautiful womanhood even among the degradation of the tribes,” he wrote late in life, “but I saw to know none of the former and few of the latter.”<sup>61</sup>

The Cayuse War formally ended in 1850, when five Cayuse leaders agreed to surrender to Euro-American military authorities to stop the mayhem, and submitted to a show trial and execution. Despite a well-substantiated defense pointing out that the Whitman killings had been according to Cayuse law, and reasonable doubt that the five men tried for the killings had in fact been part of them, the outcome was a foregone conclusion. Indeed, as pioneer historian Frederick V. Holman (see Chapter XI) later proudly proclaimed, if the Cayuse Five had not been found guilty in court and killed by officers of the state

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Ambuscade,” which was published in the *New York American* in 1830 and republished several places beyond that. Raoul Granqvist, *Imitation as Resistance: Appropriations of English Literature in Nineteenth-Century America* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1995), pp. 37 – 39; *New-York Mirror*, Vol. 9, July 9, 1831 to June 30, 1832 (New York: G.P. Morris), 306 – 307; Charles Fenno Hoffman, *The Poems of Charles Fenno Hoffman*, Ed. Edward Fenno Hoffman (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1876), pp. 38 – 46.

<sup>61</sup> John Minto to Eva Emery Dye, Dec 18, 1900, Folder 9, Box 2, Eva Emery Dye Papers. Minto’s early indoctrination by means of poetry suggests historian Brian Rouleau’s insights about Western children’s literature may well apply to earlier eras. See Brian Rouleau, “How the West Was Fun: Children’s Literature and Frontier Mythmaking toward the Turn of the Twentieth Century,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 51:1 (2020), pp. 49 – 74. On recollections of Pacific Northwest pioneers being raised with Indian-hating from birth onward, see T[imothy] W[oodbridge] Davenport, “Recollections of an Indian Agent,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 8:1 (1907), pp. 1 – 41, esp. 41; W[illiam] J. Trimble, “American and British Treatment of the Indians in the Pacific Northwest,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 5:1 (1914), pp. 32 – 54, esp. 34.

Judge Lynch would have exercised jurisdiction and these murderers would have paid the penalty, for about five hundred Oregon pioneers came to Oregon City to see that these Indians did not escape justice for the Whitman massacre.<sup>62</sup>

Consciously letting themselves be martyred to bring peace to the Cayuse—and many of the other Native groups in the region—the five were hanged by pioneers.<sup>63</sup>

In many ways, the Cayuse War was prototypical of the various individual wars that made up the War on Illahee. After a litany of Euro-American wrongs and crimes, a targeted counterattack by a specific Native group became a Euro-American *casus belli* for a broad-based war on Native people generally. The only unusual element was the lack of coercive land seizures at the end of the conflict—which would come soon after.

Because although the sacrifice of Cayuse Five ended formal war carried out partially by and at the expense of the federal government, plenty of Indian killers and would-be Indian killers continued their assaults.

War was not always necessary for mass murder. After volunteering in the Cayuse War in 1848, John E. Ross moved south and kept on killing. Leading a vigilante group colloquially known as the “Oregon boys,” Ross and his men ranged through northern California and southern Oregon between 1849 and 1853, killing Indigenous people as they found them (see Chapter III). This they portrayed as revenge for crimes inflicted on Euro-American communities—though the records were often unclear on the perpetrators

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<sup>62</sup> Frederick V. Holman, “ADDRESS... at the Unveiling of the Memorial Stone to Peter Skene Ogden, at Mountain View Cemetery, Oregon City, Oregon, October 28, 1923,” in Henry L. Bates *et al.*, “The Occasion of the Unveiling of the Memorial Stone on the Grave of Peter Skene Ogden,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 24:4 (1923), 361 – 385, quotation on p. 377. On lynchings legal and extra-legal, see Chapter VI.

<sup>63</sup> Minthorn, “Wars, Treaties, and the Beginning of Reservation Life,” esp. pp. 64 – 65; Ronald B. Lansing, *Juggernaut: The Whitman Massacre Trial, 1850* (San Francisco: Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society, 1993).

or even the existence of such crimes. Very clear in the records is public support for mass murder. As the August 7, 1853 Extra edition of *Yreka Herald* described events in Oregon:

Now that general hostilities against the Indians have commenced we hope that the Government will render such aid as will enable the citizens of the north to carry on a war of extermination until the last R\_dsk\_n of these tribes has been killed. Extermination is no longer even a question of time—the time has arrived, the work has been commenced, and let the first man that says treaty or peace be regarded as a traitor.<sup>64</sup>

During the Rogue River Wars of 1853 and 1855 - 1856, Ross continued his attempts at mass killings as a military leader. He was not always successful; an attempt to kill men, women, and children at the Battle of Hungry Hill in 1855 went awry when Ross and the rest of the volunteer forces were decisively defeated by those they were targeting (see Chapter III). Had he and his men won, Ross would have committed yet another massacre. Ross and his men killed Indians where and when they could, whether or not there was a formal war on.<sup>65</sup>

Jesse Applegate, a pioneer of 1843 who eventually became one of the few pioneer critics of genocidal wars in the Pacific Northwest, attempted to draw a distinction between the old, “virtuous” pioneers like himself who arrived before 1848 and the men

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<sup>64</sup> Excerpted in James Mason Hutchings Diary [transcript by Gertrude Hutchings Mills], pp. 18 – 19, Box 105a, Peter E. Palmquist Collection of Male Photographers in the American West, WA MSS S-2733, Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT.

<sup>65</sup> Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee*, 195 – 196; John E. Ross, “Report to Gov. Curry, Nov 10, 1854,” *Protections Afforded By Volunteers of Oregon and Washington Territories to Overland Immigrants in 1854*, Ed. Benjamin F. Harding, Misc. Doc No. 47, U.S. House of Representatives 35<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 1858. Mark Axel Tveskov, “A ‘Most Disastrous Affair’: The Battle of Hungry Hill, Historical Memory, and the Rogue River War,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 118:1 (Spring 2017), pp. 42 – 73; Benjamin Madley, “California and Oregon’s Modoc Indians: How Indigenous Resistance Camouflages Genocide in Colonial Histories,” in *Colonial Genocide in Indigenous North America*, ed. Andrew Woolford, Jeff Benvenuto, and Alexander Laban Hinton (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2014), pp. 95 – 148.

(like Ross) who followed. In his notes for a history of Oregon he never completed (see Chapter VIII), he asserted that

The Indian wars were the main historical incidents of the period [late 1840s to the late 1850s]—These in their bringing on, as well as well as management[,] reflect no credit upon the whites. Since 1849 a new element, the gold hunters, was added to the population, having few if any of the virtues of the early pioneers. The prompt assumption of the Cayuse war debt by the Government being a precedent, suggested an easier mode of obtaining gold than digging it from the bowels of the earth. If new diggings were sometimes difficult to find, a new Indian war was easily provoked, which served their purpose equally well. When the supply of water began to fall in the summer an Indian war was almost sure to be inaug[u]rated in Southern Oregon and Northern California.<sup>66</sup>

There was an increase of Euro-American violence and warmaking from the late 1840s on, gold miners were often the most visible (and perhaps prolific) perpetrators, and many did hope to profit from the wars (whether by means of direct recompense, plunder, or land). But the sharp dividing line that Applegate drew is harder to support. Gold miners might press the issue, but war was always coming. Given the widespread agreement that Euro-American pioneers would, inevitably, attempt mass murder for land in the Pacific Northwest, the intensification of violence was a matter of numbers as much as anything. Men like Bristow, Stillwell, and Minto were ready for sweeping violence when the moment came. On at least a few occasions (see below), so was Applegate.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Jesse Applegate, "Notes Upon Oregon History" [n.d.], pp. 17 – 18, Folder: Jesse A. Applegate, Box 5, Willamette University and Northwest Collection.

<sup>67</sup> Benjamin Mountford, "The Pacific Gold Rushes and the Struggle for Order," in *A Global History of Gold Rushes*, ed. Benjamin Mountford and Stephen Tuffnell (Oakland: University of California Press,

The Whitman killings that spurred the Cayuse War were not a necessary cause for the War on Illahee. The attacks on Native lives, property, sovereignty, and rights in the decade(s) of mayhem and murder that followed were first and foremost a product of Euro-American hunger for land and abhorrence of Indian-ness. If it hadn't been the Whitman killings, some other incident of violence as a response to settler pugnacity would have been used as excuse for a similar broad war against Indians—whether real, rumored, or created after the fact.

William Thompson, a newspaper editor and volunteer soldier, later described Indian-fighting in pioneer Oregon as an entertainment as well as a duty:

For excitement, the frequent Indian uprisings, and more frequent Indian scares, afforded abundant material upon which the young enterprising and adventurous spirits of the day could work off their surplus energies. Hunting, too, afforded a pleasurable and profitable pastime to the young.<sup>68</sup>

The wanton pioneer violence of the 1850s was driven mostly by greed and fear. But for some people, it was a hobby. For Thompson, who wrote with pride of having shot a Native man in the back for no other reason than “attempt[ing] to get away,” it was all three. Shooting a Native man, who died “kicking the grass,” was the event that marked Thompson's teenage transition to adulthood in his memory. And there were many others like him.<sup>69</sup>

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2018), pp. 88 – 108, esp. 90 – 91; cf. Hyde, *Empires, Nations, and Families*, p. 425. The modern push to blame miners reaches a height in Rodman Wilson Paul and Elliott West, *Mining Frontiers of the Far West, 1848 – 1880*, revised edition (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001; orig. 1963), pp. 230 – 231.

<sup>68</sup> Thompson, *Reminiscences of a Pioneer*, p. 17.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 40 – 41. The man Thompson killed had been travelling with his party for a few days before the murder. The only “suspicious” act the Native man committed was that he seemed to be on guard around his White companions—perhaps because he feared they might try to murder him. Although Thompson

Joseph Lane, who took office as the first official governor of Oregon Territory in 1849 and remained a central figure in Oregon politics until 1861, embodied the continuity between folk violence and officialdom. Like other U.S. officials, he counseled caution in treating with Native polities and voiced a preference for the bloodless seizure of land by treaty. Like other pioneer vigilantes, he condoned and engaged in sprees of rape and murder against Indigenous communities. Like other pioneers trying to shape history, he rewrote his own violent past into a more pleasing shape in later years, both celebrating “righteous” assaults on Native men and hiding the worst aspects of his violence from mainstream historical narratives for generations.

Before becoming a governor, Joseph Lane rose to national fame in the U.S.-Mexico War. One of several “mushroom generals” promoted by President Polk due to his Democratic bona fides, Lane earned fame for his ruthless “anti-guerrilla activity” along rural Mexican roads.<sup>70</sup> Lane and his men took few prisoners and showed little mercy; as one local newspaper put it, the campaign was pursued “even to the termination of every last scoundrel of them.”<sup>71</sup> He was also responsible for the sack of Huamantla (infamous in Mexican history, largely unknown in the United States)—in the words of historian Malcolm Clark “an awesome orgy of rape, murder, desecration[,] and drunkenness... the

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committed his murder near Rock Creek, Oregon, during the so-called “Snake” War, he was not at the time a member of the armed forces (see Chapter VII).

<sup>70</sup> Richard Bruce Winters, *Mr. Polk's Army: The American Military Experience in the Mexican War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997), pp. 43 and 47.

<sup>71</sup> Andreas Riffel, “Greasers, Gringos und Gräueltaten im mexikanisch-amerikanischen Krieg 1846–1848” (“Greasers, Gringos, and Atrocities in the U.S.-Mexican War, 1846-1848”), PhD dissertation (University of Heidelberg, 2016), p. 526. As Riffel brings up here and elsewhere, the stock response American military officers had to accusations of atrocity during the U.S.-Mexico War was to deny, deflect, and then to claim that the real atrocities were committed by their opponents.

ultimate atrocity of a war made hideous by atrocities.”<sup>72</sup> Some reminiscences, like that of volunteer William D. Wilkins, claimed that Joseph Lane not only condoned but ordered the day and night of slaughter, mayhem, and theft after the taking of the city. The volunteer Otto Zirckel reported that Lane continued this campaign of carnage, pillage, and rape into the settlements surrounding Huamantla.<sup>73</sup> As one local witness reporting on Lane’s “anti-guerilla activity” put it, “All sorts of atrocities were committed... an indiscriminate slaughter was made... women were forced, etc., etc.” Andreas Riffel, a historian of atrocities during the U.S.-Mexico War, notes tersely that “Lane tolerated all of this.”<sup>74</sup> Given the evidence of his involvement in rapes in Oregon (see chapters 2 and 9), Lane may have not only tolerated but participated in these wartime crimes. It is not clear how Lane may have talked about the rapes and killings of the Sack of Huamantla in private. Publicly, he commended his men “for their gallant conduct.”<sup>75</sup> He took a similar approach in Oregon. In official papers and letters, he paid lip service to “protecting the Indians” while responding to the slightest provocation with overwhelming force. He praised the “gallant conduct” of Indian fighters, and opined that Native people must be “taught... to know that they can be hunted down and destroyed.”<sup>76</sup> In speeches not meant for posterity, he spoke of relishing his part in that violence.

Arriving in Oregon in the midst of the Cayuse War in March 1849, Lane took pragmatic steps to limit its spread. Writing to Samuel Gilmore, the captain of a newly

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<sup>72</sup> Malcolm Clark, Jr., *Eden Seekers: The Settlement of Oregon, 1818 – 1862* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981), p. 225.

<sup>73</sup> Riffel, “Greasers, Gringos und Gräueltaten im mexikanisch-amerikanischen Krieg 1846–1848,” pp. 521 – 527.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, p. 527.

<sup>75</sup> Albert G. Brackett, *General Lane's Brigade in Central Mexico* (Cincinnati, OH: H.W. Derby & Co., 1854), p. 95.

<sup>76</sup> Joseph Lane to “Editor of the Statesman” [Asahel Bush], June 28, 1851, transcribed in <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/jolaneletters.html>.

formed company of volunteers headed to southern Oregon, Lane laid out his official approach to Indian policy:

while I will promptly protect the lives and property of the white inhabitants, I shall at the same time be equally ready and prompt in protecting the Indians in all the rights guaranteed to them by the laws of Congress, and from being forcibly ejected from their possessory rights in the Territory until the government of the United States shall have by treaty extinguished those rights. You will therefore carefully restrain your men from committing any act towards the Indians which would have a tendency to prejudice them against the white citizens. Your duty to the country, as well as your duty as an officer, requires a strict observance of this order. If, by any cause, the Indians of Oregon should, in the present year, be aroused to hostility, the injury they might do to the settlements, in the absence of a greater part of the male population, would be incalculable.<sup>77</sup>

Lane counseled peace, even comity, but only because violence might pose a threat to White settlements. Like virtually all U.S. officials, he presumed the imminent extinguishment of Native title to the land by means of treaty. Like most, he was willing to threaten and employ violence in pursuit of expropriation. He might, in his official capacity, suggest that “the cause of humanity calls out loudly for [Indian] removal.” But removal, not humanity, was his object.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Joseph Lane to Capt. Samuel Gilmore, Apr 9, 1849, File 22, Container 34, Oregon State Archives, Salem, OR, taken from <http://truwe.sohs.org/files/jolaneletters.html>.

<sup>78</sup> Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indian* Vol. 1 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), p. 397. As is often the case in Prucha’s magisterial work, the overarching mistake of the section on the Pacific Northwest stems from Prucha assuming colonizers are telling the truth.



After his election as Oregon's first Territorial Delegate in June 1851, Lane resolved to spend the summer tying up loose ends, mining for gold, and hunting Indians in the Rogue River region.<sup>79</sup> Although Lane described the conflicts he fought in as a "war [that] had commenced in good earnest," the main southern clashes he was involved in in 1851 were the result of one-sided aggression. In May of 1851, a battalion of mixed regulars and volunteers led by Major Phil Kearney blazing a trail through southern Oregon saw a group of Native people running away from them, charged, and began the first of a series of pitched battles with any Native group they could find, a chain of failed surprise attacks, hasty retreats, and occasional victories. Kearney initiated these attacks at the requests of local White inhabitants. Though Kearney's campaign was quickly framed as a response to Native aggression, Kearney's own reports made clear that the Euro-American soldiers struck first.<sup>80</sup>

Joseph Lane proclaimed to the people of Oregon in letter to the Salem *Oregon Statesman* that he (along with his friend Jesse Applegate) had joined in on the attacks as soon as he could. The battles he was proud to have been a part had no obvious specific aggressor or inciting incident. As Lane described the part of the fighting in which he had been involved:

We soon found an Indian trail leading up a large creek, and in a short time overtook and charged upon a party of Indians, killing one. The rest made their escape in a dense chaparral. We again pushed forward as rapidly as possible until

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<sup>79</sup> "Letter from General Lane," *Indiana Sentinel* [Indianapolis] Aug 21, 1851, p. 2, taken from <http://truwe.sohs.org/files/jolaneletters.html>.

<sup>80</sup> "Southern Oregon No. 2," *Oregon Sentinel* [Jacksonville] May 11, 1867, p. 2, taken from <http://truwe.sohs.org/files/scraps.html>. The lack of any reported motivation for the attack other than the Indian-ness of those running from the troops is striking; even the suspicion of culpability for crimes or violence was generally added to these kinds of accounts after the fact. E. A. Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War and Its Aftermath, 1850 – 1980* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), esp. pp. 36 – 37.

late in the evening, when we gave battle to another party of Indians, few of whom escaped. Twelve women and children were taken prisoners; several of those who escaped were wounded.<sup>81</sup>

Lane did not name or care about particular tribal designations, nor did he make any indication that the Euro-American aggressors had attempted to connect the groups they attacked to any particular perceived wrongdoing—only a presumption that “[t]he Indians had organized in great numbers for the purpose of killing and plundering our people passing to and from the mines.” There had been some violence (the parameters of which remain unclear) between a party of gold miners and a Native group in early June—a single encounter spun into a vast conspiracy by the Euro-American rumor mill. Whether the particular groups Kearny and Lane attacked had anything to do with any killings or plunderings was not seemingly considered. The people Lane, Applegate, and Kearney attacked were Indians, they were in the “wrong” place, and that was enough. And, Lane assumed, that would be enough for the readers of the *Oregon Statesman*.<sup>82</sup>

Just as he had praised as gallant the men under his command who had killed, pillaged, and raped in the U.S.-Mexico War, so did Lane praise as gallant regular soldiers, “volunteers,” and vigilantes that killed in southern Oregon. And outside of the newspapers, Lane indicated not only approval but participation in acts of violence that were not fit to print. The important thing was that Kearney (and Lane) had “done much to humble the Rogue River Indians, and taught them to know that they can be hunted down

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<sup>81</sup> Joseph Lane to “Editor of the Statesman” [Asahel Bush], June 28, 1851, *Oregon Statesman* [Salem] July 22, 1851, p. 2, taken from <http://truwe.sohs.org/files/jolaneletters.html>.

<sup>82</sup> Joseph Lane to “Editor of the Statesman” [Asahel Bush], June 28, 1851; Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War and Its Aftermath, 1850 – 1980*, esp. pp. 32 – 33.

and destroyed.”<sup>83</sup> A short-lived treaty, never ratified by the National Congress or respected by local Euro-Americans, followed the violence in 1851. There would be many more like it.

Was Lane’s violence, part of a broader series of attacks on Native communities in south and southwest Oregon in 1851, part of a “war commenced in good earnest,” as Lane claimed? There were officers of the United States in charge of at least some of Euro-American bands attacking Native people, and soldiers in the pay of the United States were in the vanguard. But Major Kearney’s attacks on Native polities living along the Rogue River have typically been framed as prefatory “clashes” rather than being a part of the Rogue River War(s), usually defined as either from 1853 – 1856, split into two separate conflicts in 1853 AND 1855- 1856, or restricted only to the part of the war with full federal backing from 1855 - 1856. Which killings of Indigenous people in the region by soldiers count as acts of war has been defined by treaties (see below), not by the nature of the acts themselves.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Joseph Lane to “Editor of the Statesman” [Asahel Bush], June 28, 1851.

<sup>84</sup> For “clashes,” see Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War and Its Aftermath, 1850 – 1980*, p. 44. See also Nathan Douthit, *Uncertain Encounters: Indians and Whites at Peace and War in Southern Oregon, 1820s – 1860s* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2002), p. 159; David G. Lewis, “Causes of the 1853 Rogue River War,” *Quartux Journal* March 30, 2020, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2020/03/30/causes-of-the-1853-rogue-river-war/>; Ashley Cordes, “Revisiting Stories and Voices of the Rogue River War (1853 – 1856): A Digital Constellatory Autoethnographic Mode of Indigenous Archaeology,” *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 21:1 (2021), pp. 56 – 69; Tveskov, “A Most Disastrous Affair,” esp p. 45 (which elides the 1851 battles into a decades-long history of conflict before 1853). Framings of the Rogue River War(s) that include under the heading of war the lethal forced marches to reservations inflicted by U.S. forces might extend the war(s) to 1857 instead of 1856; see for example Rose M. Smith and Barry Codiek, “Guide to the Cayuse, Yakima, and Rogue River Wars Papers,” (Eugene: University of Oregon Special Collections, 2010), <https://scua.uoregon.edu/repositories/2/resources/1327> and Chapter V of this dissertation. Recent National Park Service signage has implicitly included Kearney’s attacks by framing the “Rogue River Wars” as spanning from “1850 – 1856.” See “From Homeland to Tragedy,” Manzanita Rest Area Plaque (National Park Service), [https://www.nps.gov/cali/learn/historyculture/upload/From\\_Homeland\\_to\\_Tragedy-508.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/cali/learn/historyculture/upload/From_Homeland_to_Tragedy-508.pdf) [web version last updated Feb 20, 2019].

The contemporaneous invasion of the Oregon Coast in 1851, at what became Port Orford, is similarly seldom categorized as war. Mexican War veteran and itinerant carpenter John M. Kirkpatrick landed with eight other men and a cannon on June 9, 1851, sent on a steamship by William Tichenor (a White merchant and mariner) to establish a port. A local Native community—most likely Kwatami Tunne, the Sixes River band of the Tututni peoples—initially welcomed them as traders. However, after the ship left and it became clear that the Euro-American adventurers planned to stay, local leaders (in the words of Kirkpatrick) “grew saucy and ordered us off.” When a large group of local Native people came back—perhaps planning to evict the invaders, perhaps simply reopening negotiations—Kirkpatrick fired on them. After a battle in which the cannon proved decisive, the two sides agreed to a fourteen-day peace, with the understanding that the steamship would return and remove Kirkpatrick and his men from what was known as “Ma’-na’-xhay-Thet”—or, as the invaders later called it, “Battle Rock.” Fifteen days later, with no ship in sight, a large number of Native people—Kirkpatrick claimed over a hundred—encircled the Euro-American camp, and shot arrows somewhat near it. Kirkpatrick perceived this as bad aim, or fear of the cannon, but these arrows may have been deliberate misses, warning shots reminding the invaders of their promise to leave. If so, the volley worked. The White “adventurers” were dislodged, and they made a long eight-day trek to Umpqua City—facing hunger and scares, but neither inflicting nor taking further casualties.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> J. M. Kirkpatrick, *Oregon Statesman* [Salem] July 15, 1851, p. 2; Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War and Its Aftermath, 1850–1980*, pp. 33 – 36; Adam Fitzhugh, “Battle Rock: Anatomy of a Massacre,” Research Paper for Oregon Heritage Fellowship (Salem: Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, April 2020), <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/OH/Documents/Battle%20Rock,%20Anatomy%20of%20a%20Massacre,%20Adam%20Fitzhugh.pdf>; David G. Lewis and Thomas J. Connolly, “White American Violence on Tribal Peoples on the Oregon Coast,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 120:4 (2019), pp. 368 – 381, specific ethnic

Tichenor enlisted a second, larger group of volunteers to make a beachhead at the same point of Oregon coast. According to Loren L. Williams, a volunteer who wrote an extensive reminiscence of the invasion, men were enlisted in San Francisco with the offer of free passage to Oregon in exchange for three weeks of fort-building and fighting (“defending the peace”). Williams, writing a few decades later, portrayed an atmosphere of ever-present danger along the coast; he and his “boisterous” companions saw any large group of Native people as a standing threat. This memory may have been shaped by the violence of the expedition that followed. In the last days of the summer of 1851, the newspaperman, explorer, gold miner, and latter-day pro-slavery radical William T’Vault attempted to blaze a trail connecting Port Orford to the main Oregon-California route. Williams joined up.<sup>86</sup>

Williams remembered the expedition as a quasi-military adventure. T’Vault was a “mountaineer and experienced Indian fighter,” and the men who joined him hoped to become the same, “looking forward to the time when they might immortalize themselves in some hand to hand conflict with the Indians we expected to encounter on the way.” As usual, every group of Indians they encountered was assumed to be a threat. Most of the Euro-American trailblazers turned back as the food ran out, but a core group of ten

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identifier on p. 370. George B. Wasson published a Coquille/Coquelle history of events, including the memory that the Native leaders who were mowed down by cannon fire were under the impression they were attending a peaceful parlay. The original name for the site also come from Wasson. George Bundy Wasson, Jr. “Growing Up Indian: An Emic Perspective,” PhD Dissertation (University of Oregon, 2001), pp. 182 – 185. Although there was a longer text published around 1904 purportedly from Kirkpatrick, doubts have been cast on its authenticity. See Roberta L. Hall and Don Alan Hall, “The Village at the Mouth of the Coquille River: Historical Questions of Who, When, and Where,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 82:3 (1991), pp. 101 – 108, esp. p. 104.

<sup>86</sup> Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 1, pp. 14 – 15, 19, Graff 4683, Newberry Library Special Collections, Chicago, IL. On William T’Vault, see George S. Turnbull, *History of Oregon Newspapers* (Portland: Binfords & Mort, 1939), pp. 26, 41 – 42; Brier, “Political Censorship in the Oregon Spectator”; *Oregonian* March 27, 1866, p. 2, found at <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/tvault.html> [mining]; Jeff LaLande, “‘Dixie’ of the Pacific Northwest: Southern Oregon’s Civil War,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 100:1 (1999), pp. 32 – 81.

continued, eventually coming into a conflict with a Coquille village which killed half of the adventurers. The official story told by T’Vault at the time was of a sudden and inexplicable attack by previously friendly Indians. Williams, whose unpublished reminiscence contains significantly more details than the official record of events, proudly wove a story of theft, kidnapping, and lethal threats leading up to the supposed “massacre” of his five Euro-American compatriots.<sup>87</sup>

As the half-starved expedition made its way along the Coquille River in August, Williams spotted a Native man while hunting. After debating “whether to shoot him or not” without preamble, Williams decided to seize the man as a prisoner, resolving “to kill him” if he “[ook] affright and run away.” Stripped of his belongings at gunpoint, the man was “persuaded” by T’Vault to pilot the expedition to Fort Umpqua using sign language (as the prisoner and his captors did not have any languages in common). The extent to which the man understood the demands of his heavily armed captors is unclear, but he signaled assent to their demands and led them first along the Coquille River and then in the direction the party thought they should go—northwards.<sup>88</sup>

They came upon a small village whose inhabitants immediately ran away—one might conjecture, based on their previous behavior, that T’Vault and his expeditioners leveled their guns at all and sundry. With an infant still wailing unheeded at the center of the village, the Euro-Americans set about eating all of the food they could find. Their captive took this chance to escape, and Williams decades later remained incensed that “our Indian guide [had] deserted us.” Wandering northwards without the aid of a captive

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<sup>87</sup> Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 1, p. 30; William T’Vault to Anson Dart, Sept 19 1851, letter published in *Weekly Oregonian* [Portland], Oct 4, 1851, p. 2; Charles F. Wilkinson, *The People Are Dancing Again: The History of the Siletz Tribe of Western Oregon* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), p. 77.

<sup>88</sup> Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 1, pp. 51 – 52.

guide, T’Vault and his company finally found a river and soon hailed a group of Native men in canoes—who Williams described as “hostil[e] and very much to be dreaded.” The volunteers hired the men in canoes for transportation, offering their shirts as payment (as they had little else besides their guns). Though “no hostile demonstration was made” by the canoers, neither party trusted the other.<sup>89</sup>

After a few days travel, they reached a large Indigenous community along the Coquille on September 14, 1851, and violently clashed with the residents. There was an altercation of uncertain origin during which Native attempts to either aid or disarm the Euro-Americans escalated into the five of the volunteers being killed, and the rest scattering and fleeing. Williams was first buffeted by clubs, and then took an arrow as he broke free and (he claimed) killed at least two of his pursuers. T’Vault escaped with the help of unnamed Indigenous boy. Neither was pursued past the initial melee, both blamed the other for getting the party into a trap, and both found succor in Native communities they stumbled into after the clash. Historical certainty about who attacked first in this conflict will likely remain unattainable. The Euro-American volunteers perceived hostility and started shooting; whether that hostility had actually existed before the firefight was quickly rendered moot.<sup>90</sup>

Fort Orford, established formally as military base on the same day as the clash, received news of the conflict a few days later and sent word south. Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey “scraped together” a another, even larger volunteer force in California and

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<sup>89</sup> Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 1, pp. 54 – 55, 59 – 60,

<sup>90</sup> Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 1, pp. 68 – 87; William T’Vault to Anson Dart, Sept 19 1851, letter published in *Weekly Oregonian*, Oct 4, 1851, 2. Williams claimed T’Vault and a few others had insisted on heading into village for breakfast despite the danger; T’Vault claimed that a “person whose name I will not insert here” had done so—and left only Williams unnamed. Josiah Parrish, a White missionary who travelled to the region after the altercation on a fact-finding mission, made the claim that the locals were simply trying to help T’Vault and his men free their canoe. See Hall and Hall, “The Village at the Mouth of the Coquille River,” esp. p. 105.

led a punitive expedition into the Coquille River region in November 1851. They claimed officially to have killed fifteen Indians. There is no record that indicates those killed had anything to do with the conflict, and no record that indicates Casey and his company made any attempt to determine whether those killed had anything to do with the conflict—indeed, their preferred method was to kill before Native people realized the White invaders were attacking. Scuttlebutt among the soldiers further north was that Casey’s men had “come on the [I]ndians and without any hesitation began to slaughter them + killed every Indian on the ground,” up to four hundred slain. This number was almost definitely exaggerated, but it is entirely possible that Casey and/or his men may have killed more people than they let on in official reports, in addition to destroying the food supplies at every camp they raided. Loren L. Williams, however, was fairly certain the punitive expedition did not reach the village where he had taken an arrow in the gut. For him, vengeance came a few years later, in 1853, when “fractious miners, never merciful to Indians” killed twenty people in that community.<sup>91</sup>

None of the three bands of armed men who landed at Port Orford in 1851 were fighting in an officially declared war. All three were mustered in arms with the expectation of fighting Indians, with the last under the command of a U.S. Lieutenant Colonel. All three expeditions killed people, and suffered casualties. They were part of a decades-long war against Indians generally, and could be counted as part of a long Rogue

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<sup>91</sup> Wilkinson, *The People Are Dancing Again*, p. 77 [description of the punitive expedition]; Robert Marshall Utley, *Frontiersman in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian, 1848 – 1865*, Vol. 1 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), 36 [scraping together Casey’s force]; George Bennett, “A History of Bandon and the Coquille River,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 28:4 (1927), pp. 311 – 357, esp. 319 – 320 [lethal sneak attacks by Casey’s force]; John D. Biles to Michael Albright, May 23, 1852, Folder 7, Box 1, Malick Family Papers WA MSS S-1298, Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT [“killed every Indian on the ground”]; Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 1, p. 144 [“fractious miners”]; Lewis and Connolly, “White American Violence on Tribal Peoples on the Oregon Coast,” p. 371.



River War—even more than the Cayuse War, a war on all Native people in a region rather than a specific polity. Attempts to get treaties signed at the tail-end of the conflict in the Coquille region faltered, in large part due to language barriers; even if the negotiations had been successful, the national Senate would likely have cast aside any treaties signed, just as they did with the rest of the treaties Anson Dart brought them.<sup>92</sup> Just like Kearney and Lane’s invasions and killings, the three 1851 campaigns on the coast are not typically included as part of the Rogue River War(s), or any other war.

One reason why could be that the 1851 attacks were not ordered from on high. Although they were led by military officers, they were framed as scouting and trailblazing expeditions rather than military campaigns. Though the distinction likely didn’t mean much to the people being attacked by U.S. soldiers and vigilantes, it is perhaps meaningful to distinguish these haphazard campaigns from organized, official warfare, as the United States federal government did from the 1850s until 1901 (see Chapter IX).

Or perhaps the lack of treaties explains the lack of designations as war(s). When the 1853 Rogue River war is counted as such, accounts tend to focus on the treaty

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<sup>92</sup> David G. Lewis, “Anson Dart’s Report on the Tribes and Treaties of Oregon, 1851,” *Quartux Journal* Oct 8, 2017, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2017/10/08/anson-darts-report-on-the-tribes-and-treaties-of-oregon-1851/>; David G. Lewis, “Termination of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon: Politics, Community, Identity,” PhD dissertation (University of Oregon, 2009), Appendix B. By 1879, Anson Dart blamed most of the violence in 1850s Oregon on “indiscretion” by military figures, leading to the deaths of “innocent” Indians. See Henry George Waltmann, “The Interior Department, War Department and Indian Policy, 1865 – 1887,” PhD dissertation (University of Nebraska, 1962), pp. 301 – 302. According to his son Richard, Anson Dart had been distressed by the removals he viewed as inevitable; from their homestead on Ho-Chunk/“Winnebago” land in Wisconsin in the 1840s, Richard Dart[t?] remembered gathering in sadness with his family to watch the forced removal of their Ho-Chunk neighbors. Richard Dartt [sic], “Settlement of Green Lake County,” *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at its 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Held Oct. 21, 1909* (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society, 1910), pp. 252 – 272. See also Michelle Neimann, “Towards an Eco-poetics of Food: Plants, Agricultural Politics, and Colonized Landscapes in Lorine Neidecker’s Condensery,” *Modernism/Modernity* 25:1 (2018), pp. 135 – 160, esp. 142 – 143.

negotiated with Joseph Lane at Table Rock.<sup>93</sup> The period of the Rogue River War(s) universally agreed to be part of a war, from late 1855 to mid-1856, ended in a series of expropriative treaties. It is not unreasonable to suggest that if Dart's treaty in 1851 had been ratified, Kearny and Lane's attacks would be remembered as the first Rogue River War. Similarly, it is not unreasonable to suggest that if there had been a treaty negotiated at their conclusion, the 1851 invasions at Port Orford would have retroactively been labeled the Coquille War or another such title. This kind of work done by dating of wars (see Chapters 5 – 10) was not restricted to southern Oregon. One advantage of framing the conflicts as part of a broader War on Illahee is that it breaks down artificial boundaries between war and peace erected by some historical government figures and (eventually) historians.

The frame of a War on Illahee also makes it easier to see the connections between different episodes of pioneer violence in the Pacific Northwest. The writings of volunteers demonstrate how not only the same settler colonial ideas but sometimes the same Euro-American killers were part of attacks on different groups of Indigenous people in different regions. The wanton violence in southern Oregon was the most infamous and likely the most intense (see Chapter III). But the attitudes behind it—and sometimes the same perpetrators—were common across most of the Pacific Northwest.

In his 2008 introduction to the “War Department Records of the Division and Department of the Pacific, 1847 – 1873,” National Archives and Records Administration archivist Michael F. Knight wrote that “[f]rom 1846 to the late 1870s, the Army was

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<sup>93</sup> David G. Lewis, “Rogue River Treaty of 1853,” *Quartux Journal* Jan 17, 2018, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2018/01/17/rogue-river-treaty-of-1853-negotiated-september-10-1853-ratified-april-12-1854/>; *Olympia Pioneer and Democrat*, March 31, 1855, p. 1.

almost constantly engaged in conflict with many of the hundreds of Native American tribes with ancestral lands encompassed by the Department.” Working off of the government documents he had charge of without clear reference to secondary literature, Knight perceived in the records a Cayuse conflict that lasted from 1847 to 1855, a Modoc conflict that lasted from 1851 to the 1870s, a Yakima/Coeur d’Alene conflict that lasted from 1855 to 1858—and a Rogue River conflict begun in 1851 for which he did not venture an end date. Knight’s approach to the materials falls back too often on old tropes—talk of “raids,” “depredations,” “uprisings,” and similar terms. But perhaps because he does not grant these conflicts the formal term of “war,” and builds from the sources more than from historical tradition, Knight’s framing of the period does better than many in showing the sweep of these conflicts.<sup>94</sup> Almost uniquely, Knight puts the 1851 attacks and invasions in southern Oregon under the same heading as the violence that continued in the years that followed. Perhaps coincidentally, Knight’s gloss of a Cayuse conflict from 1847 to 1855 more closely maps onto the narrative of the war told by Cayuse/Nez Perce/Umatilla scholar and leader Anthone Minthorn’s narrative timeline than the standard span of a Cayuse War from 1847 to 1850—although Minthorn has suggested one might extend the timeline of war further, to the late 1870s.<sup>95</sup>

The framing of a War on Illahee should not be the only frame to discuss violence or wars against Native people in the Pacific Northwest. It was waged by Euro-Americans against different Native polities at different times, and sometimes in alliance with Native groups or individuals. Experiences of the War on Illahee varied, sometimes significantly, between different regions, different Native polities or ethnies, and (to some extent)

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<sup>94</sup> Michael F. Knight, “Introductory Material,” 2008, M 2114, War Department Records of the Division and Department of the Pacific, 1847 – 1873, National Archives and Records Administration.

<sup>95</sup> Minthorn, “Wars, Treaties, and the Beginning of Reservation Life,” pp. 61 – 89

different years. But as a frame it is a useful means to tracking the continuity of Euro-American violence, and de-emphasizing pretexts for that violence that were often ad hoc or post facto. Re-examining pioneer accounts through the lens of general War on Illahee can reveal that episodes too often framed as “violence on both sides” were—in many cases by pioneers’ own accounts—instances of pioneer attacks predicated on nothing more than the Indian-ness of their targets.

Except for a brief period in the mid-1850s, the War on Illahee did not stretch across the whole of the Pacific Northwest, nor was it ever uniform and continuous. There were areas at temporary peace, occasional ceasefires, and plenty of non-violent interactions between Native and White people. But most pioneers shared an overarching goal and vision of conquest, ready (whether reluctantly or eagerly) to kill so they could seize Native land. Individual wars were a part of a campaign of racial conquest seen as inevitable even by those Euro-Americans, like Samuel Parker, who regretted it. The Whitman killings may have been the inciting incident for the Cayuse War, and for the War on Illahee more generally. But ultimately, the War on Illahee was driven by Euro-American land hunger, and would have happened without the Whitmans, or any of the other inciting incidents mentioned in this and the following chapters. Some Euro-Americans hoped to achieve conquest without firing a shot (see Chapter III). But any counterfactual that imagines a Pacific Northwest without the War on Illahee must imagine away a vast plurality of Euro-Americans, their land hunger, and their ready recourse to racist violence.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Douthit, *Uncertain Encounters*; Elliott West, “The Nez Perce and their Trials: Rethinking America’s Indian Wars,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 60:3 (2010), pp. 3 – 18, 92 – 93. On the centrality of land hunger in American history, see Jeffrey Ostler, *Surviving Genocide: Native Nations and*

There was no Native action that could have prevented the War on Illahee. Different Indigenous polities navigated Euro-American violence and land hunger in different ways; some were more successful than others, often for reasons beyond their immediate control. What is striking, when reading through the hateful reminiscences and letters of Euro-American volunteers on the front lines of the War on Illahee, is how much Pacific Northwest Native communities were able to preserve their peoples, their lands, and their cultures in the face of so many invaders intent on ending them. Incalculably vast harm was done by the legions of Euro-American killers and the people and governments that backed them—through killings, through thefts, through removals, through decade after decade after decade of genocides, physical and cultural. That so many Native people and polities have survived and in some cases thrived is a testament to the skill, grit, and perseverance of generations.

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*the United States from the American Revolution to Bleeding Kansas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), esp. p. 357.

CHAPTER III: “THE UNDERSTANDING WAS THAT ALL WERE TO BE  
KILLED”: NORTHWEST PIONEERS, EVERYDAY VIOLENCE,  
AND THE EMBRACE OF GENOCIDE

On October 8, 1855, James Lupton undertook the killing spree he had been ideating for years. Just before dawn, self-appointed “Major” Lupton led his men in a surprise attack on a sleeping camp at the mouth of Little Butte Creek, in southern Oregon. They knew their target, an Indigenous polity known locally as “Jake’s Band,” would be caught unawares. In September, Lupton had met with local Native communities promising peace. Thus, as he assured his men when recruiting in the local tavern a few days before the attack, it would be easy to “massacre them while off their guard.” Lupton and his “volunteers,” acting without the authority or knowledge of U.S. federal or territorial governments, starting shooting from the trees while it was still dark, then moved in to close quarters to use swords and knives on any survivors. The massacre was less complete than Lupton had hoped. Though caught unawares by a surprise attack from people who had promised peace, some members of Jake’s Band were able run, hide, or even fight back. Lupton and his men, seeing their targets flee, purportedly “compelled” the few Native women captured alive to call out to “their husbands, and sons, and brothers, that they might be shot.” While he was threatening to kill his hostages, Lupton himself was shot by one of the defenders. Faced with resistance, Lupton’s men broke off their pursuit of the fleeing survivors, finishing their attack by killing the wounded and desecrating the dead.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup>John Beeson, *A Plea for the Indians; with Facts and Features of the Late War in Oregon* (New York: John Beeson [self-published], 1857), quotations on pp. 46, 50 – 51; E. A. Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War and Its Aftermath, 1850–1980* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 85 – 89.

Though many aspects of what became known as the Lupton Affair or Little Butte Creek Massacre have been disputed over the years, Lupton’s devotion to mass killing is an agreed-upon fact. It remains unclear how many Indigenous people were killed in the attack, with estimates ranging from around thirty to one hundred or more. When U.S. soldiers were brought to the scene of the massacre by outraged survivors the next day, they counted twenty-eight bodies. But several more of the slain were presumed to have washed downstream, and some of the wounded who were able to escape may have later died of their injuries. It remains difficult to determine whether the volunteer soldiers called themselves “Exterminators,” or whether that was widely-accepted moniker after the attack—certainly calls for “extermination” were unremarkable at the time. The ethnic make-up of “Jake’s Band” has been disputed: they may have been majority Takelma, or majority Ka’Hosadi Shasta, or may have embraced an admixture of local Indigenous cultures and beliefs. Lupton most likely targeted them because they were nearby and seen as vulnerable, or he may have been (as latter-day apologists suggested with little evidence) attempting mass killing as some sort of proactive defense. But Lupton’s determination to deal death was undisputed by all.<sup>98</sup>

At the brink of war in 1853, the last time the constant thrum of Euro-American violence had reached a fever pitch in southern Oregon, Lupton had been only barely restrained from an attempt to shoot down a group of Native people whom he felt had been insolent. Lupton and a few compatriots had met a group of Indigenous fighters on the road, and each had interrogated the other about their intentions—a reasonable act in

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<sup>98</sup> Thomas J. Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram, on Territories of Oregon and Washington*, H.R. Exec. Doc. No. 114, 35th Cong., 2nd Sess. (1859), p. 44; Marc James Carpenter, “Pioneer Problems: ‘Wanton Murder,’ Indian War Veterans, and Oregon’s Violent History,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 121:2 (2020), pp. 156 – 185.

uncertain times. Lupton was livid, and pressed his companions to circle back and shoot down all of their interlocutors, “to teach them better than to interfere with white men.” Had his group not been outnumbered at the time, his companions would have been prepared to let him try.<sup>99</sup>

The Lupton Massacre was unusual but not extraordinary, the most publicly outrageous event in a vast wave of Euro-American violence perpetrated in the Pacific Northwest in the middle of the nineteenth century. It is most famous because of what followed—reciprocal killings of local Euro-American families by Indigenous fighters began the last and most lethal of the Rogue River War(s), which ended in the extermination or expulsion of most Indigenous communities in the region. The Lupton Massacre has thus drawn far more attention at the time and since than similar mass killings of non-combatant Indigenous peoples in the Pacific Northwest in the same period, like the Maxon (or Mashel) Massacre, or the mass killings at Grand Ronde Valley (see Chapters 3 and 8). The Lupton Massacre was unusual because the aftermath was witnessed by Euro-Americans with a vested interest in reporting the killings; soldiers and officers from the nearby Table Rock Reservation were brought to the site of the massacre by outraged survivors, and had no reason to suppress the news. The recorded body count for the massacre was unusually but not uniquely high for the region; most accounts of Euro-American violence against Native people involved fewer victims for a single attack and/or less official documentation. The success of the volunteers in perpetrating the killings was unusual; in many other conflicts with Native people in the area, untrained Euro-American volunteers were less able to achieve the mass murders they sought. And,

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<sup>99</sup> George E. Cole, *Early Oregon: Jottings of a Pioneer of 1850* (Spokane, Wash.: Shaw & Borden Company, 1905), p. 52.



along with much of the rest of the violence in southern Oregon, there were unusual financial motivators for federal authorities to emphasize the atrocity as a means drawing clear distinctions between licit warfare (which the government might be expected to bankroll) and illegitimate vigilante violence (which it would not).<sup>100</sup>

But attempted extermination of Native people in the Pacific Northwest was not unusual; it was often threatened and occasionally pursued in the 1850s, 1860s, and beyond. The Lupton Massacre was the crest of a particularly devastating wave of genocidal assault in the Pacific Northwest, but it was part of the ebb and flow of everyday violence against Indigenous people practiced by Euro-American colonizers. During and beyond the mid-nineteenth century, settler acts of theft, rape, and murder perpetrated against Indigenous people were frequently unpunished, ignored, or even lauded by much of White society. Genocide in the region went beyond the incidents reported and outside of the most notorious areas of southern Oregon. Calls for mass murder came often and off-handedly; endorsements of genocide were an acceptable part of the Euro-American public sphere in the nineteenth-century Northwest. Most Euro-Americans who came to the Pacific Northwest, after all, came with a settler colonial script honed by decades of American empire—and those who didn't soon learned it. Many came already viewing "Indians" as an amorphous, violent Other, an existential threat until proven otherwise. In letters, newspaper articles, and speeches, settlers typically referred to "Indians" and "friendly Indians" rather than more specific tribal,

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<sup>100</sup> For distorted and positive coverage of the Lupton Massacre at the time, see *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* December 1855, p. 254, found in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 12 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1856). For more accurate coverage from the same period, see "Oregon—Rogue River War," *New York Daily Tribune* Nov 14, 1855. The Lupton Massacre, like most other mass killings in the Pacific Northwest, remains largely unknown at the time of writing, even among scholars. See Benjamin Madley, "Reexamining the American Genocide Debate: Meaning, Historiography, and New Methods." *American Historical Review* 120:1 (2015), pp. 98 – 139, esp. p. 112.

cultural, or political designations. Most saw no need to append “hostile” to the former; for Euro-Americans of the time, Native people were presumed hostile until proven otherwise.<sup>101</sup>

Even those pioneers who did not commit wanton violence against Native people themselves typically found it acceptable. White would-be perpetrators of crimes against Indigenous communities had little to fear from the Euro-American justice system once hegemony was established; only a few amongst the most outrageous acts of violence were ever meaningfully prosecuted and punished. Euro-Americans committing such acts had more to fear from Indigenous communities themselves, who would mete out their own justice when practicable. But those Euro-Americans who wanted to steal from, rape, or kill Indigenous persons could do so knowing that if a counterattack came, they could likely count on the Euro-American community to rally around White supremacy rather than support justice for the victims. American treaty negotiators, as they had throughout the seizure of the continent, used the fact of White exterminators as a weapon against the Native peoples with whom they bargained.<sup>102</sup>

It is likely significantly more Indigenous people were killed by settlers than has typically been assumed. Population figures and population losses in the nineteenth-century Indigenous Pacific Northwest before and in the early stages of American conquest remain informed estimates. Thousands were killed through colonialism—but how many thousands, and how many of those thousands were killed directly at the hands

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<sup>101</sup> Gray Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee: U.S. Empire and the Transformation of an Indigenous World, 1792 – 1859* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), chap. 7; Katrine Barber, “‘We Were at Our Journey’s End’: Settler Sovereignty Formation in Oregon,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 120:4 (2019), pp. 382 – 413.

<sup>102</sup> For American use of the threat of White exterminators as a bargaining tactic, see Jeffrey Ostler, *Surviving Genocide: Native Nations and the United States from the American Revolution to Bleeding Kansas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), esp. pp. 86 and 136.

of the invaders, remains inchoate. Settlers who feared Indian attacks routinely overestimated Indigenous populations, and stories of Indian wars often inflated the number of Native fighters killed by orders of magnitude. Scholars have already revised down early pioneer accounts of battles to more accurate and modest figures. However, I contend in this chapter and those following that although killings in battles were often inflated, killings outside of the conventions of war often went unreported—particularly when there was no official war on. The cold-blooded executions, acts of opportunistic murder, and attacks on Indigenous civilians in the records I discuss likely only scratch the surface of these killings.

The specific examples discussed in this chapter are indicative rather than exhaustive. American colonization in the 1840s and 1850s is among the best-studied periods in the history of the Pacific Northwest, so there is a substantial secondary literature to lean on. At the same time, much of that literature has been shaped by decades of incomplete erasure. Later chapters will delve into some contentious incidents of the 1850s not discussed at length here; public and private discussions and distortions of the historical record continued for generations. Pioneer acts of aggression deemed dishonorable were edited out of public memory early and often (see Chapter X). Though events like the Lupton Massacre might be reported in the papers, letters from locals were substantially less likely to mention acts of wanton violence initiated by pioneers. Indigenous counterattacks and reciprocal violence were thus seldom differentiated from other forms of aggression, and were used as proof for the righteousness of exterminatory violence already in progress.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> For histories of memory and erasure grappling with specific wars in the region, see Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War and Its Aftermath, 1850 – 1980*; Boyd Cothran, *Remembering the Modoc War:*

The shape of the cover-up would change significantly in later decades; public pride in exterminatory violence began to fade in the twentieth century (see Chapter XI). But obfuscation of the evidence was there from the beginning. Many pioneers and volunteer soldiers did not want their wanton violence against noncombatants, women, and children reported (see Chapter X). In 1855, likely not knowing his interlocutor planned to publish his remarks, one volunteer described the murders he had committed in southern Oregon with pathos:

We found several sick and famished Indians, who begged hard for mercy and for food. It hurt my feelings, but the understanding was that all were to be killed. So we did the work.<sup>104</sup>

Whether or not this guilt was usual, the “understanding” was common. Often-unspoken understandings of pioneer mayhem, mutilation, and murder were woven through local conceptions of the colonization of the Pacific Northwest, and shaped most stories of it, through whatever mix of silence and celebration. Wanton violence and genocide were the foundation upon which the heroic edifices of pioneer history were built.

The conquest of what became the United States was and is settler colonial; that is, predicated on the elimination rather than exploitation of Indigenous peoples and communities, and their replacement by (presumptively Euro-American) settlers. One succinct summation of settler colonial conquest in the Pacific Northwest and the United

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*Redemptive Violence and the Making of American Innocence* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014). On violence against Native people in the region, see especially Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee*.

<sup>104</sup> Beeson, *A Plea for the Indians*, p. 52.

States came from Judge Francis Henry, a former gold miner and soldier, in an 1884 address.<sup>105</sup> Colonization and Indian Wars in the Pacific Northwest, he proclaimed, were but the inevitable continuation of the old, old story of the colonization and occupation of America by the whites, which has been enacted times without number from the shores of the Atlantic to the Pacific, during the last four hundred years—simply one of the three incidents of that inevitable destiny which has already subjected the whole continent to the use of civilized man, namely: First—the insidious invasion of the pioneer; second, a treaty by the government with the Indians; and third, their forcible expulsion from that territory to convenient reservations, to be taken from them by the same process at some future time.<sup>106</sup>

Henry’s description was essentially correct, although different American colonizers attempted these steps in different orders in pursuit of their “inevitable [manifest?] destiny.” Pivotaly, Henry’s gloss on colonialism included the settler pursuit of continuing seizures of Native land after initial treaties were signed, wars were fought, and reservations were formed (see Chapters 4 – 6).

The “insidious invasion of the pioneer” into Native lands in the Oregon Territory [Oregon and Washington] was given federal imprimatur with the passage of the Donation Land Claim Act (DLCA) in 1850. With the DLCA, the U.S. federal government promised enormous grants of land in the Pacific Northwest to White settlers. It presumed a cession of Native land by Indigenous communities that had not yet occurred. Euro-

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<sup>105</sup> It is unclear from the record whether Francis Henry took part in Indian Wars himself, at least officially. When prompted to list his “Indian war service” on a form for the Washington State Library Historical Department, his daughter Mary O’Neil simply wrote “Mexican.” Mary A. O’Neil, “Henry Francis,” History of Thurston County Pioneers before 1870 [form], Feb 1918, Washington State Library—Historical Department, Washington State Library Manuscript No. 134, Pullman, WA.

<sup>106</sup> “Speech of Hon. Francis Henry [1884],” Washington Pioneer Association Transactions 1883 – 1889, p. 41, Box 30, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Heritage Resources, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA.

Americans had already been seizing Native land without permission (see Chapter II). With the federal government opening the floodgates of legitimacy to the rising horde of Oregon colonists, negotiations for Native land, an afterthought for many, were a vital concern for federal forces hoping to forestall costly wars.<sup>107</sup>

Death was a pivotal tool in the arsenal of American negotiators in the 1850s Pacific Northwest. Death from a series of overlapping epidemics over generations had put many Native polities in a precarious position. The exact number or percentage of deaths from these epidemics remains highly speculative, but memory and history on all sides agrees that the effects cataclysmic for most Indigenous communities.

Anthropologist and historian Robert Boyd's educated guesswork, still the leading source on the epidemics that afflicted the Indigenous Pacific Northwest, includes the presumption that deaths from causes other than disease (like murder) were essentially a rounding error.<sup>108</sup> But it is unquestionable that disease took a horrific toll on Indigenous communities, which impacted the strength of their bargaining positions.

Death *threats* were also a potent tool for the Americans. Nearly all treaty negotiators used the long-standing Euro-American technique of threatening (or warning of) the genocide that would follow without a treaty. As Colonel Beverly Allen put it to a group of Santiam Kalapuya during an April 1851 treaty negotiation meant to expropriate their homelands:

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<sup>107</sup> Kenneth R. Coleman, "'We'll All Start Even': White Egalitarianism and the Oregon Donation Land Claim Act," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 120:4 (2019), pp. 414 – 439; Paul Frymer, "'A Rush and Push and the Land is Ours': Territorial Expansion, Land Policy, and U.S. State Formation," *Perspectives on Politics* 12:1 (2014), pp. 119 – 144, esp. p. 125; Julius Wilm, *Settlers as Conquerors: Free Land Policy in Antebellum America* (Weisbaden, GE: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2018). People of mixed European and Indigenous descent were included in later modifications to the DLCA.

<sup>108</sup> Robert T. Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence: Introduced Infectious Diseases and Population Decline among Northwest Coast Indians, 1774 – 1874* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), esp. chaps. 8 and 9.

It will be better for you to remove to a reserve beyond the Cascade Mountains.... There our Government would protect you both from encroachment by whites and of neighboring tribes of Indians. Whereas, if you remain among the whites, it will inevitably end in your annihilation as a people.<sup>109</sup>

The threat of murdering pioneers—which negotiators warned explicitly or implicitly would not be stopped by American government—was an effective means of coercion.<sup>110</sup>

Nearly all Euro-Americans expected Native land to be seized, even those who presented themselves as sympathetic. John Pollard Gaines, Joseph Lane’s successor as Oregon’s Territorial Governor from 1850 to 1853, was sometimes pilloried by pioneers for being too soft on Indian issues. His preferred method of land seizure was “to treat with the Indians for the relinquishment of their right to the soil” rather than exterminatory war, and he expressed the hope that the National Legislature would pass Acts “calculated to further the objects of justice and humanity towards this fading race.” But Gaines was as steadfast as any in his pursuit of Native land. He urged generous land grants for all emigrants, and “the immediate organization of the militia” to defend those lands. These grants could only come from as-yet unceded lands, and Gaines meant to have them.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Quotation from Beverly Allen taken from Ronald Spores, “Too Small a Place: The Removal of the Willamette Valley Indians, 1850 – 1856,” *American Indian Quarterly* 17:2 (Spring, 1993), pp. 171 – 191, quotation on pp. 176 – 177. Although Spores’s interpretation of treaty negotiations is strikingly outdated, his attention to the language of treaty negotiators is fine-grained.

<sup>110</sup> Ostler, *Surviving Genocide*, esp. p. 121; Paige Raibmon, “Unmaking Native Space: A Genealogy of Indian Policy, Settler Practice, and the Microtechniques of Dispossession,” *The Power of Promises: Rethinking Indian Treaties in the Pacific Northwest*, ed. Alexandra Harmon (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), pp. 56 – 85; M. Susan Van Laere, *Fine Words and Promises: A History of Indian Policy and its Impact on the Coast Reservation Tribes of Oregon in the Last Half of the Nineteenth Century* (Philomath, Ore.: Serendip Historical Research, 2010), chap. 3.

<sup>111</sup> John P. Gaines, “Governor’s Message, Dec. 2 1850,” *Oregonian*, Dec 4, 1850, pp. 2 – 3.

Gaines led a commission that signed treaties with a number of Native groups (including the failed 1851 Rogue River treaty discussed in Chapter II) in the early 1850s, most famously associated with Indian Superintendent, druggist, and land speculator Anson Dart.<sup>112</sup> The team sometimes agreed to a small part of some Native negotiators' demands, and assured them that Indigenous land rights in small tracts of the Willamette Valley would be preserved (while reassuring pioneers that "the reserve will [not] interfere with the convenience of the settle[rs]"). This proved to be too much for their fellow Euro-Americans, locally and in the National Legislature, and these treaties were not ratified. But although these treaties may have been too generous for many Euro-Americans to stomach, they were nonetheless expropriative, seen as the best among bad options by the Native negotiators who acceded to them.<sup>113</sup>

Cayuse War veteran, gold miner, and politician Joel Palmer took over treaty negotiations when he was appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the region in 1853. As he informed his friend, confidant, and fellow Indian fighter Nathan Olney (see

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<sup>112</sup> As David G. Lewis has noted, Anson Dart was not initially part of Gaines's Treaty Commission in 1850, and his involvement or absence at various treaty negotiations has not been fully established. See David G. Lewis, "Anson Dart and the Willamette Treaty Commission," *Quartux Journal* Jan 4, 2018. Anson Dart speculated in Wisconsin and New York, and is remembered as a pioneer founder of Green Lake and (formerly) Dartford Wisconsin. He continued in speculation and politics after his time in Oregon. He also patented a "cure" for syphilis, a topical ointment using a compound of the oil of "Hindostan" [Indian] muskmelon seeds and the oil of dwarf olive fruits. "Historical Papers," *Ripon Commonwealth* Nov 13, 1885 [land]; Richard Dartt [sic], "Settlement of Green Lake County," *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at its 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Held Oct. 21, 1909* (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society, 1910), pp. 252 – 272 [land and politics]; Marjorie Catlin Roehm, *The Letters of George Catlin and His Family: A Chronicle of the American West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 321 – 322 [appointment as Indian Superintendent]; Anson Dart, 1864 "Improved Compound Oil," United States Patent No. US45028A ["It is as sure a prevention to taking the venereal diseases as that Water will quench fire"].

<sup>113</sup> Commissioners Allen, Gaines, and Skinner to Dr. Anson Dart, Apr 16, 1851, frame 00528, Reel 3, John Pollard Gaines Papers, 1832 – 1864, Microfilm collection, quoted from Katherine Louise Huit, "Oregon Territorial Governor John Pollard Gaines: A Whig Appointee in a Democratic Territory," Master's thesis (Portland State University, 1996); Spores, "Too Small a Place"; MacKenzie Katherine Lee Moore, "Making Place and Nation: Geographic Meaning and the Americanization of Oregon: 1834 – 1859," PhD dissertation (University of California, Berkeley, 2012), pp. 130 – 132; Daniel L. Boxberger and Herbert C. Taylor, Jr., "Treaty or Non-Treaty Status," *Columbia* 5:3 (1991), pp. 40 – 45.



Chapters 6 and 10), Palmer aimed “to extinguish by treaty the Indian title to all the lands in Oregon” by 1856.<sup>114</sup> Like his predecessors, he assured Native listeners that proximity to White people—Americans or otherwise—would lead to doom. As he told some Lower Chinook leaders in June 1853:

Experience has taught us the white and red men cannot always live together in peace.... When there are but few whites they can get along very well and not quarrel, but when there are a great many they will have difficulty. When they live together there will be difficulties; little difficulties will get to be great difficulties.<sup>115</sup>

Careful to specify White people generally rather than Americans when speaking to leaders with decades of experience dealing with people of European descent, Palmer warned them only somewhat obliquely that conflict with the arriving flood of pioneers was inevitable. As he framed the issue at an 1855 negotiation in eastern Washington, one could no more stop the flood of White pioneers than one could “prevent the wind from blowing” or “the rain from falling.”<sup>116</sup>

Isaac I. Stevens was appointed governor of Washington Territory in 1853, like Joseph Lane before him a U.S.-Mexico War veteran benefitting from the political patronage of a Democratic President.<sup>117</sup> One of Stevens’s early objectives, only partially

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<sup>114</sup> Joel Palmer to Nathan Olney, Sept 28, 1854, Folder 51, Box 1, Joel Palmer Papers, Mss 114, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>115</sup> Quotation taken from Sarah Cullen, “‘Little Difficulties Will Get to Be Great Difficulties’: Joel Palmer and the Office of Indian Affairs in the Oregon Territory, 1853 – 56,” *British Association for American Studies Digital Essay Competition 2*, Feb 28, 2017, <https://www.amdigital.co.uk/about/blog/item/sarah-cullen-oregon>.

<sup>116</sup> Jo N. Miles, “Kamiakin’s Impact on Early Washington Territory,” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 99:4 (Fall 2008), pp. 159 – 172, quotation from p. 165.

<sup>117</sup> “Joel Palmer and Isaac I. Stevens Biographies,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 106:3 (2005), pp. 356 – 357. Many “Indian fighters,” like Joseph Lane, had also been involved in the U.S.-Mexico War. Local perceptions in northeastern Oregon and southeastern Washington had it that many of the men who “served

realized, was to build up territorial armed forces. Frustrated in his initial attempts, he helped push through a law organizing the militia through the territorial legislature in February of 1855. As militia companies began to take shape in the spring and summer of 1855, Stevens and his allies conjured up visions of batteries along the coast, cavalry to “subdue” Native peoples in the east, and riflemen on snowshoes to “ferret out the Indians in the mountain fastnesses, and summarily punish them.” His full dream of military force was frustrated; as usual, imperial appropriations fell short of colonial ambitions. But Stevens was preparing for war, and dreaming of a force fierce and flexible enough to pursue and “summarily” assassinate Indians in the furthest reaches of the territory.<sup>118</sup>

Preparations for war inflected treaty-making in the region, which Stevens was in charge of from 1854 to 1857. Stevens (as lawyer and historian Charles F. Wilkinson put it) “had his script and he meant to keep to it,” pushing for as much Native land as possible and only reluctantly accommodating his interlocutors.<sup>119</sup>

But like Dart in Oregon, Stevens thought it “injudicious” to immediately attempt to uproot and deport all Native peoples across the territory—after all, the artillery, cavalry, and snowshoed riflemen he hoped to obtain the materiel and funds for had not yet coalesced. Stevens instead attempted the seizure of most Native land while affirming other sovereign rights, and in some cases affirming control over land not currently demanded by White settlers. Further diminution, he believed, could be worked toward in

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as ‘Indian Fighters,’ in defense of the country east of the Cascade Mountains... had been defenders on the southern border in the Mexican War, that gave Texas to the Union.” See Lulu Crandall, “Maurice Fitzgerald,” Folder 36, Box 7, Lulu Donnell Crandall Papers, Cage 249, Washington State University Libraries Special Collections, Pullman, WA.

<sup>118</sup> *Olympia Pioneer and Democrat* March 31, 1855, p. 2 [quotation]; Mary Ellen Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic: The American Militia in the Antebellum West* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), p. 144.

<sup>119</sup> Charles F. Wilkinson, *Messages from Frank’s Landing: A Story of Salmon, Treaties, and the Indian Way* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), p. 12.

future years.<sup>120</sup> Although Native negotiators were sometimes able to extract important concessions from him in writing, Stevens pursued expedient seizure of land above all else. And he would warn and threaten violence to achieve his ends (see Chapters 3 and 5).<sup>121</sup>

Some of Stevens's threats were more subtle than others. In preparations for the Treaty of Medicine Creek/She-nah-nam in 1854, his representatives Michael Troutman Simmons and Benjamin Franklin Shaw (see Chapter IV) laid the groundwork for a treaty by telling locals that it was the only way to “solve their trouble with the whites”—troubles which included murders committed by local Euro-Americans, which had been (and remained afterward) unpunished.<sup>122</sup> At other times the Governor was more direct. When Isaac I. Stevens got fed up at the pace of negotiations with Yakama leaders in June of 1855—by which time of the organization of militia companies had nearly been completed—he let his mask slip. As one of the witnesses remembered it:

[the] Governor getting out of patience recapitulated all that had been said and offered and concluded by saying, if you do not accept the terms offered and sign this paper (held up paper) you will walk in blood knee deep.<sup>123</sup>

This threat, remembered by two witnesses of partially Native descent who were part of the Euro-American treaty party, was not recorded in the generally voluminous official

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<sup>120</sup> SuAnn M. Reddick and Cary C. Collins, “Medicine Creek Remediated: Isaac Stevens and the Puyallup, Nisqually, and Muckleshoot Land Settlement at Fox Island, August 4 1856,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 104:2 (2013), pp. 80 – 98. On practicalities of perceived power as perhaps the major determinant of “harshness” in treaty terms, see Arthur Spirling, “U.S. Treaty Making with American Indians: Institutional Change and Relative Power, 1784 – 1911,” *American Journal of Political Science* 56:1 (2012), pp. 84 – 97.

<sup>121</sup> Alexandra Harmon, “Pacific Northwest Treaties in National and International Historical Perspective,” in *The Power of Promises: Rethinking Indian Treaties in the Pacific Northwest*, ed. Alexandra Harmon (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), pp. 3 – 31, esp. p. 6; Joshua L. Reid, *The Sea Is My Country: The Maritime World of the Makahs* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), esp. chap. 4.

<sup>122</sup> Reddick and Collins, “Medicine Creek to Fox Island.”

<sup>123</sup> Andrew Dominique Pambrun, “Reminiscences of A.D. Pambrun of Athena, Oregon,” quoted in Miles, “Kamiakin’s Impact on Early Washington Territory,” p. 167.

record of the treaty talks—an omission that had a practical utility (see Chapter IV).<sup>124</sup> But the threat of White violence—as something the U.S. government could protect against and/or as something the U.S. government could inflict—was everywhere.

Treaties are living and powerful documents. In the United States, many of the most important fights to have Indigenous rights respected by the settler colonial state have been predicated on compelling American governments to live up to the promises made in treaties signed by previous generations.<sup>125</sup> The original Native negotiators were able to weave important confirmations of some of their communities' sovereign rights into many of these treaties. Generations of Native communities and Native leaders since have turned treaties into cornerstones of protection for many Native American nations. But the efforts and successes of Native negotiators need not obscure the violence and coercion that went into the seizure of Native land by means of paper. The threat of White violence—by the soldiery, by the settlers, by volunteers occupying a hazy status in between—haunted nearly every treaty negotiation, whether or not it was voiced.<sup>126</sup>

U.S. Navy Lieutenant Neil Howison, reporting on an 1846 visit to Oregon, voiced his distaste for the attacks on Indigenous people he had seen committed. Writing about Columbia River peoples, he reflected that:

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<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.* Despite the apparent thoroughness of treaty meeting records, there were other instances where parts of the negotiations and events were omitted from Stevens's official record. See Lin Tull Crannell, "William Craig: Governor Stevens's Conduit to the Nez Perce," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 97:1 (Winter 2005/2006), pp. 19 – 30, esp. p. 21. Detail is not always a signifier of completeness. See also Michelle M. Jacob and Wynona M. Peters, "'The Proper Way to Advance the Indian': Race and Gender Hierarchies in Early Yakima Newspapers," *Wicazo Sa Review* 26:2 (2011), pp. 39 – 55, esp. p. 43.

<sup>125</sup> Chris Friday, "Performing Treaties: The Culture and Politics of Treaty Remembrance and Celebration," in *The Power of Promises: Rethinking Indian Treaties in the Pacific Northwest*, ed. Alexandra Harmon (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), pp. 157 – 185.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Harmon, "Pacific Northwest Treaties in National and International Historical Perspective," esp. 26 – 27.

as if the proximity of the white man were not sufficiently baneful in its insidious destruction of these unhappy people, our countrymen killed two by sudden violence and wounded another in an uncalled for and wanton manner during the few months of my sojourn in the country. The only penalty to which the perpetrators of these different acts were subjected was the payment of a blanket or a beef to their surviving kindred. Public opinion, however, sets very strongly against such intrusions upon the degraded red man, and perhaps a year hence it may be strong enough to hang an offender of this kind.<sup>127</sup>

As historian Julius Wilm dryly put it, “things developed differently.”<sup>128</sup> With very few exceptions, Euro-American Indian killers in the Pacific Northwest from the 1840s through at least the 1870s could expect little more than censure from their fellow Americans—and often received plaudits.<sup>129</sup> Indigenous communities might sometimes be able to exact more serious penalties themselves (and the threat of Indigenous justice might keep some wanton Euro-American murderers in check), but any strike against the killers by Native people risked devastating repercussions. Euro-American killers of Indians might or might not face negative public opinion, but they could assuredly count on their fellow Euro-Americans to defend them.

Indeed, many of those Euro-Americans arguing (and even acting) against wanton murder drew on practicality and fear as much or more as morality. Howison may have been sympathetic to the people whose murders he decried (and thought any “humane

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<sup>127</sup> Neil M. Howison, “Report of Lieutenant Neil M. Howison on Oregon, 1846: A Reprint,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 14:1 (1913), pp. 1 – 60, quotation on p. 46. It is possible that what Howison perceived as cavalier and insufficient punishment for murder may (or may not) have suited the criminal justice norms of the Columbia River people concerned.

<sup>128</sup> Wilm, *Settlers as Conquerors*, p. 222.

<sup>129</sup> Brad Asher, *Beyond the Reservation: Indians, Settlers, and the Law in Washington Territory, 1853 – 1889* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), esp. pp. 212 – 213.

citizen” would feel likewise), but his more trenchant warning was that with bad treatment (and the potentially baleful influence of “half-breeds,” if they were not allowed land claims):

the consequence might in all time to come be most deplorable for the peace and safety of this country; where, from the sparseness of the population, a band of forty or fifty blood-thirsty savages might surprise and destroy in rotation hundreds of inhabitants.<sup>130</sup>

Worries like Howison’s might occasionally spur authorities into action. George H. Ambrose, who worked as an Indian Agent in southern Oregon in the mid-1850s, pursued one of the only successful prosecutions of wanton Indian-killers in the 1850s Pacific Northwest. His motive for doing so was clear—to protect the White community from counterattacks.

In 1854, a pioneer named John H. Miller started and lost a fistfight with a local man known to Euro-Americans as Indian Jim, who was part of the local Native community made up mostly of Illinois people. Angry at the loss of face, Miller went back to his camp, grabbed a revolver, and shot Jim down. To stop the Illinois from “committing some serious depredations,” Ambrose pursued a criminal case.<sup>131</sup> Matthew Deady, the presiding judge, took it upon himself to instruct the jury to remember that Indians technically counted as people in the eyes of the court:

By the laws of this Territory it is made a criminal offence for ‘any person armed with a dangerous weapon to assault another with intent to murder,’ that is[,] to

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<sup>130</sup> Howison, “Report of Lieutenant Neil M. Howison on Oregon, 1846,” quotations on pp. 24 [block quote] and 46 [“humane citizen”].

<sup>131</sup> John Samuel Ferrell, “Indians and Criminal Justice in Early Oregon, 1842 – 1859,” Master’s thesis (Portland State University, 1973), pp. 51 – 52.

assault another person. An Indian without reference to the position he occupies in the intellectual or moral scale of humanity is within the meaning of the Statute ‘a person’—a human being. Although the loss to society resulting from the death of an Indian may be comparatively small, yet the guilt of the slayer, or one who attempts to slay is none the less complete, whatever may be the color of the victim.<sup>132</sup>

Unusually, John H. Miller was tried and convicted for the wanton murder he inflicted. The perceived “comparatively small” nature of the deed may not have kept him from conviction, but it did influence his sentence. Deady gave him two years in prison for the murder he committed. Miller may even have served some portion of that time. A Native person would have been put to death.

But even this light criminal punishment for a Euro-American murderer of an Indian was unusual. Indeed, a different pioneer, also named John Miller, had escaped judicial punishment for a series of rapes and murders only a few months before. In the 1850s, sentencing a killer of Native people to a few years in prison was as far as Euro-American justice could go. And in the pioneer period, it wouldn’t go that far again.<sup>133</sup>

Although he might pursue limited justice to preserve peace, Ambrose was at heart sympathetic to genocide. Writing semi-anonymously about the Native people he claimed were in his charge, Ambrose proclaimed “I would not care how soon they were all dead, and I believe the country would be greatly benefited by it.” His objection to genocide was practical, not moral. And he was far from alone.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> [Salem] *Oregon Statesman*, June 2, 1855.

<sup>133</sup> Ferrell, “Indians and Criminal Justice in Early Oregon, 1842 – 1859,” pp. 49 – 52.

<sup>134</sup> Carpenter, “Pioneer Problems,” quotation on p. 162. Beeson, *A Plea for the Indians*, p. 28.

Gen. John E. Wool, the U.S. officer in charge of military operations in the Pacific from 1854 to 1857, has sometimes had his distaste for wanton White violence mistaken for humanitarianism. His reputation as a “friend to the Indians” was made by his enemies in the Oregon and Washington Territories, many of whom saw friendship with Native people as execrable. In late 1855, Wool refused to hand over federal arms to unsanctioned militias and explained that he didn’t currently have enough troops to assist in every volunteer effort across the region to deprive Native people of their land, liberty, and lives. Branded as a coward and a traitor by many—the *Oregon Argus* suggested that the General “deserve[d] to have his wool taken from the top of his cocoanut”—Wool was an “Indian sympathizer” only inasmuch as he objected to killings without purpose, which might provoke counterattacks against White settlers.<sup>135</sup> As historian Laurence Hauptman put it, “Wool was no humanitarian but a professional military officer,” and his objections to vigilante violence against Native people stemmed from “cost efficiency” more than morality.<sup>136</sup>

General John Wool was quite certain about who was inciting the violence—“lawless whites,” whose “lawless barbarity [sic] practices upon tribes of Indians of the

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<sup>135</sup> Gregory P. Shine, “General John E. Wool (1784 – 1869),” *Oregon Encyclopedia* [https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/wool\\_john\\_e/#.X\\_jEj9hKhEY](https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/wool_john_e/#.X_jEj9hKhEY), Jan 23, 2020.

<sup>136</sup> Laurence M. Hauptman, “General John E. Wool in Cherokee Country, 1836 – 1837: A Reinterpretation,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 85:1 (Spring 2001), pp. 1 – 26, quotations from p. 3. While Hauptman was concerned largely with Wool’s deeds during Cherokee removal, the same insight applies to Wool’s actions in the Pacific Northwest. Hauptman also wrote flattering pieces about John E. Wool, which tended not to touch on any evidence or stories related to his time on the West Coast. See for example Laurence M. Hauptman, “John E. Wool and the New York City Draft Riots of 1863: A Reassessment,” *Civil War History* 49:4 (2003), pp. 370 – 387.



most inoffensive nature [had] apparently no motive but wanton cruelty.”<sup>137</sup> But he still viewed removal as a likely inevitability:

From all that I can learn or have seen in relation to the Indians and their peculiar situation in regard to the White inhabitants, treaties ought to be made with them, and if driven from their lands and hunting grounds, in order to preserve them from starvation and total destruction, some allowance or remuneration should be made to them.<sup>138</sup>

Wool had scorn for “the lawlessness and brutality of a certain class of white frontiersmen” and some sympathy for the Native people they attacked—but ultimately saw as a core goal “giv[ing] the best protection to the white inhabitants and restrain[ing] the Indians.”<sup>139</sup>

Like other military figures, Wool thought the threat of White violence a useful backstop in bargaining. In 1854, he urged his officers stationed in the Pacific Northwest to soften the ground for treaty-making:

[I]f you can use any influence with the Indians to induce them to comply voluntarily... do so. You should be careful to make known to the Indians that the object in collecting them upon a Reserve is to locate them upon lands under

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<sup>137</sup> John E. Wool to Col. J. Cooper, March 14, 1854, Roll 2, Letters sent Oct 10 1853 to Apr 23 1859, M 2114, War Department Records of the Division and Department of the Pacific, 1847 – 1873, National Archives and Records Administration.

<sup>138</sup> John E. Wool to Inspector Genl Infantry Col. J. K. F. [?] Mausfield, May 12, 1854, Roll 2, Letters sent Oct 10 1853 to Apr 23 1859, M 2114, War Department Records of the Division and Department of the Pacific, 1847 – 1873, National Archives and Records Administration.

<sup>139</sup> Harwood P. Hinton and Jerry D. Thompson, *Courage Above All Things: General John Ellis Wool and the U.S. Military, 1812 – 1863* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2020), p. 244; John E. Wool to Inspector Genl Infantry Col. J. K. F. [?] Mausfield, May 12, 1854, Roll 2, Letters sent Oct 10 1853 to Apr 23 1859, M 2114, War Department Records of the Division and Department of the Pacific, 1847 – 1873, National Archives and Records Administration. Later in the same letter he spoke of “better protection of the whites and Indians”; whether the first distinction [“give the best protection to the white inhabitants and restrain the Indians”] might be more indicative is left to the reader.

control of the Government, and from which lawless whites who might wish to injure them, can by law be excluded....

The only circumstances under which you would be required to use your force in regard to the Indians, would be in case they were to commence hostilities upon the Settlers; or if the Superintendent should call upon you for military assistance in moving any tribe when it became a measure of necessity to preserve peace.<sup>140</sup>

The reservation system seemed, to Wool, “to be the only mode of preventing frequent collisions with the whites and the ultimate extermination of the red men.”<sup>141</sup>

These orders gave the officers serving under Wool relatively wide latitude to deploy force against Native people in the Northwest. Although Wool hoped that they could be “induce[d]... to comply voluntary,” his framing suggests that he expected that compliance to be extracted sooner or later, voluntary or no. And the orders to use force if “the Indians... commence[d] hostilities upon the Settlers” did not exempt Native reprisals for Euro-American violence. Indeed, even the perceived threat of violence could be pretext for removal to “preserve the peace.”

In his letter preparing Army Inspector General J. Mausfield for his 1854 tour of the Pacific, Wool was circumspect about the slaying of Native people, but clear about national goals:

If we can get the Indians to settle on these Reserves and to cultivate the land, it will not only preserve these people [who] are fast disappearing by disease and

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<sup>140</sup> E.D. Townsend [on behalf of Gen. Wool] to L. Loe[ser], Oct 10, 1854, Roll 2, Letters sent Oct 10 1853 to Apr 23 1859, M 2114, War Department Records of the Division and Department of the Pacific, 1847 – 1873, National Archives and Records Administration.

<sup>141</sup> John E. Wool to Col. S. Cooper, Dec 12, 1854, Roll 2, Letters sent Oct 10 1853 to Apr 23 1859, M 2114, War Department Records of the Division and Department of the Pacific, 1847 – 1873, National Archives and Records Administration.

other causes from the face of the land of their fathers, but relieve us of much trouble and a great expense maintaining [a] military post in the interior. Principal among the “other causes” were murderous bands of vigilantes, as Wool well knew. But ultimately those vigilantes were among the White inhabitants he was expected to protect. The volunteers, vigilantes, and criminals who attacked Native people and communities did so rightly suspecting that when push came to shove, they could count on the United States, sooner or later, to defend them from counterattacks. General Wool may have been denounced by locals for his insufficient zeal for genocide, and blamed for providing insufficient federal resources to pursue war against Native people. But his objections to their immoral actions and haphazard approaches did not mean that Wool did not share roughly the same dream of American empire. For him, killing in the service of empire was a last resort. For others, it was the first.

William Henderson Packwood “contracted the western fever and decided [to] become a United States soldier” in 1848, at the age of 16, leaving his peripatetic midwestern slaveholding family to journey west.<sup>142</sup> Learning the ropes from a bunkmate who had been “a soldier in Florida in the Seminole Indian War,”<sup>143</sup> Packwood was deployed to Fort Vancouver. He first saw combat in 1852 in southwestern Oregon territory, attacking the settlements of Ka’hosadi Shasta, Takelma, and other Native peoples. There was, as usual, no official war declared. After leaving the army in 1853

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<sup>142</sup> W. W. Stevens, “The Old Oregon Trail as Told by the Trailers,” chap. 9 (William H. Packwood, 1913[?]), Baker County Library Archive digital collection. Packwood’s story of how he avoided the age restrictions varied. Speaking with W. W. Stevens, Packwood claimed to have been shown a kindness by his commanding officer. Speaking with Fred Lockley, Packwood claimed to have “wrote eighteen on two slips of paper, put a slip in each shoe and truthfully swore that I was ‘over 18.’” Either or both could, perhaps, be true. Fred Lockley, “Experiences of an Oregon Pioneer,” *Overland Monthly* 69:3 (March 1917), pp. 245 – 246.

<sup>143</sup> Stevens, “The Old Oregon Trail as Told by the Trailers,” chap. 14.

Packwood “decided to become a gold hunter,” seeking treasure in the hills he had tromped over as a soldier.<sup>144</sup>

His career as an Indian killer continued. Packwood joined a “company of rangers” that formed to attack “bothersome” Coquille settlements in 1854, participating in the Nasomah Massacre—a mass killing of Coquille people. Notably, the threadbare reasons for the massacre given in the official record (cutting a ferry rope, refusing to meet with the murderous mob) were not a part of Packwood’s reminiscence; he recalled only that “our camp and people in the surrounding country decided to beat [the Indians] back.” Packwood followed this unofficial vigilante violence with an official government commission during the Rogue River Wars in 1855, and rejoined the “volunteer militia” in Coos Bay, “running down bad Indians”; e.g., attempting to imprison Native people seen as out of place, on pain of death (see Chap. 4). Then Packwood returned to gold mining, always ready to take up what he called the “rude laws” of mining country when necessary—whether against “man” or “Indian,” categories he differentiated in his account.<sup>145</sup> After 5 years spent alternately killing Native people and mining for gold on the land seized from them, William Henderson Packwood was given a job on the Siletz Reservation in 1857, principally occupied with attempting to take away the weapons of

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<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 15. Given that Packwood narrated himself attacking “Indians,” the broad Native ethnics named here are speculative guesses. See also David G. Lewis, “Ka’hosadi Shasta Peoples of Oregon and California,” *Quartux Journal* Nov. 30, 2019, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2019/11/30/kahosadi-shasta-peoples-of-oregon/>.

<sup>145</sup> Stevens, “The Old Oregon Trail as Told by the Trailers,” chap. 16. On the Nasomah Massacre, see George B. Wasson, “The Coquille Indians and the Cultural ‘Black Hole’ of the Southern Oregon Coast,” from *Worldviews and the American West: The Life of the Place Itself*, ed. Polly Stewart, Steve Siporin, C.W. Sullivan III, and Suzi Jones (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2000), pp. 191 – 210; Bob Zybach, “The 1855-1856 Oregon Indian War in Coos County, Oregon: Eyewitnesses and Storytellers, March 27, 1855 – August 21, 1856,” Report Prepared for Coquille Indian Tribe Tribal Historic Preservation Office, May 15, 2012, esp. pp. 118 – 119; Madonna L. Moss and George B. Wasson, Jr., “Intimate Relations with the Past: The Story of an Athapaskan Village on the Southern Northwest Coast of North America,” *World Archaeology* 29:3 (1998), pp. 317 – 332; Cf. Gary Dielman, “William Packwood (1832 – 1917),” (2009, rev. 2013), Baker County Library Archive digital collection. For the supposed motivations behind the mass killings, see “Slaughter of Indians by the Vigilantes Recalled,” *Oregonian* Jan 29, 1928, p. 8.

those Native people placed there.<sup>146</sup> Packwood continued his roundelay of wars, mining, and Indian “service” for much of the rest of the 1800s.<sup>147</sup> This history of violence was an asset in his burgeoning political career, and likely contributed to his election as a representative for Curry County to the Oregon Constitutional Convention in 1857—eventually gaining fame as the final living member of that body. Although Packwood consistently failed as a miner and speculator, he was able to gain success as a politician and public servant, eventually leveraging his years of what newspapers called “subjugat[ing] the turbulent r\_dsk\_ns” into a political dynasty.<sup>148</sup>

Violence against Native people as a volunteer was widely seen as a political asset in the 1850s. Distrust of regular army personnel was high—the first Oregon Constitution barred regular soldiers from voting.<sup>149</sup> But citizen-soldiers were politically popular. Matthew Deady, a judge, supporter of slavery, and political powerhouse in the territory, bemoaned in 1856 that men had been “elevated so far above the earth... [by] the mere accident of being at the head of a party of men who found and killed some Indians in an open country under none but ordinary circumstances.”<sup>150</sup> And support for Indian-killing could be bipartisan—the Democrat-aligned *Oregon Statesman*, Whig-aligned *Oregon*

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<sup>146</sup> Stevens, “The Old Oregon Trail as Told by the Trailers,” chap. 17.

<sup>147</sup> Packwood also fought in the Bannock War, in 1877. W. A. Pettit, “Constitution Framer Is Last of Sturdy Men,” *Oregonian* Nov 26, 1911, p. 13; Stevens, “The Old Oregon Trail as Told by the Trailers,” chap 12.

<sup>148</sup> Lockley, “Experiences of an Oregon Pioneer”; William H. Packwood Dies at Age of 85,” *Oregonian* Sept 22, 1917, p. 1. William H. Packwood’s great-grandson Robert W. Packwood was a six-term Senator from Oregon and a serial sexual harasser. See Mark Kirchmeier, *Packwood: The Public and Private Life from Acclaim to Outrage* (San Francisco: HarperCollinsWest, 1995); Kristine Phillips, “Al Franken’s Resignation: He Followed in the Footsteps of Robert Packwood,” *Washington Post* Dec 7, 2017.

<sup>149</sup> *Oregon Constitution*, Article 2, Section 5, taken from Charles H. Carey, ed., *The Oregon Constitution and Proceedings and Debates of the Constitutional Convention of 1857* (Salem, Ore, State Printing Department, 1926), p. 401.

<sup>150</sup> Matthew Deady to James W. Nesmith, Jan 21, 1856 [emphasis in original], Folder 16, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers, Mss 577, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

*Argus*, and performatively neutral Democrat-aligned *Oregon Spectator* and *Oregonian* all printed editorials calling for mass killings in the 1850s.<sup>151</sup>

The political utility of volunteer violence was especially on display during the elections of 1855. Joseph Lane and John P. Gaines were both running for the position of territorial delegate. Both were former territorial governors, both were U.S.-Mexico War veterans, and both claimed to have been participants in Oregon's undeclared Indian Wars. Speaking before an appreciative audience in southern Oregon, each man bragged of having "taken 'a turn at the sq\_\_ws'" in the wars of the early 1850s; a barely coded reference to rapes apparently appreciated by the audience. This came as a moment of comity. The two men clashed over one another's war service in Mexico and argued about the Missouri Compromise.<sup>152</sup> Lane accused Gaines of cowardice; Gaines accused Lane (jokingly?) of being sexually attracted to smelly old men. The two men seem to have consistently agreed on three things when campaigning in southern Oregon in 1855: that Oregonians were "the wisest bravest handsomest... most magnanimous most intelligent people on the face of the earth"; that although both men held illegally enslaved people in Oregon neither should bring up the other's involvement; and that bragging about sexually assaulting Native women was a good way to win votes from some pioneers (see Chapter X).<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>151</sup>Besides the sources listed elsewhere in these notes, see *Oregonian*, Oct 20, 1855.

<sup>152</sup> Both men were themselves slaveholders, although Gaines identified as publicly against the spread of slavery in this speech. Frederick Waymire accused (or possibly applauded, depending on whether one sees sarcasm or sincerity in the relevant text) both Gaines and Lane of seeking to "obviate the vexatious slave question in Oregon by using Indians." Lane is known to have enslaved Native people; scholars are as yet unsure about Gaines. See Frederick Waymire to James W. Nesmith, Nov 4, 1850, Folder 32, Box 2, James W. Nesmith Papers. See also R. Gregory Nokes, *Breaking Chains: Slavery on Trial in the Oregon Territory* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2013), p. 117.

<sup>153</sup> Matthew Deady to James W. Nesmith, Apr 29, 1855, Folder 16, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers. Though related in private letters, Deady did not deem this part of the campaign worthy of publication in his newspaper. The inclusion of these details in a letter was likely due to his correspondent's tastes—James W.

Lane's part in killings and implied rapes is supported by other sources and elements of his biography. It is unclear whether Gaines was exaggerating to match Lane for the sake of political contest. He had been present during some Euro-American attacks and raids in southern Oregon in 1851 (and negotiated a failed treaty at the end of them), and may or may not have been directly involved in the assaults. In either case, the political posturing is indicative of a rough pioneer consensus on violence among many Oregonians in the early 1850s.<sup>154</sup>

The pervasiveness of Euro-American attacks on Indigenous communities in southern Oregon is a well-established part of the historical record. The infamy of incidents like the Lupton massacre has waxed and waned, but the violence has always been part of the historical canon. Scholars have established beyond a reasonable doubt that bands of Euro-Americans pursued the mass extermination of Native communities in the region. Debate may still continue regarding the culpability of regional officials, the extent of support (or success) the marauders enjoyed, and technical aspects of terminology (see Introduction). But as Gray Whaley, David Lewis, George Wasson, and many many others have shown, it is established fact that there were organized attempts at extermination in southern Oregon.<sup>155</sup>

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Nesmith was a connoisseur of "spicy letters." See William H. Farrar to James W. Nesmith, Nov 18, 1859, Folder 2, Box 2, James W. Nesmith Papers; Huit, "Oregon Territorial Governor John Pollard Gaines," pp. 185 – 187.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 147 – 156.

<sup>155</sup> Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee*; David G. Lewis, "Acknowledgement Is Long Past Due for Attempts to Exterminate the Tribes of Oregon," *Quartux Journal* March 28, 2019, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2019/03/28/acknowledgement-is-long-past-due-for-attempts-to-exterminate-the-tribes-of-oregon/>; George Bundy Wasson, Jr. "Growing Up Indian: An Emic Perspective," PhD Diss. (University of Oregon, 2001).

Pioneers recognized that many of their attacks were, effectively, war crimes. As Charles S. Drew, a politician and eventual military officer, put it in a letter demanding pay for volunteers in 1854, Americans needed to pursue

a mode of warfare, inconsistent perhaps in some instances, with the laws governing nations, yet altogether more effectual. The tactics of armies are but shackles and fetters in the prosecution of an Indian war. “Fire must be fought with fire;” and the soldier, to be successful, must, in a great measure, adopt the mode of warfare pursued by the savage.<sup>156</sup>

As Karl Jacoby, among others, has demonstrated, Euro-American would-be exterminators often projected their genocidal intentions onto their foes. The money Drew demanded raised a scandal regionally, but the endorsement of war crimes did not.<sup>157</sup>

Plenty of pioneers killed without such a preamble. James Lupton was far from the only man waiting for his moment, and Loren L. Williams far from the only volunteer signing up for a chance at killing. As the volunteer Charles Blair wrote, “every man [was] anxious to kill the first indian.”<sup>158</sup> And often, any would do. In 1851, Euro-American packers in southern Oregon, near Wolf Creek, “who had some grievance against the indians” decided they wanted to lynch a Native person, and grabbed the first one they

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<sup>156</sup> Charles S. Drew to Quartermaster General, Dec. 30, 1854, *Protection Afforded by Volunteers of Oregon and Washington Territories to Overland Immigrants in 1854: Papers Transmitted by the Secretary of the Oregon Territory* (Washington, D.C.: House of Representatives 35<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, Misc. Doc. No. 47, 1859), p. 25. This letter came in as part of a boondoggle, wherein Drew and Benjamin Franklin Dowell were widely accused of attempting to defraud the government. See W.J. Martin, “The Expedition to Fight the Emigrants,” *Umpqua Weekly Gazette* Aug 9, 1855, p. 1. On war crimes against “savage nations” being deemed acceptable by European-descended people, see [Emmerich de] Vattel, *The Law of Nations; or, Principles of the Law of Nature Applied to the Conduct and Affairs of Nations and Sovereigns*, trans. unknown (Philadelphia: H. Nicklin & T. Johnson, Law Booksellers, 1829, orig. 1758), pp. 92, 414, 432; Donald L. Cutler, “*Hang Them All*”: *George Wright and the Plateau Indian War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), pp. 27 – 29; Ostler, *Surviving Genocide*, p. 100.

<sup>157</sup> Karl Jacoby, “‘The Broad Platform of Extermination’: Nature and Violence in the Nineteenth Century North American Borderlands,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 10:2 (Summer 2008), pp. 249 – 267.

<sup>158</sup> Thomas H. Smith, “An Ohioan’s Role in Oregon History,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 66:3 (1965), pp. 218 – 232, quotation on p. 220.



found. The incident became a local legend because one of the packers realized, as they began the lynching, that he knew their chosen victim, and was owed \$1.50 by him. So the gang of men halted the proceedings long enough for the packer to collect his “six bits,” and for their victim to make arrangements for the rest of his money to be passed on to his family. And then they hanged him.<sup>159</sup>

Martin Angell, a pioneer who settled near Jacksonville, O.T. in 1852, stood out *even in southern Oregon* for having “an inveterate hatred of the [Indian] race.”<sup>160</sup> He was most infamous for urging the public lynching of a nine-year-old Native boy on the streets of Jacksonville in August, 1853, purportedly shouting “hang him, hang him; he will make a murderer when he is grown,” which convinced most of the last waverers in the lynch mob to stand aside as the citizens of Jacksonville strangled the child to death (see Chap. 5).<sup>161</sup> Angell was also known for freelance killing—it was remembered that “Angell, from his own door[,] shot a peaceable Indian who was passing.” Angell’s wife was described locally as “a half breed,” but her supposed Native heritage did not keep him from being an eager proponent of killing and genocide.<sup>162</sup> After Angell was executed for these deeds by an unidentified presumed-to-be Native person in 1856, he was eulogized locally as “a kind husband and father and an influential citizen, but an implacable enemy to the whole Indian race.” It is unclear whether there was evidence that Angell had been a kind husband, or if this descriptor was merely the standard pablum of pioneer eulogy. Whether or not he was kind to his partially Native wife, Angell was provably “an implacable

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<sup>159</sup>George Riddle to R[obert] A[sbury] Booth, Aug 21, 192[7?], Folder 2, Box 1, Robert Sawyer Papers, Ax 100, University of Oregon Special Collections.

<sup>160</sup> George H. Parker, “Short History of Josephine County,” March 1922 [np], p. 6, George R. Riddle Papers, Mss 1388, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>161</sup> Bill Miller, “The Ambush of Martin Angel,” *Medford Mail Tribune* June 15, 2009.

<sup>162</sup> Parker, “Short History of Josephine County,” p. 6; “Indian War in Rogue River,” *Oregon Statesman*, Aug 23, 1853, p. 2.

enemy” to Native people generally. His marriage, whatever it was like, did not preclude a racism so vile that it attracted notice even in 1850s southern Oregon (see Chapter X).<sup>163</sup>

Unlike local legends and news, it was not uncommon for Euro-American letters home to ignore violence against Native people, even when the writer didn’t have a stake in it. The letters of Clinton Schieffelin, sent during the Rogue River Wars, demonstrate this particularly well. Schieffelin and his brother Joseph bought a farm near Jacksonville in November of 1853, a few months after the close of the first Rogue River conflict. Unusually for a Euro-American resident of southern Oregon, and especially unusually for a would-be gold miner, Schieffelin initially appears to have hoped for (coercive) assimilation rather than mass extermination of his Indigenous neighbors. He wrote in 1854 “we never shal[l] hav[e] mor difficulty with th[e]m” now that local Indigenous persons were trying their hands at farming, with one such farm just across the Rogue River from his own.<sup>164</sup>

Clinton Schieffelin claimed to have nursed and fed “Old Jo” (likely Chief Apserkahar; see below) who was dying from tuberculosis in 1854—and later claimed that this act of kindness had saved the lives of himself and his brother. When Indigenous fighters killed Euro-American families along the Rogue River in retaliation for the Lupton Massacre in 1855, they spared the property and persons of the Schieffelin brothers. On October 9, the day following the Lupton Massacre, Joseph Schieffelin was

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<sup>163</sup> Miller, “The Ambush of Martin Angel.”

<sup>164</sup> Clinton Schieffelin to Jacob and Elizabeth [Berard] Schieffelin, Nov 27 1853, Folder 68, Box 5, Schieffelin Family Papers, WA MSS S-1401, Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT. Euro-American settlers in the American Pacific Northwest in the 1850s wrote about Native violence, but seldom Euro-American instigation. According to Laura Ishiguro, most British settlers in British Columbia seldom wrote about violence at all, instead “construct[ing] tenacious representation[s] of settler lives as banal and unchallenged.” See Laura Ishiguro, *Nothing to Write Home About: British Family Correspondence and the Settler Colonial Everyday in British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2019), p. 8.

stopped by “Ol[d] Sam the head Che[i]f” who “tol[d] him to go home.” Neighbors on both sides had their houses burned, and many were killed. Clinton and Joseph Schieffelin (and their homestead) were “spar[ed] unhurt and unin[ju]r[e]d.” Having shown a level of sympathy and humanity to local Indigenous communities, they were passed over during the reprisals that followed the Lupton Massacre.<sup>165</sup> The Scheiffelins, however, sided unequivocally with their Euro-American compatriots. With his White neighbors dead and American supremacy in the Rogue River region threatened, Clinton Scheiffelin joined a volunteer company on October 20, 1855, and took part in the Battle of Hungry Hill (see below).<sup>166</sup>

Clinton Scheiffelin never mentioned Euro-American aggressions in his letters home. It is unlikely that he had not heard about the Lupton Massacre or similar smaller incidents. Clinton Scheiffelin tended bar in Jacksonville, where the attack at Little Butte Creek had been coordinated; his brother Joseph had travelled through Table Rock Reservation a few days after the attack; and Clinton likely served alongside men who had participated in it. It beggars belief that Clinton Scheiffelin did not acquire some sense of what had spurred his Indigenous acquaintances to respond with such violence. But the story of the Lupton Massacre was irrelevant or unfit for consumption back home. Even to a comparatively sympathetic settler like Scheiffelin, the killing of Native people was nothing to write home about.

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<sup>165</sup> Clinton Schieffelin to Jacob Schieffelin, Oct 23 1855, Folder 70, Box 5, Schieffelin Family Papers. Original quotation: “I Du think thar is no 2 men in this valey but wat would of Bin kilde under simler circumstances, we hav lost nothing as yet, hour house is not birmt or Barn hour Horses + cattle was on the resurve and they wasn’t stolin Hour nabors hav bin kilde thare house Burnt + stock stolin and kilde While Joseph and my self is sparde unhurt and uningerd the only reason that I can Giv for our escape is that when olde Jo Sam brother was sick last Fall Joseph and myself nust him and gave him medison and vittles untill he did And Tom a nother brother past the winter within 1 mile of our hous and we hav gave him a grate deal he is our best Indian friend I think.”

<sup>166</sup> Clinton Schieffelin to Jacob Schieffelin, Nov 4 1855, *ibid.*

One of the few exceptions to the norms of complicity and silence was John Beeson, an 1850s Anglo-American settler horrified by the violence done to his Indigenous neighbors. The “mischief-making policy of Squatter Sovereignty,” he declared after fleeing Oregon in 1856, had allowed “violence and outrage... to a dreadful degree.”<sup>167</sup> Beeson still wanted Native land for himself, and hoped for a future where Native people rejected their culture and their past. But he was horrified that for so many of his fellow pioneers, Native people “came to be thought of as game to be shot, or vermin to be destroyed,” and were “shot whenever it could be done with safety to the shooter.”<sup>168</sup> In his self-published *Plea for the Indians*—one of the most vital sources on Oregon pioneer violence in the era—Beeson suggested that many Euro-Americans in southern Oregon were like him dismayed by calls for mass extermination, but were intimidated into keeping silent.<sup>169</sup> John Beeson had to flee out of fear that he would be lynched for his protests.<sup>170</sup> His son Welborn Beeson stayed, and fought alongside the volunteers his father decried. Perhaps Welborn felt he had to.<sup>171</sup>

Proclaimed friendship with “the Indians” did not preclude mass killings. Such claims may often have been latter-day fabrications or exaggerations. Joseph Lane trumpeted his friendship and honesty in dealing with Native people in the late 1870s, but

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<sup>167</sup> John Beeson to the Editors of *True Californian*, n.d. (1856?), taken from <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/beeson.html>.

<sup>168</sup> Beeson, *A Plea for the Indians*, quotations on pp. 17, 25. Beeson, like other White American writers, also argued that the murders he discussed should be stopped in the interest of “self-preservation and self-protection.” *Ibid*, p. 18.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 48 – 49.

<sup>170</sup> John Beeson, “To My Family and Friends in Rogue River Valley,” *Oregon Argus* June 21, 1856, taken from <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/beeson.html>.

<sup>171</sup> John K. Lamerick, who despised John Beeson as “a monomaniac on the subject of slavery [who] considers the negro or Indians better than whites,” remembered that Beeson “was drove out of Rogue River Valley for his lying.” It is unclear whether Lamerick himself was involved in the driving. John K. Lamerick to Joseph Lane, Sept 22, 1856, taken from <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/jolaneletters.html>.

had run for office in the 1850s on his record as an Indian fighter, cracked jokes about sexually assaulting Native women, and commended mass killings of Indigenous people by other military officials. His sometime focus on positive and honest relations with Native peoples in his old age was likely a reaction to the sordid reputation he had acquired during the Civil War as a Confederate sympathizer. But it may have been one-sidedly accurate. Perhaps, as his family remembered, Joe Lane *was* seen as a friend when he persuaded local leader Apserkahar to stand down at the close of the 1853 Rogue River War. Perhaps Apserkahar did take the name “Chief Joe” to mark the occasion, as a sign of esteem.<sup>172</sup> And perhaps, even, that perception of friendship survived among some of Apserkahar’s followers after their leader died of disease and wanton violence from White settlers pushed them into an even more costly war, and after the trails of tears that followed (see Chapter V). But that friendship was not reciprocated. Joseph Lane was a staunch supporter of Indian killing and Indian killers; he may have been a friend *of* the Indians, but he was not a friend *to* them. Rather, as he said in Congress and (perhaps) in church, Joseph Lane believed that “the Inj\_ns should be skulped” [sic].<sup>173</sup>

And there were others like him. Late in life, James Twogood wrote about his time as a miner and tavern keeper in southern Oregon in the early 1850s. He claimed unusual friendship with local Native people. “I made the Indians a special study,” he wrote in 1897, “[I]earned some of their language. It pleased them; were quite friendly; seemed to like me and I do not think they would have killed me, from the fact that they had plenty

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<sup>172</sup> Marc James Carpenter, “‘Justice and Fair Play for the American Indian’: Harry Lane, Robert Hamilton, and a Vision of Native American Modernity,” *Pacific Historical Review* 87:2 (2018), pp. 305 – 332, esp. pp. 314 – 315; cf. Nathan Douthit, *Uncertain Encounters: Indians and Whites at Peace and War in Southern Oregon, 1820s – 1860s* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2002), esp. pp. 69 – 77; Nathan Douthit, “Joseph Lane and the Rogue River Indians: Personal Relations across a Cultural Divide,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 95:4 (1994/1995), pp. 472 – 515.

<sup>173</sup> James W. Nesmith to Jesse Applegate, Jan 18, 1859, Folder 1, Box 3, James W. Nesmith Papers.

of chance.”<sup>174</sup> This perception of friendship, he claimed, made him slow to realize the breadth of the Rogue River War in 1855. If true, this required some mental dexterity on Twogood’s part, for he knew of numerous instances of Euro-American violence in the period.<sup>175</sup>

Indeed, Twogood’s transition from miner to tavern keeper was enabled by a massacre. In 1853, shortly after Lane negotiated the treaty that (briefly) halted the Rogue River War, a group of Euro-American men led by a tavernkeeper named Bates lured a group of Indigenous people who lived along Grave Creek into his tavern for a meal and conversation, barred the door, murdered them, then buried them all in a mass grave. The number of dead were unknown—perhaps a few dozen. Bates decorated his tavern with the severed head of an Indigenous man; whether from this incident or another is uncertain. Bates left to seek his fortune in South America shortly after the killings, and Twogood took over his tavern. It is not known why Bates left—whether he felt under threat by the few remaining relatives of those he had murdered, or simply wanted to seek greener pastures. Whether he left up or took down Bates’s grisly decorations, Twogood almost certainly knew what had happened. But he made no mention of any of this in his reminiscences.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> James Twogood to Dudley & Michener, Nov 10, 1897, p. 11, James Henry Twogood papers, 1888-1910, Graff 4224, Newberry Library Special Collections.

<sup>175</sup> James Twogood, [Untitled Reminiscence], p. 7 [“I was not frightened a little bit for I did not think it possible that the R\_dsk\_ns wer on the War path, knowing them all as well as I did”], James Henry Twogood Papers.

<sup>176</sup> Matthew P. Deady, “Southern Oregon Names and Events,” *Transactions of the Eleventh Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1883* (Salem, Ore.: E.M. Waite, 1884), pp. 23 – 24. Deady claimed Captain John K. Lamerick and other unnamed parties as his sources for the events. He saw a severed head hung at the Bates House himself, and thought it was from an incident wherein an Indigenous hostage had been compelled to kill a member of a rival band, only to be slain himself upon bringing back the demanded head. These events bear a striking resemblance to the murder of (likely) Ka’hosadi Shasta leader “Bill” in 1854; whether Deady was conflating killings or describing a separate discrete event is unclear. See Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee*, 202 – 203.

James H. Twogood was a friend to the killers, not the Indians. Describing the 1855 Lupton Massacre as a counterattack responding to depredations by Native people (which he said had been led by Chief Joe [Apserkahar], widely known in southern Oregon to have died in 1854), Twogood wrote:

a company of volunteers... under command of my good friend, Major Lupton... attacked the Indians Sunday morning, October 9. Quite a number of whites were wounded, and Major Lupton was shot through with an arrow that proved fatal.<sup>177</sup>

This account from Twogood was published in 1910, so perhaps his memory had been distorted. But it is nonetheless striking that the Native deaths disappeared entirely from his narration.

Twogood certainly remained cognizant of the exterminatory intent of his fellows. Writing decades later about his experiences as a volunteer soldier, Twogood painted a vivid picture of his fellow pioneers on the eve of the Battle of Hungry Hill (which took place on October 31, 1855). They were hoping to pull off an attack similar to the Lupton Massacre along Grave Creek, to

start down the creek as soon as it got dark in order to be near them and take them by surprise about daylight the next morning. Squaws and p\_p[ ]s\_s were with them, and they should shoot everything they came to, regardless; for nits bred lice etc....

Scalps were what they were bound to have.... I pitied every one of them, thinks I- if you had lived with those Inj\_ns for four years, knew them as I know them,

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<sup>177</sup> Broadside, “Reminiscences of the First Settlements of Southern Oregon Early Times in Idaho and a Few of Idaho’s Pioneers’ The Upbuilders of the Territory with Brief Reminiscences of a Few Good Friends of Olden Times—First Gold Discoveries North of California—By ‘Uncle Jimmy, Twogood,” James Henry Twogood Papers.

you'd not be quite so fierce, and what was the result? ....Mr. Injin... ran the whole shooting match back to camp.... not over 4 or 5 Indians killed; but s[o]me 30 Whites killed and wounded  
And not a scalp brought into camp.<sup>178</sup>

As Jimmy Twogood remembered (and as scholar Mark Axel Tveskov has proven), volunteers at the Battle of Hungry Hill had been intent on mass murder, but were instead routed. They had been intent on genocide, on killing all the Native people they found, down to the children (because “nits bred lice etc”). Superior Native strategy and skill outweighed the significant numerical advantage of the volunteers. The prevalence of racism and cowardice among the Euro-Americans also played a role—the former prompted a too-hasty charge, the latter a quick retreat. But the rank incompetence of the volunteer forces should not obscure their deadly purpose. The volunteers attempted indiscriminate murder, and in this instance they failed.<sup>179</sup> At other times and places they succeeded—usually at a smaller scale, when they possessed even greater disproportionate force than they had in the Battle of Hungry Hill. The site of the 1851 lynching at Wolf Creek was within a day’s ride of battle. There were likely other such attacks.

It is possible that some Native people did think of “Uncle Jimmy” Twogood as friendly (at least by comparison to other Euro-Americans), and that he fooled them into

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<sup>178</sup> James Twogood to Dudley & Michener, Nov 10, 1897, pp. 10 - 11, James Henry Twogood Papers.

<sup>179</sup> Mark Axel Tveskov, “A ‘Most Disastrous Affair’: The Battle of Hungry Hill, Historical Memory, and the Rogue River War,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 118:1 (Spring 2017), pp. 42 – 73. Reporting on Tveskov’s work has somehow included the claim that the Battle of Hungry Hill was a key factor in the push to forcibly remove the Native population of southern Oregon, which Tveskov does not claim and the historical evidence does not support. See Jude Isabella, “Site of a Forgotten War,” *Archaeology* (January/February 2013), <https://www.archaeology.org/issues/60-1301/trenches/312-battle-hungry-hill-oregon>. On the more general tendency for American incompetence and Native success to obscure genocidal intent from the former, see Ostler, *Surviving Genocide*, pp. 121 – 122; Benjamin Madley, “California and Oregon’s Modoc Indians: How Indigenous Resistance Camouflages Genocide in Colonial Histories,” *Colonial Genocide in Indigenous North America*, eds. Andrew Woolford, Jeff Benvenuto, and Alexander Laban Hinton (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2014), pp. 95 – 130.



thinking that friendship was genuine. It is likely that Twogood did have some knowledge of Native language—or at least a grasp of the simplified version of Chinook Jargon used by Americans. But familiarity with people or culture does not always breed sympathy. It is quite clear that Twogood’s sympathies were with the exterminators, from his “good friend” Lupton down. And Twogood, like most of contemporaries, spoke of “Indians” rather than individual ethnies. Like Joseph Lane, he may have been a “friend of the Indians,” but it is unlikely he was much of a friend *to* them—though he may have wanted to be remembered as one later in life. In an 1856 letter to Joseph Lane, James Twogood expressed his abhorrence for so-called “friendly Indians” in a letter attacking those who critiqued southern Oregon generally or the Lupton Massacre specifically:

[S]ir, I do believe in *nine cases out of ten* it is th[ese] *good Indians, these pets*, that have learned the manners and customs of the whites and have always been well treated, it is these *very pets*, sir, that are the ringleaders of these marauding parties. And then they have [a] peculiar way of expressing their thanks to their benefactors by shooting them down without a moment's warning. If the people in the States were really aware what *grateful beings* our *good Indians* are I don't think they would be quite *so free* in expressing their sympathies in behalf of the *poor Indian*.<sup>180</sup>

In 1897, around 30 years later, “Uncle Jimmy” Twogood claimed friendship with “the Indians.” He was lying to his interlocutors, deceiving himself, and/or possessed of an unusual definition of “friendship.” He stood with the killers.

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<sup>180</sup> James H. Twogood to Joseph Lane, June 20, 1856, taken from <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/jolaneletters.html>.

There were innumerable killings outside of battles and famous events. Often only casual mentions persist in the historical record. When Captain Edward O.C. Ord marched through the Chetcoe River region of southwest Oregon in March of 1856, he mentioned in passing in his diary that there had been “2 sq\_\_ws killed here lately—on suspicion.” This was treated as unremarkable and common. A few days later he killed some more Native women, either as participants or collateral damage in an attack, and gave no count of how many. Such killings would seldom make their way to a military report.<sup>181</sup>

Americans’ belief in a vast race war could help to create one. Decades after events, John Hamblock reminisced about his role bringing news of a general Indian war to Port Orford in February of 1856. A careful reading suggests Hamblock not only brought news of the war, but that his actions led to its expansion.

Following another Native military victory on February 22, Hamblock had ridden hard for the coast. On the way he passed a large group of Native people (possibly Tolowa) coming home from a “shindig,” in a jovial mood. Hamblock remembered having his gun at the ready, recalled being dismayed that the Native people who made way for his horse did not step back far enough, and imagined that he and his horse had shared a moment of solidaric racism as they were passing. He was sure that he had escaped death only because the Native people he had encountered did not yet know of “the outbreak”—a war that had been going on for at least three months at this point, and arguably for much longer than that. The notion that the locals would not necessarily have been interested in an all-out race war seems never to have occurred to Hamblock.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Edward Otho Cresap Ord, “Diary of E.O.C. Ord 3<sup>rd</sup> Art U.S. Army,” transcribed in Ellen Francis Ord, “The Rogue River Indian Expedition of 1856,” Master’s thesis (University of California, 1922), p. 27.

<sup>182</sup> John Hamblock to T.A. Wood, May 1, 1896, Folder 35, Box 4, Mss 1514 Military Collection, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections. Hamblock had fled to America to avoid military service in

Instead, Euro-American volunteers brought the war to the region. A few nights after Hamblock brought his warning, a volunteer named Silvester Long was guarding the beach south of Port Orford when he saw a person he perceived to be Indigenous approaching at the tideline. Long shouted at the person, and they began to move away again. At this point Long opened fire, but was unable to kill the fleeing figure before they got away. The Euro-American volunteers at Port Orford raggedly mustered for an attack—although the boat pressed into service for that purpose capsized, killing eight men, including Long (an accident that Hamblock called “[a]nother hard strok[e] on the Long family caused by the disturbances of the indians”). Hamblock’s interpretation was that the person Silvester Long had fired upon was a spy, sent to single-handedly “do us up before daylight.” Hamblock thus presumed both that local Indigenous communities initially had little knowledge of a war that had been raging for months, and that the man Long had fired upon was some sort of commando ready to dispatch dozens in the dead of night.<sup>183</sup>

The sequence of events might suggest instead that Long brought local Indigenous communities into the broader race war Euro-Americans were waging. Local Indigenous communities had presumed, perhaps, that the war on the Rogue River need not touch them, that existing peaceful relationships would hold. Indeed, Hamblock’s reminiscence included his distrust for a local Euro-American man named Hinch, who had married into a local Indigenous community, and who was prevented from warning his Indigenous in-

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Germany—it remains unclear how much of his Oregon volunteer experience entailed actual fighting. Grace Thill, “Tablet in Coast Cemetery Relates Pioneer Family’s Role in Settlement,” *Oregonian* Jan 18, 1967, p. 16.

<sup>183</sup> John Hamblock to T.A. Wood, May 1, 1896, Folder 35, Box 4, Mss 1514 Military Collection, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections. John Hamblock’s focus on the Long family came in part because he married into it following wartime events.

laws to stay away from excitable volunteer forces. Hamblock assumed all Native people were simply waiting for their moment to attack the Whites, and people died. Such a presumption might have held water because of how many Euro-Americans were waiting (or *not* waiting) for their chance to attack Indians.<sup>184</sup> The ragged volunteers that mustered in Port Orford inflicted more casualties on themselves than the peoples they indiscriminately made war. But by March, regular troops were murdering Native men and women alike in the region, with the advice and encouragement of local vigilantes.<sup>185</sup>

Caroline Stumbo, who came to Oregon with her husband Hiram Niday in 1852, brought with her a hatred and perhaps a fear of Native people. She watched at least one execution performed by southern Oregon volunteers in 1854 with gusto, and was ready for disaster or violence after her husband died (of natural causes) amid rising tensions in 1855. She fled her home expecting (not unreasonably) to be murdered following the counterattacks responding to the Lupton Massacre in October 1855, and she and her children took refuge at Fort Leland, briefly the site of a battle that same night. As family lore had it

With the volunteers was an Indian scout by the name of Hank Brown, who walked into the fort and said to mother, “Was you scared yesterday when the Indians was after you?” She said, “Yes, Hank, I wish they were all dead”. Just then he threw seven long haired scalps into her lap saying, “There are seven good Indians, my part of last night’s fight.”<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.* Curiously, the war played no part in the pioneer commemoration of Hamblock in 1900. *Morning Oregonian* Aug 22, 1900, p. 4.

<sup>185</sup> Ord, “Diary of E.O.C. Ord 3<sup>rd</sup> Art U.S. Army,” pp. 27, 32.

<sup>186</sup> Charles D. Sexton, “Notes from the Life of Caroline Sexton Oregon Pioneer,” [n.d. but around 1926], George R. Riddle Papers.

Caroline Stumbo Niday took part in at least one later attempt to make the Indians “all dead,” taking up a gun in a battle along Cow Creek in 1856. Making war on Indians was also how she met her second husband David Sexton, who fought in the “Indian Wars” from 1853 to 1857—the year of their marriage. The War on Illahee brought them together.<sup>187</sup>

Samuel R. Templeton, a volunteer who fought in the Rogue River region in 1855 and 1856, remembered four decades later that his company had shot at any “Indian” they saw. A few of Templeton’s stories involved battles with well-armed groups. A few others involved shooting prisoners who were supposedly trying to escape (including “one of them we intended to hang if I had got him to the fort”).<sup>188</sup> And in one illustrative story

We was skirmishing down the river [the] nex[t] day [after shooting the prisoner] and saw an Indian on the other side[.] [W]e began shooting at him[.] [H]e fell down and said don’t shoot[.] So there was a canoe over there[,] so one man swam over [to] get the canoe and took three or four men over after him and his sq\_\_w and he had a purse [o]f one hundred and ten dollars in gold dust a pistol and some am[m]unition.<sup>189</sup>

The detail about the money and weapon Templeton’s company seized was probably meant to be condemnatory, with the assumption that a Native person could only have

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<sup>187</sup> Charles D. Sexton, “Judge Walton to the Rescue: Notes on the Life of Caroline Sexton, Oregon Pioneer,” *Lane County Historian* 24:2 (Fall 1979), pp. 55 – 57. In describing Caroline Stumbo Niday’s prejudices as “hatred and perhaps a fear,” I am in part taking inspiration from Laura Ishiguro’s reminder not to assume settler anxiety as an overwhelming driver. See Ishiguro, *Nothing to Write Home About*, p. 97. On shared devotion to genocide between the sexes among Euro-American pioneers, see also Mark Axel Tveskov *et al*, “Every Rusty Nail Is Sacred, Every Rusty Nail Is Good: Conflict Archaeology, Remote Sensing, and Community Engagement at a Northwest Coast Settler Fort,” *American Antiquity* 84:1 (2019), pp. 48 – 67, esp. p. 54.

<sup>188</sup> S. R. Templeton to T. A. Wood, May 26, 1896, p. 11, Folder 44, Box 1, Mss 1514 Military Collection, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections.

<sup>189</sup> S. R. Templeton to T. A. Wood, May 26, 1896, pp. 12 – 13.

acquired gold and a gun through ill deeds. But this detail also shows how they shot at and robbed a man (and his presumed partner) simply because he was an Indian, in the wrong place at the wrong time.

In December of 1855, Oregon Governor George Law Curry answered questions about volunteer conduct with whataboutism rather than denial. As Curry put it in a letter to Pennsylvania's William D. Kell[e]y:

You must not allow your benevolent feelings to prejudice your judgment in regard to our warfare with the Indians. You will read much in the papers about the War and the Conduct of the Volunteers which may seem barbarous and inhuman, but the truth is that the Indian on our frontiers who has so ruthlessly massacred our people, even little innocent children, does not possess any of the ennobling traits that marked the character of the aborigines who bordered the primitive settlement or colonies of the Eastern States. They are faithless and merciless, and the people of Oregon are as one man in sentiment.<sup>190</sup>

Notably, Curry did not deny the conduct of the volunteers, arguing (implicitly) instead that “barbarous and inhuman” conduct by volunteers was justified by supposed “faithless and merciless” conduct by local people—and that volunteer violence had broad support in the Oregon Euro-American community. Curry had attempted in vain to assert control over volunteer violence in the fall of 1855, and to disband autonomous units (like William H. Packwood's, in Coquille territory) which were spreading the war in Oregon. But though they had ignored his orders and committed all manner of horrors, Curry still

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<sup>190</sup> Transcription of George Law Curry to Judge William D. Kell[e]y, Dec 2, 1855, found in George L. Curry [Jr.] to Eva Emery Dye, Jan 1, 1927, Folder 8, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers, Mss 1089, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

defended even those volunteers he had briefly tried to slow down. Politically, excusing genocide was the only move that made sense.<sup>191</sup>

But was it the genocide or the infamy that made southern Oregon unusual? The War on Illahee between 1847 and 1858 featured recurrent tensions between federal and local armed forces throughout the region, but those tensions were at the highest in southern Oregon. Bands of Euro-American murderers appear to have been more numerous in southern Oregon (and Northern California) than elsewhere.<sup>192</sup> Euro-American reports of wanton violence were more common and more likely there. This is in part likely driven the fact of comparatively more violence on the ground. But there were also unusually sharp distinctions between U.S. officials and local politicians compared to elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest. The former were motivated to weaponize the truth of the latter's pursuit of genocide, if for no other reason than to avoid being blamed for—or billed for—the expensive failures of the war(s) in southern Oregon.

If, as men like Jesse Applegate averred, [White] gold miners were particularly prone to exterminatory violence, it bears remembering that gold miners notoriously did not stay in one place or profession. What they wreaked in southern Oregon they wreaked elsewhere. Where White miners went, they did violence—whether organized or not.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic*, pp. 140 – 141. On page 141 Rowe notes both broad support for the volunteers (citing contemporary newspapers) and distaste for them in northern Oregon (citing a work of historical fiction written in the 1910s). The former was assuredly the case, the latter more doubtful—though some may have both supported the volunteers *and* found them distasteful.

<sup>192</sup> Benjamin Madley, *An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016).

<sup>193</sup> David G. Lewis, “Four Deaths: The Near Destruction of Western Oregon Tribes and Native Lifeways, Removal to the Reservation, and Erasure from History,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 115:3 (2014), pp. 414 – 437; Kari Marie Norgaard, *Salmon and Acorns Feed Our People: Colonialism, Nature, and Social Action* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2019), p. 57; Madley, *An American Genocide*; Daniel Marshall, *Claiming the Land: British Columbia and the Making of a New El Dorado* (Vancouver, B.C.:

Miners might become soldiers, and soldiers might become miners. Indeed, desertion to try one's luck in the mines was apparently a serious issue in the Army's Department of the Pacific in 1854, with one officer suggesting that it be widely put about that "inducements to go to the mines are greatly misunderstood and overrated.—that there is probably more suffering among the miners than among any other class of people in this country."<sup>194</sup> This problem was particularly acute among the volunteers. Volunteer officers during longer campaigns of conquest in the Pacific Northwest expressed "strong doubts of their ability to prevent the desertion of the major part of their forces... to the min[e]s[,] very many of them having been old miners in California."<sup>195</sup> Many of the more notorious figures in Pacific Northwest wars, including Joseph Lane, were also would-be gold miners.

The notion that an onslaught of (presumptively White) miners meant violence against Native people was widely understood in the 1850s and 1860s.<sup>196</sup> A "stampede" of White gold miners to the Colville region of northern Washington from 1855 to 1858

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Ronsdale Press, 2018), chap. 5; Rodman Wilson Paul and Elliott West, *Mining Frontiers of the Far West, 1848 – 1880*, revised edition (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001; orig. 1963), pp. 202 – 206.

<sup>194</sup> E. D. Townsend to Lieut. W. M. Dye, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry, Benicia Feb 14 1854, Roll 2, Letters sent Oct 10 1853 to Apr 23 1859, M 2114, War Department Records of the Division and Department of the Pacific, 1847 – 1873, National Archives and Records Administration.

<sup>195</sup> Bion Freeman Kendall to James W. Nesmith, Nov 12, 1861, Folder 10, Box 2, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>196</sup> One under-studied reversal was the abortive gold rush on the Queen Charlotte Island, known mostly because the first American set of would-be gold miners crashed their ship into the island in 1851 and were captured by a Haida community and held for ransom, with the bill eventually paid from federal funds in 1854. Subsequent non-Indigenous gold miners also met Haida resistance, and prospecting on the island trickled to a halt around the time of the Fraser River rush. See Patricia Elizabeth Vaughan, "Co-Operation and Resistance: Indian-European Relations on the Mining Frontier in British Columbia 1835 – 1858," Master's thesis (University of British Columbia, 1978), chap. 2; Drew W. Crooks, "Shipwreck & Captivity: The *Georgiana* Expedition to the Queen Charlotte Islands," *Columbia* 8:2 (1994), pp. 17 – 23; Arielle Rose Gorin, "The Battle for the Pacific Northwest Borderlands after the Oregon Treaty," PhD dissertation (Yale University, 2018), chap. 1.



precipitated and continued wars there.<sup>197</sup> Another stampede of White gold miners in the Fraser River area in 1857 and 1858 brought mayhem and murder further north.<sup>198</sup> As one man pressing for the seizure of Nez Perce land near Clear Water River in 1861 put it, if “[t]his portion of the reservation” was not purchased quickly, “we will have the Nez Perc[e] at war with us. Miners can not be kept from that country. Indeed the miners are the only hope of every body here.”<sup>199</sup> White gold miners were known as prone to invasions and violence—which to many Euro-Americans was worth the prosperity they promised.<sup>200</sup>

One representative sample of the overlap between mining and soldiering would be the case of the appropriately named Andrew J. Miner. When Miner applied for military benefits in the 1903, he wrote that he came to Oregon with his only “regularly enlisted” service being “in [the] Missouri militia in the Mormon Trouble 1844-5”—apparently

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<sup>197</sup> Louis Wapato (Colville), interview by Jeff Wilner, May 15, 1973, Folder 9, Box 1, NW Tribal Oral History Interviews, Western Washington University Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Bellingham, WA. Quotation from Frank Teck, “Indians and Indian Wars” [np], p. 8, Folder 2, Box 1, Frank Teck Papers, Western Washington University Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Bellingham, WA.

<sup>198</sup> Marshall, *Claiming the Land*; Gorin, “The Battle for the Pacific Northwest Borderlands after the Oregon Treaty,” chap. 2. The same methodological issues around what is and is not a war—with the accompanying diminution of the importance of mass murder—dog questions about the existence and scope of the Fraser River War. As historian Jeremy Mouat awkwardly put it, “the Fraser River rush was a more or less orderly affair. Considerable tension arose between European and Native miners, culminating in a series of confrontations, assaults, and murders, but actual warfare was avoided.” Jeremy Mouat, “After California: Later Gold Rushes of the Pacific Basin,” *Riches for All: The California Gold Rush and the World*, ed. Kenneth N. Owens (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), pp. 264 – 295. Though Mouat does not define what “actual warfare” would entail, one might presume the lack of British Canadian government involvement. Mouat’s use of the term “orderly” here is harder to explain.

<sup>199</sup> James A. Hardie to James W. Nesmith, Jan 9, 1861, Folder 7, Box 2, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>200</sup> Although violence against people was the main concern of those Euro-Americans who feared reprisals, violence against (potentially beloved) animals was common too—as in a reminiscence from gold miner Ralph Fisk, who ended up entangled in the “Snake” War in 1864: “An Indian dog came down opposite camp across the river and set up a terrible howl for a long time, so one of the boys thought he would stop his howling so he took a shot at some distance away; he only wounded him, then he howled worse than ever. It raised quite a commotion in camp, especially amongst the women and children as they thought that would enrage the Indians, who would want revenge, and it so happened later on.” Ralph Fisk, “Ralph Fisk Relates Some Pioneer History: Came to Canyon [w]ith Father in 1864,” *Blue Mountain Eagle* March 17, 1922. The attempt to “stop his howling” may have been for sport as much as anything. Cruelty to animals was amusement favored by many of the men who ended up chasing gold (and other adventures). See Richard Stott, *Jolly Fellows: Male Milieus in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2009), pp. 22 – 24.

indicating he was involved in the Illinois “Mormon War” of that period. But Miner, who worked as a miner, noted several times when he “served as a Volunteer in the Indians Wars.” In the summer of 1854, when there was no declared war, he participated in a lethal surprise attack on a Coquille River camp that he claimed killed “sixty or seventy” Native people. He fought as an irregular volunteer in a Jacksonville militia that mustered just after the Battle of Hungry Hill, in 1855. He teamed up with “about 15 Prospectors” at “Indian Creek, on the Klamath River, in 1856,” and killed three Indians for unspecified reasons—notable, as every other incident of violence he recalled was connected to a real or imagined murder. He claimed to have been involved in a killing of “about forty Indians” (probably Ka’hosadi Shasta) along the Scott River that same year. And he was later involved in the Idaho portion of the so-called “Snake” War in the 1860s.<sup>201</sup> As an accompanying affidavit put it:

Miner [was] engaged in frequent fights with the Indians... Andrew J. Miner was a noted Character, and was well known among the Miners and frontier men at that time, and his reputation for and as an Indian fighter was well known among us mining men.<sup>202</sup>

More lawful would-be murderers in Oregon were open to waiting for the government to get rid of the Native people they refused to co-exist with. Robert Hull, a settler in the Mollala area of the Willamette Valley, wrote to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Joel Palmer about a dispute with a Native Mollala neighbor. At first, Hull explained:

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<sup>201</sup> Affidavit of Andrew J Miner, June 23, 1903, Folder 25, Box 29, Military Department Records 89A-12, Oregon State Archives, Salem, OR.

<sup>202</sup> Deposition of Lucian B. Lindsey, July 6, 1903, Folder 25, Box 29, Military Department Records 89A-12, Oregon State Archives, Salem, OR.

[I was] thinking to shoot him down, but I did not know whether I should be justified or not. I want to know of you whether I shall take the law into my own hands and shoot them down or shall I wait a little longer expecting to have them moved.<sup>203</sup>

Having recently seized land along the Mollala River, Hull saw no future with independent Mollala people as neighbors. Only two courses of action would be acceptable to him: the government would compel the Mollala to leave, or Hull would kill his neighbors—and he was willing to wait only “a little longer.” It is worth considering how many men like Hull did not bother to write asking for legal clarification before they killed.

Sarah Lauer (née Freundlich, Anglicized to Friendly) regaled her grandchildren with the story of a killing she claimed to have committed as a pioneer in the city of Eugene in the 1850s. While she was visiting with a female friend from town founder Eugene F. Skinner’s household, a Native man came to the house. As Sarah Lauer put it (according to her grandson):

a drunken Indian came in, and they were scared to death, so they felt that the best thing they could do was to give him more to drink. So they sat him down in a big rocking chair in front of the fireplace and kept feeding him booze until he just about passed out, and then the two gals just took the rocking chair and pushed it into the fire... He was pretty wild and they were scared to death and it was just a matter of salvation. So they “done him in” as the saying is.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Quotation from Robert Hull taken from Spores, “Too Small a Place,” p. 179.

<sup>204</sup> Charles Baum, interview by Shirley Tanzer, Aug 22, 1977, Oregon Jewish Oral History and Archive Collection, Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education, Portland, OR. I am thankful to Ellen Eisenberg for alerting me to the existence of this source. Though unnamed in the original source, I

The perceived drunkenness and Indian-ness of the murder victim was apparently enough to justify murder in the name of fear; no other act was noted or implied. The other story of Indian-killing with which Lauer regaled her grandchildren was even less motivated:

the other story she used to like to tell was there was a lot of turpentine being made in the hills back there. They would get it from the trees around, and there was one old timer there called Turpentine Joe. He would always go in the hills and come out with turpentine, sell it, drink until the money from the turpentine was used up, and he would go back into the hills again. So the story is that he was off on one of his turpentine expeditions. He always travelled alone. And he suddenly found himself surrounded by a group of our unfriendly Indians. He had been splitting a log with the wedge and the mallet, and he told the Indians that his honor was at stake. He would like to finish splitting this log and they could understand that. So he said you know, "I can do it faster if you guys helped me pull the log apart." So he got two Indians on one side of the log, and two Indians on the other side of the log, and he had this wedge in there and he said, "Now when I tell you, you pull." So when they were all set, he grabbed his mallet and knocked the wedge out of the log and he had them all trapped by the fingers, and so then he leisurely went over and got his rifle and got rid of them.<sup>205</sup>

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was able to determine the identity of the killer through a tracing of family relations and newspapers sources (in addition to the oral history, see "Administrators Appointed," *Eugene Guard* May 28, 1898; "S.H. Friendly Dies," *Morning Oregonian* Aug 14, 1915). The purported member of Eugene Skinner's family whom Lauer claimed had an equal hand in the killings is as yet unidentified (but was nicknamed "Mamie Kraus"). Cf. David T. Courtwright, *Violent Land: Single Men and Social Disorder from the Frontier to the Inner City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), esp. pp. 37 - 41

<sup>205</sup> Charles Baum, interview by Shirley Tanzer, Aug 22, 1977.

Whether a description of fact, an exaggerated anecdote, or a tall tale, this story demonstrated an extraordinary level of Indian-hating prevalent in one of the leading pioneer families of Eugene.

General fear and hatred of Native people was present in urban and rural spaces alike. News items of “Indian depredations” elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest risked sparking mob violence in Portland. Captain John Commingers Ainsworth, who ran a stern wheel boat along the Columbia in 1856, remembered that the “Indians as temporary help” that he had hired to unload the boat were unable to land safely in Portland due to “very intense” excitement about attacks hours to the east (which the Native people on board, of course, had no connection to). Forced to continue with Ainsworth’s boat after it had been repurposed for military support, these Native day laborers came within a hairsbreadth of being shot further up in the Cascades by “sentinels [who] had been instructed to shoot any Indian they saw.”<sup>206</sup> Many Portlanders joined Hamilton Maxon’s volunteer company, which committed a series of killings in northwestern Washington (see Chapter IV).<sup>207</sup>

The men on the Ainsworth’s ship were lucky to escape with their lives. After a group of presumed Yakama and Klickitat fighters attacked the settlement at the Cascades, volunteers and regulars poured into the region killing and scalping any presumed aggressor they could find. Their targets included local Native people as well as those who had traveled south for the attack. Philip Sheridan, later famous for his part in the Civil War, rounded up and imprisoned the locals. The volunteers threatened to shoot all the prisoners. Instead, a plurality were hanged by the military, after a hasty set of court-

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<sup>206</sup> “Ainsworth Statement,” pp. 5 – 7, Folder: Captain John Commingers Ainsworth, Box 5, Willamette University and Northwest Collection, WUA014, Willamette University Special Collections, Salem, OR.

<sup>207</sup> Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic*, p. 178.

martials based on evidence that ranged from flimsy to non-existent (see Chapter VI). At least one was provably innocent.<sup>208</sup>

The worst of the attacks on Native communities may have been in southern Oregon, but in times of heightened tension White violence was close to surface everywhere. Violence against Native people in the Willamette Valley and along the Columbia in the 1850s may have been less pervasive and organized than the violence elsewhere in the territory. But White recourse to violence was still very much a part of pioneer culture, and there are likely more wanton murders from the period lurking in Oregon (and Washington) pioneer archives and reminiscences—and many more incidents about which no specific record survives.

The Lupton Massacre became the most infamous act of a violent time. Later historians of the region had to reckon with a few key stories of horror. And Native histories kept other stories alive. But the cupidity, fear, and hatred so many Euro-American pioneers brought with them to Oregon led them to innumerable smaller acts of murder and violence. Within and between the famous assaults on Native communities in

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<sup>208</sup> Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic*, p. 171; Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, April 16, 1856, Folder 28, Box 1, Malick Family Papers WA MSS S-1298, Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT; Philip Henry Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs, of P.H. Sheridan, General, United States Army, Vol. 1* (New York: C.L. Webster & Co., 1888), pp. 81 – 84. Sheridan did find particulate matter in the muskets of the men he detained and had executed. He took this as evidence of having been in a recent battle—rather than simply evidence of less-than-spotless guns, which might well function without frequent cleaning by the 1800s. David P. Miller, “Ballistics of 17<sup>th</sup> Century Muskets,” Master’s thesis (Cranfield University, 2010), pp. 55 – 56, 100; B. P. Hughes, *Firepower: Weapons Effectiveness On The Battlefield, 1630 – 1750* (New York: Sarpedon, 1997, orig. 1974). Whether or not Sheridan’s ad hoc forensics were effective, there is no question that some men having nothing to do with the conflict were among the executed. See Cutler, “*Hang Them All*”, pp. 101 – 102; David G. Lewis, “A Startling History of the Cascades Indians, 1855 – 1862,” *Quartux Journal* July 24, 2016, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2016/07/24/forever-terminated-the-cascades/>. At least one of those executed, Chief Tumulth, had been a signatory to the treaty establishing the Grand Ronde Reservation, but were killed before they could travel there; this technicality led to several families being temporarily disenrolled from 2013 – 2016; see Amanda Peacher, “Tribal Court Reverses Grand Ronde Disenrollment Decision,” *Oregon Public Broadcasting*, Aug 8, 2016.

the era, there were smaller atrocities that did not make their way to the history books, recounted (with pride or occasionally regret) only locally or privately.

CHAPTER IV: “NOTHING LESS THAN A TOTAL EXTERMINATION...  
WILL APPEASE THE AMERICANS”: THE WAR ON ILLAHEE  
AT ITS ZENITH

Almost any story could be deformed into a tale of pioneer pride. Henry Van Asselt—a former Dutch Republic soldier, cabinet maker, and early pioneer in the Puget Sound region—once accidentally shot himself. In reminiscence repeated by his family, he turned the story of a self-inflicted gunshot wound into a performance of racial superiority, one that revealed a presumption of Native aggression.

As Van Asselt was returning to his hunting camp in Puget Sound from Seattle in 1854, he spotted a group of Native people nearby, assumed their hostile intent, and grabbed his gun to try and kill them. He missed, and instead shot himself in the arm. He remembered having been given the name “Sucway” (which he translated as “a devil, bulletproof”) among the Puget Sound Indigenous peoples, and (he claimed) was avoided by most of them afterwards. Van Asselt assumed this was because they were impressed at his hardiness after he had survived shooting himself; one might wonder if Van Asselt’s habit of attempting to gun down Native people for no other reason than proximity might have played a role.<sup>209</sup>

Besides the self-inflicted gunshot wound he insisted was a sign of his heroic prowess, Van Asselt played a part in more formalized killings as a volunteer in the Puget Sound War from 1855 – 1856. By December 1855, Van Asselt’s land claim was a staging

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<sup>209</sup> Mrs. Emma Jane Cavanaugh Fulford, “Uncle Henry Van Asselt,” p. 296 – 297 [1935?], Vol 5, Folder 5, Box 1, DAR Family Rec. of Wash. Pioneers, Cage 472, Washington State University Special Collections. There were other versions of the story, all involving Van Asselt’s self-inflicted wound purportedly striking fear into the hearts of Native people. Rev. H[arvey] K. Hines, *An Illustrated History of the State of Washington* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1893), pp. 522 – 523; Emily Inez Denny, *Blazing the Way; or, True Stories, Songs and Sketches of Puget Sound and Other Pioneers* (Seattle: Rainier Printing Company, 1909), pp. 322 – 323.



ground for volunteers under Captain C. C. Hewitt “out to hunt Indians” in the region—with Van Asselt himself as one of the “hunters.” In December 1855 and January 1856, according to the pioneer Eli Bishop Maple (Mapel), volunteers “killed several Indians” who were trying to flee along Cedar River and at different times caught “a good many scouts, whom we settled with there and then.” In other words, they captured Native people, presumed they were scouts for a hostile force, then they killed them. It is unclear whether the killings stopped or continued when they went from Hewitt’s company to longer service in the volunteer company of Arthur Denny.<sup>210</sup>

The killing of “scouts” and “spies,” as E.B. Maple put it, was common code in pioneer wars on Native people, indicating guilt by Indian-ness. Such assumptions of hostility are especially striking in northwestern Washington, where White pioneers were especially reliant on Native allies and mercenaries to pursue their war aims in the 1850s. But this strategic necessity did not preclude broad-based hostility, nor did it prevent men like Van Asselt and the Maples from trying to kill Indian strangers when and where they could. Volunteers and regulars alike killed “spies” on little evidence—sometimes with the semblance of a trial, often without one (see Chapter VI).<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Cf. Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities around Puget Sound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p. 87. Henry Van Asselt’s involvement in the killings of Native people during the Puget Sound War has not been part of his popular legacy; see Pat Brodin, “Duwamish Pioneer Served in Civil War Militia,” *Tukwila Reporter* July 15, 2013. E. B. Mapel, “A Short Autobiography of E. B. Mapel, of No. 316 Wall Street, Seattle, Washington, Who Was One of the First Settlers of Seattle or Puget Sound Country,” Clipping dated November 16, 1902, Clarence B. Bagley Scrapbooks, Vol. 1, pp. 38 – 39, Microfilm Reel No. A2254, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA. Eli Bishop Maple (Mapel) enrolled in C.C. Hewitt’s volunteer company alongside his more famous brother Samuel Adams Maple (Mapel) [The family seems to have used both spellings of the last name]. There is one sentence celebrating expeditions in the region (with no detail to speak of) in Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington* (Portland: North Pacific History Company, 1888), p. 595. Company identification taken from Virgil F. Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2: Washington Territorial Militia and the Indian Wars of 1855-56* (Tacoma: Washington National Guard State Historical Society, 1961?), pp. 91, 84.

<sup>211</sup> Lissa K. Wadewitz, “Rethinking the ‘Indian War’: Northern Indians and Intra-Native Politics in the Western Canada-U.S. Borderlands,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 50 (2019): 339 – 361; Henri M. Chase to

By and large, these off-the-cuff killings did not make the history books. The 1862 marriage of Henry Van Asselt to Jane Maple (Mapel), attended by famed Suquamish/Duwamish leader See-athl (“Chief Seattle”) and perhaps hundreds of his people, was legendary in the region. The arrival of both families before most other Euro-Americans, in 1851, is a staple of pioneer history. The killings members of both households attempted and committed in the 1850s have received much less attention.<sup>212</sup>

During the period of the War on Illahee, in the 1850s, there are commonly reckoned to have been two to three wars between Native polities and Americans in Washington Territory, all purportedly stemming from unjust elements of the treaties pushed by Isaac I. Stevens (see Chapter III). One, the Puget Sound War (~1855 – 1856), was waged against Native people living in the Puget Sound region of northwestern Washington Territory. The war(s) against various Native polities in eastern Washington Territory are often grouped under the heading of the Yakima War (~1855 – 1856/8+). These wars were waged against any and all Native peoples not seen as under the control of Euro-Americans. As in Oregon, many early histories and reminiscences combined these conflicts into an overarching period of “Indian Wars.” And they were fought as such—on both sides of the Cascade Mountains, the general War on Illahee accelerated into the individual wars named in history books when bellicose brigades of Euro-American soldiers pursued indiscriminate attacks in Indian country. (Mis)understandings

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James Tilton, July 31, 1856, found in Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2*, p. 57.

<sup>212</sup> Coll Thrush, *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2017, orig. 2007), p. 42; BJ Cummings, *The River that Made Seattle: A Human and Natural History of the Duwamish* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2020), pp. 29 – 30; Vera Parham, “‘These Indians Are Apparently Well to Do’: The Myth of Capitalism and Native American Labor,” *International Review of Social History* 57:3 (2012), pp. 446 – 470, esp. p. 452.

of treaties just or unjust may have given the wars some of their shape, and convinced some Native polities to cast their lot with one side or another. But ultimately, murderous White land-hunger was the driving force behind the wars in 1850s Washington, just as it was in 1850s Oregon.<sup>213</sup>

Some pioneer reminiscences and some historians propose a clear dividing line between the period of wars and a purported period of comity that preceded it. Because Washington Territory had far more Native residents than White invaders, because Native people were already much more a part of the workforce in Euro-American spaces than elsewhere in the American Northwest, and because the percentage of White people that had married into Native communities was a higher proportion of the Euro-American community than elsewhere, there was less violence reported than in southern Oregon or California. But less did not mean none. In 1853 and 1854, there were at least three reported lynchings by settlers in the Puget Sound region—and no reason to think that the mob violence that made the papers were the only killings in that span. As Seattle pioneer William Bell put it, in an unknown mix of reportage and bravado, “when an Indian would steal anything it was our custom to tie him up & lynch him” (see Chapter VI). In the Washington Territory, the few American trials of White men who had killed Native people in the 1850s ended in acquittal.<sup>214</sup> And many episodes of violence never made the papers or the courts. Fear of counterattacks from numerically superior Native

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<sup>213</sup> Cf. Jo N. Miles, *Kamiakin Country: Washington Territory in Turmoil, 1855 – 1858* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 2016).

<sup>214</sup> Arthur A. Denny, “Pioneer Days on Puget Sound,” 1888, p. 15, Folder 7, Box 1, Eloise Thomas Papers, Mss 1717, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR; Michael J. Pfeifer, *The Roots of Rough Justice: Origins of American Lynching* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2011), pp. 49 – 50; David Peterson del Mar, *Beaten Down: A History of Interpersonal Violence in the West* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), pp. 28 – 29; John Robert Finger, “Henry L. Yesler’s Seattle Years, 1852 – 1892,” PhD dissertation (University of Washington, 1968), p. 29 [quotation]. One also might reasonably be suspicious of the level of due process present for Native people in the state-sanctioned killings of Puget Sound Native persons in this period—see Chapter VI.

communities kept many pioneers from acting as violently as they wished. But plenty of White settlers in Washington Territory dreamed of murder, and planned for extermination.<sup>215</sup>

In this chapter I argue that the pioneer conquest of Washington was more violent than it has typically been portrayed. The evidence from volunteers in the Puget Sound War, especially, suggests a sharp break from previous scholarship, much of which has asserted the conflict was almost bloodless. I examine and deconstruct the historical binaries of “friendly Indians” and “unfriendly Indians,” and how the former could quickly become the latter for most pioneers at the slightest provocation. I reveal new details about mass killings, both the (comparatively) well known and the extremely obscure. And I survey the understudied efforts, in Oregon and Washington alike, to force nearly every Native person in the region—“friendly” or not—into often deadly internment camps in the mid-1850s. Pioneer violence in Washington Territory was more like that in Oregon than has typically been acknowledged. Plenty of White people in both hoped to pursue genocide, a dream that peaked but did not abate in the mid-1850s.

Jonathan McCarty, who settled on unceded Muckleshoot land in the Puyallup Valley in 1853, claimed to have fought as a volunteer in the Puget Sound region in 1856. In later years he would have little to say about his own actions in wartime—focusing instead on the righteousness of hanging the famed Chief Leschi “until he was dead, dead,

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<sup>215</sup> Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities around Puget Sound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), chap. 2. Of course, marriages between Native people and White settlers were a part of Oregon too. See for example Melinda Marie Jetté, *At the Hearth of the Crossed Races: A French-Indian Community in Nineteenth-Century Oregon, 1812 – 1859* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2015).

dead” (see Chapter VI).<sup>216</sup> But McCarty did reflect on and relish individual violent encounters with Native people before the war. Particularly, he remembered an incident in 1854 when a Muckleshoot man had approached his farmstead, asking if McCarty would be willing to repair a gun. Incensed at the request, and feeling threatened by the existence of a Native person with a weapon, McCarty warned the man off and would have shot him in the back and made “a good Indian” out of him had McCarty’s wife Ruth not intervened.<sup>217</sup>

Stories of near-violence were frequent. The Gischer family of Bellingham had the story of the family patriarch, John Gischer, so worked up over “many tales of the wild Indians and their ferocious nature” when he first moved to the area from Germany that he reacted to Indigenous night fishers at the stream near his house by lying in wait with an axe in the dark. It was only because those fishers did not happen to come close to him that bloody murder was avoided. If they had, one might suspect that Gischer would have framed the story for his descendants as one of righteous violence against an invading foe, adding family lore of violence against living Indians to the “humorous” stories the Gischers told of desecrating the Indigenous dead.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Jonathan McCarty does not seem to appear on the official rolls of any Washington volunteer company. The records may have been lost, or he may well have “volunteered” in a less official capacity. Virgil F. Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2: Washington Territorial Militia and the Indian Wars of 1855-56* (Tacoma: Washington National Guard State Historical Society, 1961?), p. 83. There are other McCartys on the rolls, so the issue may be one of transcription. See also Steve Dunkelberger, “Clara McCarty: Pioneer Woman Holds Many Firsts in History,” *South Sound Talk* Oct 18, 2017.

<sup>217</sup> Jonathan McCarty, “Hard Times in the Early Fifties,” *Tacoma Ledger* Sunday, June 12, 1892, found in Volume 4, Folder 4, Box 1, DAR Family Rec. of Wash. Pioneers; Mary Ellen Snodgrass, *Settlers of the American West: The Lives of 231 Notable Pioneers* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2015), 110.

<sup>218</sup> Percival R. Jeffcott, untitled manuscript, pp. 81 – 82, Folder 26, Box 3, Percival R. Jeffcott Papers, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Heritage Resources, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA. For the desecration of the dead, see *ibid*, p. 46 [“Then Lora Gischer laughed; for he had thought of another of his boyhood activities: The big lot of skulls scattered about the beach, with as many characteristic expressions on their deskinning features, could have told the nature of their owners, we kids thought; and acting on a hint, a few days later, we visited the scene again, this time armed with gunnysacks;

Pioneers and politicians were sometimes willing to distinguish between “Indians” and “friendly Indians.” But the latter category was always provisional, and subject to change. As Seattle co-founder Arthur A. Denny put it in his 1888 description of build-up of war in the Puget Sound Region back in the fall of 1855:

[N]one could be found to doubt the fact that the Indians were unfriendly. Those who, a short time before insisted that the [local] Indians were all friendly, would now declare most vehemently that all were hostile, and must be treated as enemies.<sup>219</sup>

Indoctrination about the natural murderousness of Indians was endemic from childhood on in the Pacific Northwest. Roxa S. Shackelford (née Cock) remembered playing with Governor Isaac I. Stevens’s daughters, from whom she was “inseparable,” in the 1850s. They were given a “cedar bark ‘poncho’ trimmed with sea otter fur” by Michael T. Simmons, an occasional Indian agent and eventually a chief architect of the internment camps set up by Governor Stevens in the mid-1850s, whom “*all* the Indians loathe[d]” (see below). “[W]e children got a great deal of pleasure out of it when we ‘played inj\_n’ + massacred each other,” Shackelford wrote. Even at a very young age, pioneer children got the message.<sup>220</sup>

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and filling them with those horrible relics of a long passed Indian age, we lugged them home, and mounted them, one on top of each post in our front fence. (What a Hallow-e’ en trick that would make in our day!)”].

<sup>219</sup> Arthur A. Denny, “Pioneer Days on Puget Sound,” 1888, p. 18, Folder 7, Box 1, Eloise Thomas Papers. Denny skipped over the wars themselves almost entirely.

<sup>220</sup> Roxa S. Shackelford to Eva Emery Dye, Sept 23, 1906, enclosed in [Edwin?] Bingham to Eva Emery Dye, Oct 9, 1906, Folder 13, Box 2, Eva Emery Dye Papers, Mss 1089, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. For the “loathed” quotation, see *Puget Sound Courier* Apr 25, 1856, p. 3. The assertions of a partisan newspaper must be treated with skepticism, but there is supporting evidence for the loathing of Michael T. Simmons by 1856; see Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi: Narrative and the Politics of Historical Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), p. 96. In earlier years, he may have been more trusted—see, for example, the changing opinions of Nisqually Tyee Dick, in SuAnn M. Reddick and Cary C. Collins, “Medicine Creek to Fox Island: Cadastral Scams and Contested Domains,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 106:3 (2005), p. 374 – 397, esp. 385 – 386, 391.

Nearly anything could turn into evidence of horror. Anne E.K. Huggins, a granddaughter of pioneer, history writer, and sometime Indian Agent Edward Huggins (see Chap. 9), claimed as one of her earliest memories “an old red leather bound volume of Catlin’s North American Indians—many a time my blood ran cold with fear as I looked at the lovely engravings of the blood-thirsty savages.” There is no image obviously denoting bloodthirstiness in Catlin’s tome; the pictures tend toward Native people engaged in foodways or cultural expression, not warfare. But raised in a colonial household, Anne Huggins apparently could not help but fear the images she looked over. It is unclear whether Huggins was aware of her own Native ancestry through her grandmother Letitia Work—though Huggins’s focus on the purportedly “flaxen heads” of her mother, uncles, and aunts might be read as suggestive.<sup>221</sup>

For many settlers, temporary friendliness towards Native people were predicated on assumptions of racial dominance. Jonathan McCarty (see above) clashed violently with Native people as he travelled the Pacific Northwest on various jobs in the 1850s—sometimes as a volunteer soldier, sometimes not. His own account of how he came to accept Native people as part of a community was a fantasy of racial dominance. On a claim made from Muckleshoot land near Auburn, McCarty came upon a Native person grazing a horse, attacked him, and (purportedly) held off five of his friends. Told by the local Indian Agent [likely Michael T. Simmons] that “if the Indians trespassed on my

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<sup>221</sup> Anne E.K. Huggins to Eva Emery Dye, Jan 20, 1904, Folder 15, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers; Cf. George Catlin, *Catlin’s North American Indian Portfolio: Hunting Scenes and Amusements of the Rocky Mountains and Prairies of America* (New York: James Ackerman, 1845); Emma Milliken, “Choosing between Corsets and Freedom: Native, Mixed-Blood, and White Wives of Laborers at Fort Nisqually, 1833 – 1860,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 96:2 (2005), pp. 95 – 101; Jean Barman and Bruce M. Watson, “Fort Colville’s Fur Trade Families and the Dynamics of Race in the Pacific Northwest,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 90:3 (1999), pp. 140 – 153.

rights to whip h\_\_\_ out of them,” McCarty now felt that his “trouble with Indians” was over, and expressed “good satisfaction” with them as farmworkers. While the specifics of his violent encounter may be more racist parable than reality, the core of the story was that McCarty moved from threats of “making good Indian[s]” out of near every Indigenous person he met to accepting them as workers only after he had established his own fantasy of racial domination. And pioneer perceptions could go the other way: when fantasies of racial dominance frayed, support for genocide might increase.<sup>222</sup> As in Oregon, newspapers across the political spectrum were quick to call for mass extermination—generally in the case of the Democratic *Pioneer and Democrat*, against the polities east of the mountains in the case of the Whig *Puget Sound Courier*.<sup>223</sup>

The hardening of genocidal intent and the fragility of belief in “friendly Indians” is notable in the letters of the Malick family, who settled in near Fort Vancouver, in what became southern Washington, in 1848. Various family members described local and regional events in a stream of letters back to their relations in Illinois until 1865. There were two especially frequent correspondents: Abigail Malick, the matriarch of the family, and John D. Biles, who married into the family in 1852 and managed many of their affairs through the 1850s. Both correspondents wrote of Indians on occasion, one of the only subjects beyond the immediate family and finances worthy of mention. Abigail Malick’s assertions about Native people got steadily darker over the years. Biles supported mass extermination from the beginning.

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<sup>222</sup> Jonathan McCarty, “Hard Times in the Early Fifties.”

<sup>223</sup> Mary Ellen Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic: The American Militia in the Antebellum West* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), p. 167; *Puget Sound Courier* Nov 16, 1855, p. 2; W. A. Katz, “Public Printers of Washington Territory, 1853 – 1863,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 51:3 (1960), pp. 103 – 114.



In her early letters to her daughter Mary back in Illinois, Abigail Malick stressed the friendliness of local Native communities. In a January 1850 letter meant to convince her daughter Mary and son-in-law Micheael Albright to come west, Abigail Malick wrote

We... haves aplenty of Indians here, and aplenty of white people here of all sorts; and a very pleasant place to live, and a plenty of soldiers here to protect them too, from the States. The Indians are very good here, there is no more danger of them than of the people in Illinois [spelling, grammar, and punctuation changed/added for clarity].<sup>224</sup>

Abigail Malick, anticipating her daughter Mary's fears and objections, assured her of the goodness of local Indians and the proximity of soldiers. Her daughter Rachel was more direct a few years later in 1852, urging Mary not to "get scar[ed] out of" the trip for fear that "[t]here is too many and the country is 2 [sic] wild for any such thing." Their calls to emigrate tapered off over the years.<sup>225</sup>

John Denormandy Biles was, like Abigail Malick, originally a resident of Pennsylvania, and had been deployed to Fort Vancouver as a soldier in 1848. He began courting Rachel Malick in 1850 and married her 1852. This delay was in part because the family patriarch George Malick did not want his daughters marrying soldiers (still seen as a disreputable profession by many at the time), and in part because Rachel Malick was 14 in 1850, and her family was skeptical of letting her marry quite so young.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> Abigail Malick to Mary [Malick] and Michael Albright, Jan 31 1850, Folder 1, Box 1, Malick Family Papers WA MSS S-1298, Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT. [Spelling, grammar, and punctuation changed for clarity; original text: "We... haves Aplentey off indians Heare And A plenty of white People heare of All sorts And A very pleasant place to live And A plenty of Solders heare to Protect them to from the states the Indians ar very good heare there is no more danger of them than of the People in Illinois"].

<sup>225</sup> Rachel Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, May 14, 1852, Folder 7, Box 1, Malick Family Papers.

<sup>226</sup> Lillian Schlissel, Byrd Gibbens, and Elizabeth Hampsten, *Far from Home: Families of the Western Journey* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 13 [Abigail Malick's birthplace]. "Death of Justice

Writing to his new in-laws, Biles seemed to take it as read that exterminatory violence was a reasonable response to any acts of violence against white settlers by Native people. Describing the three successive invasions at Port Orford in 1851 (see Chapter II), Biles blamed the (predominantly Tututni and Coquille) Native defenders for all violence, and wrote approvingly that the army had responded by attempting to “destroy all that tribe of savages.” As far as Biles knew, they had succeeded in that purpose. After a series of skirmishes, he told his new family, the U.S. Dragoons “come on the indians and without any hesitation began to slaughter them + killed every Indian on the ground about four hundred in all +c.”<sup>227</sup> The numbers were almost certainly exaggerated, but the sentiment was not.

For her part, Abigail Malick in 1853 differentiated the Indigenous peoples near Fort Vancouver from those fighting the Rogue River War(s) a few hundred miles south:

the Indians [here]... call us the Boston Teyes [sic], which is interpreted Masters or grandees. They like to work for us, both Indians [and] Indian Woman. The

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J.D. Biles,” *Oregonian* Sept 14, 1890, p. 4. Schlissel, Gibbens, and Hampsten do not meaningfully delve into issues of race in their coverage of the Malicks; indeed, they stick close enough to their sources to perhaps inadvertently replicate the families’ views on “Indians” and “Negroes” (both used without quotations by the authors in the text). Because their coverage also contains factual errors (the authors locate Port Orford and the Rogue River as north of the Columbia River, for example), I have not cited it extensively here. Discussing how “Negroes and mulattoes” in the Northwest were mostly “servants bravely named” p. 11; Describing mass execution as “the excitement of frontier life” p. 24; “war to the north with the Rogue River Indians” p. 31. Lillian Schlissel’s other text on the Malicks takes Abigail Malick’s fearful fantasies of murderous and cannibalistic Indians uncritically, ignores the various members of the families’ calls for genocidal violence, and misuses Toni Morrison’s work. Lillian Schlissel, ““They Have No Father and They Will Not Mind Me’: Families and the River,” *Great River of the West: Essays on the Columbia River*, ed. William L. Lang and Robert C. Carriker (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), pp. 112 – 125 (uncritical report of Abigail Malick’s fear of cannibalistic Indians on p. 116). Ironically, Schlissel uses a quotation about the “deep story” of America from Toni Morrison’s *Playing in the Dark* to perpetrate one of the things Morrison was critiquing. Morrison explores the racial disingenuousness and coded language with which White writers talk around “real or fabricated Africanist presence.” Without acknowledging that she was doing so, Schlissel deracinates the original quotation to talk instead about the disjuncture between the yeoman ideal and the challenges on pioneering on the ground, especially for women. See Schlissel, “They Have No Father and They Will Not Mind Me,”” p. 123; Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 6.

<sup>227</sup> John D. Biles to Michael Albright, May 23, 1852, Folder 7, Box 1, Malick Family Papers.

Indians are very good and kind here and they would not do any thing to the Americans here but the Rogue River Indians are at war with the Americans and the miners there, but that is three hundred miles from here, and General Lane went there to make a treaty with them or kill them all.<sup>228</sup>

She differentiated the local people by their friendliness, and their perceived subservience (included in her gloss of the Chinook Jargon phrase “Tyee,” or leader). Abigail Malick made this perception of her own dominance clearer in a later letter, responding to a note from her granddaughter asking what her Indigenous maidservant’s name was:

Her name was Mary; that is all. The Indians do not have two names like white people have two names; they are like negroes—they have but one name. She was a very good girl, but she could not talk English. She talked gorgen [sic?] Indian and that I can talk as well as they can. And she was very easy to learn to work, but I had a good deal of trouble to learn her to work at first, but the worst was to learn her to be cleanly but... she was not cleanly enough [for some kinds of work].<sup>229</sup>

These assertions were ridiculous, of course. The maidservant “Mary” undoubtedly had other names; indeed, it is within the realm of possibility that the name “Mary” was bequeathed upon her by Abigail, as that name appears to have been her favorite moniker.

Abigail Malick’s assertion that she could “talk as well as they can” was a fantasy of

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<sup>228</sup> Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, September 28, 1853, Folder 14, Box 1, Malick Family Papers. Original text: “the Indians[unintelligible] Call us the Boston Teyes, Wich is interpreted Masters or grandees they like to work for us both Indians or Indian Woman the Indians Are very god And kind here and they Would Not do enney thing to the Americans here but the Rogue River indians Are At War With the Americans And the Minders there but that is three hundred Miles from here and Genrel Lane Wint there to Make a treaty With them or kill them All.”

<sup>229</sup> Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, [April?] 13 1854, Folder 18, Box 1, Malick Family Papers. Original text: “Her name was Mary that is all the Indians do not have ~~but one~~ two names like white people have two names they are lik negroes they hav but one name She was A very good girl but she Could not talk English She talked gorgen [?] Indian And that I Can talk As Well As they can And She was very easy to learn to work but I had A good deal of trouble eto learn her to work At firs but... I thought She was not Cleanley enough.

linguistic mastery more than fact—hinting, perhaps, at the ease of mastery more broadly that she fantasized of. But these claims do show Abigail Malick’s initial willingness to embrace exploitation colonialism based on racially disparate labor—one might even interpret her comment about the local Native people being “like negroes” as stretching beyond the matter of names. Abigail Malick’s domestic servant Mary left in 1853, and does not appear to have ever come back. Mary was initially called away to help nurse a sister who had contracted smallpox.<sup>230</sup> The sister recovered, but Mary did not return (despite Abigail Malick’s wishes). Abigail Malick claimed in 1853 that “Indians and kannackers [sic]... nearly all died” from smallpox; Mary and her sister’s survival, reported in the same letter, was an unintentional reminder that “nearly” was very different from “all.”<sup>231</sup>

Abigail Malick’s limited tolerance disappeared with the wars in 1855. At first, she still differentiated between what she perceived as friendly Indians (the locals she interacted with) and unfriendly Indians (Indigenous peoples further afield). In June 1855, Abigail Malick wrote to her daughter about the first Walla Walla treaty council:

The governor [Isaac I. Stevens] has gone to make a treaty with the Snake Indians. And if they will not treat with him they will have war with them, and will kill them all off so that they cannot kill no more Americans as they travel to this country. And that would be the best way, to kill them all off. I recollect when we were among them that they were very saucy.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, Sept 28, 1853, Folder 14, Box 1, Malick Family Papers.

<sup>231</sup> Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, [April?] 13, 1854, Folder 18, Box 1, Malick Family Papers.

<sup>232</sup> Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, June 10 1855, Folder 24, Box 1, Malick Family Papers. Original text: “the governor has gone to Make A treaty with the snake Indians And if they will not treat with him they will have war with them And will kill them All of so that they Cannot kill No More

Abigail Malick hoped that the government forces at Walla Walla would attempt extermination, and thought genocide “the best way” to deal with a perceived threat to American lives. She followed with two examples of the “sauciness” she had brought up in connection to genocide she wanted. One was a Native man who had asked Abigail Malick for a pipe as a gift, and rode off upset when she refused to give him one. The other was a time when nearby Native people on horseback had kicked up dust near where Malick had been cooking. “[T]hey never tried to hurt us no more than to steal from us if they could get a chance,” Abigail Malick told her daughter. Yet the Indigenous polities along the east Columbia River having been “very saucy” seems to have been supporting evidence, for Malick, that they deserved extermination. In the summer of 1855, though, she still wrote that “we are here in peace and all as one with [the local] Indian tribes.”<sup>233</sup>

Her son-in-law John Biles made few such distinctions in his letters. In November 1855, having just been elected as First Lieutenant of a volunteer company,<sup>234</sup> he informed his relations:

[T]he Indians have declared war against the Americans and already much blood has been spilt.... Volunteers are being raised every day. Nothing less than a total extermination of the R\_ dsk\_ ns will appease the Americans.<sup>235</sup>

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Americans As they travil to this Countrey And that would be the best way to kill them All off I reclect when we were Among them that they ware very saucey.” “Snake” was a slur used to describe enemies by many Native polities in Illahee. Although Euro-American parlance eventually began to use it as a descriptor for Northern Paiute, Bannock, and Shoshone peoples, Malick here used it to describe plateau peoples like the Yakama, Palus, and presumably others. Slurs are flexible.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.* Abigail Malick recalled no actual thefts that were perpetrated—she assumed this was only due to the vigilance of her party. Original text: “But they never tried to hurt us no More than to steel from us if they Could get A Chans.” Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, Aug 12 1855, Folder 25, Box 1, Malick Family Papers. Original text: “we Are here in peace And All As one With Indian tribes.”

<sup>234</sup> John D. Biles was First Lieutenant in Company A, Washington Volunteers, Mounted Scouts. Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2*, p. 83.

<sup>235</sup> John D. Biles to Mary and Michael Albright, Nov. 9 1855, Folder 26, Box 1, Malick Family Papers.

Biles counted himself among those unappeasable Americans. In a May 1856 letter, he transitioned from cursing his own continuing inability to capture any “Indian spies” to castigating the U.S. government for trying to make peace. Any peace, he warned, would last

in all probability only six or eight months. Then [the Indians] will again Commence Hostilities with ten fold more Vigor. The policy of our Gen. Gove[rnment] is to treat with the Vill[ai]ns, after they have murdered hundre[d]s of men, women + Children, and laid waste thousands of dollars worth of property. At the eleventh hour they come in And give them Blankets for the murder they have already Committed And give a clear Chance for them to commence again.<sup>236</sup>

Biles (now identifying as Captain Biles) believed that Native people were inherently treacherous. Moreover, he believed in the dream of White supremacy in the Northwest, bragging to his abolitionist in-laws in the same letter that there were “only about half doz. ‘Kinky heads’ in this Territory. The atmosphere [here is] not healthy for them.” Whether he was referring the natural environment, the social environment, or both is unclear from the context—but his dream of a White Northwest was obvious.<sup>237</sup>

Over time, Abigail Malick’s attention to distinctions between Native peoples began to collapse into a hatred more like Biles’s. There were slippages in her generally sympathetic descriptions of local erstwhile Indigenous allies in December 1855:

[T]he people volunteered and went... and brought in all the friendly Indians. They were scared as bad as the white people. They said they were so glad that the white people came for them, that they did not know what to do. They said they did not

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<sup>236</sup> John D. Biles to Mary and Michael Albright, May 30, 1856, Folder 29, Box 1, Malick Family Papers.

<sup>237</sup> John D. Biles to Mary and Michael Albright, May 30, 1856, Folder 29, Box 1, Malick Family Papers.

think that white men cared about Indians. But it was not that they cared anything about them. [The volunteers] were afraid that [the Indians] would turn traitors and murder us all. For [the volunteers] all went war-like towards them, and if they had not come right along with them they would have destroyed them all immediately. And now they have them at the Fort and keep a strong guard over them.<sup>238</sup>

Malick reported that the local Native community still sought and saw alliance with local Euro-Americans, but knew that volunteers had gone in ready to commit mass murder at any perceived sign of resistance. It is quite possible that those she labeled “friendly Indians” saw the specter of violence just as clearly. If they did, in truth, proclaim themselves “so glad that the white people came for them,” such expressions were most likely tactical, whether or not they were genuine.

Native communities in the immediate area had experienced White presumptions and violence before. One particular vivid example appeared in the reminiscences of Judge William Strong, the commander of the volunteer cavalry rounding up Indians at Fort Vancouver. The events of 1855 were not the first time Strong had led a brigade of heavily-armed Euro-Americans into Native homes. Shortly after his arrival in 1850 and his assumption of a judgeship, he found that the sheep pioneers had brought to the Cathlamet region north of Fort Vancouver were being hounded by local dogs (presumed to be the animals of a Kathlamet community). Strong organized a vigilante group to execute Native peoples’ dogs *en masse*, and shared the story with his family later:

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<sup>238</sup> Abigail Malick to Michael and Mary Albright, Dec. 8 1855, Folder 26, Box 1, Malick Family Papers. Original text: “the people volentard And went At And brought in All the friend Indians they War scard As bad As the white people they said they ware so glad that the white people Came for them that they did not know what to do they said they did not think that white Men Card A bout Indians but it was not that they Cared enneything About them they Ware Afraid that they would turn traiters And Murder us All for theye All went war like towards them And if they had not came rite Along with them they would have distroyed them All Immediateley And now they have them At the Fourt And keep A strong guard over them.”

[Strong and fellow leader James Birnie] formed a protective association, and shot the dogs whenever they could catch them, until the dogs learned the trick of running into the lodges whenever they saw a white man around with a gun. This protected them for some time, until the sheep were nearly gone, when something had to be done, and Judge Strong, with a rifle in one hand for emergencies, and a Colt's revolver in the other for dogs, boldly went into the lodges and shot the dogs there. It was risky work. The inside of the lodge was all smoke and confusion, and the children and the Indians hid the dogs in the beds, but canine curiosity was too strong, and every now and then a dog would stick his head out and bark. Crack would go the revolver, half a dozen more dogs would break out simultaneously, and then it would be bow-wow, crack, crack, until the revolver was empty. In this way the dog pest was kept down, and the sheep were given some chance for their lives.<sup>239</sup>

When Strong and his men came to compel Native people to be interned at the Fort, some would already have known him of old—the man who had gone house to house, pointing his rifle at anyone he perceived as a threat, shooting his pistol into the beds of children to kill dog after dog after dog.

The dog-killing story tends to be omitted from more recent popular memory of the Judge. Instead, William Strong has sometimes garnered praise for not actively pursuing genocide in the region to the extent that other pioneers preferred. A group of

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<sup>239</sup> Thomas N. Strong, "How Whites Supplanted the Indians at Cathlamet," n.d. but possibly Dec. 1902?, Folder 14, Box 2, Cage 249, Lulu Donnell Crandall Papers, Washington State University Libraries Special Collections, Pullman, WA. A similar version of this story was published in Thomas Nelson Strong, *Cathlamet on the Columbia: Recollections of the Indian People and Short Stories of Early Pioneer Days in the Valley of the Lower Columbia River* (Portland: Binford and Mort, 1906), pp. 144 – 145. The key changes from the earlier version were the removal of the names of the shooters, and a change from "a protective association" to "an impromptu protective association."



Native people led by a man known as Chief Umtux/Umtuch (variously identified as Cowlitz, Cathlamet Chinook, and/or Klickitat) led a group to escape their Euro-American jailers, fearing that the White men would act on their expressed wish to attempt extermination. Strong and his volunteers hunted down the escaped prisoners—who had committed no crime. There was a tense conversation, and someone murdered Umtux in the night. Strong claimed it was “some lawless rogue”; some have since proposed the killer was Strong’s second-in-command Hamilton Maxon, given his murderousness elsewhere in Washington (see below). There is no record of any attempt to find, much less punish, the supposed perpetrator, and the murder remains a mystery. With tensions running high, Strong agreed that the Native group could have a period of mourning, and they agreed to return to the fort afterwards.<sup>240</sup>

Thomas N. Strong, Judge Strong’s son, remembered that his father was only just able to enforce practical peace over reckless race hatred among the volunteers and the people of Vancouver:

When the company came marching back in to the fort without any Indians either dead or alive and without a battle to report, excitement ran high and when it became known upon what terms they had allowed the Indians to remain, the excitement increased. There could be no talk of lynching, because the company contained practically all the fighting men of the settlement, so the women with busy tongues took the matter into their own hands, and when the company was assembled, appeared before it, and, in the presence of an excited crowd, presented

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<sup>240</sup> Strong, *Cathlamet on the Columbia*, p. 122; Harry M. Strong, “Adventures of a Pioneer Judge and His Family,” *Columbia* 16:4 (2002/2003), pp. 18 – 23; Scott Hewitt, “Exhibit Explores Why Battle Ground Had No Battle,” *Columbian* Sept 12, 2016; Louise Tucker and Don Higgins, “History’s Mysteries 7: Battle of Battle Ground,” (Battle Ground, WA: Battle Ground Library, 2016).

to the Captain a woman's red petticoat as a banner for his soldiers. It was a deadly insult and the company quailed under it.<sup>241</sup>

Notable is both the assumption of lynching as an option, and the shared bloodthirstiness of the pioneers regardless of gender. Women were here calling for vigilante killings as much as the men—Abigail Malick wasn't alone. As Thomas Nelson Strong put it, pioneers “boldness sometimes became temerity, their love of liberty license, and their justice revenge, and the wife of the pioneer was like unto him.”<sup>242</sup> The situation was resolved, according to Strong, through his father's manly calm and masculine violence:

For a moment matters looked serious, and there was every prospect of a general riot and a free fight, but the Captain was a man of parts and equal to the situation. With a white face he stepped forward and on behalf of his company accepted the gift. In a few manly words he told the women and the gaping crowd that they did not know what they did or appreciate the reason for the action of the soldiers, and assured them that if it should be the good fortune of the company to be ordered to the front that their flag would be carried into action, and if so carried would be dyed a deeper red before it returned, and then turning to his company gave a short military command. There was some hesitation in obeying it, and a tall, lanky fellow made some insolent remark and drew a bowie knife. That was enough, and with joy in his heart that his wrath could be unloosed and that he had somebody

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<sup>241</sup> Strong, *Cathlamet on the Columbia*, p. 124. Similar threats of having a petticoat inflicted as a brand of unmanly behavior had circled around Joseph Lane's bellicose peace negotiations in 1853, which were insufficiently murderous for some southern Oregonian White people. See Terence O'Donnell, *An Arrow in the Earth: General Joel Palmer and the Indians of Oregon* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1991), pp. 154 – 155.

<sup>242</sup> Strong, *Cathlamet on the Columbia*, p. 124.

besides women to expend his anger upon, in one bound the Captain was up on him [and nearly choked/beat him to death].<sup>243</sup>

As his son would portray it, only through an individual act of manly violence was William Strong able to keep the community at Fort Vancouver from turning forced imprisonment into mass murder.<sup>244</sup>

Abigail Malick seems to have approved of the imprisonment of the “friendly Indians” (a carceral policy being pursued throughout the American Pacific Northwest at this time; see below). In a March 1856 letter she noted the economic benefits of the war along with her continuing predictions of genocide:

[T]he volunteers and soldiers are a-going to kill them all before they bring the war to a close. Congress are a-preparing and sending soldiers here all the time for the occasion, and Governor Stevens has... told the volunteers that they shall have all that they take from the Indians where they are a-going besides pay from government, so I understand from all. And that will be great pay, for the Indians are very rich where they are, they have a great many cattle and horses, and [the volunteers] are a-going to take all as they go... the volunteers took the friendly Indians and brought them to Fort Vancouver, and took their horses from them, and their guns, and their hatchets, and are as yet keeping them at the garrison.<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> Strong, *Cathlamet on the Columbia*, pp. 125 – 126.

<sup>244</sup> Del Mar, *Beaten Down*, pp. 54 – 57; Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880 – 1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

<sup>245</sup> The perception that Isaac I. Stevens had promised volunteers plunder was widespread. Thomas J. Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram, on Territories of Oregon and Washington*, H.R. Exec. Doc. No. 114, 35th Cong., 2nd Sess. (1859), p. 98; Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, March 18 1856, Folder 27, Box 1, Malick Family Papers. Original text: “the vollen ters And soldiers Are Agoing to kill them All Before they bring they war to A Close Congress Are Apreparing And Sending soldiers here All the time fore the a oCation And governor Stevens has governor told the voulenteers that they shal have All that they take from the Indians whare they Are Agoing besides pay from government so I understand from All And that will be greate pay for the Indians Are very rich where They Are they have

Abigail Malick had a personal stake in these dreamt-of Native riches; both her former son-in-law Biles and her new son-in-law-to-be Henry Pearson were volunteers who might hope to share in the plunder. Indeed, it was Henry Pearson's success in the war that briefly brought Abigail Malick around on him as a suitor; she credited him with leading volunteer soldiers who had broken a siege at the Cascades of the Columbia (see below):

There were a company [of] soldiers there called the Shanghais, and they came with Lieutenant Pearson in command and they sounded their bugle and the soldiers took after [the Indians], and they ran off in the woods, and soldiers killing [and] scalping them as they went.<sup>246</sup>

While assuring her family that Pearson was “no soldier, only appointed a Lieutenant” (since a regular soldier would be too disreputable a match), Abigail Malick used Pearson's position as the head of a company killing and scalping Native people as proof of his bona fides. Pearson, she wrote approvingly, was “very resolute, you may be sure, among the Indians.”<sup>247</sup> A few years later in 1860, having come to despise him for what she perceived to be mistreatment of her daughter, she celebrated Pearson's death while on patrol in 1860 whilst accusing him of the opposite, writing “Jane's husband was killed by the Indians. That was good for him, for he would rather be with the Indians than with white people.”<sup>248</sup> Abigail Malick even filtered her own bloodlust through a racial lens.

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A greate Menney Cattle And horses and they Are Agoing to take All As they go... the volunteers took the friendly Indians And Brought them to fourt Vancouver “And took ther horsses from them And ther guns And there hathets And Are As yet keeeping them at the garrison...”

<sup>246</sup> Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, April 16, 1856, Folder 28, Box 1, Malick Family Papers. Original text: there ware A Compiney Soldiers there Caled the Shang hies And they Came with Leutenant pearson In Command And they sounded there Bugle And the Soldiers took after them And they ran of in the woods And And soldiers killing scalping them As they went. These killings were separate from the official retaking of the Cascades at Columbia; see Philip Henry Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs, of P.H. Sheridan, General, United States Army, Vol. 1* (New York: C.L. Webster & Co., 1888), pp. 72 – 84.

<sup>247</sup> Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, April 27, 1856, Folder 28, Box 1, Malick Family Papers.

<sup>248</sup> Abigail Malick to Mary Albright, Oct 31, 1860, Folder 38, Box 1, Malick Family Papers.

After writing two paragraphs about the tortures she would like to inflict on an accused child murderer—mostly incremental dismemberment and burning, with time to recover in between each step—she summed up her fantasy of inflicting a slow, agonizing death by declaring that if she were the governor, she “would be a real Indian in such a case.”<sup>249</sup>

Abigail Malick’s last mention of Native people (before her passing in 1865) was an endorsement of the killing of Native men and women alike. Writing in September 1861, as the “Snake” War of the 1860s was picking up steam (see Chapter VII), Malick assured her relatives:

Three companies of Dragoons are acoming soon.... they are afraid of them, Indians and sq\_\_ws are as [a]fraid of the soldiers as death, and I am glad they are afraid of them... If [the Dragoons] get after them they will give them plenty of powder and lead for their supper or dinner.<sup>250</sup>

Abigail Malick’s letter then transitioned smoothly to a discussion of her own dinner plans. Advocacy of mass murder was not extraordinary, and needed no space from everyday concerns.

The Euro-American habit of framing Native people as presumptively and broadly aggressive shapes periodization of wars. When writers of histories strive to put a start

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<sup>249</sup> Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, Dec 17, 1860, Folder 38, Box 1, Malick Family Papers.

<sup>250</sup> Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, Sept 1, 1861, Folder 39, Box 1, Malick Family Papers. Original text: “three Compeneys of Dragoons Are A Coming Soon.... they Are A fraid of the Soldiers Indians And Sq\_\_ws Are As Fraid of the soldiers As death And I Am Glad they are A Fraid of them... If they get After them they Will give them plenty of powder And Led For there Souper or dinner.” White women calling for the death of Native women (and men) was not unusual. Sarah Winnemucca, a Northern Paiute woman who worked as a scout for American soldiers in the 1870s, remembered a visiting White woman telling her fellow troops that they should dismember Winnemucca by quartering—“I would see the horses pull her to pieces with good grace.” As Winnemucca said, “this is the kind of White woman that are in the West.” Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, *Life Among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims*, ed. Mrs. Horace [Mary Tyler Peabody] Mann (Boston: Cupples, Upham, + Co, 1883), p. 168.

date on the Yakima War, they often choose the killing of Indian Sub-Agent Andrew Bolon by Yakama/Klikitat leader Mo-Sheel on September 25, 1855. Alternatively, some interpretations see as the inciting incident the actions that had brought Bolon into Yakama territory in the first place. Invading White gold miners had abducted and raped Yakama women (or attempted to), and were promptly captured and executed for their crimes by Yakama authorities.<sup>251</sup> Bolon was sent to investigate. Early Euro-American rumors matched the killing of Bolon with the eventual captured and executed Yakama leaders in the ensuing war, Kamiakin/K'amáyakin and Qualchan/Kwáłchin.<sup>252</sup> The two had advocated for war since at least the killings by the miners, and likely before, but their connection to the death of Bolon was a matter of conjecture and convenience. A Native eyewitness recounted in the 1910s not only the actual identity but also the supposed motivations of the killer, who was remembered as taking revenge against “the man who hanged my uncles and cousins at Wallula”—thus acting against Bolon specifically, for his supposed role in killing the Cayuse Five (see Chapter II), rather than Euro-Americans generally. In all versions of the story, the inciting incident for the killing of Bolon reaches back to one or another instance of Euro-American violence.<sup>253</sup> Yet the killing of Bolon

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<sup>251</sup> Granville O. Haller, “Kamiarkin [sic] in History: Memoir of the War in the Yakima Valley 1855 – 1856,” p. 7 [n.p., n.d.], MSS P-A128, Bancroft Collection of Western Americana. University of California, Berkeley Special Collections, Berkeley, CA; Clifford E. Trafzer, *Death Stalks the Yakama: Epidemiological Transitions and Mortality on the Yakama Indian Reservation, 1888 – 1964* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1997), p. 29; Alex Saluskin, “A Historical Account of the Yakima War,” ed. Catherine Arquette, compiled by Inez R. Strong (Yakima Tribal School, 1989, orig. 1967), p. 4.

<sup>252</sup> Ichishkiin name spellings, here and throughout, adapted when possible from Virginia Beavert and Sharon Hargus, *Ichishkiin Sinwit: Yakama/Yakima Sahaptin Dictionary* (Toppenish, Wash.: Heritage University; in association with Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009). Any errors or omissions are mine.

<sup>253</sup> Lucullus Virgil McWhorter and Su-el-lil, *Tragedy of the Wahn-Shum: The Death of Andrew J. Bolon, Yakima Indian Agent, As Told by Su-el-lil, Eyewitness...*, ed. Donald M. Hines (Issaquah, Wash.: Great Eagle Publishing, 1994), pp. 5 – 32, quotation on p. 26. Although Bolon had not actually been the hangman after the trial of the Cayuse Five, he was the sheriff. Jo N. Miles, “The Life and Death of A. J. Bolon, 1826 – 1855,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 97:1 (Winter 2005/2006), pp. 31 – 37.

was often framed as the decisive moment among pioneers, in history books and on monuments.<sup>254</sup>

But Bolon's death was the start of a war only because Euro-Americans treated it as such. Despite attempts by some Yakama leaders to resolve the killing of Bolon diplomatically, a contingent of U.S. troops led by Granville O. Haller launched a broad-based punitive expedition into Yakama territory bent on retribution for Bolon. To the extent that the Yakima War is separable from the broader War on Illahee, it was this invasion that marked the shift to something more like full-scale war.<sup>255</sup>

Granville O. Haller was a lifelong military man, taking part in the long war of attrition that was the Second Seminole War in the early 1840s, following with an assignment bringing government rations to Fort Gibson, Indian Territory [later Oklahoma], then fighting in the U.S.-Mexico War before his assignment in the Pacific Northwest. He was already acclimated to indiscriminate killing before his failed attack at Toppenish Creek (see below).<sup>256</sup>

In 1854, near what became Caldwell, Idaho, a member of a wagon train of Euro-Americans led by Alexander Ward killed a member a band of Native people (presumed to be Eastern Shoshone), supposedly as the Native man was attempting to steal a horse. As

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<sup>254</sup> On the multitude of start dates, see among others Ron McFarland, "The Battle of Tohotonimme and Sherman Alexie's 'The Trial of Thomas Builds-the-Fire,'" *Midwest Quarterly* 57:2 (2016), pp. 180 – 194, esp. 184 – 185.

<sup>255</sup> On historians reflexively blaming Native actions for wars, see Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indian* Vol. 1 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), p. 407 ("Hostile acts by the Yakimas and Oregon Indians... called out volunteers").

<sup>256</sup> Granville O. Haller, "[Auto]Biographical Memoir of Brevet Major Granville Owen Haller, U.S. Army," pp 4 – 5, Folder 1, Box 1, Granville O. Haller Papers, Acc. 3431-001, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA [Second Seminole War]; Granville O. Haller, "A brief memoranda of the Services and Life of Colonel Granville O. Haller, U.S. army, retired," 9 – 11, *ibid*; On supplying Cherokee in Indian Country, see Laurence M. Hauptman, "General John E. Wool in Cherokee Country, 1836 – 1837: A Reinterpretation," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 85:1 (Spring 2001), pp. 1 – 26.

both sides exchanged fire, the clash escalated into a lethal battle that left nineteen Euro-Americans and unknown number of Native people dead.<sup>257</sup> Haller led two punitive expeditions from Oregon in response to this violence. The first was a comparatively measured affair. After soliciting the assistance of a few Umatilla and Nez Perce scouts, Haller and his men, in his words, “invaded the usual haunts of the murderers, killed a few, and recaptured the clothing and other effects taken from their victims.” This was at least in theory a targeted response—although it is entirely possible that some of those they killed had nothing to do with the clash, and the “recaptured” items had been acquired by other means—like trade.<sup>258</sup>

Haller’s second attack in 1855, the “final punishment of the Snakes” ordered by General John Wool, was against perceived hostile Native communities in the region generally.<sup>259</sup> Haller began, according to Wool, by working with local Native communities—identifying (by unknown means) four of “the murderers,” and hanging them over the graves of Ward wagon train members. Then, on “patrol,” Haller claimed to have led a rampage through the mountain West. He ransacked fishing communities and “hung and killed” Native men in their own villages in the mountains—he estimated

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<sup>257</sup> On the so-called “Ward Massacre,” see Gregory R. Campbell, “The Lemhi Shoshoni: Ethnogenesis, Sociological Transformations, and the Construction of a Tribal Nation,” *American Indian Quarterly* 25:4 (2001), pp. 539 – 578, esp. p. 544; John D. Unruh, Jr., *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840 – 60* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993; orig. 1979), p. 189 – 190; Priscilla Knuth, “‘Picturesque’ Frontier: The Army’s Fort Dalles,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 67:4 (1966), pp. 293 – 345, esp. pp. 311 – 312; David L. Bigler, *Fort Limhi: The Mormon Adventure in Oregon Territory, 1855 – 1858*, (Norman, OK: Arthur H. Clark Company, 2003), pp. 82 – 83. In the nineteenth century, it was sometimes referred to as the “Snake River Massacre.” See Herbert O. Lang, *History of the Willamette Valley: Description of the Valley and Its Resources, with an Account of its Discovery and Settlement by White Men, and its Subsequent History*, (Portland, Ore.: Himes and Lang, 1885), p. 363.

<sup>258</sup> Granville O. Haller, *The Dismissal of Major Granville O. Haller of the Regular Army... and a Few Observations* (Paterson, N.J.: Daily Guardian, 1863), p. 35.

<sup>259</sup> General John Wool approved the expedition, but this description of its objective came from Major Gabriel J. Rains. The “final punishment” was anything but, as Army attacks on the multitudes of Native people they ascribed the slur “Snakes” to continued for decades. Quotation found in Knuth, “‘Picturesque’ Frontier,” p. 312.



nineteen people in all. Haller's killing spree was not a part of any war recognized by the U.S. government, though he listed it alongside the later campaigns of that year. In a way, after all, the United States was always at war with "the Indians."<sup>260</sup>

When Haller acted on his orders to "invade the Yakima country" on October 1, 1855, he seems to have imagined a punitive expedition similar to the ones he had mounted earlier that same year. By Haller's own account, it was his invading force, not the Native defenders, who fired the first shots of the Battle of Toppenish Creek on October 5:

[A]s we descended a hill to the bottom lands of Topinish [sic] Creek to encamp, we discovered the Indians taking position behind trees to fight. At the same time, a Chief on a distant bluff was making a harangue to his warriors, who replied to him with yells, and thus showed their positions and that they were not greatly superior in numbers. As soon as our mule train had come up and our rear was properly guarded, we attacked our adversaries and drove them off.<sup>261</sup>

As usual, Native defensiveness was read as Native aggression. The men Haller attacked were right to be defensive; he had come to kill them. He wouldn't succeed.

After they attacked, Haller's force was surrounded by Yakama and Palouse fighters, and he led a series of pitched battles and retreats. The size of the Native force remains unclear. Haller insisted they numbered in the hundreds—he had a source claiming 500 (which Haller glossed as "perhaps six hundred") in 1863. By the 1880s,

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<sup>260</sup> Haller, *The Dismissal of Major Granville O. Haller of the Regular Army*, pp. 35 – 36, 42. Jo N. Miles takes Haller at his word that these killings were meant as deterrent rather than revenge. The effect on the ground was similar, in either case. Miles, *Kamiakin Country*; Cf. Unruh, Jr., *The Plains Across*, pp. 215 – 216.

<sup>261</sup> Haller, *The Dismissal of Major Granville O. Haller of the Regular Army*, p. 38.

Haller's guess had metastasized to "2200 fighting men." There may have been a few hundred.<sup>262</sup>

Retreating along unfamiliar territory while under fire, Haller and his men were only able to find a way through with the help of men of partially Native descent, Scottish/Cayuse/Umatilla scout and doctor Donald McKay and Scottish/Ojibwe scout Archibald McIntosh.<sup>263</sup> Haller faced significant pushback from his men for relying on the (accurate) advice of his scouts:

Donald McKay was Cayuse Indian on his mother's side and the men with Haller were afraid to trust him for he (McKay) said he must have time to reconnoitre their situation and get his bearings. Some of the command were bitterly opposed and discouraged Major Haller trusting him, and said, "He was no better than any other damned Indian," but after several hours deliberation it was decided the only way was to trust Donald McKay.<sup>264</sup>

Many volunteers were unwilling to put faith in any person of Native descent, no matter their bearing or background. In fact, some evidence suggests that the volunteers survived with only a handful of casualties due to the actions of the men they fought as well as their mixed-race allies. Chief Moses, a Columbia-Sinkius leader who fought in the Battle of

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<sup>262</sup> *Ibid*, p. 38 ["perhaps six hundred" in 1863]; Granville O. Haller, "Biography," [np, nd], p. 4, Folder 5, Box 2, Granville O. Haller Papers ["2200 fighting men" in the 1880s].

<sup>263</sup> Juana Fraser Lyon, "Archie McIntosh, the Scottish Indian Scout," *Journal of Arizona History* 7:3 (1966), pp. 103 – 122, esp. p. 107 – 108.

<sup>264</sup> Roxa Cock Shackelford, "Major Haller in 1855," enclosed in Charlotte Haller McKee to Lulu Crandall, Jan 22, 1909, Folder 9, Box 2, Cage 249, Lulu Donnell Crandall Papers. On Donald McKay, see Lisa Philips, "Written Out of the Script: Three Generations of McKays," *Before and After the State: Politics, Poetics, and People(s) of the Pacific Northwest* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2018), pp. 179 – 206.

Toppenish Creek, implied later that he fought Haller's men more to "dr[i]ve them to the Dalles" than kill them.<sup>265</sup>

Haller and his men attacked the first Native group they found, then lost pitched battles over three days before retreating back from whence they came, leaving behind their supplies and spiking their howitzer as they fled. They failed badly, outnumbered and outfought, and with that failure set off Euro-American panic across the region of an impending "invasion" by the people they had just attacked. The Battle of Toppenish Creek (sometimes known as Haller's Defeat) is perhaps the best marker for the start of the—or at least a—Yakima War. But like most conflicts in the War on Illahee, the overarching cause not a single event but a Euro-American devotion to settler colonial seizure.<sup>266</sup>

Supposedly, the retaliatory force sent out after Haller's retreat found a letter Kamiakin/K'amáyak̓in had dictated to local Catholic priest Father Charles Pandosy, explaining the actions of the coalition he led, warning of all-out war, and asking for peace. The letter was kept by the volunteers, even as they pillaged and burned down the church. According to the copy that ended up in the archdiocesan records in Seattle, Kamiakin/K'amáyak̓in had dictated a message which identified the core violence of the American approach:

[N]ow we know perfectly the heart of the Americans. For a long time, they hanged us without knowing if we are right or wrong; but they have never killed or

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<sup>265</sup> "Big Chief's Will: Moses Gets a Yakima Attorney to Write the Legal Document," *Spokane Spokesman-Review* Oct 5, 1895, p. 8. See also Miles, *Kamiakin Country*.

<sup>266</sup> Army historians still sometimes prefer to call this a "clash" rather than a defeat. See Army Historical Foundation, "Army Almanac: Milestones in Army History," *On Point* 21:2 (Fall 2015), pp. 62 – 63.

hanged one American, though there is no place where an American has not killed Indians.<sup>267</sup>

Kamiakin/K'amáyak̄in and his allies recognized lynching a part of the American heart, and knew it had little to do with justice. They recognized both the lack of fair trials for Native people, and the lack of any consequences for American Indian-killers. Lynching was part of their cause for war.

It is you, Governor [Stevens], who has wanted war, by these words: The country will be ours from all tribes, all nations, and you will go to such-and-such a place and leave here your land. Our heart has been torn when you have said these words. You have shot the first gun. Our heart has been broken. There is only one breath left; we did not have the strength to answer. Then we took common cause with our enemy to defend all together our nationality and our country.<sup>268</sup>

Kamiakin/K'amáyak̄in indicated an (aspirational) unity of purpose, noting the shared wrong planned against all Native nations, not just Yakama, and asserting a common cause among Indigenous peoples.

However, the war was not going to start so soon, but the Americans who were going to the mines ha[d] fired on some Indian[s]... because they did not want to give them their women [and] we have taken the care of defending ourselves.... we can say it is not we who have started war, but we have only defended ourselves.<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> Edward J. Kowrach, *Mie Charles Pandosy O.M.I.: A Missionary of the Northwest* (Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1992), pp. 95 – 97.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*

Kamiakin/K'amáyak̄in asserted that the inciting incident of the war had been American miners firing on Indians after being refused sex. This was, he proclaimed, a defensive war. And he finished his letter by indicating his openness to peace:

Write this... to the soldiers and the Americans and they give you an answer to know what they think. If they do not answer it is because they want war; we will then, 1,050 men assembled. Some only will go to battle, but as soon as the war is started the news will spread among all our nations and in a few days we will be more than 10,000. If peace is wanted, we will consent to it, but it must be written to us so we may know about it.<sup>270</sup>

There was diplomacy and perhaps bravado in this letter—certainly Kamiakin/K'amáyak̄in's call for a united front of Indigenous polities against Euro-American aggression (and his estimation of his present and future troop counts) was more aspirational than descriptive. But the analysis of the American position was essentially accurate. Stevens did intend to take all the Native land he could, by force if necessary. And Americans did rely on wanton violence against Native people, in the near-certainty that they would face no real penalty from their countrymen.

Major Gabriel J. Rains, who led the American retaliatory force, claimed he had left a written response at the mission, and retained a version of it for posterity. Whether or not the message he claimed to have left existed, and whether or not it was ever received and understood, it expressed his genocidal intent clearly. In all likelihood, it was meant for his rambunctious men at least as much as the Native people he hoped to hunt down. It read in part:

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<sup>270</sup>*Ibid.*

You know me and I know you, you came among the white people, and to my house at the Dalles with Padre Pandosy, and gave me a horse, which I did not take... You came in peace, we come in war, and why, because your land has drank the blood of the white man and the great spirit requires it at your hand.... You know you murdered white men going to the mines who had done you no injury, and you murder all Americans though no white man had trespassed upon your land.<sup>271</sup>

Rains's denial of Yakama accusations could not have been predicated on fact. It would be impossible for him to know whether or not the killed miners had done what they were accused of—that proclamation was based on his assumption of White innocence and Native guilt. Indeed, his statement was internally inconsistent, denying that White men had trespassed on Yakama land in the same breath that he castigated them for killing trespassers. Rains's denunciation eventually turned biblical:

Your foul deeds were seen by the eye of the Great Spirit who saw Cain when he killed his brother Abel and cursed him for it. Fugitives and vagabonds shall you be, all that remain of you upon the face of the earth, as well as all who aid and assist you, until you are gone.

You say now, "if we will be quiet and make friendship, you will not war, but give a piece of land to all the tribes"—we will not be quiet but war forever until not a Yackima [sic] breathes in the land he calls his own....

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<sup>271</sup> G[abriel] J. Rains "to Kam-i-ah-kan," Nov 13, 1855, Miscellaneous Letters Received August 22, 1853 – April 9, 1874, Records of the Washington Superintendency of Indian Affairs 1853 – 1874, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, RG 75, National Archives and Records Administration, accessed via microfilm (M5, Roll 23). Originally found in Miles, *Kamiakin Country*. See also Kowrach, *Mie Charles Pandosy O.M.I.*, p. 104.

[T]he whites are as the stars in the Heavens, or leaves of the trees in the summer time. Our warriors in the field are many as you must see, but if not enough, a thousand for every one man will be sent to hunt you out, to kill you, and my kind advice to you, as you will see, is to scatter yourselves among the Indian tribes more peaceable and forget you were ever Yackimas.<sup>272</sup>

In this letter Rains threatened genocide against Yakama people specifically rather than Native people generally—although there is little indication he made many such distinctions on the ground, at least in Washington. If Kamiakin/K'amáyaḱin did get Rains's message, it likely rang true—the Yakama had been warned by Pandosy in 1854 that White men more numerous than “grass on the hills” would “take your country as they have taken other countries from the Indians.” Rains would fail in his quest to end the Yakama, but not for lack of trying.<sup>273</sup>

The War on Illahee escalated in eastern Washington Territory because of Euro-American invasions and attacks, just as it did in Oregon Territory (see Chapter III) and in western Washington Territory (see below). The common pioneer view that there was a general Indian War at this time was, in this way, correct. Across the region, bands of Euro-American volunteer soldiers made war on Native groups, who responded in kind—and who communicated to their kin and allies elsewhere. The broader context of invasion

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<sup>272</sup> G[abriel] J. Rains “to Kam-i-ah-kan,” Nov 13, 1855. Threats predicated on White numerousness were among the most common (and accurate) used by military figures in the Pacific Northwest. See, e.g., Frances Fuller Victor [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Oregon, Volume 2*, Ed. Matthew P. Deady [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888), p. 550.

<sup>273</sup> Quotation from Charles Pandosy to Bishop Mazenod, June 5, 1854, transcribed and translated in Kowrach, *Mie Charles Pandosy O.M.I.*, p. 78. Like many other Army officers, Rains combined resolute willingness to kill on behalf of White supremacy with a distaste for disorganized wanton White violence. Posted in California after his stint in Washington Territory, he wrote scathingly of unprovoked volunteer attacks and genocidal acts during the 1859–1860 “Mendocino War.” See Jason E. Pierce, *Making the White Man's West: Whiteness and the Creation of the American West* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2016), p. 231; Frank H. Baumgardner, *Killing for Land in Early California: Indian Blood at Round Valley, 1856–1863* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2005).

and White lies at treaty councils shaped wars on both sides of the Washington Territory. And even as more recent historians have taken up a more sympathetic view of Native actions, there is still a habit of laying the impetus of war on Native defenders rather than White invaders.<sup>274</sup>

The Nisqually leader Chief Leschi is central to most accounts of the Puget Sound War (sometimes known as the Treaty War or even the Leschi War). Many such accounts begin with Leschi's refusal to sign off on the terms of the first Treaty of Medicine Creek, and end with his execution after the Puget Sound War was brought to a close, prosecuted for murder because he had killed as a soldier during the war. But although Leschi fought the war, he did not start it. All reasonable candidates for an inciting incident come from the Euro-Americans who invaded his people's homeland.<sup>275</sup>

On October 22, 1855, Captain Charles Eaton led an expedition of mounted volunteers ("Eaton's Rangers") to detain or destroy "all the Indians [he could] find near the western base of the Cascades." News and rumors of Euro-American losses in the East played a role in this escalation. As a response to long-brewing fears that the Native polities of northwestern Washington would ally with those east of the mountains to wage an exterminatory war on Americans, the territorial government attempted to impose a

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<sup>274</sup> See the otherwise excellent Frederick E. Hoxie, "Denouncing America's Destiny: Sarah Winnemucca's Assault on US Expansion," *Cultural and Social History* 9:4 (2012), pp. 549 – 567, esp. 551 [Yakama "resistance—along with the intense hardships that accompanied the transition to reservation life—triggered a number of violent conflicts with authorities"].

<sup>275</sup> Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, esp. chap. 4. Although well-written, I have largely avoided two of the standard sources often used to narrate the Puget Sound War: Richard Kluger, *The Bitter Waters of Medicine Creek: A Tragic Clash between White and Native America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011); J. A. Eckrom, *Remembered Drums: A History of the Puget Sound Indian War* (Walla Walla, Wash.: Pioneer Press Books, 1989). Neither book uses thorough notes, and it is thus difficult to tell when they are leaning on untrustworthy sources or (in Kluger's case) engaging in creative speculative non-fiction. I have thus respectfully put both to the side except in cases where the evidence upon which they base their claims is clear.



carceral regime on the Native peoples of the region. As historians Su Ann Reddick and Cary C. Collins have shown, Eaton was given a free hand to inflict violence by the territorial government:

Should you meet any unusual or suspicious assemblage of Indians, you will disarm them, and should they resist, disperse them, and put any who resist or use violence to death, or send them to Fort Steilacoom in irons, or bound as you may deem best.<sup>276</sup>

And the volunteers meant to deal death. As Army Lieutenant John Nugen put it to Acting Governor Mason the day after they left:

I am happy to inform you that Fort Steilacoom is once more a quiet place... The Volunteer Company got off in fine order 2 1/2 P. M. yesterday - the men in fine spirits and apparently with a determination of taking the Scalp of every R\_dsk\_n who may be so unfortunate as to fall in their way.<sup>277</sup>

Their orders might have been to capture, but those in charge knew that Eaton's men meant to kill. They were also restive and resistant to authority, with most refusing to take military oaths or acknowledge the authority of the territorial government. James McAlister, a member of the expedition who had been a witness at the signing of the Treaty of Medicine Creek, was one of several who pushed for the company to ignore orders and try to hunt down Leschi. Under the belief that Eaton was leading his men in the wrong direction, McAlister struck out on his own and exchanged fire with a Native group he bumped into. The fight was at best a draw; after the initial exchange (that killed

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<sup>276</sup> Reddick and Collins, "Medicine Creek Remediated," pp. 86 – 87.

<sup>277</sup> John Nugen to Acting Governor Mason, Oct 23, 1855, transcribed in Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2*, p. 7. Other army personnel remembered something similar—see Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, p. 58.

McAlister and a few others, probably on both sides) the Euro-American force hunkered down in a defensive position, and the Native group they had battled with eventually decided to leave. The expedition that was purportedly meant to collect Native people had embarked with the “determination” to kill (and scalp) every Native person they found; their ineffective attempts to do so had pushed the region into a war footing. This was even clearer the next day, when an unidentified group of people (presumed to be Indians) killed eight White settlers, mostly non-combatants, in the White River area fifteen miles north of the initial clash. It is unclear to what extent these killings were connected. It is unclear whether McAlister shot first. It is perfectly clear that Eaton’s Rangers had sallied forth intending to kill Indians.<sup>278</sup>

Wanting to avoid the space constraints and expense of detention at forts, Indian Agent Michael T. Simmons (acting on behalf of the territorial government) instead managed the creation of a series of internment camps among of the islands of the Puget Sound. In October, orders went out to round up Native residents of Seattle (excepting Native people working for the armed forces, a category that included both soldiers and workers at places like pioneer Henry Yesler’s mill).<sup>279</sup> On November 12, 1855, those Native residents of the wider region not attached to military duties were instructed to

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<sup>278</sup> Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic*, p. 151 – 152; Shannon Bentley, “Indians’ Right to Fish: The Background, Impact, and Legacy of *United States v. Washington*,” *American Indian Law Review* 17:1 (1992), pp. 1 – 36, esp. p. 35. For James McAlister as a gold miner, see Cornelius C. Cox, “From Texas to California in 1849: Diary of C. C. Cox,” ed. Mabelle Eppard Martin, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 29:1 (1925), pp. 36 – 50. Rowe builds her narrative of this event from convincing primary sources. Some reminiscences from pioneers asserted without evidence (first-hand, documentary, or other) McAlister and Eaton had come in peace and been attacked without warning or provocation; see Urban E. Hicks, *Yakima and Klickitat Indian Wars, 1855 and 1856* (Portland, OR: Himes the Printer, 1886), pp. 5 – 6. Historical accounts often end up in the middle—see Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, pp 58 – 59, 162 – 163. Though numerous pioneer accounts recalled McAllister as a “friend of the Indians,” evidence of this friendship has not yet been established concretely—and many seem rather instead to establish familiarity with Leschi, which does not in itself indicate friendship. See James Longmire, “Narrative of James Longmire, A Pioneer of 1853 (Concluded),” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 23:2 (1932), pp. 138 – 150, esp. 144.

<sup>279</sup> Lorraine McConaghy, “The Old Navy in the Pacific West: Naval Discipline in Seattle, 1855 – 1856,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 98:1 (Winter 2006/2007), pp. 18 – 28.

report to these makeshift island camps, each run by a Euro-American citizen volunteer. The details of the internment camps across the Pacific Northwest remain hazy and deserve further research. Cecilia Svinth Carpenter's study of just the camp on Fox Island suggested 720 Native people were interned there, with over 100 dying in 1856.<sup>280</sup> Isaac I. Stevens claimed to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs that he had 4000 Native people as "submissive and unconditional prisoners" just in the Puget Sound Region—although his perception of "submission" and perhaps his enumeration were overstated.<sup>281</sup> And there were smaller camps elsewhere, along with "friendly Indians" outright imprisoned at forts, like those Judge Strong had forced into incarceration (see above). It is clear there were thousands of Native people living in the camps, under sometimes appalling conditions and the constant threat of an outbreak of White violence. It is also clear that many other Native people avoided the camps.<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>280</sup> Cecilia Svinth Carpenter, *Tears of Internment: The Indian History of Fox Island and the Puget Sound War* (Tacoma: Tahoma Research Services, 1996), pp. 45, 75.

<sup>281</sup> Isaac I. Stevens differentiated the 4000 that "were moved from the war ground on the Sound" from his overall claim of having to feed "5,350 Indians." This number may have been accurate, but it was attached to a request for more government funding—it is possible that pecuniary interests may have led Stevens to a maximal estimate. Although Stevens describes a broad policy of internment in this letter, it is possible that he meant to describe only a subset of the interned as "submissive and unconditional prisoners." Isaac I. Stevens to George W. Mannypenny [sic], May 31, 1856, printed as No. 72, United States Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1856), pp. 735 – 741, quotation on p. 736. George W. Manypenny came to regret his involvement in allotments and attempts to dissolve tribal governments in the 1850s, "thus making the road clear for the rapacity of the white man." See Patrick Wolfe, "Against the Intentional Fallacy: Legocentrism and Continuity in the Rhetoric of Indian Dispossession" *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 36:1 (2012), pp. 3 – 45, quotation on p. 31.

<sup>282</sup> Reddick and Collins, "Medicine Creek Remediated," esp. p. 87; Cummings, *The River that Made Seattle*, pp. 46 – 47; Thomas W. Prosch, "Seattle and the Indians of Puget Sound," *Washington Historical Quarterly* 2:4 (1908), pp. 303 – 308 [Prosch is speckled with errors, but his discussion on Bainbridge Island in the context of internment is suggestive]; and esp. Carpenter, *Tears of Internment*. Cf. Harmon, *Indians in the Making*, p. 87 ["camps established for the non-combatants"]. For internment elsewhere, see among other Andrew H. Fisher, *Shadow Tribe: The Making of Columbia River Indian Identity* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), p. 57; Judith W. Irwin, "The Dispossessed: The Cowlitz Indians in Cowlitz Corridor," *Columbia: Magazine of the Northwest* 8:2 (1994), pp. 10 – 15; David G. Lewis and Thomas J. Connolly, "White American Violence on Tribal Peoples on the Oregon Coast," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 120:4 (2019), pp. 368 – 381; George B. Wasson, "The Coquille Indians and the Cultural 'Black Hole' of the Southern Oregon Coast," from *Worldviews and the American West: The Life*

There were killings, uncounted and perhaps uncountable, perpetrated in pursuit of internment. On October 28, two weeks before Simmons sent out his official internment order, a volunteer company under the command of C. C. Hewitt—the one that Van Asselt and Maple belonged to—went out on the first of several patrols of Native land outside of Seattle. Although their orders were supposedly to assist in “removing Indians,” they apparently expressed “the determination of exterminating all ‘horse-style’ Inj\_ns” they found (though it is unclear whether this determination was voiced before or after they had learned of the killing of several settlers in the White River region). The records remain unclear as to how successful this plan to find and murder Native people was, and how much they bothered to distinguish between those they labelled “horse-style” and others. Some certainly didn’t.<sup>283</sup>

Samuel L. Stewart, in the same reminiscence wherein he recalled “fighting Indians before we joined the army just the same as we did in the army” (see Chapter II), recalled being a member of Hewitt’s unit. He remembered the sort of fighting he had been involved in, on Whidby Island and in the Duwamish River area south of Seattle:

We knew how to watch the trails our selves... We knew how to locate an Indian camp and give them a round or two and if there were to[o] many of them to fight a retreat. The most of the fighting in that wood country was done by small squ[a]ds of men....

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*of the Place Itself*, ed. Polly Stewart, Steve Siporin, C.W. Sullivan III, and Suzi Jones (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2000), pp. 191 – 210.

<sup>283</sup> Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic*, p. 153. It is common to connect Hewitt’s patrols to killings at White River, because they occurred on the same day: October 28, 1855. But Hewitt’s men went on their first patrol apparently before the news reached Seattle. See Charles H. Mason to G[abriel] J. Rains, Oct 30, 1855, composed by John Nugen, transcribed in Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2*, p. 8.

[The regular troops] wanted to beat their drums and toot their bug[le]s, but we could not stand that. I seen one fight at the forks of D[u]wamish [R]iver where eight men took fifteen scalps[,] all warriors but one woman, without receiving a scratch.<sup>284</sup>

The official army reports from the Puget Sound War might be spare and sparse reading, but men on the ground like Stewart were engaged in violence that did not reach those reports.

The killings Stewart decribed with gusto may have been the same ones Admiral Thomas Stowell Phelps would later decorously refer to in his *Reminiscences of Seattle* as the

unfortunate affair on the Duwam-sh River bottom; one of those cruel, senseless acts in cold blood, repeated wherever civilized races encroach upon the savage domain, and always productive of trouble, frequently of the indiscriminate slaughter of innocent people, and occasionally of war in its worst form—the wanton, deliberate, and unprovoked killing of unoffending Indians.<sup>285</sup>

Phelps did not elaborate, and there is little trace of the “affair” he was referring to in extant historical records. The “unfortunate affair” may have been what Stewart was referring to, or it may have been an entirely separate incident of “wanton and unprovoked killing”; the framing and phrasing of Stewart’s letter implies that this was not the first or

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<sup>284</sup> Samuel Stewart to T.A. Wood, Dec. 30, 1896, Folder 44, Box 4, Military Collection, Mss 1514, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, Ore. The numbers of the slain recounted here may or may not be an exaggeration, but the specificity (and supporting evidence from others) suggests that they are not a fabrication.

<sup>285</sup> Thomas Stowell Phelps, *Reminiscences of Seattle, Washington Territory, and the U.S. Sloop-of-War “Decatur” during the Indian War of 1855 – 1856*, ed. Alice Harriman (New York: The Alice Harriman Company, 1908; orig. 1902), p. 43. As was typical, Phelps made a division between the “unoffending Indians” and the (presumably White) “innocent people,” and framed as the main problem with the “killing” of the former that it might lead to the “slaughter” of the latter.

last time Stewart or his fellow volunteers had been engaged in violence against their Native neighbors. And the discussion of “but one” scalp taken by his fellow men belonging to a woman is indicative of a broader norm of body mutilation. It is unclear whether these killings were perpetrated while Samuel Stewart was a part of C. C. Hewitt’s volunteer company, or while he was killing with an even less official outfit. To him, it didn’t matter.<sup>286</sup>

Indian internment backed by lethal threats was already underway in Oregon too. On October 13, 1855, Joel Palmer made official a policy to effectively incarcerate all Native men in the Oregon Territory, whether closely supervised on reservations, imprisoned, or worse:

The names of all adult males, and boys over 12 years of age shall be enrolled, and the roll called daily.

When any one shall be absent at roll-call, the fact shall be noted, and unless a satisfactory reason be rendered, the absentee shall be regarded as a person dangerous to the peace of the country, and dealt with accordingly.

Any Indian found outside of his designated temporary reservation, without being able to satisfactorily account therefor, shall be arrested and retained in custody so long as shall be deemed necessary; or should he be a stranger not belonging to any of the bands of this valley, he shall be placed for safe keeping in the county jail, or taken to Fort Vancouver....

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<sup>286</sup> Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2*, p. 91. Histories built without the benefit of records from the men who did violence on the ground have sometimes underestimated the extent of the killings by volunteers and others in northwestern Washington. See Harmon, *Indians in the Making*, p. 87.

No Indian will be permitted to leave his assigned encampment unless by written permit from the local or special Agent.<sup>287</sup>

Native people, confined to reservations, were required to report daily (and Indian Agents were encouraged to disarm them when feasible). Those unknown were to be imprisoned—at best, given the menacing tone of “dealt with accordingly.”<sup>288</sup>

And although many of the details of Palmer’s orders were for his Agents, they also contained guidance a call for the White citizenry to temper—but continue—their vigilantism:

Any Citizens generally are requested... to exercise a due degree of forbearance in their dealings with Indians; but at the same time to keep a vigilant watch over them and report to acting Agents the presence of strange Indians among us, and render such aid in their apprehension, as may tend to protect our persons and property, and secure peace.<sup>289</sup>

Anyone deemed a “strange Indian” by any White citizens risked arrest or worse simply for existing, no matter their background. And that category could be broad; as Palmer himself declared, “it is extremely difficult to distinguish among our Indian population.” For White settlers and officials alike, any Indian was a threat until proven otherwise.<sup>290</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> Joel Palmer, “REGULATIONS For The Guidance of Agents in the Oregon Indian Superintendency Pending Existing Hostilities,” Oct 13, 1855, Document No. 13,009, Oregon State Archives Digital Collections, <https://sos.oregon.gov/archives/exhibits/echoes/Documents/indian-agent-regulations-1855.pdf>.

<sup>288</sup> In general, Oregon law attempted to reserve firearms for White use, as in the 1868 law enshrining the right of “every white male citizen of this state above the age of sixteen years... to have, hold, and keep, for his own use and defense, the following fire-arms, to wit: Either or any one of the following-named guns, and one revolving pistol; a rifle, shot-gun (double or single barrel), yager, or musket; the same to be exempt from execution [confiscation], in all cases, under the laws of Oregon.” William Lair Hill, Compiler and Annotator, *The Codes and General Laws of Oregon*, Vol. 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (San Francisco: Bancroft-Whitney Company, 1892), Chapter XXVII, §3171.

<sup>289</sup> Joel Palmer, “REGULATIONS For The Guidance of Agents in the Oregon Indian Superintendency Pending Existing Hostilities,” Oct 13, 1855.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.* Terence O’Donnell, Palmer’s principal biographer, strains to read the Indian Superintendent’s every action as sympathetic to Native people. Although many pages are dedicated to Palmer’s solicitous

And these were not just words; armed “citizen guards” who appeared the records neither as regulars nor volunteers stalked reservations and internment camps for Native people in the 1850s. Alphonso D. Boone remembered being a “citizen g[u]ard” as a teenager in that decade, keeping armed watch over the “Grand Round [sic] Reservation” alongside future Portland mayor David P. Thompson and others.<sup>291</sup> George H. Himes, in later decades a prominent historian of Oregon (see Chapter VIII), was still an adolescent when he took up arms as an unofficial “Home Guard” in the same region.<sup>292</sup> As his friend and fellow historian John W. Redington put it, “Mr. Himes was only a boy at the time of the war of ’56, but he did a volunteer soldier’s duty just the same.”<sup>293</sup> Euro-American teenagers with guns helped to enforce the carceral regime demanded at the height of the War on Illahee.<sup>294</sup>

Joel Palmer, like Wool and many other government officials who negotiated with Native people, was scorned by pioneers as soft on “the Indians.” William Barnhart, a former volunteer and amateur historian who would go on to be a thieving and murderous Indian Agent at the Umatilla Reservation (see Chapter V), accused the man he referred to as “Hon. Palm-her” of “promiscuously ming[ling]” with “the aboriginal females [who] at that time infested the whole region of the Dalles.” This (probably invented) association,

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words when speaking to Native communities directly, the internment order is given only a few sentences: “[Palmer] issued a general order that any Indians refusing to live in the sanctuaries [O’Donnell’s term for the reservations/internment camps] would be treated as hostiles. Thus did Palmer hope to shelter his charges from the coming storm.” Strikingly, O’Donnell frames even Palmer’s call for forced imprisonment or death as supportive of Native people. O’Donnell, *An Arrow in the Earth*, p. 221.

<sup>291</sup> Alphonso D. Boone [Jr.] to Eva Emery Dye, Apr 25, 1904, Folder 6, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers. Alphonso D. Boone Jr. was the proud great-grandson of the famed Daniel Boone.

<sup>292</sup> George Himes Certificate of Participation in the Indian Wars, Folder OSC2-2, Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Records, Mss 364, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections; “Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885 - 1933,” p. 35, Folder 3, Box 1, *ibid.* George H. Himes was somewhere between the ages of 11 and 13 when he first took up arms against Native people.

<sup>293</sup> J[ohn] W. Redington to Eva Emery Dye, July 31, 1928, Folder 12, Box 2, Eva Emery Dye Papers.

<sup>294</sup> According to some pioneer accounts, at least a few White women with guns played a part in enforcing the carceral regime too. See the story of Kate Melville, in Ezra Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound: The Tragedy of Leschi* (Seattle: Lowman & Hanford, 1905), pp. 171 – 172.



he proclaimed, explained why the federal government had not backed the volunteers in the region sooner.<sup>295</sup> The disgust was mutual. Palmer denounced the “the savage and brutal conduct of these miscreants who have provoked this war” (and the “corrupt and vicious demagogues” who encouraged them)—and unlike Barnhart, Palmer had evidence. But he decried the violence in large part because it interfered with his department’s efforts to “carry out the policy of the government in its effort to colonize these Indians upon the reservations designated.” And Palmer followed his denunciation with a call for more regular troops “to enable us to commence active operations for the permanent location” of Native communities.<sup>296</sup>

Palmer, Wool, and many others shared many of the overarching goals of the pioneer murder squads. They, too, insisted upon the seizure of most Native land for American empire. They differed primarily in tactics. What Palmer decried was less the end goal of the volunteers than their bloodlust and haste.

In the fall of 1855, few were more hasty and murderous than the Oregonian volunteer militias, who ignored (or denied) other military authorities and wandered through Washington and Oregon Territories, attacking almost any Native communities they could find. Undersupplied and unfamiliar with the country, they couldn’t find many. The disorganized troops would ride off in pursuit of any Indian spotted, hoping to capture

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<sup>295</sup> William Barnhart, “History of the Yakima Indian War” [n.d., but begun in 1856], Folder 2, Box 1, Thomas J. Hobbs Papers, Mss 977, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. Barnhart’s text and letters featured rapid-fire scatological, sexual, and racist innuendos. He conjectured privately that nearly all participants in the Yakima Indian War, volunteers and leadership alike, were “stiff-legged” from sexually transmitted diseases. See William Barnhart to James Nesmith, May 9, 1856, Folder 6, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers, Mss 577, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>296</sup> Joel Palmer to General John E. Wool, Jan 27, 1856, published in Robert McClelland, “Report of the Secretary of the Interior,” No. 75, Senate Executive Documents, found in *Message from the President of the United States to the Two Houses of Congress at the Commencement of the Third Session of the Thirty-Fourth Congress* (Washington, D.C.: A.O.P. Nicholson, Printer, 1856), pp. 744 – 745. See also O’Donnell, *An Arrow in the Earth*, chap. 12.

or kill them, and frequently would ride off in disorderly retreat when confronted with a Native fighting force of any size. Whatever their incompetence, the marauding bands of Oregonians were an existential threat to Native communities. Although the people could sometimes avoid them, the volunteers pillaged and ransacked wherever they went, plundering Native food stores and “requisitioning” the livestock of Native people and settlers alike.<sup>297</sup>

On December 5, 1855, Walla Walla leader Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox came under a flag of truce to negotiate with this new set of colonial invaders, hoping to forestall the rapidly accelerating war by negotiating reparations for the losses (real and perceived) of the pioneers. Ignoring the rules of parley, the volunteers attacked and imprisoned him and his diplomatic party, touching off a series of running battles with Native forces. Between those battles, they killed most of their prisoners, including Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox, and then dismembered his body to distribute trophies among the volunteers. Though not atypical of volunteer conduct during the War on Illahee, the murder and butchery of Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox would eventually become a lightning rod for critics—both in the sense that it would be repeated and condemned in many circles, and in the sense that criticism of the killing of Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox *as extraordinary* drew attention from other analogous acts of violence. In the near-term, the volunteers who killed Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox were condemned by General John Wool but commended by the territorial governments of Oregon and Washington alike.<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>297</sup> Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic*, p. 146 – 147, 173.

<sup>298</sup> Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic*, p. 166. In 1925, the editors of the Washington Historical Quarterly published the “Indian war” diary and letters of the Hembrees, who had fought and killed in Yakama country in the 1855 and 1856. Neither Hembree mentioned Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox or his death, with Waman Hembree referring merely to a “Battle ground” presumably near where the slaying had occurred. But the editors nonetheless felt the need to insert a long footnote justifying the killings as righteous, but describing the dismemberment as “sad.” None of the other acts of butchery from the campaign were mentioned, nor

The commanding officer in charge of those who killed Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox and his associates, James K. Kelly, relied on the standard excuse for the murder of a captive—that he was killed while he was trying to escape. Kelly did not think the fact that Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox had been seized while trying to negotiate a peace was worth mentioning. As Kelly’s report put it in the newspapers:

The loss of the Indians must be very great, as their killed alone, during the two days [of battle], cannot be less than fifty men. Among their killed yesterday was the noted chief of the Walla-Wallas the celebrated Pee-Peu-Mox-Mox. He was taken prisoner by my command on the 5<sup>th</sup> inst., near his camp on the Touchet, and during the battle yesterday made an effort to escape. In doing so, he was killed, together with four others who were made prisoners at the same time, and who also attempted to get away.<sup>299</sup>

The killings had happened in between battles. By conflating them, Capt. Kelly could ward off any questions about justification, and inflate the number enemies killed in a battle that was, at best, a draw.

Native people were often killed while purportedly trying to escape. Indeed, even those who supposedly did escape may have, in fact, been murdered. The “scout and Indian trailer” Jeff Landers hinted in his memoir that at least one Native person in the 1850s who had surrendered to his company and then “escaped” had in fact been executed.<sup>300</sup> Other volunteers dropped the pretense. As Captain Urban E. Hicks, who led

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was there any hint of the wantonness of the other killings. Waman C. Hembree, “Yakima Indian War Diary,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 16:4 (1925), pp. 273 – 283, quotation from p. 279, n. 11.

<sup>299</sup> *Puget Sound Courier* January 4, 1856, p. 2.

<sup>300</sup> W. W. Stevens, “The Old Oregon Trail as Told By the Trailers,” chap. 7 (Jeff Landers, 1913[?]), Baker County Library digital collection. As Stevens put it, “It is hinted to this day that some of the pursuers [including Landers] could tell what became of the Indian if they were so minded.”

men on the Puget Sound in 1856, put it, “the volunteers got tired of the business and quietly resolved to take no more prisoners.” He killed at least one prisoner himself.<sup>301</sup>

Newton Ward, part of the company that killed Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox, remembered that the question of whether to kill prisoners ended up answering itself:

[It was] asked what should be don[e] with the [prisoners,] some one said tie them or kill them. they under[s]tood that and they made a break to get [a]way, one of them had an old knife and he made a lung[e] at L[i]eutenant Miller[,] he threw up his arm and the knife struck it. Just at that time a man whose name I have forgotten struck the Indian over the head with his gun. He killed the Indian but he broke his gun all to pieces. There were five of the Prisoners killed and scalped, among the number was old Pe Pe Mox mox [sic] the head Chief. Every man wanted a scalp of his head, there was not enough to go around so [Dr.] Mack Shaw cut his ears off.<sup>302</sup>

The extent of the bodily mutilation inflicted on Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox was extreme. James Sinclair, who had been present at the killing but did not take part, resignedly described it in a letter a friend a few months later:

The whole scalp was taken from his head, and cut up into 20 pieces, his skull was divided equally for buttons — his ears preserved in a bottle of spirits — and large strips of his skin cut off along his back to be made into Razor strops — such is Indian warfare.<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> Hicks, *Yakima and Cllickitat Indian Wars, 1855 and 1856*, pp. 13, 11.

<sup>302</sup> Newtown Ward to T. A. Wood, Folder 46, Box 4, Mss 1514 Military Collection, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>303</sup> James Sinclair to William Cowan, Feb 10, 1856, transcribed in William N. Bischoff, “Introduction,” Plympton J. Kelly, *We Were Not Summer Soldiers: The Diary of Plympton J. Kelly*, ed. William N. Bischoff (Tacoma: Washington State Historical Society, 1976, orig. unclear), p. 39. See also Simon

Scalping in and of itself was not unusual. Indeed, Newton remembered that “there were 75 Indians killed and Scalped” in the battle the next day. This body count was almost certainly an exaggeration, probably a vast one.<sup>304</sup> But the volunteers did commit further mutilations. Writing in his diary after the last battle, volunteer Plympton J. Kelly wrote “yesterday peu peu Mox Mox was taken up by Dr. Shaw and his ears cut off[f] and to day he has be[e]n taken out and subject to further indignities.” Then the volunteers moved camp, with Plympton J. Kelly noting that there was “enough beef entrails and dead Indians lying around the place to bre[e]d a pestilence if the weather was warm enough.”<sup>305</sup>

Newton Ward had first gained fame in 1854 as an adolescent survivor of the so-called “Ward Massacre,” a clash between a Euro-American wagon train and a band of Eastern Shoshone wherein 19 Euro-American were killed, including most of Ward’s family. The killings on the wagon train were what inspired Granville O. Haller’s punitive expeditions before the Yakima War (see above). In his reminiscence Ward made no distinction between the Native people (presumed to be Eastern Shoshone) who had killed his family in 1854 and the Paiute, Yakima, and other bands he rode against as a teenage soldier in 1855. They were simply “the Indians,” in both cases. The only specific descriptor he used for any Native person was for the “Nez Perce Boy” the volunteers had spared while killing Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox and the other prisoners. For Ward, the “Indians”

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Harrison, *Dark Trophies: Hunting and the Enemy Body in Modern War* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012).

<sup>304</sup> Newtown Ward to T. A. Wood, Folder 46, Box 4, Mss 1514 Military Collection, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>305</sup> Kelly, *We Were Not Summer Soldiers*, p. 70. William N. Bischoff’s reading of the sources suggested the “further indignities” included the gouging out of Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox’s eyes. See William Norbert Bischoff, “The Yakima Indian War 1855 – 56,” PhD dissertation (Loyola University, 1950), p. 223 n. 52.

generally were the enemy, with the Nez Perce specifically a guarded and contingent exception.<sup>306</sup>

Some of the volunteer soldiers who turned to history-writing left little doubt where they stood on killings and mutilations. William Barnhart, trying to sell his unfinished “History of the Yakima War” in 1856, while the war was still ongoing, joked to soon-to-be Oregon Indian Superintendent James W. Nesmith that

[t]he work will be bound in the hid[e] of PuPu-Mox=Mox tanned expressly for the purpose, so that everyone owning a copy of the work will always have “really and truly” a part and parcel of the “Yakima Indian War” in the House.<sup>307</sup>

Barnhart never finished his book. But body parts taken from Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox were preserved and displayed with pride by pioneers. Granville O. Haller remembered seeing two ears, in alcohol, evidently an Indian’s, and they were proudly shown to me at Fort Dalles, Oregon, as the ears of Pio-pio-mox-mox. I saw Razor strops of human skin, evidently an Indian’s skin, and was assured they were taken off the body of Pio-pio-mox-mox. Those persons who exhibited these were highly respected citizens of Oregon, and seemed proud of their trophies.<sup>308</sup>

These trophies may have been moved around. Sarah J. McKinlay, a descendant of fur traders and of Meti/Nez Perce peoples (among others), recalled that

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<sup>306</sup> Newtown Ward to T. A. Wood, Folder 46, Box 4, Mss 1514 Military Collection, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. On the so-called Ward Massacre, see Campbell, “The Lemhi Shoshoni,” esp. p. 544; Knuth, “‘Picturesque’ Frontier,” esp. pp. 311 – 312; Bigler, *Fort Limhi*, pp. 82 – 83.

<sup>307</sup> William Barnhart to James Nesmith, Apr 22, 1856, Folder 6, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers. Scatological humor and racism were both common themes in Barnhart’s writing, so the non-standard “PuPu” spelling may have been intentional.

<sup>308</sup> Granville O. Haller to Eva Emery Dye, June 24, 1894, Folder 13, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers. This kind of trophy-taking after executions famously a part of lynching culture in the American South. See especially the synthesis in Roger C. Hartley, *Monumental Harm: Reckoning with Jim Crow Era Confederate Monuments* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2021), p. 64.

the men let [Peopeomoxmox] come in the camp and had talk with him, th[e]n they killed him and cut his ears and some other part of his body and, in a bottle with spirits, they had in Salem to show how brave the men were. I suppose it is there yet.<sup>309</sup>

According to some later pioneer accounts, a portion of “the scalp of Pio-Pio Mox-a-Mox, greatest villain of all the Indian chiefs, became the hair on the head of a doll belonging to a little girl in St. Johns, Oregon.”<sup>310</sup> Given how many pieces were taken by volunteers eager for a share of the gory spoils, this may even have been true.

As a volunteer soldier fighting in the eastern portions of the Washington Territory in 1855 and 1856, Waman C. Hembree appears to have assumed all Native people not under the command of White officers were enemy combatants. A diary kept by one of his men (who was also one of his relatives) records multiple instances of “Indian spies” being caught and killed. There is little indication that these “spies” were anything other than Native people in the wrong place at the wrong time. Waman Hembree wrote on March 1, 1856, of capturing two “Indian spies” of unknown names and ethnies who were “tried by Court martial” in the Walla Walla valley and (in one case) summarily executed.

What offense against military law had this supposed spy committed to merit a court

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<sup>309</sup> Sarah J. McKinlay [née Ogden] to Eva Emery Dye, Jan 28, 1892, Folder 8, Box 2, Eva Emery Dye Papers. Bracketed spelling of “Peopeomoxmox” reflects McKinlays’s. Listed as of Meti/Nez Perce descent in genealogical records, Sarah J. McKinlay claimed her mother had extended family relations all over Indian country. “[M]y mother... made it safe for my father to travel among enem[ie]s as her people was a protection for him, even the Crow nation as her father was half Crow.” Sarah J. McKinlay [née Ogden] to Eva Emery Dye, March 20, 1892, *ibid*.

<sup>310</sup> This anecdote was told by amateur historian and journalist Fred Lockley to a gathering of the Sons + Daughters of Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast. Ida J. Steele, Sons + Daughters of the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast meeting minutes, June 17, 1936, Folder 9, Box 2, Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Records.

martial and execution? There is no record. This was, in all likelihood, a lynching under the thin veneer of military law (see Chapter VI).<sup>311</sup>

In April of 1856, Captain Absalom Jefferson “A. J.” Hembree bragged in a letter to his that “we have run them all out.... we have drove the Indians from their country.” And it was true that most Native communities kept their distance. Yet only a few days after writing this letter, A. J. Hembree was killed leading his men in a headlong charge against a group of six Native men he had claimed to have already driven away. When Hembree was shot off his horse, his fellows beat a quick retreat. Waman and A.J. Hembree’s discussion of “the Indians” generally was typical, making no allowance for friendly or neutral forces in the area.<sup>312</sup>

William D. Stillwell, who fought in the Cayuse (1848) and Yakima (1855 – 1856) portions of the War on Illahee, remembered that his compatriots in the latter tortured and mutilated as well as killed. Following Hembree’s death, volunteer forces did not mount an attack against the main Native force in the hills, judging such an assault too hazardous. But they did kill isolated people where and when they could. As Stillwell recalled it,

In the fight on the mountain... Andy Wright shot one Indian through the hips at the rock-entrenchment on the highest point, where the Indians had barricaded themselves to do sharp shooting. Wright first scalped the Indian and then killed

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<sup>311</sup> Waman C. Hembree, “Yakima Indian War diary” [COPY], enclosed in Walter L. Embree to Mrs. Lulu Crandall, June 7, 1925, esp. Friday Oct 26, 1855; Thur Nov 8, 1855; and March 1, 1856; Folder 23, Box 86, Edmond S. Meany Papers, 1883 to 1935, Acc. 106 – 001, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA. An earlier mention of spy capture by Nathan Olney on Oct 26, 1855 stipulated that Olney had “caught” “[t]wo Indian spies of the Yacamaw tribe.” But in Waman Hembree’s own descriptions of violence (and those of his brother) the enemy was simply “Indians.”

<sup>312</sup> A.J. Hembree to Joel J Hembree, Apr 2, 1856 [COPY], *ibid*; William P. Bonney, “Monument to Captain Hembree,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 11:3 (1920), pp. 178 – 182. A.J. Hembree’s name is misspelled in the title but not the text of Bonney’s short history of the event. See also Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic*, p. 175.



him with his butcherknife. Why didn't he kill him first? Oh he was mad because [A. J.] H[e]mbree had been killed. We were all neighbors at Yamhill.

The next day we killed two Indians up the creek, above where the oaks set in. Col. \_\_\_\_\_ [omitted in original; likely Thomas R. Cornelius] looked ahead and called to me: 'Bill, Inj\_ns ahead'. I saw three Indian with a pack horse. I deployed my men to right and left and we went after those Inj\_ns. The Colonel killed one. I rode after one old fellow who made up a canyon overtook him and shot him. No! I did not scalp him, but some of the boys did scalp him. I never scalped an Indian in my life.<sup>313</sup>

As was typical for the reminiscences of men like Stillwell, foes were described throughout simply as "Indians." The Native man Andy Wright wounded and then skinned alive before killing was not known to have had any role in the death of Absalom Hembree, and the Native people with pack horses killed the next day may not even have been involved in the conflict. They were Indians, and that was enough for the volunteers. Stillwell's insistence that he had "never scalped an Indian" was, in a way, also typical—many Euro-Americans who had committed violence that might be considered suspect were quick to point out acts even worse than theirs (see Chapters 7 and 9).

Euro-Americans attempted and sometimes succeeded in perpetrating wanton murders and mass killings in northwestern Washington too, into at least 1856. Many of these killings, like those discussed above, are only a shadowy outline in the archival sources. In 1886, former Captain Urban E. Hicks, now a successful politician and newspaper editor, gleefully remembered murdering a small community in the South

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<sup>313</sup> "Account of Wm. D. Stillwell," Folder 24, Box 16, Cage 24, Lucullus Virgil McWhorter Papers, Washington State University Libraries Special Collections, Pullman, WA.

Prairie region east of modern-day Tacoma, Washington, most likely early in 1856. He and his men snuck up on a large “ranch” dwelling, and shot the people who lived there as they tried to get away.

As the savages came out of the one hole in front, they were shot down, big and little, sq\_\_ws and all, except one b\_ck and one sq\_\_w, who ran, side by side, the full length of our fire and escaped. In the ranch was found numerous household trinkets, dresses, dishes, spoons, knives and forks, rings, and keepsakes, taken from the residences of the families massacred on White [R]iver. I also found the scalp of one of the white women who had been so cruelly murdered.<sup>314</sup>

If Hicks did, in fact, find Euro-American household goods and a scalp at the “ranch,” he found them only *after* he and his men had murdered nearly every man, woman, and child who lived there. The killings were perpetrated before any such evidence was conveniently found.<sup>315</sup>

The most infamous mass killing in the region, the Maxon Massacre in the Nisqually area of Washington, perpetrated in March 1856, was predicated on the notion that all Native people were to be considered hostile until proven otherwise. A volunteer force led by Capt. Hamilton J.G. Maxon, who had previously volunteered in the Cayuse War, marauded through the lower Nisqually River region capturing or killing any Native person they found. Even according to a flattering volunteer’s account sent to the paper in the next month, the men under Maxon had shot first and asked questions later, compelling those who surrendered to give up the locations of others, and in one case

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<sup>314</sup> Hicks, *Yakima and Klickitat Indian Wars, 1855 and 1856*, p. 16.

<sup>315</sup> As in the other conflict of the War(s) on Illahee, looting was endemic. See Kelly R. McAllister and Annabelle Mounts Barnett, “Catherine McLeod Mounts: Growing Up Strong in Tough Times on Puget Sound,” *Columbia* 25:2 (2011), pp. 3 – 8.

forcing a captive Indigenous woman to serve as the bait for an ambush. Indigenous captives also served to identify those the volunteers had killed as culpable for previous killings of settlers. Whatever the (suspect) veracity of those identifications, they served the interests of all parties involved—the volunteers got to justify their killings; their Native captives got to forestall potential future executions of themselves or others. This account was subtitled “Eight Hostiles Killed,” but even in the volunteers’ own story of the events all of the Indigenous people they bragged of killing had been surprised and trying to run away when they were shot. The killed were “hostile” only insofar as the volunteers presumed all Indians not under White control to be hostile. And it was in many cases routine to exclude killings of non-combatants.<sup>316</sup>

Maxon and his men committed more wanton killings, in addition to those bragged of in the paper. The understanding was that they had killed upwards of seventeen people, mostly women, children, and unarmed men (modern estimates put the number killed north of thirty), who had been trying to cross the river to get away. As Puyallup/Nisqually political leader and historian Henry Sicade later put it, “The old men and the women were shot down, the defenseless children were killed and later the babies were found crushed against the boulders by the river and in the river, not a life being spared.” At least the outline of these deaths was known by local Euro-Americans, but they did not appear in the official reports, nor in national news. Nisqually oral traditions have kept the memory of murders alive, and have regularly reinserted them into Euro-American histories. But without contemporary Euro-American witnesses like those that

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<sup>316</sup> “Complete Surprise on an Indian Encampment! Eight Hostiles Killed,” *Olympia Pioneer and Democrat*, Apr 11, 1856, p. 2. For excluding the killings of non-combatants as a matter of routine rather than strategy or guilt, see Edward Otho Cresap Ord, “Diary of E.O.C. Ord 3<sup>rd</sup> Art U.S. Army,” transcribed in Ellen Francis Ord, “The Rogue River Indian Expedition of 1856,” Master’s thesis (University of California, 1922), p. 32.

wrote of wanton violence in southern Oregon or the horrors inflicted on Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox in southern Washington, the Maxon Massacre was obscured by historians—like Washington State Historical Society founder Elwood Evans—hoping to minimize the misdeeds of pioneers (see Chapters 8 and 9).<sup>317</sup> This omission, in turn, helped shape the work of historians more willing to attempt to understand the Native side of the story. When the teacher and amateur historian Oscar H. Jones wrote a glowing history of Henry Sicade’s life in 1936, he chose the story of Leschi (see Chapter VI), rather than Sicade’s own history of the Maxon Massacre, as *the* example of pioneer iniquity.<sup>318</sup>

And there is evidence that more formal mass killings in northwestern Washington Territory were contemplated at the highest levels, rejected only because they seemed too risky. Sidney S. Ford, a judge and a captain in the volunteer militia, mustered a group of mostly Cowlitz and Chehalis fighters to fight alongside the volunteer forces, after his government-mandated attempts to seize all of their firearms foundered in the face of carefully strategized Native resistance. He and Isaac I. Stevens hoped this arrangement would help dampen the likelihood of those groups joining a pan-Native alliance.<sup>319</sup>

But Ford and Stevens apparently also considered genocide. After hearing that a few Upper Chehalis had met with a messenger presumed to be from the Yakama, Stevens and Ford contemplated “summarily dispos[ing]... [of] the men of the [Chehalis] tribe,” as

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<sup>317</sup>Henry Sicade, "The Indians' Side of the Story," Address to the Research Club of Tacoma, April 10, 1917, in *Building a State, Washington: 1889 – 1939*, ed. Charles Miles and O. B. Sperlin (Olympia: Washington State Historical Society, 1940), pp. 490 – 502; Abbi Wonacott, *Where the Mashel Meets the Nisqually: The Mashel Massacre of 1856* (Spanaway, Wash.: Bellus Uccello Publishing, 2008). Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, pp. 45 – 48.

<sup>318</sup>Oscar H. Jones, "In a Familiar Yet Foreign Land: The Life and Memories of Henry Sicade, 1866 – 1938," ed. Cary C. Collins, *Columbia* 19:2 (Summer 2005), pp. 1 – 11, esp. p. 2.

<sup>319</sup>Tove Hodge, "The Family of Sidney S. Ford, Senior," *Centralia: The First Fifty Years*, ed. Herndon Smith (Centralia, Wash.: F. H. Cole Printing Company, 1942), esp. p. 88. Chehalis leader Koolah Yuanan later said that he had torn his clothes and pretended to have been attacked by "hostile Indians," successfully pressuring Ford to accede to Chehalis gun ownership.

Stevens put it in a letter to Secretary of War Jefferson Davis. Stevens and Ford came to agree that this would be too risky, and if attempted “the tribe would break out.” Though they contemplated murdering all of men among the (Upper?) Chehalis community they were allied with, Stevens and Ford decided that this mass killing wouldn’t be feasible—although there were a few individual suspicious shootings of Upper Chehalis men.<sup>320</sup>

During the War on Illahee in Washington Territory, martial law, not murder, gained the most infamy on the national stage.<sup>321</sup> As the war(s) were accelerating in 1855, suspicion fell not only on all Native people, but on many of those who associated with them. In the fall of 1855, there were calls to lynch Catholic priests in Olympia, viewed as suspicious because of their perceived friendliness with Native communities.<sup>322</sup> By March of 1856, some soldiers in Washington Territory were instructed to round up not only Native people but:

all the French and other foreign born citizens, especially those who may have Indian wives... settled on the Muck Prairie and in the vicinity of Montgomery’s Station. You will notify these persons that the orders of the Commander in Chief are imperative that they shall immediately depart for the Post at Fort Nisqually, to

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<sup>320</sup> Hodge, “The Family of Sidney S. Ford, Senior,” esp. p. 87; For “summarily dispose,” see Isaac I. Stevens to Jefferson Davis, Sec of War, March 21, 1856, transcribed in Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2*, p. 32. Ford’s son, also named Sidney S. Ford, oversaw the Fox Island internment camp—see Carpenter, *Tears of Internment*. For the shootings, see “Personal recollections of Mary Jane Brown,” DAR Family Rec. of Pioneers, Vol 2, p. 235, Folder 2, Box 1 Daughters of the American Revolution, Washington, Family records of Washington pioneers, 1927-1942, Washington State University Library Special Collections, Pullman, WA. My gloss on events is somewhat different from Brown’s. The original reads: “a drunken Indian... [was] accidentally killed near the home of Judge [Sidney S.] Ford. Hostile Indians threatened the life of the interpreter, but peace was finally restored without further loss of life.” Cf. Kent D. Richards, *Isaac I. Stevens: Young Man in a Hurry* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1979), p. 269.

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 316 – 321; Roy N. Lokken, “The Martial Law Controversy in Washington Territory, 1856,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 43:1 (1956), pp. 91 – 119.

<sup>322</sup> Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic*, p. 145.

be guarded by Sergeant Packwood<sup>323</sup> and as many men of the late Ferry guard as can be procured,

Should you find any resistance from these settlers you are instructed to employ force, by tying the men and bringing them in as prisoners....

You are instructed to use every persuasion possible with these suspected persons before resorting to force, but should they resist, you are authorized to employ force, and coerce their immediate removal.<sup>324</sup>

Although focused especially on the “foreign born,” and on men who had intermarried with Native people, the ambit of the troops was deliberately broad:

As they occupy that part of the country which is at present a part of the theatre of war, martial law of necessity exists there. Consequently you will have no hesitation in enforcing the order to secure all men whom you may find in a suspicious locality, or when the fact of their residence near the enemy, and within the range of the scouts of the hostile Indians seem to imply an understanding and which in itself is a doubtful and suspicious circumstance.<sup>325</sup>

In times of colonial conquest, the invaders did not wish to suffer the ambiguity of a middle ground. Martial law was made official in April. As Isaac I. Stevens would later put it:

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<sup>323</sup> Apparently a different William Packwood than the Oregon legislator and Indian killer described elsewhere. See Samantha Croll, “Thurston County Pioneers - William Packwood,” Aug 4, 1918, WSL Manuscript No. 134, Washington State Library, digital copy available at <https://www.washingtonruralheritage.org/digital/collection/pioneers/id/10/>.

<sup>324</sup> James Tilton to Col Hurd, March 2, 1856, Folder 22, Box 5, Clarence B. Bagley Papers, Acc 0036-001, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA. For more on James Tilton, see Judy Bentley and Lorraine McConaghy, “Slave Master or Benefactor? James Tilton in Antebellum Washington Territory,” *Columbia* 28:2 (2014), pp. 6 – 11. Based on the information provided in the article, the answer to the question in its title is “Slave Master”—Tilton was one of the more widely known enslavers in the 1850s Washington Territory.

<sup>325</sup> James Tilton to Col Hurd, March 2, 1856, Folder 22, Box 5, Clarence B. Bagley Papers.

There is no such thing in my humble judgment as neutrality in an Indian war, and whoever can remain on his claim unmolested, is an ally of the enemy, and must be dealt with as such.<sup>326</sup>

Native people were hostile until proven otherwise, and non-Native people who did not agree were to be assumed complicit. Peaceful co-existence with Native people was to be treated as suspicious in itself—although such sweeping orders tended to be enforced against those already deemed suspect, like former Hudson’s Bay men. Or, some charged, Stevens’s political opponents. This round-up, unlike the imprisonment of Native people, faced some political pushback. Hamilton G. Maxon imprisoned several White settlers on suspicion of treason—defined as “giving aid and comfort to hostile Indians”—and (with Benjamin F. Shaw) was part of a military commission that attempted unsuccessfully to try them for that capital offense. Summary trials (and executions?) for White men was too radical, and the attempt was squashed by territorial and military authorities.<sup>327</sup>

While there was no organized round-up of White men living with Native women in Oregon to match the one ordered in Washington, there were calls for it. In April 1856, a volunteer named Peter Ruffner wrote to James W. Nesmith in his capacity as U.S. Marshal (see Chapter V), asking for money and supplies to compensate those he was providing locally to continue the war against Native people in the Port Orford region. Ruffner wrote that the volunteers

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<sup>326</sup> “Governor Isaac I. Stevens to the Fourth Annual Session of the [Washington Territory] Legislative Assembly, Dec 3, 1856,” *Messages of the Governors of the Territory of Washington to the Legislative Assembly, 1854 – 1889*, ed. Charles M. Gates (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1940), pp. 28 – 47, quotation on p. 32.

<sup>327</sup> Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic*, pp. 177 – 180; “I have proclaimed martial law in Thurston County,” Isaac I. Stevens to Stephen A. Douglas, May 25, 1856, Pacific Northwest Historical Documents, University of Washington Digital Collection, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/community.29377793](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/community.29377793); Lokken, “The Martial Law Controversy in Washington Territory, 1856.” Quotation from Elwood Evans to Isaac I. Stevens, May 30, 1856, Folder 22A, Box 5, Clarence B. Bagley Papers.

that went after [“the Pistol River + Chilco Indians”] came [u]pon them[,] s[o]m[e] 60 men women + children tha[t] all said th[ey] were willing to go to the reserve, so the party did not kill a[n] Indian.... These white men that lives with sq\_\_ws found out that those sq\_\_ws said that th[ey] would go... to the reserve. So rather than to l[o]se th[eir] sq\_\_ws th[ey] told the Indians to take to the mount[ain][--] that those men [the volunteers] was going to take them up the coast a ways to kill them all.<sup>328</sup>

The volunteers had, apparently, agreed not to murder this group of Native people so long as they agreed to be removed. Then this Native group fled into the mountains—some with White family members along. There are other records that confirm the insistence of some local Euro-Americans to banish all Native people, even women married to White men, and the resistance of some of the latter’s husbands.<sup>329</sup> It is unclear or whether or not the group of Native people that fled had, in fact, been warned by White family members of an impending plot to murder them all. It is likewise unclear whether the mass murder they avoided was a known plan or merely a predictable probability.

Ruffner asked Nesmith for help paying for arms and provision to ensure that there would be “attention paid to those indians + s[ome] of the whites, if not we will be compelled to le[a]ve + give up to them.” Nesmith, Ruffner hoped, would “d[o] som[e]thing in S[ome] shape on [the] way to r[id] this po[r]tion of the Country of th[e]se Indians.” And Ruffner wanted to use the guns on “some of whites” too—those who showed sympathy (that might be taken as allegiance) to the Native people whose

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<sup>328</sup> Peter Ruffner to James W. Nesmith, Apr 18, 185[6], Folder 24, Box 2, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>329</sup> Ord, “Diary of E.O.C. Ord 3<sup>rd</sup> Art U.S. Army,” p. 30; George Bundy Wasson, Jr. “Growing Up Indian: An Emic Perspective,” PhD Dissertation (University of Oregon, 2001), pp. 217 – 220.



homeland he did not want to leave.<sup>330</sup> It is unclear whether Ruffner got any assistance from the government to enact his dream of killing his neighbors. But the government did undertake the removal he and so many other pioneers asked for, sometimes including house-to-house searches to seize Native people for internment (see Chapter V).

The Washington Indian Wars in the 1850s can be distinguished from those in Oregon during the same period by the much greater number of Native people known to have fought alongside Euro-American forces. But allies are not always friends, and many Native fighters were even less trusted by the Euro-Americans they fought alongside than Donald McKay (see above). Many wished them ill. Edmund C. Fitzhugh, a U.S. Commissioner, murderous spousal abuser, and latter-day Confederate (see Chapter X), suggested to one commander that he “make scouts of [the Northern Indians] & give them a lively chance for being killed.”<sup>331</sup> And sometimes volunteers looking to kill any Indian they could find would attack even those aiding the U.S. war effort. Upper Chehalis leader Koolah Yuanan was instructed to wear a white cloth on his hat, so that pioneers would know he was an ally, and wouldn’t take his Indian-ness as sufficient cause to kill him. As Koolah Yuanan told his descendant Silas Heck, wearing the mark of allyship was not always enough. Koolah Yuanan was nearly killed by volunteers near Olympia, Washington, who knew he was a friendly but “were in favor of doing away with all of my people they could.” The would-be murderers were stopped only because their fellows

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<sup>330</sup> Peter Ruffner to James W. Nesmith, Apr 18, 185[6], Folder 24, Box 2, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>331</sup> Wadewitz, “Rethinking the ‘Indian War,’” quotation on 355 (emphasis in the original). Lisa K. Wadewitz has shown that Euro-American ill treatment of their Native allies spurred some Indigenous communities on either side of the border to set aside their differences and resist colonial violence in concert.

cautioned that “such an act would be annihilation for all the white settlers in this district.” On other occasions, would-be murderers refused to be restrained by such pragmatism.<sup>332</sup>

In May 21, 1856, a volunteer named James A. Lake murdered a “friendly Indian” just outside of Fort Nisqually. Lake had lost family members in the killings along White River the previous year, and (as his commanding officer Urban E. Hicks put it) “[o]f course he was bitter against all r\_d-sk\_ns, friend of foe.”<sup>333</sup> The Native man Lake shot outside of Fort Nisqually, known locally as “Indian Bob,” had been given special dispensation to leave the internment camp near Fort Steilacoom and work at Fort Nisqually. As “Indian Bob” was chopping wood, James Lake gunned him down in cold blood.<sup>334</sup> As Hicks remembered it:

I scolded [Lake] for the act, but still could not help sympathizing with him, as, indeed, he had the sympathy of the entire company and camp. I cautioned him to keep quiet and promised that I would do what I could to shield him from further trouble. The next morning Dr. Tolmie, accompanied by two or three sq\_\_ws, appeared in camp, and immediately entered complaint before Colonel [Benjamin F.] Shaw that one of his friendly Indians had been killed the evening before, near the fort, by a volunteer.... The Colonel ordered all the companies to be drawn up in line. It then became generally known what had happened, and it required considerable effort on the part of the officers to keep the men in line while the roll was being called and they were being examined by Tolmie and his sq\_\_ws. My

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<sup>332</sup> Quotations from Silas Heck, discussing his father, found in Hodge, “The Family of Sidney S. Ford, Senior,” p. 94.

<sup>333</sup> Hicks, *Yakima and Klickitat Indian Wars, 1855 and 1856*, p. 17.

<sup>334</sup> William Fraser Tolmie to Colonel Silas Casey, May 23, 1856, transcribed in Clarence B. Bagley, “Attitude of the Hudson’s Bay Company During the Indian War of 1855 – 1856,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 18:4 (1917), pp. 291 – 307, letter on pp. 304 – 305. “Bob” claimed to have needed to leave the internment camp out of fear of his former enslaver. See also Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic*, pp. 181 – 182.

company was the last to be examined, and although it was by that time pretty generally suspected who they were after, still it was hoped by the boys that by noise and confusion they would so frighten the sq\_\_ws that they would fail to identify.<sup>335</sup>

Urban E. Hicks remembered with glee escalating attempts to intimidate or, if need be, kill the witnesses. Despite the “noise and confusion” meant to frighten them, the two Native women identified the killer. But the Euro-Americans troops were committed to making sure James Lake got away with murder:

Scarcely had [Lake] been pointed out by the sq\_\_ws, before the men, in spite of the efforts of their officers, broke ranks and with wild yells rushed for their guns, threatening dire vengeance upon Tolmie and his sq\_\_ws if Lake was touched. It required the utmost exertion on the part of the officers to save them from assault....

[O]rder was somewhat restored, when the Doctor agreed that if the men would permit him and his sq\_\_ws to escape he would not molest Lake any further. A way was opened for them, through which they ran to their horses, quickly mounted, and galloped of, no doubt heartily glad to get away with their scalps, to the now infinite amusement of the men. No more was heard of the affair.<sup>336</sup>

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<sup>335</sup> Hicks, *Yakima and Clickitat Indian Wars, 1855 and 1856*, pp. 17.

<sup>336</sup> Hicks, *Yakima and Clickitat Indian Wars, 1855 and 1856*, pp. 17 – 18.

After one volunteer killed a man in cold blood, his comrades were willing to kill several more people to keep him from any possibility of consequences. After all, he had the sympathy of “the entire company and camp.”<sup>337</sup>

On May 26, 1856, James A. Lake was tried by a military commission— apparently for a different murder. While transporting a Native prisoner named “Mowitch” to Seattle to stand trial for taking part in the war, James A. Lake and his fellow volunteer Joseph Brannon had shot “Mowitch” twice in the head. Facing the faint possibility of consequences, Lake claimed that he had been:

firmly convinced that the Indian Mowitch was concerned in the depredations perpetrated [along White River].... I was determined that no such savage monster should escape the fate he richly deserved.<sup>338</sup>

Both men were immediately cleared by the military court. To what extent this was because the officers did not care about the killing, and to what extent because they thought Lake’s justification righteous, is not recorded. If nothing else, the trial underlines the need for skepticism in other White killings claimed to have been specific acts of vengeance (like the murder of Quiemuth, below). For the killing Lake discussed with his friends, the motive was simply race hatred. When brought before a court for another killing, he identified his victim as a specific perpetrator. The few other pioneers brought before the courts of law (or public opinion) for Indian-killing may well have done likewise. Some remembered “revenge killings” were likely more similar to Lake’s murder of “Indian Bob”—capricious attacks of opportunity. Joseph Brannon went on to

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<sup>337</sup> Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, 173. My identification of James A. Lake as the same perpetrator comes from Urban E. Hicks’s account. See also Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, pp. 365 – 367.

<sup>338</sup> Brad Asher, *Beyond the Reservation: Indians, Settlers, and the Law in Washington Territory, 1853 – 1889* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), p. 112.

murder more Native people without legal consequence. There is no indication that James A. Lake suffered any punishment for either of the murders he is known to have committed. What made him stand out to his fellow volunteers was less his murderousness than his lovely singing voice.<sup>339</sup>

The Puget Sound War has sometimes been portrayed as of a different character from the other wars in the Pacific Northwest. Euro-American wars on local communities, when discussed at all, have at times been subsumed within the narrative of Euro-American conflicts with Indigenous peoples and polities from British-claimed territory they deemed “Northern Indians,” who sometimes attacked Euro-American and Native settlements alike. Even compared to other regional conflicts, there were relatively few conventional battles in the Puget Sound War. The most famous clash, the Battle of Seattle, resulted in little loss of life on either side, and may have been (as historian Mary Ellen Rowe has suggested) meant as “more demonstration than battle” by the Native forces that participated in the attack. But many pioneers were happy to attempt to murder Indigenous people, both locally and internationally. And that didn’t stop when the war wound down—not with the judicial murder of Chief Leschi (see Chapter V), and not afterwards.<sup>340</sup>

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<sup>339</sup> Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, p. 172. On the outcome of the trial, see Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2*, p. 50. Harvey W. Scott, who later gained fame as a newspaper editor and staunch opponent of women’s suffrage, remembered James A. Lake’s musicality. Characteristically of Scott’s writing, the murders Lake committed went unmentioned (see Chapter IX and Conclusion). Leslie M. Scott, Compiler, *History of the Oregon Country By Harvey W. Scott, Fifty Years the Editor of the Morning Oregonian*, Volume 2 (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1924), p. 41.

<sup>340</sup> Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic*, p. 170. Rowe’s assertions about the Battle of Seattle are based in large part on later Native testimony. On the framing of the Puget Sound War, see Wadewitz, “Rethinking the ‘Indian War’”; Mike Vouri, “Raiders from the North: The Northern Indians and Northwest Washington in the 1850s,” *Columbia* 11:3 (1997), pp. 24 – 35; J. Overton, “The Battle of Port Gamble,” *Columbia* 29:1 (2015), pp. 23 – 27; John Lutz, “Inventing an Indian War: Canadian Indians and American Settlers in the

On July 17, 1856, a force of mixed volunteers from across Oregon and Washington led by Benjamin Shaw attacked a large group of mostly Cayuse Native people who were camped in Grand Ronde Valley (near what is now Elgin, Oregon).<sup>341</sup> The Native people were harvesting camas, but began to pack up and retreat as soon as they realized White volunteers were nearby. Euro-Americans later claimed that the Cayuse horsemen sent to speak with them was very rude. Benjamin F. Shaw and the volunteers reported the sauciness and the retreat as hostile acts. This was normal for them; on June 30, 1856, when four Native men in canoes had seen Shaw's force and tried to paddle away, he had ordered his men to shoot them. As was also characteristic, the volunteers on July 17, 1856 were already forming lines to charge "the enemy village," even before the supposedly hostile retreat that was claimed to have triggered the attack. After all, with the terms of many of the volunteers about to expire, this was their last chance to "make a fight before going out of service." The volunteers appear to have killed between forty and sixty people—mostly old men, women, and children. Then they looted and burned the encampment, seizing a wealth of horses and other goods—some of the plunder Governor Stevens had apparently promised at the outset of the war.<sup>342</sup>

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Pacific West, 1854 – 1864," *Journal of the West* 38:3 (July 1998), pp. 7 – 13. Although primarily an argument that lethal clashes between "Northern Indians" and American pioneers in the given date range did not rise to the level of war, Lutz's piece also implied that the Puget Sound War was only a "general Indian uprising on the Sound," neither a war nor relevant to his discussion of violence between Americans and First Nations people within the same date range.

<sup>341</sup> Grand Ronde Valley should not be confused with the similarly named Grand Ronde Reservation, located much further to the west.

<sup>342</sup> Walter Washington De Lacy, "Diary of the Yakima Indian War Kept By W. W. De Lacy, Captain, Engineers and Acting Adjutant, W. T. V. Covering Period June 12th to August 29, 1856," transcribed in Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2*, pp. 60 – 71; Clifford E. Trafzer and Richard D. Scheuerman, *Renegade Tribe: Palouse Indians and the Invasion of the Inland Pacific Northwest* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1986), pp. 72 – 74; Richards, *Isaac I. Stevens*, pp. 297 – 298; William L. Lang, "'Ambition Has Always Been My God': William Winlock Miller and Opportunity in Washington Territory," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 83:3 (1992), pp. 101 – 109, esp. p. 105; Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram*, p. 115. For Shaw and his men shooting at canoes for trying to escape, see Benjamin F. Shaw to James Tilton, July 1, 1856, transcribed in

Hamilton G. Maxon and those of his men who had not deserted were part of this attack, though only barely. They had been sent to assist with the war effort in the east. Unwilling to take orders from Shaw and in trouble for having fired their weapons for practice without warning the rest of the volunteers, Maxon's company was at a sulky distance from the rest of volunteers during the lead-up to the attack on Grand Ronde. The fighting and looting were disorganized and chaotic, and Maxon and his men charged off and were lost for a few days—most likely in an attempt to continue the killing spree.<sup>343</sup>

The unprompted killing of dozens of Cayuse people was good news for the perpetrators. Benjamin F. Shaw would ride the mass killing perpetrated at the Grand Ronde Valley into political success, winning election to the Washington territorial legislature in 1857 and profitably dipping in and out of the Indian Service for the next decade or so.<sup>344</sup> Governor Isaac I. Stevens made the attack a centerpiece of his governor's message in 1856, transforming the assault and looting spree into a well-planned tactical masterstroke, "the hardest and most brilliant blow of the war."<sup>345</sup> This false assertion largely stuck; Shaw's wanton killings at Grand Ronde Valley did not attract the same censure as the killing sprees by other volunteer companies elsewhere, like those of Lupton or Maxon, and have sometimes been missed by historians since.<sup>346</sup>

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*Message of the Governor of the Washington Territory Also the Correspondence...* (Olympia, WA: Edward Furste, Public Printer, 1857), pp. 258 – 259; For "make a fight before going out of service," see Benjamin F. Shaw to Isaac I. Stevens, May 22, 1856, transcribed in *ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>343</sup> Walter Washington De Lacy, "Diary of the Yakima Indian War Kept By W. W. De Lacy, Captain, Engineers and Acting Adjutant, W. T. V. Covering Period June 12th to August 29, 1856," transcribed in Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2*, pp. 60 – 71.

<sup>344</sup> James R. Masterson, "The Records of the Washington Superintendency of Indian Affairs, 1853 – 1874," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 37:1 (1946), pp. 31 – 57.

<sup>345</sup> Isaac I. Stevens, "Governor's Message," transcribed in *Message of the Governor of the Washington Territory*, pp. 1 – 23, quotation on p. 9.

<sup>346</sup> Thomas Leander Morehouse, "Colonel B.F. Shaw and party locating site of Battle of the Grande Ronde, fought July 1856" [photograph], Oct 27, 1907, PH036 / A82, Lee Moorhouse (1850-1926) photographs, 1888 – 1916, digital collection, University of Oregon Special Collections and the Tamástslíkt Cultural

This was not the only lie Isaac I. Stevens told in his 1856 Governor's address. He also proclaimed to his "fellow citizens":

[Y]ou will find nothing to reproach the people of our beloved territory with, for their conduct either at home or in the field.

During the first six months of this war, not an Indian was killed except in battle.

Throughout the war, not an Indian has been killed in a volunteer camp....

[W]e have waged war with humanity, with moderation, with honor to our country and honor to ourselves.<sup>347</sup>

These were lies which he repeated to the press,<sup>348</sup> and which he repeated, somewhat more defensively, to the National Congress a few years later. In May 1858, he pressed the National Congress to pay six million dollars for expenses incurred in Oregon and Washington during the wars waged there. In this speech, Stevens argued both that incidents of wanton violence by pioneers didn't matter *and* that there had been no such incidents of consequence:

[I]t has often been charged against us, that [the Washington and Oregon] war was brought on by outrages upon the rights of the Indians; that it was gotten up for the purpose of speculation; and that it was the treaties which caused the war. Well, sir, suppose the treaties did cause the war; suppose we did have vagobonds [sic] in that country who committed outrages upon the Indians; suppose some few citizens were operated upon by the motive of making a speculation out of the war; if these things be true, did they make it any less the duty of the people, and of the

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Institute, Eugene, OR. Cf. Mark Spence, "'Soyaapo' and the Making of Lewis and Clark," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 105:3 (2004), pp. 482 – 499, esp. 484 – 485.

<sup>347</sup> Isaac I. Stevens, "Governor's Message," quotation on p. 13.

<sup>348</sup> "Substance of the Remarks of Gov. Stevens at the Dinner Given to Col. Shaw and the Volunteers," *Pioneer and Democrat* Nov. 7, 1856, p. 2.



authorities of the Territories, a war having come upon them, to protect the settlements?<sup>349</sup>

Even if all of the allegations about Northwesterners were true—and Stevens went on to hotly deny them—they did not matter.

In this same speech, Isaac I. Stevens put forward lies and distortions that would set the tone for many histories of the period to follow. He carefully separated those “few” pioneers who had committed outrages (“vagobonds”) from who he termed “American citizens, the very choice and flower of your yeomanry.” And he attempted to erase his own threat that Yakamas (and perhaps others) would “walk in blood knee deep” unless they signed the treaty he had dictated (see Chapter III). Responding to (accurate) charges that Native people had been compelled to sign under threat of violence, Stevens pointed to the

official record of its proceedings—a record which was taken verbatim by two secretaries separately. It is not a fixed up or patched up concern.... Pu-pu-mux-mux... every Indian chief, and every Indian there assembled... expressed joy and satisfaction.<sup>350</sup>

The deliberately incomplete record (as one of those two secretaries later attested) had been created for the treaty councils with political purpose, allowing Stevens to build documentary supports for his falsehoods. He overshot even the half-truths of those documents in this memorial—although threats of violence during negotiations were blotted out, a record of reticence remained. Stevens had lied to Native people and

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<sup>349</sup> Isaac I. Stevens, *Speech of Hon. Isaac I. Stevens, Delegate from Washington Territory, on the Washington and Oregon War Claims, Delivered in the House of Representatives of the United States, May 31, 1858* (Washington D.C.: Lemuel Towers, 1858).

<sup>350</sup> Stevens, *Speech of Hon. Isaac I. Stevens... May 31, 1858*. Word order slightly reworked for clarity, with the original intent and implications left intact.

polities, he had lied to the citizens of Washington Territory, and now he baldly lied to Congress:

At no time during th[e] war was there any unauthorized killings by the volunteer forces. The Indians, whether friendly or hostile, were sacred in the camps of the volunteers during that war. Their conduct was throughout humane and meritorious.<sup>351</sup>

Perhaps Stevens even lied to himself. In any case, the story worked well enough. Stevens and Joseph Lane were able to push through legislation to pay for the war material and wages of the volunteer forces. After some back and forth and an audit of inflated expenses, recompense or volunteer portions of the War on Illahee flooded in during the Civil War, and more trickles of federal funding continued into the 1870s and beyond.<sup>352</sup>

Historian Kent D. Richards, whose 1979 biography of Stevens *Young Man in a Hurry* remains prominent in the literature, declared in 2016 that “No one in the government was saying ‘Oh, let’s go and wipe out these heathens’” in Washington Territory during the wars of the 1850s. Though detailed in many of its facets, Richards’s biography of Stevens extends credulity selectively. He rejects historical reports of White miners who attempted to rape Native women in 1855 as “pure fabrication”—without providing any evidence other than indirect reference to Stevens’s denial (see Chapter VIII). Isaac I. Stevens threaded enough lies and omissions into his speeches and negotiations that generations of historians could, wittingly or unwittingly, cover up some

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<sup>351</sup> Isaac I. Stevens, *Speech of Hon. Isaac I. Stevens, Delegate from Washington Territory, on the Washington and Oregon War Claims, Delivered in the House of Representatives of the United States, May 31, 1858* (Washington [D.C.], Lemuel Towers, 1858).

<sup>352</sup> Richards, *Isaac I. Stevens*, p. 342 and p. 436, n. 48.

hard truths. His blanket denials of murder, rape, and colonial violence are *still* shaping the historical record.<sup>353</sup>

Organized violence by companies of volunteer soldiers sputtered to a stall in the fall of 1856, as undersupplied, underwhelmed, and (they felt) underpaid pioneers mustered out or deserted. But killings by regular soldiers and by everyday Euro-American citizens continued, in the ongoing undeclared wars, in attacks by vigilante mobs, and in individual violent encounters. The conduct of the pioneers as a group was seldom “humane and meritorious” toward Native people, in wars or beyond them. What the Coquille/Coquille anthropologist George B. Wasson labelled the “Oregon holocaust” may have been the most intense in southern Oregon, but it was not limited to that region. Nor was it limited to times of war. Wasson’s survey of the horrors of the 1850s took in not only official and unofficial acts of war, but also “the terrible years of concentration camps and virtual ‘death camp’ reservations” that continued through and after the wars. As Chapter V discusses, the war on Indians continued in the peace.<sup>354</sup>

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<sup>353</sup> Kent D. Richards quotation from Feliks Banel, “Remembering Washington’s Complicated First governor Isaac Stevens,” *My Northwest* (Seattle), Aug 31, 2016. Unsubstantiated characterization of historical accounts of (attempted?) rapes of Yakama women as “pure fabrication” in Richards, *Isaac I. Stevens*, p. 336 and p. 435, n. 38.

<sup>354</sup> Wasson, Jr. “Growing Up Indian,” quotation on p. 34; Wasson, “The Coquille Indians and the Cultural ‘Black Hole’ of the Southern Oregon Coast.”

CHAPTER V: “NEVER STOP TO ASK WHETHER THE WAR WAS RIGHT OR  
WRONG”: THEFT, MURDER, COMPLICITY, AND THE OREGON  
TRAILS OF TEARS

John K. Lamerick was sure the war wasn't over. He had fought and sometimes killed Native people in Oregon from at least 1852, related stories of his murders with gory gusto, and claimed the rank of (volunteer) Brigadier General during the official portion of the Rogue River War in 1855 – 1856, largely due to his reports of having recruited hundreds of men for the cause. In December of 1855 he had been confident that “the quantity of men now in the field is quite suff[icient] to *kill* all of the Indians in this territory.” He was wrong—many Native people survived, and won battles even though they did not have the resources or numbers to continue the war. Peace seemed to have been made in western Oregon by June, 1856. But Lamerick and pioneers like him were unconvinced. He wrote of “citizens... trying to get up a purse and offer a reward for [Native] scalps” to get rid of the last “few scattering Indians” in the region. And he assumed another exterminatory war would be underway in Oregon before long, to match the one still being fought in Washington Territory.<sup>355</sup>

In a few ways, he was right. The so-called “Snake” War on Native peoples in eastern Oregon and Washington (among other places) had been slowly picking up steam since 1854 (see Chapter IV)—although Lamerick chose to commit treason and join the

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<sup>355</sup> For Lamerick's stories of gory murder, see Matthew P. Deady, “Southern Oregon Names and Events,” *Transactions of the Eleventh Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1883* (Salem, Ore.: E.M. Wait, Steam Printer and Bookbinder, 1884), pp. 23 – 24. For mass recruitment, see Nathan Douthit, “Between Indian and White Worlds on the Oregon-California Border, 1851 – 1857: Benjamin Wright and Enos,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 100:4 (1999), pp. 402 – 433, esp. p. 432 n. 54. For “kill *all* the Indians,” see John K. Lamerick to E. M. Barnum, Dec 13, 1855, Yakima and Rogue River War, Document File B, Reel 2, Document 522, Oregon State Archives. For “get up a purse,” see John K. Lamerick to Joseph Lane, Sept 22, 1856, taken from <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/jolaneletters.html>. For assumptions of war, see among others Peter Laufer, “All We Ask Is to Be Left Alone,” *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations* 36 (2014), pp. 17 – 33, relevant quotation on p. 19.

Confederate army before recruitment for “Snake” War volunteers began in earnest, in 1862 (see Chapter VII). More broadly, attacks on Native people and communities continued, only somewhat attenuated, as formal wars across the region wound down.<sup>356</sup>

Nearly all early histories of the Pacific Northwest agreed there had been an “Indian War” in 1855 and 1856. The War on Illahee was, perhaps, felt across the region more universally in that period than any other. Past those dates, the length of the wars depended in part on the chroniclers. Those fighting for earlier volunteer claims extended the wars backwards. Those focused on eastern Washington Territory extended the wars forwards. Some few even noted the continuing war with Native groups in eastern Oregon and beyond that went into the 1860s.

Within and beyond the wars of the period, there was a continuity of settler violence, theft, rape, and murder. Attacks on Native sovereignty, individual and collective, continued. Attempts by Euro-Americans to use reservations as prisons and piggy banks continued. Lynchings, legal and extra-legal, within war and beyond it, continued. White theft of Native land, individual and collective, continued. And Native resistance to colonial regimes, in ways big and small, continued.

The end of outright war in western Oregon and parts of Washington did not end White depredations on Native communities. The Trails of Tears that forced Native communities onto reservations traumatized, tortured, and sometimes killed. Conditions on reservations could be just as lethal, especially when aggravated by hatred and graft. And those Native people beyond the reservation faced Euro-American legal systems and social norms that would refuse to protect Native residents from White violence. This

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<sup>356</sup> For Lamerick as a Confederate, see Robert W. Johannsen, “The Secession Crisis and the Frontier: Washington Territory, 1860 – 1861,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 39:3 (1952), pp. 415 – 440, esp. p. 419.

chapter is meant to be suggestive rather than comprehensive, demonstrating that even as the War on Illahee did not suddenly end when armies began to disband. Many pioneers continued their war on Indians into the purported peace.

In 1856 and 1857, government authorities in Oregon undertook a series of deadly removals to reservations—the Oregon Trail(s) of Tears. Both the journey and the destination could be lethal, dogged by Euro-Americans with guns and murderous intent. The vision of reservations as a carceral system that Joel Palmer had made official during the war (see Chapter IV) continued haphazardly in the peace. Historian and anthropologist David G. Lewis has shown that reservations like Grand Ronde were viewed—and at times administered—as “concentration camps” by Euro-Americans in the 1850s. Native nations eventually made reservations into places of community and power, despite the intent of pioneers. But the initial years on the reservation were desperate for many Indigenous people.<sup>357</sup>

A full account of the Trails of Tears in the Pacific Northwest is beyond this study. The work already done makes clear that they could be lethal. Historian Stephen Dow Beckham’s review of a removal from the Table Rock region of Oregon to the Grand Ronde Reservation, conducted by George Ambrose in the late winter of 1856, shows a ragged train besieged by pioneer murderers. Ambrose reported eight Native people dying on a 33-day march, at least one of whom was murdered by pioneer vigilantes prowling the edges of the train for just such an opportunity. As Ambrose knew, there were “[s]ome

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<sup>357</sup> Brook Colley, *Power in the Telling: Grand Ronde, Warm Springs, and Intertribal Relations in the Casino Era* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018), pp. 33 – 36, Lewis quotation on p. 33; Tracy Neal Leavelle, ‘We Will Make It Our Own Place’: Agriculture and Adaptation at the Grand Ronde Reservation, 1856 – 1887,” *American Indian Quarterly* 22:4 (1998), pp. 433 – 456; Alexandra Harmon, *Reclaiming the Reservation: Histories of Indian Sovereignty Suppressed and Renewed* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2019).

declaring that every Indian will be killed” in the removal. Whether or not the fundraising for scalp bounties Lamerick described was successful (see above), there were White killers eager to murder Native people whether or not they could get paid for the killing. Nor were Euro-Americans necessarily innocent in those deaths Ambrose attributed to sickness; the forced march in the cold was likely a contributing factor for many who perished. The physical and psychological trauma brought on by pioneer violence were likely contributing factors for nearly all.<sup>358</sup>

William Tichenor, who had spurred invasions of southwestern Oregon in 1851 (see Chapter II), masterminded an especially lethal set of removals of Chetco and Pistol River communities near Port Orford. As historian Gray Whaley has shown, Tichenor was given barely tacit approval for genocide by Indian Superintendent James Nesmith (see below) in 1857, informed that if settlers “hit upon some mode for [Chetco and Pistol River peoples’] extermination,” it would “occasion no regrets at this office.” Tichenor did have at least seventeen Chetco people killed—supposedly while trying to escape—and expressed willingness, even eagerness, to “kill the last one of them” to make Port Orford “quiet.”<sup>359</sup>

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<sup>358</sup> Stephen Dow Beckham, ed., “Trail of Tears: 1856 Diary of Indian Agent George Ambrose,” *Southern Oregon Heritage* 2:1 (1996), pp. 16 – 21; Ambrose quotation found in George Ambrose to Col. Ford, Jan 7, 1856, transcribed in David G. Lewis, “We Are Willing to Remove Anywhere, Where We Can Obtain Peace: Removal of the Rogue River Tribes to the Grand Ronde Reservation,” *Quartux Journal* Sept 16, 2017, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2017/09/16/we-are-willing-to-remove-anywhere-where-we-can-obtain-peace-removal-of-the-rogue-river-tribes-to-the-grand-ronde-reservation/>, Strikingly, Ambrose noted “danger” only from “hostile Indians,” and not from the band of pioneer murderers that killed a member of the forced migration he was leading. Presumably Ambrose himself did not feel a sense of danger from the White killers. See also MacKenzie Katherine Lee Moore, “Making Place and Nation: Geographic Meaning and the Americanization of Oregon: 1834 – 1859,” PhD dissertation (University of California, Berkeley, 2012), pp. 136 – 143.

<sup>359</sup> Gray H. Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee: U.S. Empire and the Transformation of an Indigenous World, 1792 – 1859* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), pp. 201 – 202.

Robert Metcalf, an Indian Sub-Agent who conducted a removal of Umpqua region Native people to Grand Ronde Reservation in the same period, encouraged the use of force even as he discouraged outright murder. His diary records both attempts to avoid *wanton* killings and attempts to rally more organized pioneer violence to force the movement of Native captives who “expressed a desire to die in their own country” rather than “leav[e] the land of their nativity where the bodies of their forefathers rest.” Many Native people in the region were convinced they were being marched off to die in any case. Often, they were right. At least one person was murdered in the night during this particular forced removal. Metcalf assumed the murderer must have been an Indian, rather than one of the pioneers who had threatened and planned to kill Native people on the forced march. There is no record of how Metcalf came to his conclusion; he simply had an “understanding” that a Klickitat man had done the deed. Ambrose, Metcalf, and perhaps even Tichenor might have been inclined to undercount the dead. Those listed as “deserted” may have escaped, but some may well have been murdered and left unfound.<sup>360</sup>

Native accounts remembered brutal horror beyond the partisans hoping to murder them. People died, and army personnel would not permit their families to time to bury them. Soldiers “abused”—most likely in multiple senses of the word—women on forced

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<sup>360</sup> David G. Lewis, “Umpqua Journal of Removal to the Grand Ronde Encampment, 1856,” *Quartux Journal* Oct 29, 2016, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2016/10/26/umpqua-journal-of-removal-to-grand-ronde-encampment-1856/>. Metcalf attempted, and failed, to get an army platoon to help him enforce the removal. See also Thomas J. Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram, on Territories of Oregon and Washington*, H.R. Exec. Doc. No. 114, 35th Cong., 2nd Sess. (1859), pp. 44 – 45.



marches. These actions might not make the official reports—those in charge would have been motivated not to reveal them. But Native communities remembered.<sup>361</sup>

William Cribbs White, later a Euro-American farmer in Umatilla country, was haunted by his time working as a subcontractor (and perhaps a de facto guard) accompanying mass removals of Native people across the Northwest. His daughter Rosella White Hammer

recall[ed] many interesting stories of his adventures in this work. It was a pitiful sight to see them driven as sheep and cattle, different Tribes mixed together and fighting each other; Indians who had lived on lands on which their forefathers had spent all their lives. Those who lived on fish were placed inland, and those from the North, placed in the South. He told of difficulty the troops had in taking the dead babies and children from their mothers, as they would carry them for days, trying to hide them. There was nothing the Officers could do to stop the Indian women from wailing or chanting their death dirges; as soon as some tired, and quit, others would take up the mournful song. They were so homesick leaving their homes, that they could not eat.<sup>362</sup>

Official reports of the removals like those written by Ambrose and Metcalf tended to be sparse, stories of successes and challenges accompanied by terse counts of the dead.

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<sup>361</sup> Charles Wilkinson, *The People Are Dancing Again: The History of the Siletz Tribe of Western Oregon* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), pp. 155 – 167. See also E. A. Schwartz, “Sick Hearts: Indian Removal on the Oregon Coast, 1875 – 1881,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 92:3 (1991), pp. 229 – 264; Sarah Deer, *Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), chap. 5.

<sup>362</sup> Rosella White Hammer reminiscences, Apr 6 1927, pp. 7 – 8, Vol 1, Folder 1, Box 1, DAR Family Rec. of Wash. Pioneers, Cage 472, Washington State University Special Collections.

White's more jarring account was a family story, shared mostly in private. And it matched, much more closely, the Indigenous histories of the removals.<sup>363</sup>

Deaths due to Euro-American action and inaction continued on reservations. As one military report from the period put it

[T]he volunteers, without discipline, without order, and similar to the madmen of the revolution, menace us with death every day; they have already despoiled of their provisions the inhabitants of this country and the Indians who have so nobly followed the advice to remain faithful friends of the Americans.

To-day these same volunteers are not yet satisfied with rapine and injustice, and wish to take away the small remnant of animals and provisions left.<sup>364</sup>

The report came from the Cayuse portion of the Umatilla Reservation, but one like it could have come from nearly anywhere.

White fear often drove Euro-American misgivings—many of the calls to fulfill the basic promises the U.S. government had made were connected to a fear of renewed war more than a humanitarian cause. In an 1858 report on Grand Ronde and Siletz, Special Indian Commissioner Christopher H. Mott registered a worry about hunger:

Since my first visit to Grand Ronde, at which time the Supt. [James W. Nesmith, see below] [m]ade an order for the reduction of rations to the Indians, there has been some complaints & threats from them.

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<sup>363</sup> Like many pioneers, William "Uncle Billy" Cribbs White was remembered by his family as being friendly with Native people. Though such claims must be treated with skepticism, his daughter's story of how the family weathered the 1878 Bannock/Shoshone War has potentially convincing detail: "He always dealt fairly with the Indians, and during their uprising [likely the 1878 Bannock War, since White's farm was on Butter Creek], while many people were massacred, no harm came to him or his family. The Indians braided a wreath of cherry twigs and placed it over the gate, an indication from the Chief, that they would not molest this place." Rosella White Hammer reminiscences, Apr 6 1927, p. 8

<sup>364</sup> Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram*, p. 110.

There is no fish or game within reach & the truth is that at this agency the department will have to feed the Indians, else starvation or the plunder of the whites will follow—then comes another Indian war.

The latest intelligence from the Spokane Country is that our troops have met with some “brilliant” successes, and the war is ended for the present.<sup>365</sup>

The threat of starvation was not depicted as necessarily a concern in itself, but as a concern because it might lead to further war—perhaps reopening a war in western Oregon just as the campaign against Native peoples in eastern Washington was perceived to be winding down (see Chapter VI).<sup>366</sup>

Politically connected volunteer soldiers often ended up in positions of power on reservations. After all, as Matthew Deady had noted, Indian fighting was a political asset (see Chapter III). And the men who killed and stole during the wars sometimes continued to kill and steal beyond them.<sup>367</sup>

James W. Nesmith, a thin-skinned pioneer proud of his reputation for violence, claimed to have “commanded troops in every Indian war in Oregon since the year 1843...

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<sup>365</sup> C. H. Mott Report, Sept 22, 1858, transcribed in David G. Lewis, “Mott’s Special Report on Grand Ronde and Siletz in 1858,” *Quartux Journal* Jan 4, 2017, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2017/01/04/motts-special-report-on-grand-ronde-and-siletz-in1858/>. Mott had been sent by Congress to investigate conditions in the Oregon territory, following disagreements between General John E. Wool and several figures in territorial government. Kent D. Richards, *Isaac I. Stevens: Young Man in a Hurry* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1979), p. 331.

<sup>366</sup> The soldiers who kept armed guard over Native people at the Coastal Reservation, meanwhile, plundered local farms to such a great extent that in 1858 they were banned from carrying their guns outside of the fort when not on duty—implying not only thievery but armed robbery. See Julie M. Schlablitsky, “Duty and Vice: The Daily Life of a Fort Hoskins Soldier,” Master’s thesis (Oregon State University, 1996), p. 77.

<sup>367</sup> James R. Masterson, “Records of the Washington Superintendency of Indian Affairs, 1853 – 1874,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 37:1 (1946), pp. 31 – 57. Benjamin F. Shaw, who led the mass killings at Grand Ronde Valley in eastern Oregon 1856, seems to have been posted for less than a year at a number of different Indian Agent positions, in between the campaigns he led. See also George Bundy Wasson, Jr. “Growing Up Indian: An Emic Perspective,” PhD Dissertation (University of Oregon 2001), pp. 176 – 177; Albert J. Partoll, “Frank L. Worden, Pioneer Merchant, 1830 – 1887,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 40:3 (1946), pp. 189 – 202.

to the commencement of the [1873] Modoc campaign.”<sup>368</sup> He fought as a defiant volunteer, refusing to be placed under the command of regular U.S. forces.<sup>369</sup> Indeed, he often refused any military authority other than his own—when leading a company in 1855, Nesmith ignored orders he did not care for both from military leaders and from Oregon Territorial Governor George Law Curry, and ignored complaints that his men were committing “outrages”—typically code for rape and/or murder.<sup>370</sup> He was a longtime ally of Joseph Lane, who ensured Nesmith’s appointments first as Oregon U.S. Marshal in 1856, then Superintendent of Indian Affairs in 1857. Unlike Anson Dart or Joel Palmer, Indian Superintendent James Nesmith was popular among a critical mass of his fellow White Oregonians. With a proud history as a volunteer soldier and connections with the so-called “Salem Clique,” he was elected by the new state legislature as Senator from Oregon in 1860, taking over Joseph Lane’s seat. He spent his time in the National Congress fighting to preserve the Union, demanding more federal money be spent in Oregon and the Northwest, encouraging the people of Idaho Territory to take up arms and kill their Native neighbors, and fighting *against* citizenship and personhood rights for people of color.<sup>371</sup>

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<sup>368</sup> James W. Nesmith to James O’Meara, June 3, 1873, Folder 6, Box 3, James W. Nesmith Papers, Mss 577, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. For Nesmith’s thin-skinned pridefulness, see especially Stafford Hazelett, “‘To the World!!’: The Story Behind the Vitriol,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 116:2 (2015), pp. 196 – 219.

<sup>369</sup> James W. Nesmith to Asahel Bush, Oct 22, 1855, Folder 2, Box 3, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>370</sup> Mary Ellen Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic: The American Militia in the Antebellum West* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), p. 163; Plympton J. Kelly, *We Were Not Summer Soldiers: The Diary of Plympton J. Kelly*, ed. William N. Bischoff (Tacoma: Washington State Historical Society, 1976, orig. unclear), pp. 34 – 36; Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram*, p. 113. See also David G. Lewis, “Curry’s Volunteers,” *Quartux Journal* Oct 25, 2020, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2020/10/25/currys-volunteers/>.

<sup>371</sup> Sydney Teiser, “Life of George H. Williams: Almost Chief-Justice,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 47:3 (1946), pp. 255 – 280, esp. p. 266; Harry Kelsey, “The Doolittle Report of 1867: Its Preparation and Shortcomings,” *Arizona and the West* 17:2 (1975), pp. 107 – 120; Merle W. Wells, “Caleb Lyon’s Indian Policy,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 61:4 (1970), pp. 193 – 200; James W. Nesmith, “Speech of Hon. J.

Nesmith railed in his letters against those who swindled Native people. This was not out of compassion; indeed, some evidence suggests he was not above a swindle himself (see below). Nesmith objected to the ways “the indians have been fooled and humbug[g]ed in th[e] Sale” of their lands, but largely because he viewed such tricks as ineffective. He thought Native people “would rather die than surrender their country,” and thus would fight rather than acquiesce if tricked into sale; Nesmith preferred instead that cessions be compelled through force of arms.<sup>372</sup> He argued that “the rights of the Indians as recognized by the law as well as the general usage and policy of the government should be protected.”<sup>373</sup> This was not sympathy, nor what Nesmith called “the farce of recognizing their national character,”<sup>374</sup> but a desire to avoid unnecessary deaths of White pioneers who did not yet have the numbers or arms for extermination. Indeed, as Nesmith was cutting food shipments to Oregon reservations in 1858 (thus worsening an already desperate situation), he was pushing for yet more killings in Washington Territory, calling on General Harney and Governor Isaac I. Stevens to order Col. Wright to continue his war of extermination (see Chapter VI) by marching on Colville, W.T., and “clean[ing] out ‘the Vagabonds’ of that valley.”<sup>375</sup>

Nesmith had nothing but scorn for “Indian sympathizers,” “exaggerated accounts of Indian consciences” by missionaries,<sup>376</sup> and “hypocritical scoundrels who defend the

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W. Nesmith of Oregon, on Reconstruction, Delivered in the Senate of the United States, January 18, 1866” (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Globe Office, 1866).

<sup>372</sup> James W. Nesmith to Asahel Bush, Oct 14, 1855, Folder 2, Box 3, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>373</sup> James W. Nesmith to Charles E. May, Nov 19, 1859, Folder 19, Box 3, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>374</sup> James W. Nesmith, “Remarks of Hon. J. W. Nesmith of Oregon Upon the Indian Appropriation Bill, May 13 + 14 1862,” Folder 19, Box 3, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>375</sup> James W. Nesmith to Isaac Ingalls Stevens, Nov 17[?], 1858, Folder 6, Box 3, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>376</sup> James W. Nesmith, “1875 Address to the Oregon Pioneer Society,” p. 30, Folder 13, Box 3, James W. Nesmith Papers.

savages [in] their histories.” Nesmith hoped that such men would be murdered by Indians forthwith, so that others

understand the proper policy to p[ur]sue towards these red devils who are bound by no honor and restricted by no law, whose only appetite is for blood and murder, and whose only instinct is to steal and lie[;] the sooner the atrocious Red man ceases to be petted and spoiled by the penurious tribe of white cloaked [illegible crossed out] Pecksniffs, and are remitted to the strong arm of the gov[er]nment to be enthralled by their fears, the sooner will the advance of civilization be quit of that course of blood and nest of scalps that has marked and marred its progress.<sup>377</sup>

This man was appointed to the (newly combined) position of Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon and Washington, officially charged with managing, controlling, and defending the Native people and polities of the region from 1857 to 1859.<sup>378</sup>

Mott, the Special Indian Commissioner sent to appraise conditions, initially reported that Nesmith was

a plain blunt man, of great force of character, [who] has impressed me most favorably both as to his efficiency and integrity.

His manners and his language may be somewhat brus[que] and at times insubordinate yet I think it will be found that he has conducted Indian Affairs of these territories without reference to his own pecuniary advantage.<sup>379</sup>

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<sup>377</sup> James W. Nesmith to James O’Meara, June 3, 1873, Folder 6, Box 3, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>378</sup> Cf. David G. Lewis and Thomas J. Connolly, “White American Violence on Tribal Peoples on the Oregon Coast,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 120:4 (2019), pp. 368 – 381, esp. 376.

<sup>379</sup> C. H. Mott Report, Sept 22, 1858.

It is unclear whether Mott remained of this opinion, especially as he appended to this recommendation a follow-up letter concerned about Nesmith's choices regarding rations and spending (see above).

Mott may have taken Nesmith's brusqueness and plainness as a sign of honesty, but elsewhere there is evidence that he sought pecuniary advantage. In 1862, Timothy W. Davenport, about to start work as an Indian Agent at Umatilla, seems to have asked Nesmith for advice, knowing that Nesmith would be "likely to voice the prevalent knowledge and sentiments of those engaged in Government employ." As Nesmith apparently put it:

The Indian, like the negro, is the product of a long succession of ages, with an environment favorable to barbarism... On the outside the appearance is, that the Government is trying to civilize the Indians, when in fact there is no such intention. They are put upon reservations, where goods and rations are occasionally doled out to them, for the reason that it is cheaper to do that than to fight them. The agriculture and mechanics supposed to be taught on the agencies is all a pretense....

Dr. Marcus Whitman... sacrificed his life mainly in their interest and I shall assume there is nothing to show for it. My advice is, not to spend your time experimenting where others, after long trying, have failed. Go and do something for yourself.<sup>380</sup>

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<sup>380</sup> T[imothy] W[oodbridge] Davenport, "Recollections of an Indian Agent," *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 8:1 (1907), pp. 1 – 41, quotation on pp. 4 – 5. Timothy Woodbridge Davenport leaves out James W. Nesmith's name in the text, but he is far and away the most likely person to fit all of the descriptors Davenport includes about the person whom he was quoting.

For some, the purpose of Indian Affairs was one of suppress violent resistance to colonialism—reservations were cheaper than war. And the advice included a call for corruption, recommending that Davenport “do something for [him]self” while in the service.<sup>381</sup>

Assertions that Native agricultural learning was “all a pretense” notwithstanding, James Nesmith’s daughter Harriet remembered from her childhood on the family farm that men from Grand Ronde and Siletz were “allowed out on passes” in the late 1850s to do “good work in the harvest fields binding grain by hand.” Support for internment and disgust for Native people did not, apparently, preclude the exploitation of Native labor. It remains unclear whether or how they were coerced; whether or how they were paid; and whether or how James Nesmith managed to profit from the labor.<sup>382</sup>

In at least one case in Washington Territory, the evidence for corruption is even clearer. William Barnhart, the former volunteer and historian who in 1856 had joked about binding his scatological “history” of the Yakima War in the skin of Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox (see Chapter IV), became an Indian Agent at the Umatilla Reservation in December 1861. In addition to attempting a reign of terror, William Barnhart claimed to excel at embezzlement. He informed his successor that the use of “paper fiction” had been the key to his success, bragging that he had earned \$4,000 in his position despite a salary of only

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<sup>381</sup> When Oregon Senator, land thief, and former volunteer John H. Mitchell was being successfully prosecuted for fraud and graft 1905, he argued that he had done was worse than what men like James Nesmith and Matthew Deady had done. See John H. Mitchell to J. W. Redington, Juan 30, 1905, Folder 2, Box 21, Edmond S. Meany Papers, 1883 – 1935, Acc. 106, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA. On Mitchell, see Thomas W. Prosch, “Oregon in 1863,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 14:1 (1913), pp. 61 – 64; Jerry A. O’Callaghan, “Senator Mitchell and the Oregon Land Frauds, 1905,” *Pacific Historical Review* 21:3 (1952), pp. 255 – 261; John Messing, “Public Lands, Politics, and Progressives: The Oregon Land Fraud Trials, 1903 – 1910,” *Pacific Historical Review* 35:1 (1966), pp. 35 – 66.

<sup>382</sup> Harriet Nesmith McArthur, “Recollections of Rickreall,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 30:4 (1929), pp. 362 – 383, quotation on p. 377. James W. Nesmith’s attempts as a U.S. Senator to line his friends’ pockets in the name of fighting corruption (using provably false evidence) are detailed in Kelsey, “The Doolittle Report of 1867.”



\$1,500. Among his purported “paper fictions” were relatives hired for inflated paychecks, friends with sinecures/salaries as “clerks” or school-less “schoolteachers,” and embezzlement with the help of the sutler.<sup>383</sup>

Besides self-enrichment, Barnhart saw intimidation and control as among his main duties. One of his first acts was to call in troops from Fort Walla Walla in an attempt to seize and imprison “a small band of renegade Indians who have never lived on the reservation, but whose tribes are parties to the treaty.”<sup>384</sup> Too many of the Native people, he thought, still believed they were

their own master much as they were before the white man was first sent among them.

In my intercourse with them thus far, I believe I have to some extent disabused their minds of that hallucination, and have convinced most of them that the glorious Union was as powerful to-day as ever it was, and unless they observed the laws they would be made to feel its strength.<sup>385</sup>

This was not an idle threat. At some point during his first summer as an Indian Agent, William Barnhart was accused of killing an Indian “under circumstances which did not seem to warrant so extreme a remedy.” Apparently a “prominent young Cayuse” man had spoken rudely to Barnhart. When the young Cayuse man turned to leave, Barnhart shot

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<sup>383</sup> Davenport, “Recollections of an Indian Agent,” p. 7. For labor passes in the Pacific Northwest, see among others Louis Kenoyer, *Reminiscences of a Grand Ronde Reservation Childhood*, trans. Jedd Schrock and Henry Zenk (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, 2017), pp. 86 – 87.

<sup>384</sup> William H. Barnhart, Umatilla Indian Agency, to William H. Rector, Aug 5, 1862, U.S. Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report No. 62, p. 270, accessed digitally via <https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/lctext/id/2378>. On corrupt Indian Agents in the Pacific Northwest during this period, see M. Susan Van Laere, *Fine Words and Promises: A History of Indian Policy and its Impact on the Coast Reservation Tribes of Oregon in the Last Half of the Nineteenth Century* (Philomath, Ore.: Serendip Historical Research, 2010), chaps. 8 – 11.

<sup>385</sup> William H. Barnhart, Umatilla Indian Agency, to William H. Rector, Aug 5, 1862, U.S. Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report No. 62, p. 270, accessed digitally via <https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/lctext/id/2378>.

him in the back, killing him. Barnhart then requisitioned a unit of cavalry led by Captain E. J. Harding for his protection, in June of 1862. These men were soon supplemented by a contingent of “California volunteers on detached duty.”<sup>386</sup> A few months later, in August, Barnhart called in the cavalry again. Captain George B. Currey, at Barnhart’s instigation, tracked down and killed four Native people in the Grande Ronde Valley, principle among them Tenounis, a Dreamer religious figure, supposedly while Tenounis was resisting attempts “to make him a prisoner.”<sup>387</sup> As Colonel Justus Steinberger put it in his official report:

Efforts to carry out [the arrest] was met by resistance, and resulted in the killing of four Indians among whom was their leader, Tenounis, or the Dreamer, as he is called. This Indian, I have learned, has been for a long time disaffected. He has always denied and opposed the authority of the Government and their right to the lands now occupied by white settlers....

To have arrested a few of the leaders engaged in these hostile movements it was supposed would have broken up the band. The more summary punishment resulting from their resistance has, I have no doubt, accomplished the same end,

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<sup>386</sup> George B. Currey to Justus Steinberger, Aug 23, 1862, transcribed in George W. Davis, Leslie J. Perry, and Joseph W. Kirkley, eds, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Serial 105 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1897), p. 164; John T. Apperson, “Read By John T. Apperson at Reunion Held at Newport, Oregon June 24, 1908,” transcribed in James Robbins Jewell, ed., *On Duty in the Pacific Northwest during the Civil War: Correspondence and Reminiscences of the First Oregon Cavalry Regiment*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2018), pp. 187 – 197, esp. 190 [Jewell’s book, though framed as a primary source collection, contains significant secondary text and interpretation from the author/editor. I have thus chosen to locate his byline in front of the title]. On the use of interpersonal violence as a tool of control by Indian agents, missionaries, and educators in the Pacific Northwest (and elsewhere), see David Peterson del Mar, *Beaten Down: A History of Interpersonal Violence in the West* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), chap. 1.

<sup>387</sup> George B. Currey to Justus Steinberger, Aug 23, 1862, transcribed in Davis, Perry, and Kirkley, *The War of the Rebellion*, p. 164.

and more effectually.... the immediate punishment served has, I think, produced a salutary effect for [the Indians] future good conduct.<sup>388</sup>

Barnhart hoped to rule by fear. He had people killed. Steinberger and his fellow military men thought it “salutary.”<sup>389</sup>

Although he did plenty of damage, Barnhart’s racist presumptions of acknowledged supremacy seem to have been wrong. There is no evidence that the Native people he oppressed, stole from, and attacked were “disabused” of the truth of their sovereignty over their land and their persons. For all Barnhart’s claims of rounding up Native people and forcing them onto the reservation, his successor Timothy W.

Davenport found that:

very few of the three tribes were there.... they were away, fishing along the Columbia, hunting in the Blue Mountains, digging camas in the Grand Ronde Valley, picking berries along the water courses, or hanging around the towns where they bartered their “ictas” for the white man’s goods.<sup>390</sup>

But this continuance of lifeways and sovereignty existed uneasily with continuing vulnerability to murderous pioneers and soldiers, pillaging opportunists, and government

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<sup>388</sup> Justus Steinberger to Fort Walla Walla, August 23, 1862, transcribed in *ibid.*, pp. 163 – 164. The “hostile movements” refers to settler allegations that Tenounis and his men had threatened to run White pioneers out of Grande Ronde Valley if they didn’t leave by choice. There was no suggestion that Tenounis or his men actually engaged in violence other than (allegedly) resisting arrest—and one might note that pioneers sometimes perceived the very existence of Native people as a standing menace, suggesting interpretive caution about their claims. Cf. Scott McArthur, *The Enemy Never Came: The Civil War in the Pacific Northwest* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 2012), p. 109 [“Tenounis [was] a true terrorist before the term was ever coined”].

<sup>389</sup> On murder, see Davenport, “Recollections of an Indian Agent,” esp. p. 2. On military protection, see Henry McCann, Fort Walla Walla, Order No. 110, June 13, 1862, transcribed in Davis, Perry, and Kirkley, *The War of the Rebellion*, p. 1140. On the equivalent in Nez Perce country, see Merle W. Wells, “Caleb Lyon’s Indian Policy,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 61:4 (1970), pp. 193 – 200. In Northern Paiute country, see Carolyn Sorisio, “Playing the Indian Princess? Sarah Winnemucca’s Newspaper Career and Performance of American Indian Identities,” *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 23:1 (2011), pp. 1 – 37.

<sup>390</sup> Davenport, “Recollections of an Indian Agent,” p. 12 [“very few”] and pp. 14 – 15 [“they were away”].

officials that typically either abetted or ignored the attackers. Even if Barnhart's lethal dream of White supremacy was a mirage in the minutiae, collectively the racists like him were able to inflict continuing harms. They would always have their fantasies of unquestioned supremacy frustrated. But they could still murder people, under the thin veil of military justice.

In the last months of 1862, a nearby White miner was shot in the dead of night by a person or persons unknown. All Euro-American parties immediately assumed the wounded man must have been shot by Indians, and charged Timothy W. Davenport, the new Indian Agent, with finding the people responsible. Davenport was led by interpreters to a village of "renegades" across the Columbia River, and the locals handed him two men to be held responsible for the shooting. The men had a show trial in 1863 before a military commission. According one soldier (who later claimed to have deserted in disgust because of what he saw), the trial was concluded without any evidence, witnesses, or deliberation. Commission member Capt. E. J. Harding proclaimed "Damn the Indians, hang them." The other two commissioners (Col. Reuben F. Maury and Col. Justus Steinberger) quickly acquiesced—although there was some dispute among those who knew the story over whether this accession was out of a desire to bring the matter to a close, a desire to support Harding, or because (as Harding claimed) Steinberger "want[ed] to kill an Indian [and] ha[d] never." Steinberger killed two by hanging, the day after the show trial. This was normal; George Wright, by the 1860s the commander of the Department of the Pacific, encouraged "summary execution" by "hanging a few of the worst Indians" whenever "peace and quiet" was disturbed (see Chapter VI).<sup>391</sup>

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<sup>391</sup> Davenport, "Recollections of an Indian Agent," esp. pp. 31 – 33. "Damn the Indians" quotation from Geo[rge] B. Currey to T[imothy] W. Davenport, Oct 1, 1898, transcribed in *ibid*, 33. "[W]ant[ed] to kill"

It is unclear to what extent the two condemned men understood the charges against them. Davenport remembered no sign that they spoke any English, and they were never given an interpreter. A soldier who had been a part of the execution claimed to remember one of the condemned giving a speech “in which he denied committing any crime which would confine a white man,” but not whether the speech had been in English, Chinook Jargon, or some other tongue—or whether he was conflating this execution with another. Whether or not they spoke English, the two Native men likely *did* have sense why these soldiers were planning to murder them; people in the region had known for years that White soldiers didn’t need much of a reason beyond race. There were at least two more hangings over the winter, possibly more. The disheartened Davenport was discharged nine months into his job—and was replaced by the man who had tried to show him the ropes of embezzlement. Barnhart and his “paper fictions” were back at Umatilla by 1863. As a historian, Barnhart was a flighty failure. But he was a resilient grafter.<sup>392</sup>

Many Pacific Northwest Native people in the 1850s and beyond avoided both the bands of ravaging Euro-Americans and attempts to intern all Native people on reservations. As historian Andrew Fisher has shown, individuals and even whole communities managed to persevere outside of the gaze and the reach of the Euro-

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quotation from p. 31, *ibid.* E. J. Harding claimed that Steinberger had always wanted to kill an Indian. Davenport expressed certainty that this was not true, because of the innate good character of Steinberger. One might well be skeptical of the latter assertion. Wright quotation from Donald L. Cutler, *“Hang Them All”: George Wright and the Plateau Indian War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), p. 259.

<sup>392</sup> Davenport, “Recollections of an Indian Agent,” quotation on p. 35; “Soger Boy,” “Letter from Fort Lapwai,” April 5, 1863, transcribed in Jewell, *On Duty in the Pacific Northwest during the Civil War*, pp. 51 – 52. Historians have not yet determined the real identity of the soldier whose used the nom de plume of “Soger Boy” in the 1860s.

American state. But White depredations continued to be a threat off reservations, at least as much as on—as the story of Dick Johnson, perhaps most famously, demonstrates.<sup>393</sup>

Dick Johnson was a very careful settler. He moved to the Yoncalla area of southern Oregon around 1850 to do farm labor, and soon after started a farm of his own. He married a local Umpqua woman, and by the mid-1850s had his wife, two children, and several other relatives on his homestead, living in a large farmhouse built by their own hands surrounded by close to three hundred acres they had cleared themselves, in an out-of-the-way portion of Rice Valley.<sup>394</sup>

Dick Johnson was a Klickitat, and was mindful of the prejudices of his Euro-American neighbors from the beginning. When he first decided to create a farm of his own, according to his neighbor Jesse Applegate, “by the advice of his white friends he settled upon an isolated [portion of] the valley some distance removed from the new settlements.”<sup>395</sup> They counseled him that a far-off location would help forestall would-be land thieves.<sup>396</sup> Despite this distance, he and his family likely felt the pressures of colonialism even from their purported “many warm friends among... white neighbors.” Applegate, who claimed to be one of the warmest, lauded the Johnson’s “efforts to throw off the savage, and conform to the usages of civilized life.” Meant no doubt as a

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<sup>393</sup> Andrew H. Fisher, *Shadow Tribe: The Making of Columbia River Indian Identity* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010).

<sup>394</sup> There are several versions of the story of Dick Johnson. I draw especially on David G. Lewis, “Umpqua Valley Settlers Murder Klickitat Farmers: Dick Johnson’s Family Story, by Sallie Applegate Long,” *Quartux Journal* May 29, 2019, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2019/05/29/umpqua-valley-settlers-murder-klickitat-farmers-dick-johnsons-family-story-by-sallie-applegate-long>; see also Leta Lovelace Neiderhauser, *Jesse Applegate: A Dialogue with Destiny* (Mustang, Okla.: Tate Publishing, 2010), pp. 175 – 195; Charlotte Blake, “Jesse Applegate: His Attitude Toward the Oregon Indians,” *Reed College Bulletin* 21:4 (Nov. 1942), pp. 17 – 27; Moore, “Making Place and Nation,” pp. 143 – 158; and especially John Samuel Ferrell, “Indians and Criminal Justice in Early Oregon, 1842 – 1859,” Master’s thesis (Portland State University, 1973), chap. 10.

<sup>395</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith, care of Dick Johnson, Sept 18, 1856, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>396</sup> Ferrell, “Indians and Criminal Justice in Early Oregon, 1842 – 1859,” p. 66.

compliment, this comment reveals the level of scrutiny and prejudice the Johnsons faced from even their purportedly well-meaning neighbors.<sup>397</sup> Even their “friends,” like the Applegates, saw Indigenous peoples of their background as what Jesse Applegate framed as naturally “[t]reachorous and rapacious[,] if not so warlike as those East of the mountains,” gaining virtue only if “taught” otherwise.<sup>398</sup>

And many of their neighbors meant them harm. From at least 1854, Euro-American settlers tried to seize the Johnson farm for themselves. Although he had been encouraged in his pursuit of farming by some White neighbors, Dick Johnson had no European descent and was thus forbidden from claiming his land under the Donation Land Claim Act. And although he had made his farm in a ravine, off the beaten track, there were few places in Oregon where Euro-Americans wouldn’t deal out violence to seize good farmland. In 1852, a pioneer named Bean[e] seized about half of the land Dick Johnson had cleared, and physically attacked the Klickitat farmer when he complained. In 1854, a newly-arrived pioneer named Henry Canaday filed a land claim for the rest of Dick Johnson’s property, encompassing the rest of his farm and his house.<sup>399</sup> When Dick Johnson refused to leave his farm, members of the Canaday family broke his fences, killed his livestock, and eventually physically assaulted both Johnson and his stepfather

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<sup>397</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith, care of Dick Johnson, Sept 18, 1856, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>398</sup> Jesse Applegate to Frances Fuller Victor [?], Oct 15, 1865, Folder 1, Box 1, Frances Fuller Victor Papers, Mss 1199, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>399</sup> Ferrell, “Indians and Criminal Justice in Early Oregon, 1842 – 1859,” p. 66; Les McConnell, “The Treaty Rights of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 97:4 (2006), pp. 190 – 201, esp. pp. 191 – 192. Most likely the attacker was James H. Beane, given the timing of his land claim. Genealogical Forum of Portland, Oregon, Inc., compiler, *Genealogical Material in Oregon Donation Land Claims*, vol. 3 (Portland: Genealogical Forum of Portland, Oregon, Inc., 1962), pp. 23 – 24. For Henry Canaday’s claim see *ibid*, p. 69.

Old Mummy.<sup>400</sup> It is unclear from the record just how many assaults they suffered, and how many beatings were related to the attempts to seize their land as opposed to racial violence for its own sake. Sallie Applegate Long, a young girl at the time, remembered Old Mummy being viciously attacked by a pioneer named John Marshal at Christian religious service, with no stated reason other than “because he was an ‘Inj\_n.’”<sup>401</sup> But the record is unclear as to whether this was targeted violence or hate-fueled opportunistic mayhem.

Dick Johnson and Old Mummy did not fight back when assaulted. They took the advice of White neighbors like Jesse Applegate, who wrote later that “in view of the prevailing prejudice among the people against Indians, they were strictly enjoined under no circumstances to resist or use arms against a white man.”<sup>402</sup> Jesse Applegate and others might have thought of themselves as Johnson’s “white friends,” but they were unwilling (or thought themselves unable) to protect their “friend” if he defended himself from the pioneers who beat and robbed him. Applegate and his ilk supposedly briefly considered running off Henry Canaday themselves, but decided that would be illegal and instead wrote a sternly-worded letter to the federal government. Canaday and Bean[e]’s assaults of Dick Johnson were illegal under the law but not by Euro-American custom. Johnson’s White “friends” were unwilling to risk reprisals.<sup>403</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith, care of Dick Johnson, Sept 18, 1856, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>401</sup> David G. Lewis, “Umpqua Valley Settlers Murder Klikitat Farmers.

<sup>402</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith (Private), Dec 3, 1858, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>403</sup> Ferrell, “Indians and Criminal Justice in Early Oregon, 1842 – 1859,” p. 67. The source for this supposed meeting to discuss vigilantism was Indian Sub-Agent William J. Martin, whom the gathered men had hoped to have fired. Thus, Martin’s assertion that Applegate and some forty others contemplated removing Canaday by force may have been an exaggeration or even a fabrication, meant to portray them as on the verge of violence against fellow Euro-American pioneers.



Federal authorities wouldn't help Dick Johnson either. Indian Sub-Agent William J. Martin colluded with Bean[e] and Canaday to help them steal Johnson's land in 1853 – 1854, likely acting on his belief that the “red devils” should be “turn[ed] out” wherever possible. Indian Superintendent Joel Palmer saw no clear way for the Johnson's to remain without an act of Congress, and encouraged him to leave behind his farm. Palmer was “very anxious to set[t]le [Johnson] on the Reserve, as an example to the other Indians,” and offered to pay him for his improvements—an offer Johnson refused, wanting instead to keep his land.<sup>404</sup> All Johnson got from Palmer was a nice reference letter, asking any readers to “refrain from disturbing” Johnson or his rapidly diminishing homestead. This letter, too, proved not to be an effective deterrent to the pioneers seeking to seize Johnson's land by force.<sup>405</sup>

Johnson's fortunes did not improve when James W. Nesmith, a former volunteer and lifelong Indian-hater, replaced Palmer as Indian Superintendent in 1857 (see above). Jesse Applegate sent letters explaining the situation to Nesmith, and Dick Johnson (on Applegate's advice) met with the new Indian Superintendent in person. Nesmith was unsympathetic—not surprising, as he was generally unsympathetic toward those he labeled “atrocious... red devils.” Nesmith refused to help Dick Johnson, suggested that he leave his farm for his safety, and proclaimed that the federal government would neither help him keep his land nor even help him be remunerated for the improvements he had made on it. Nesmith instead offered Johnson a “cheap calico dress” for his wife;

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<sup>404</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith, care of Dick Johnson, Sept 26, 1856, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers. The quotation regarding Palmer's motivations is from Jesse Applegate.

<sup>405</sup> Ferrell, “Indians and Criminal Justice in Early Oregon, 1842 – 1859,” pp. 67 – 70. For the quotations from William J. Martin, see William J. Martin to Joseph Lane, Aug 19, 1856, taken from <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/jolaneletters.html>.

when Johnson refused this “paltry present,” Nesmith was incensed and had to be talked down from unspecified rash action.<sup>406</sup>

The Canaday family eventually turned to murder in their drive to steal Johnson’s farm. At first, they attempted to get the pioneer community as a whole to kill Dick Johnson. As Applegate put it (without actually naming the perpetrators) the Canadays had

attempted either by Traducing [Dick Johnson’s] character, or surprising his prudence into some resentment of injury[,] to deprive him of his powerful protectors. In the hope he would fall a victim to the popular fury when most excited by Indian atrocities in the late war, he was charged with murder it was impossible he should have committed, to provoke him into resentment his fen[c]es were broken his stock killed and both his father and himself most inhumanly beaten with clubs, and lastly a criminal prosecution commenced against him in the courts<sup>407</sup> [for arson, of which he was acquitted].<sup>408</sup>

Accusations of crimes real or invented had long been a way for Euro-Americans to rally their fellows to murder people of color they found inconvenient, in the Pacific Northwest as elsewhere (see Chapter VI). Canaday’s action may have been unusual only its failure; foiled, and thus visible in the historical record, because Dick Johnson was well-known and the attempts to frame him were sloppy. But Canaday faced little more than limp

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<sup>406</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith, Oct 19, 1858, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers. For Nesmith’s disdain for “sympathisers [sic] for the inferior races,” see Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith (Private), Dec 3, 1858, *ibid.* There were rumors that Joseph Lane had previously assured Cannady that he viewed Dick Johnson’s property claims—and the White men who supported them—“with neglect and contempt.” Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith, Dec 26, 1858, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>407</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith, Sept 18, 1858, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>408</sup> Ferrell, “Indians and Criminal Justice in Early Oregon, 1842 – 1859,” p. 71. Apparently the intervention of Judge Matthew Deady helped overturn the arson charge.

censure for his actions. When practiced against Native people, theft, destruction of property, and assault were not apparently chargeable offenses. Almost no crime committed against Native people was.

The Canadays murdered Dick Johnson and Old Mummy at sunset on Nov 28, 1858. Jesse Applegate had the most detailed contemporary written version of the story, taken from the testimony of the survivors. Eight men—Canaday’s sons, future sons-in-law, and a few toughs from California—approached the Johnson homestead by subterfuge. One member of the group pretended to be Indian Superintendent James Nesmith, and ordered Dick Johnson to divest himself of weapons and come along. Dick Johnson

replied that “he knew that this was not Nesmith” but if [the spokesman] wished to shoot him to do so, he would not resist. Upon this the spokesman deliberately discharged his rifle into Dick’s bosom, the ball a large one, tearing away the right nipple and coming out under the shoulder blade near the back bone, doubtless causing instant death as no other wounds were inflicted. Upon the fate of Dick, Mummy seems to have attempted to go to him but was prevented by two rifle balls[--]one taking effect in the breast, another in the abdomen.<sup>409</sup>

As Dick Johnson’s wife ran to where Johnson and Mummy had been murdered, the shooter (now out of ammunition) knocked her unconscious with the butt of his pistol. Dick Johnson’s brother-in-law Jim, just returning home, had his horse shot from under him but managed to sprint into his house with only a grazing bullet wound. Fearing that Jim might have a rifle in the house, and unwilling to risk a confrontation with a lone

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<sup>409</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith (Private), Dec 3, 1858, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers.

armed man in the midst of their murder spree, the eight assailants fled into the darkness. Binding his wound with a piece of saddle, Jim stood guard over his family, living and dead, until morning.<sup>410</sup>

Euro-Americans did investigate the murders of Dick Johnson and Old Mummy. This was rare, whether or not it was (as Jesse Applegate asserted) “the first time an Indian’s life or property ha[d] received so much attention.” The crime was particularly overt, the victims having given “no provocation...either by word or act,” making clear “the motive to commit this bloody deed [was] pecuniary, only and purely.” There were worries that further stories of atrocity by Oregon pioneers might make it even harder for volunteers to extract money for the wars they had already fought against Native people from a balky Congress. And there were multiple Native eyewitnesses, who could identify exactly who the murderers had been.<sup>411</sup>

According to Applegate family lore, the Johnsons’ friends and neighbors initially considered forming a vigilante party to avenge the murders outside of the law, and only Jesse Applegate’s intercession calmed them down. The inquest found that Dick Johnson and Old Mummy had maintained a non-violent stance to the end.<sup>412</sup> It was surmised that as “the nonresisting policy of the Indians” was widely known, the killers had seized “their share of the spoils” “upon the extermination of the Indians” “without risk.”<sup>413</sup> The killers were swiftly identified. Another piece of Applegate family lore had it that Old Lemyei (Dick Johnson’s mother and Old Mummy’s wife)

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<sup>410</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>411</sup> *Ibid.*; “Umpqua,” Dec 1, 1858, *Oregon Statesman* Dec 14, 1858, p. 1.

<sup>412</sup> Ferrell, “Indians and Criminal Justice in Early Oregon, 1842 – 1859,” p. 76.

<sup>413</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith (Private), Dec 3, 1858, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers. All quotations in this section come from the same paragraph and retain their original meaning, but have been rearranged for tense and flow.

stripped the shirt from “old Mummy’s” back and sitting down beside the body placed one finger on the bullet hole then pointed it straight at the face of an old man present [John Allen] and said in plain jargon “Your son did this.”<sup>414</sup>

Despite numerous witnesses, outraged neighbors, and the attention of both the press and the government, the murderers lost nothing more than face. Eight men were arrested, but they were bailed out almost immediately (with the help of local government functionaries). Dick Johnson’s family were eyewitnesses to the crimes, but they were also Indians, barred from testifying in Oregon courts. Formal charges were never brought against the murderers. Johnson’s White “friends” sold off his movable property to set aside money for his widow and children. The farm itself was seized by the Canadays, with the help of the federal land office receiver—who (it was rumored) had encouraged them to commit the murders in the first place. No one could find the means—or the will—to stop any of them.<sup>415</sup>

Applegate family lore recorded and rerecorded the “attempt to bring the murderers to justice” represented by the inquest and the brief arrests.<sup>416</sup> Jesse Applegate was correct that such an attempt was unusual. But it was also hesitant, diffident, and quickly abandoned. In the first years of the 1850s, when it seemed that particularly wanton murders by Euro-Americans might spur reprisals from Native groups, Indian agents and other Euro-American officials found ways to prosecute at least a few White murderers (see Chapter II). By 1858, such fears had waned, along with the semblance of

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<sup>414</sup> David G. Lewis, “Umpqua Valley Settlers Murder Klikitat Farmers.”

<sup>415</sup> The murderers were Henry Canaday, Joshua Canaday, John Canaday, John Allen [the younger], James Smith, and “the three Californians” (Frank Little, John Timmons, and Cornelius Frane). Ferrell, “Indians and Criminal Justice in Early Oregon, 1842 – 1859,” pp. 76 – 78. Strikingly, the murderers were (mis?) remembered as miners by some of those who quietly objected to the murders. See McConnell, “The Treaty Rights of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs,” pp. 191 – 192.

<sup>416</sup> David G. Lewis, “Umpqua Valley Settlers Murder Klikitat Farmers.”

justice they could motivate. The criminal investigation of the Johnson murders, if there really was one after the inquest, was perfunctory.<sup>417</sup> The crimes leading up to the killings had been sometimes been committed in public—one of the assaults of Old Mummy had been at a camp meeting, with White witnesses galore. But nothing was ever done. Even Jesse Applegate, meanwhile, seemed ready to endorse or at least accept grim penalties for any Indian who tried to “resist or use arms against a white man.”

Dick Johnson’s supposed White friends valued White lives—arguably even the lives of his murderers—more than they valued his. Jesse Applegate, one of the louder voices in the period decrying mass murder, still despised Indian-ness. He professed to “hold the doctrine that [what others called] ‘inferior races’ are human and entitled to live if they behave themselves,” but his very formation of that doctrine presumed White supremacy, and with it the right to kill “inferior races” that did *not* “behave themselves.” Toward the end of his private report to Nesmith, Jesse Applegate mused that “it would perhaps have been better” if the murderers had succeeded in killing all of Johnson’s family, as

there is little hope, if they are suffered to live, that they can long prevent themselves from falling back into the degraded condition from which the bravery, energy[,] and uprightness of a single mind [Dick Johnson] had retrieved them.<sup>418</sup>

Less than a week after his supposed friend Dick Johnson was murdered, Jesse Applegate was speculating—with an unknown mix of earnestness and whimsy—that Johnson’s surviving family would be better dead than Indian.

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<sup>417</sup> The main investigator in the records, Stephen Fowler Chadwick, seems to have restricted himself or been restricted to issues of property. Stephen Fowler Chadwick to James W. Nesmith, Dec 28, 1858, Folder 10, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers; Neiderhauser, *Jesse Applegate*, pp. 194 – 195.

<sup>418</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith (Private), Dec 3, 1858, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers

It would be unfair to say that all Jesse Applegate did to pursue justice for Dick Johnson was write a strongly-worded letter. In fact, he wrote at least six strongly-worded letters, both to Nesmith and to his successor. And, if family lore is to be believed, he stopped his neighbors from avenging Dick Johnson outside of the boundaries of the law—ensuring, whether Applegate suspected it or not, that no justice would be found. His yen for an orderly society precluded vigilante justice on behalf of Native people, but not against them. Indeed, he was widely credited for urging miners to join in the organized killings of Rogue River Native people in 1851 (see Chapter II).<sup>419</sup> Perhaps he viewed those attacks in a different light, as official and legitimate violence. Or perhaps he viewed White comity as more important than Native lives.<sup>420</sup>

Though Jesse Applegate continued into the 1860s to press fruitlessly for something to be done about the murders, he did not in the 1850s seem to want to risk his public standing to that end. Much of the surviving historical information on the killings of Dick Johnson and Old Mummy comes from two letters Jesse Applegate sent to Indian Superintendent Nesmith on Dec 3, 1858. One, a short letter meant for public and government consumption, succinctly stated that the killings had occurred and warrants had been issued for eight persons.<sup>421</sup> The other, much longer letter related the details and background for the slayings, including input from Johnson’s family.<sup>422</sup>

As the investigation fizzled out over the next few weeks, Applegate pestered Nesmith to “keep from the public eye any communication I may make the publicity of

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<sup>419</sup> See among others George H. Parker, “Short History of Josephine County,” March 1922 [np], George R. Riddle Papers, Mss 1388, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>420</sup> One might also contrast Jesse Applegate’s insistence that the rule of law should protect Dick Johnson’s murderers with his 1864 opinion that George McClellan should be shot as an incompetent traitor. Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith, Apr 3, 1864, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>421</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith, Dec 3, 1858, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>422</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith (Private), Dec 3, 1858, *ibid*.

which would mortify the writer, favor the escape of the guilty, or cast suspicions upon the innocent.”<sup>423</sup> A few weeks later Applegate made clear that his correspondence on Dick Johnson had been meant to be private, “merely for your amusement, for you not your successor.” This may all have been characteristic Applegate sarcasm—Jesse Applegate explained in the same missive that he had “aimed to give [the letter meant for the record] that vague indefinite and pointless character in which official letters are usually couched.”<sup>424</sup> But in the end Applegate did let the matter drop. And his belief that Joseph Lane had encouraged the killings did not prevent Applegate from supporting Lane for political office several years later. Maybe he changed his mind, and no longer believed Lane was supportive of these murders (or the many, many others Lane had called for). Maybe he let bygones be bygones. Or maybe Applegate didn’t believe that killing a few Indians should come between friends.<sup>425</sup>

Not all pioneers were murderers. Many probably never killed anyone. But almost every pioneer in the Pacific Northwest was complicit in the killings. Though he was no John Beeson (see Chapter III), Jesse Applegate was unusual among Euro-Americans in the extent of the measures he took for his Indigenous neighbors. In the case of Dick Johnson, these measures were woefully inadequate. But they were more than most other Euro-American invaders seem to have attempted.

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<sup>423</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith, Dec 26, 1858, *ibid.*

<sup>424</sup> Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith Jan 12, 1859, *ibid.* See also Roland L. De Lorme, “Westward the Bureaucrats: Government Officials on the Washington and Oregon Frontiers,” *Arizona and the West* 22:3 (1980), pp. 223 – 236.

<sup>425</sup> For Jesse Applegate’s belief that Joseph Lane supported the murders, see Jesse Applegate to James W. Nesmith Dec 26, 1858, Folder 3, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers. For Jesse Applegate’s latter-day support for Joseph Lane’s political ambitions, see Jesse Applegate to Joseph Lane, July 18, 1878, Folder 6, Box 1, Joseph Lane Papers, Ax 183, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR.



The murder of Dick Johnson has floated visibly at the edges of Euro-American historical memory since it was perpetrated, largely because of the unusual extent of the records generated by it. Jesse Applegate kept the (sharply attenuated) case alive, and his descendants kept the story alive. It is worth thinking about how many other Dick Johnsons were quietly killed for their wealth without a Jesse Applegate to bring the story regional and historical attention. By Applegate's own reckoning, it was not the killing but the outcry that was unusual. And that outcry wasn't enough to save a life or punish a murderer.

John Cannady, James Lupton, Joseph Lane, James Lake, Loren L. Williams, Bates the tavern keeper, and many many other pioneers, named and unnamed, discussed in the previous chapters and the following ones, sought out opportunities to kill Native people and take what they had, secure in the knowledge that White supremacist settler society would defend them. Many Euro-Americans deplored particularly wanton acts of violence, or at least claimed to have done so where appropriate. The understanding that all Indians were to be killed was common but not absolute. Much more universal among White settlers was the understanding that Euro-Americans must be defended from Native violence at all costs, no matter what those Euro-Americans had done. And "defense" might well include pre-emptive attack.

Joseph Lane once wrote "I am in favor of the war... and for paying all who serve in war, and never stop to ask whether the war was right or wrong."<sup>426</sup> Some other pioneers, like Jesse Applegate, *did* ask. But they didn't stop to do so. Once there was a threat of Native reprisal, whether in a war or in an individual dispute, White "friends of

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<sup>426</sup> Joseph Lane to Dr. Joseph Drew, March 2, 1856, Folder 2, Box 1, Joseph Lane Papers, Ax 183, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR.

the Indian” tended to close ranks with White belligerents. They might seek peace instead of extermination, but even sympathetic Euro-American pioneers were unlikely to allow for any real consequences to affect White people who did harm to Indians.

Hundreds of Euro-American pioneers in the Pacific Northwest attacked Native people, for profit, for pleasure, or both. They knew they had the support of thousands of other Euro-Americans. And they knew that in all but a few cases, they would be defended from reprisal by the power of the United States, and the (White) citizenry thereof. For all but a very few Euro-Americans in the nineteenth-century Pacific Northwest, White supremacy trumped justice.

CHAPTER VI: “NO ARRANGEMENT BE MADE WHICH SHALL SAVE THEIR  
NECKS FROM THE EXECUTIONER”: LYNCHINGS LEGAL AND  
EXTRA-LEGAL IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Like many Pacific Northwest pioneers, John E. Smith in his old age wanted recognition for the part he had played in the wars as a volunteer. He had engaged in the War on Illahee for years. He had taken part in the Rogue River Wars in 1854, worked on the Siletz Reservation during the height of internment and disarmament in 1857, and marched along with Col. George Wright’s forces in their campaign in eastern Washington in 1858. But John E. Smith was a packer, and had not been involved in direct combat with any Native people.<sup>427</sup>

Instead, he stressed his part in the hangings. In 1858, Colonel George Wright had his men lynch a Palouse man named Jo-Hout for unspecified and unproven thievery. And as Smith wrote with pride decades later, “[t]hey used my lasso rope to do it.” Along with accomplishments like the size of his family and the creation of the local school, John E. Smith wanted it known that he too had killed Native people in pursuit of a White Northwest—even if only through the loan of a rope.<sup>428</sup>

This chapter examines the connection between lynchings and the War on Illahee, examining especially the execution of Chief Leschi in western Washington Territory and the hanging spree undertaken by Col. George Wright in eastern Washington Territory. None of the hangings connected to either are typically counted as lynchings, presumably because they were performed by representatives of the state. But it is worth considering

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<sup>427</sup> John E. Smith, “A Pioneer of the Spokane Country,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 7:4 (1916), pp. 267 – 277.

<sup>428</sup> Smith, “A Pioneer of the Spokane Country,” quotation on p. 270.

both what part due process should play in definitions of lynching, and whose law should be considered operable in so defining. Native people executed under alien laws and procedures to which they did not accede might well be counted as lynchings; so, too, might hangings that lacked due process, or sometimes even the semblance of it, even if they were technically carried out by a military or civilian court.<sup>429</sup>

Michael J. Pfeifer, a leading historian of lynching in the Pacific Northwest, counted just six lynchings of Oregon and Washington Native people in his 2011 monograph *The Roots of Rough Justice*. This is, as he has said, almost certainly an undercount. Even by the narrow definition Pfeifer uses (excluding executions with even a whiff of legal authority, and including only vigilantes who kill by means of hanging), there were more. The problem is one of sourcing as well as definition. Pfeifer's counts of lynchings, and the scholarship shaped by them, rely mostly on newspaper sources. And in many times and places in the Pacific Northwest, Indian-killing wasn't news.<sup>430</sup> Either it wasn't meant to be talked about, or it wasn't anomalous enough to be mentioned. Most of

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<sup>429</sup> Christian G. Fritz, "Popular Sovereignty, Vigilantism, and the Constitutional Right of Revolution," *Pacific Historical Review* 63:1 (1994), pp. 39 – 66. Under more expansive definitions of the term, many of the killings discussed in earlier chapters would count as lynchings—Helen McClure has suggested the "collective killings... [that] were illegal and [in which] punishing criminals and protecting their race" should be considered lynchings. Helen McClure, "'Who Dares to Style This Female a Woman?' Lynching, Gender and Culture in the Nineteenth-Century U.S. West," *Lynching Beyond Dixie: American Mob Violence Outside the South*, ed. Michael J. Pfeifer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013), pp. 21 – 53, quotation on p. 30. There has never been a broadly agreed-upon definition of the parameters of lynching, even among the leaders of anti-lynching movements. See Christopher Waldrep, *The Many Faces of Judge Lynch: Extralegal Violence and Punishment in America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 127 – 150.

<sup>430</sup> Michael J. Pfeifer, *The Roots of Rough Justice: Origins of American Lynching* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2011), pp. 49 – 50, Appendix. Ken Gonzales-Day's book *Lynching in the West* (despite its title, a monograph on lynching in California) takes the lead of newspaper sources for counting lynchings. This has profound merit for describing the rhetoric of lynching (as Christopher Waldrep has done), but leads to an odd exclusion of numerous vigilante killings when lynchings are reckoned quantitatively. Ken Gonzales-Day, *Lynching in the West: 1850 – 1935* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006), esp. p. 83; Cf. Benjamin Madley, *An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016). In my suggestion to move beyond newspapers and public spectacle I extend the discussion of how sources are used in violence studies raised in David Peterson del Mar, *Beaten Down: A History of Interpersonal Violence in the West* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), esp pp. 11 – 12 and p. 185, n. 14.

the lynchings reported on in the late 1800s involved crowds storming jails to seize their victims; accused or suspected Native people often never made it to jail. Accounts that suggest most lynchings in Oregon or Washington “tended to be white, with a few Indians” should instead read that most lynchings *reported on as such* in Oregon and Washington “tended to be white.”<sup>431</sup>

Besides adding a few new cases of lynching under traditional narrow definitions of the term, this chapter argues that “legal lynching” needs to be included in the frame. The difference between hanging by civil courts and by civil mobs is not always so vastly different that the difference needs to be defined categorically. And the “summary justice” employed the military often varied not all from the approach taken by more conventional lynch mobs. Talk of fair trials was, in many though by no means all cases, a colonial fiction, meant to inhere legitimacy. On the ground, killings without proof of guilt or due process were not much different from one another.<sup>432</sup>

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<sup>431</sup> Nicholas K. Geranios, “Asotin: Discovery of Old Documents Casts New light on Lynchings,” *Kitsap Sun* Apr 14, 2002 [“tended to be white” quotation]; Paul Dorpat, “The Dark Days of Mob Rule and Lynching as Sport in Seattle,” *Seattle Times* July 18, 2014; Kristian Foden-Vencil, “Coos Bay Remembers Alonzo Tucker and Oregon’s Only Documented Lynching,” *Oregon Public Broadcasting* March 5, 2020; Riva Dean, “A Peaceable Mob: The Lynching of Frank Viles and Community Identity in Asotin, Washington, 1896,” Master’s thesis (Central Washington University, 2005); Jean F. Hankins, “Whitman County Grit: Palouse Vigilantes and the Press,” *Columbia* 6:1 (1992), pp. 20 – 26; Howard D. Baumgart and Michael Honey [uncredited], “The Ellensburg Tree of Justice,” *Columbia* 15:4 (2001/2002), pp. 6 – 15; Terrell D. Gottschall, “Let the Law Take Its Course: Vigilante Justice and Due Process in Walla Walla,” *Columbia* 26:1 (2012), pp. 20 – 28.

<sup>432</sup> Of unclear provenience, the term “legal lynching” appears to have had currency in African American communities since at least the early twentieth century. Vincent P. Mikkelsen, “Fighting for Sergeant Caldwell: The NAACP Campaign against ‘Legal’ Lynching after World War I,” *Journal of African American History* 94:4 (2009), pp. 464 – 486; Melanie S. Morrison, *Murder on Shades Mountain: The Legal Lynching of Willie Peterson and the Struggle for Justice in Jim Crow Birmingham* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2018); Michael J. Klarman, “The Racial Origins of Modern Criminal Procedure,” *Michigan Law Review* 99:1 (2000), pp. 48 – 97; David Garland, “Penal Excess and Surplus Meaning: Public Torture Lynchings in Twentieth-Century America,” *Law & Society Review* 39:4 (2005), pp. 793 – 883; *Frank v. Mangum*, 237 U.S. 309 (1915).

One of the most infamous acts in the War on Illahee was the judicial execution of Leschi, a Nisqually leader seized after the Puget Sound War in 1856, and hanged in 1858. As the Puget Sound portion of the War on Illahee ground to a halt, Isaac I. Stevens pursued the capture and prosecution of Leschi. He intended to make executionary displays as way to (re)establish what he called “the prestige of the white race in the mind of the Indian.” In truth, part of the peace in the Puget Sound came from Stevens renegotiating the terms of the Treaty of Medicine Creek to make them more acceptable to many Nisqually and Puyallup in August, 1856—a longtime goal of Leschi’s and an unusual achievement in the annals of treaty negotiation.<sup>433</sup> But publicly, Stevens proclaimed:

The only terms that should be allowed hostile Indians is unconditional submission. Mercy ought then to be extended to the great body, but murderers should be hung. Such are the conditions of a permanent peace.<sup>434</sup>

The purported “murderer” he (and the newspapers) had named most often was Leschi. After all, as Stevens wrote in May of 1856, Leschi “was familiarly known to most of our citizens.”<sup>435</sup> As Stevens wrote in a June 18, 1856 letter to Colonel George Wright, the man now in charge of troop operations in eastern Washington Territory (see below):

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<sup>433</sup> Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi: Narrative and the Politics of Historical Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), pp. 108 – 109; Cecelia Svinth Carpenter, *Tears of Internment: The Indian History of Fox Island and the Puget Sound Indian War* (Tacoma, Wash.: Tahoma Research Service, 1996), pp. 57 – 62; SuAnn M. Reddick and Cary C. Collins, “Medicine Creek to Fox Island: Cadastral Scams and Contested Domains,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 106:3 (2005), p. 374 – 397, esp. 393. As pioneer historian Ezra Meeker put it, “[t]hrough vanquished in the field, they won what they went to war for.” Ezra Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound: The Tragedy of Leschi* (Seattle: Lowman & Hanford, 1905), p. 273.

<sup>434</sup> “Substance of the Remarks of Gov. Stevens at the Dinner Given to Col. Shaw and the Volunteers,” *Pioneer and Democrat* Nov. 7, 1856, p. 2.

<sup>435</sup> Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, p. 60.

I presume your views and my own do not differ as to terms which should be allowed the Indians, viz; unconditional submission, and the rendering up [of] the murderers and instigators of the war for punishment.

I will, however, respectfully put you on guard in reference to Leschi, Nelson, Kitsap[,] and Quiemuth from the sound, and to suggest that no arrangement be made which shall save their necks from the Executioner.<sup>436</sup>

When Wright argued that seizure of the men named should be “suspended for the present” to keep the war from becoming more general again,<sup>437</sup> Stevens persevered:

If this demand is not inflexibly insisted upon, and peace is made under milder terms, it will be, it seems to me, a criminal abandonment of the great duty of protecting our citizens [which] will depreciate our standing with the Indians and pave the way for wars hereafter.<sup>438</sup>

As in similar frictions across the Northwest, the disagreement between Wright and Stevens was over strategy, not morality. Wright wanted to suspend (not necessarily forever) attempts to punish Leschi, as he thought that milder policies would in this case better enable American supremacy at a lower cost. Stevens thought harsh punishment would be a better path to the same goal.

Stevens had a target list. And Leschi was the first name on it, with a bounty on his head. In 1857, Stevens went to Washington, D.C. to take up his new position as territorial delegate, presenting a false and potentially lucrative history of the volunteers in wartime

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<sup>436</sup> Isaac I. Stevens to George Wright, June 18, 1856, found in Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2*, p. 52.

<sup>437</sup> George Wright to Isaac I. Stevens, Oct 4, 1856, *ibid*, p. 72.

<sup>438</sup> Isaac I. Stevens to George Wright, Oct 14, 1856, *ibid*, p. 50.

to the National Congress (see Chapter IV). The push to execute Leschi went on without him.<sup>439</sup>

Leschi was seized and brought in for trial, with his brother and fellow leader Quiemuth turning himself in shortly after. Vigilante mobs assembled to murder them both. Leschi was successfully whisked into secret imprisonment, so that territorial authorities could attempt to kill him through socially acceptable avenues. Quiemuth was cached in Stevens's office, where he was assassinated—shot and stabbed to death—while under arrest, before any trial could commence. Although stories conflict, the killer (or one of the killers) seems to have been the volunteer Joseph Bunting, backed by a mob of other pioneers. Isaac I. Stevens stated a desire to find and punish the principal perpetrator—according to self-proclaimed participant Joel Theodore Ticknor, “[Stevens] said it didn't matter so much that the Indian was killed, but he didn't like it to be done right in his office.” After all, (another) vigilante murder did not mesh well with Stevens's public assurances that law and order prevailed in the territory. Yet the brief inquest into Quiemuth's murder yielded no formal charges.<sup>440</sup>

Leschi was tried twice for the murder of the volunteer Abraham Benton Moses, an early casualty in the war. The first jury hung. The presiding judge had instructed that killings by soldiers in wartime were not a civil matter, and a few jurors were persuaded

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<sup>439</sup> Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, pp. 60 – 65. In one letter to Wright, Stevens said that the men named should be “tried, and if convicted, punished.” His comments elsewhere imply that he meant this “if convicted” as a formality. Ironically, Washington Territory laws barring Indian testimony in court scuttled a few of the cases.

<sup>440</sup> Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, pp. 163 – 165, 178. On the identity of the killer, see also James Longmire, “Narrative of James Longmire, A Pioneer of 1853 (Concluded),” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 23:2 (1932), pp. 138 – 150; Virgil F. Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2: Washington Territorial Militia and the Indian Wars of 1855-56* (Tacoma: Washington National Guard State Historical Society, 1961), p. 95; Tove Hodge, “The Family of Sidney S. Ford, Senior,” *Centralia: The First Fifty Years*, ed. Herndon Smith (Centralia, Wash.: F. H. Cole Printing Company, 1942), p. 93. Elwood Evans, a lawyer and historian discussed in some depth in later chapters, led the unsuccessful investigation of Joseph Bunting in 1856.



by the argument that the killing of Moses while on a military expedition had been an act of war. The second jury, convened in a city more hostile to Leschi and with a judge less concerned with such distinctions, convicted. Subsequent appeals delayed but did not stop the execution.<sup>441</sup>

The outcome of the case was seldom in doubt. Even if Leschi had weathered the second murder trial, there were reportedly other indictments for other killings to which he had been tendentiously tethered being drawn up in other counties.<sup>442</sup> But for a trial of a Native person accused of murder in the 1850s, it was comparatively fair. Leschi had two competent lawyers, and both sides were able to call witnesses. The first jury actually deliberated, for five hours, before being declared hung.<sup>443</sup> And the second jury at least slept on it. The trial was unjust, and the evidence thin. But at a time when a court might engage in little more deliberation than a “Damn the Indians” (see Chapter V), many Euro-Americans called it fair.<sup>444</sup>

The killing of Leschi may have been, as historian Lisa Blee put it in her book *Framing Chief Leschi*, “the [Washington] territory’s first official execution and the only Puget Sound war trial to end in punishment.”<sup>445</sup> And indeed, some of the targets on Stevens’s list, like Kitsap, avoided the mobs and were found innocent in the courts. But the killing of Leschi followed and was followed by legions of military, quasi-judicial, and

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<sup>441</sup> Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, pp. 65 – 67. Blee notes that there is “no existing evidence to suggest” that Judge Lander, a former commanding officer of a volunteer company, instructed the jury to make the same distinction. There is reason to suspect that he did not. The *Pioneer and Democrat*, a Democratic newspaper that had been calling for the death of Leschi for over a year, described Lander’s instructions as “clear, and to the point”—suggesting, perhaps, that fewer stipulations were put on the jury. “Trial and conviction of Leschi,” *Pioneer and Democrat* March 20, 1857, p. 2.

<sup>442</sup> “Leschi, Quiemuth, etc,” *Pioneer and Democrat* Nov 28, 1856, p. 2.

<sup>443</sup> “Leschi, Quiemuth, etc,” *Pioneer and Democrat* Nov 28, 1856, p. 2.

<sup>444</sup> On the competence of Leschi’s lawyers, see by inference Martin Schmitt, “The Execution of Chief Leschi and the ‘Truth Teller,’” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 50:1 (1949), pp. 30 – 39.

<sup>445</sup> Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, pp. 68, 4.

extra-judicial executions. Blee discusses the extra-legal execution of Leschi's brother Quiemuth in some depth. Reporting from the period also discussed the killing of Quiemuth, as one of several purportedly avenging James McAllister. On April 22, 1859, the *Puget Sound Herald* ran a scathing story about the indictment and execution of Too-a-pi-ti, purportedly suspected of having gunned down James McAllister at the opening of the Puget Sound War. The posse that formed to serve the warrant (which included McAllister's son George) fatally shot Too-a-pi-ti; drawing on a long volunteer tradition, they claimed they had killed him while he was trying to escape.<sup>446</sup>

In a somewhat sarcastic tone, the *Puget Sound Herald* correspondent suggested there might have been vengeance enough—pointing especially to the Maxon Massacre. And the editorialist argued that further attempts at vengeance extra-legal might endanger federal recompense and aid:

By letting the law take its course... our vengeance will certainly be ample. We certainly had more completely subdued the Indians, before the troops were withdrawn from the field, than was ever the case before or since; for, after having whipped and driven them, and after the last hostile shot was fired by them, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March '56, more than thirty Indians, counting men, women and children, were killed by our people. This in itself is more than we have lost by the Indians, during the whole war on this side of the mountains.

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<sup>446</sup> [Charles H. Prosch], "How to Serve a Writ," *Puget Sound Herald* Apr 22, 1859, p. 2. Although the Quiemuth killing may have been an act of vengeance, it is worth considering that it could have been an act of malice first and foremost. Joel Theodore Ticknor, who claimed to his family that he had played an indirect part in the killing, suggested that the initial attack had been vengeance, but the fatal blow from a knife had been dealt to keep Quiemuth from escaping (after Ticknor cried "For God's sake, don't let the Indian out"). Hodge, "The Family of Sidney S. Ford, Senior," pp. 92 – 93.

Notably, the editorialist assumed his readership would already know about the Maxon Massacre—it was treated in the text not as a revelation, but as general knowledge.

Quiemuth was killed in the Governor’s office by relatives of McAllister... and the Indians say that George McAllister killed one-armed John on the Reservation, and now the law comes in and claims Too-a-pi-ti, all for the same offence. We thus get three or four Indians for every white man....

We only fear that Congress will discover how well we can take care of ourselves, and withdraw the troops, and delay the payment of the war debt, or send it back for settlement here.

We hope our new Governor will take the subject into consideration.<sup>447</sup>

They did not hope in vain. Wa He Lute/Yelm Jim, one of the last Nisqually veterans of the Puget Sound War to face murder charges, was found guilty by his (White) jury but was eventually pardoned by Territorial Governor Richard Gholson in 1860. Native memory had it that he only just escaped a mob, with foreknowledge and the help of friends, or “they would have shot him as he was leaving the jail.”<sup>448</sup>

As historian Brad Asher has shown, Native people charged formally in a civilian court of law in Washington Territory could expect at least the semblance of a fair trial.

Conviction rates for crimes committed against White victims similar were for Native and

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<sup>447</sup> [Charles H. Prosch], “How to Serve a Writ,” *Puget Sound Herald* Apr 22, 1859, p. 2.

<sup>448</sup> Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, pp. 72 – 73; Sidney Berland, “Yelm Jim v. Washington Territory: An Enigma,” *Portage* (Seattle: Historical Society of Washington and King County, 1984), pp. 4 – 7; Thomas Wickham Prosch, “Nisqually man named Yelm Jim, Washington, ca. 1890,” NA1358, Prosch Indian Album 2:30, Prosch Indian Albums, PH Coll 18, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA. George E. Blankenship remembered that his father, Sheriff George C. Blankenship, had clapped Yelm Jim in irons and used him for free child care (!) in the 1850s. See George E. Blankenship, “Told By Pioneers: George E. Blankenship” (1914?), Pacific Northwest Historical Documents Digital Collection, University of Washington Special Collections, doi:10.2307/community.29377531. One tradition has it that Yelm Jim used his Thunder power to make an escape. See Jay Miller, “Chehalis Area Traditions, A Summary of Thelma Anderson’s 1927 Ethnographic Notes,” *Northwest Anthropological Research Notes* 33:1 (Spring 1999), pp. 1 – 72, relevant section on p. 46. On the threat of a mob, see Marian W. Smith, *The Puyallup-Nisqually* (New York: AMS Press, 1969, orig. 1940), quotation on p. 64.

non-Native defendants. However, White residents of Washington Territory could expect much lighter punishments, and could expect to be acquitted for crimes against Native people. Many of those who killed Native people in this era were never charged with a crime. The few who did get charged were released, sometimes after being acquitted. In the Washington Territory, Asher found just one conviction for a White man accused of murdering a Native person before the 1880s. The defendant in that case was sentenced to 15 months in prison, which they may have served. An Indian would likely have been put to death.<sup>449</sup>

Cases pursued in civilian courts were only a small fraction of the legal and extra-legal wrangling of the era. Many Americans meted out violence against Indians generally at the presumption of a crime, and many courts (like those following the Whitman killings) did not much bother to establish individual guilt when it came to Native defendants. The judicial murder of Leschi is an imperfect if sometimes powerful and useful metonym for Euro-American attacks on Native communities in the Pacific Northwest. Most Euro-Americans who killed Native people did so with less pretense. As Lisa Blee put it, “Leschi’s case was extraordinary while Quiemuth’s was all too common.” Indeed, most killings got even less Euro-American attention and due process than Quiemuth’s assassination. As Nisqually leader Cynthia Iyall remembered her elders putting it, “lots of Indian men went through the same thing.” And so too did many other

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<sup>449</sup>Brad Asher, *Beyond the Reservation: Indians, Settlers, and the Law in Washington Territory, 1853 – 1889* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), pp. 133 – 137, 212 – 213; Mark D. Walters, “Histories of Colonialism, Legality, and Aboriginality,” *University of Toronto Law Journal* 57:4 (2007), pp. 819 – 832, esp. 830 – 831. Cf. Paul G. McHugh, *Aboriginal Societies and the Common Law: A History of Sovereignty, Status, and Self-Determination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 21 – 26.

Native people—Indian men were especially but not exclusively targeted by murderous Euro-Americans.<sup>450</sup>

And there was already a sense by the end of 1856 that too much (talk about) wanton murder might harm the reputation of Washington Territory settlers, and perhaps even harm efforts to get federal funding for the war. The *Olympia Pioneer and Democrat*, which had been calling for killings the previous year, was urging at least a temporary halt in the wake of Leschi's conviction:

We have had no news this week of fresh Indian disturbances in any quarter. As a calm precedes the storm, this may be but the lull in advance of a fresh outbreak....

For the sake of preserving the good name our citizens have so justly earned since this Indian war commenced, it is to be hoped that no provocation (unless in self-defence), will induce any person to undertake the killing of any of the Indians.

Under present circumstances, nothing but evil could result therefrom. Gen. Wool and his pensioned scribblers would like nothing better than to learn that a score of Indians had been murdered every week.<sup>451</sup>

Killing would be a problem only if Wool, and officials like him, heard about it.

If one takes George Wright's letters as honest, there is reason to believe that if the U.S. Army, rather than the civil government of Washington Territory, had been in charge of the case against Leschi, he would have justly walked free. But this outcome would have been a pragmatic and possibly limited exception, made for the purposes of peace. In general, army leaders in Pacific Northwest were willing to execute Native people with

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<sup>450</sup> Asher, *Beyond the Reservation*. The treatment of and attention to the treatment of Native leaders should not obscure the capricious violence meted out to Native people who did not have pioneer name recognition. Lisa Blee, *Framing Leschi: Narrative and the Politics of Historical Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), pp. 97, 171 – 172, 181 - 182, quotations on pp. 181 – 182.

<sup>451</sup> "Halo," *Pioneer and Democrat* Nov 14, 1856, p. 2.

only the flimsiest of trials. There were legal proceedings civil and military against Native people, even during the war, that resulted in “not guilty” verdicts. But many, many Native people were “legally” killed, within the wars and beyond them, in circumstances even more unjust than those that Leschi faced.<sup>452</sup>

As Lisa Blee has pointed out, the appeals court which denied Leschi relief in 1857 suggested that it would have preferable under the law for Leschi to have been given a “summary mode of trial” by the army in the field.<sup>453</sup> They may have been referring to the hasty military tribunals that condemned people to death within hours of capture, or they may have been intimating the even hastier execution of those deemed a danger—or deemed as “trying to escape.” As the U.S. Army attacked Native communities in eastern Washington Territory in the 1850s, they performed many of each kind of summary trial—and many summary executions.

Colonel George Wright was likely responsible for more lynchings in the Pacific Northwest than anyone else. As he took responsibility for most acts of war the U.S. Army pursued in eastern Washington Territory from 1856 to 1858, he executed several people, typically with little to no trial before hand. After the quasi-war turned to a quasi-peace, and Wright eventually ascended to Commander of the Department of the Pacific in 1861, he continuing a policy of “summary justice,” encouraging his men to “hang a few of the worst Indians” any time there was friction between White and Native communities. He was a ruthless killer of people of color he perceived as enemies, “whether battling with

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<sup>452</sup> Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2*, p. 50.

<sup>453</sup> The 2004 Historical Court established that Leschi should have been tried as a soldier (and a prisoner of war) in a military court, if he was going to be tried at all. Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*, p. 50 – 51. For “summary mode of trial,” see *ibid*, 66.

the savage foes in the far West, or deadly hummocks of Florida, or contending with the hosts of Mexico,” as he put it. Like General John Wool, Wright believed that “most difficulties with the Indians have been brought on by the wanton aggressions of [the Whites].” To Wright, perhaps even more than Wool, this didn’t matter. He pursued White supremacy in the Pacific Northwest with violent vigor. Wright may have believed that wanton White aggression was what brought on “difficulties with the Indians.” But he chose *deliberate* White aggression as the default response to those difficulties.<sup>454</sup>

The “trial[s] by military commission” that Wright conducted were not trials in the convention sense. He would interrogate prisoners and then, most of the time, he would kill them. This was normal for U.S. military officers in the nineteenth-century West, although he was purportedly even less likely to accept exculpatory evidence than some of his contemporaries.<sup>455</sup>

Wright’s most intense period of violence was in the summer and fall of 1858. The war in eastern Washington had not so much ended as petered out in 1856. Invasions by volunteers had ebbed, as their commissions ended and they went home. Invasions by pioneers had temporarily slowed, mostly due to fear and bad weather. Violence done by or against Euro-Americans had receded, but did not disappear.

In May of 1858, in response to reports of a few more gold miners being killed, Colonel Edward Steptoe took 160 armed men on an ill-prepared expedition into northern

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<sup>454</sup> Donald L. Cutler, “*Hang Them All*”: *George Wright and the Plateau Indian War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), pp. 259, 251, 38. Wright’s actions in the 1850s were in keeping with the wishes of his superiors. Outgoing commander of the Department of the Pacific Newman S. Clarke, incoming commander William S. Harney, and Secretary of War John B. Floyd all encouraged (or in Harney’s case, planned to encourage) total war targeting families and food, and forbidding peace until the “belligerents” had been punished. See George Rollie Adams, *General William S. Harney: Prince of Dragoons* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), pp. 184 – 186. Evidence of a shared embrace of total war is especially noticeable in Adams’s book, which elsewhere takes a problematically celebratory stance on ways “the army helped open the West to white settlement” (*ibid.*, p. 193).

<sup>455</sup> Cutler, “*Hang Them All*”, pp. 101 – 102.

Washington Territory. According to a Coeur d'Alene oral tradition, Steptoe's men shot at and caused the drowning of a young Palouse woman as they wended their way northeast. Under still-contested circumstances, Steptoe and his men blundered into a battle with a force made up mostly of Palouse and Coeur d'Alene fighters. The battle quickly turned into a fighting retreat, then a full-scale one, as Steptoe's command spiked their howitzers and escaped—with the help of Nez Perce allies, and likely with the permission of the opposing army.<sup>456</sup> Known officially as the Battle of Te-hots-nim-me, and regionally as Steptoe's Defeat, the Native victory and rout of American forces shocked and appalled Euro-Americans in the region.<sup>457</sup>

The Army sent out troops to “punish the Indians who had defeated Steptoe.” As usual, this command was taken broadly. One contingent, led by Lieutenant Jesse K. Allen “ascertained [through means unknown] that there were some of the murderers in the camp of friendly Indians not far off.” A skeptic might wonder if proximity rather than proof shaped his ascertainment. His cavalry commenced a surprise attack at dawn, where Allen himself was mistaken for an Indian and shot, after which the village surrendered to his men without exchanging fire. The soldiers executed at least three captives, without obvious evidence, and seized all of the wealth of the village they could find. The people of the village may have been “friendly,” but the soldiers were still going to take their

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<sup>456</sup> Joseph Seltice, *Saga of the Coeur d'Alene Indians: An Account of Chief Joseph Seltice*, ed. Edward J. Kowrach and Thomas E. Connolly (Fairfield, Wash.: Ye Galleon Press, 1990, orig. ~1949), pp. 98 – 99; Cutler, “*Hang Them All*”, chap. 8.

<sup>457</sup> Elizabeth F. Tannatt, compiler, *Indian Battles of the Inland Empire in 1858* (Spokane, Wash.: Daughters of the American Revolution, 1914). The Battle of Te-hots-nim-me is the official designation used by the United States Army, taken from a Nez Perce term for the area (and spelled variously on monuments to the event). The name “Battle of Ingossomen,” based on a Coeur d'Alene word for the battle site, has been suggested. Mahlon E. Kriebel, *Battle of To-Hots-Nim-Me: The U.S. Army vs. the Coeur d'Alene Indians* (Colfax, Wash.: Whitman County Historical Society, 2008), n. 1. Mahlon E. Kriebel's work contains thorough though sparsely noted research, clearly marked departures into invented dialogue, and consultations with Indigenous and Euro-American locals. I have used it here only when the source of the evidence provided is clear.



food, livestock, and household goods. Allen was recorded, in army records and then in the history books, as having “lost his life” when he “surprised a camp of hostile Indians.”<sup>458</sup>

George Crook, at the time in the first of a four-decade career as a U.S. military officer, wrote in a later memoir of choosing a gentler path, negotiating with a local village to turn over five “murderers” for execution. Because Crook “could not tell who the murderers were,” he coerced a local leader (named “Skimarwaw” in the official report) and his son to identify the “murderers” and turn them over to military. Crook warned that if they did not, “many” would be killed and “they would lose all their stock and many of their families, camp equipage, etc. etc.” They acquiesced, and turned over five men for execution—who supposedly confessed, after they were informed that Crook “intended shooting them before [he] left” in any case. Perhaps they did confess, and perhaps they had attacked White people in the past. Or perhaps they were a sacrifice to preserve the rest of the community—after all, there was no choice that would preserve the lives of all from the American invaders. Crook at this point in his life found execution distasteful, so he had his man 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Turner, who “rather enjoyed that kind of thing,” arrange for a firing squad. The five “murderers” were killed, without trial as usual. Lt. Turner presumably enjoyed himself.<sup>459</sup>

As squads of Euro-American soldiers raided villages and committed vengeance killings, George Wright assembled the largest U.S. armed force to take part in the War on

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<sup>458</sup> George Crook, *General George Crook, His Autobiography*, ed. Martin F. Schmitt (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1946; orig. ~1885 – 1890), pp 59 – 60; Cf. Frances Fuller Victor [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Washington, Idaho, and Montana* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1890), p. 196; Thomas W. Prosch, “The Indian War of 1858,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 2:3 (1908), pp. 237 – 240.

<sup>459</sup> Crook, *General George Crook, His Autobiography*, pp. 61 – 64; Cutler, “*Hang Them All*”, p. 177.

Illahee of 1850s—about 900 men strong, with 680 Euro-American regulars, 33 Nez Perce soldiers, and 200 packers and herders. Compared to Steptoe’s sortie and most volunteer attacks, Wright’s expedition was meticulously planned and logistically disciplined. They might not know where they were going or whom they were fighting, but Wright and his men would wander with crisp military precision.<sup>460</sup>

Warmaking technology played a new key role in the Battle of Four Lakes, fought on September 1, 1858 between the U.S. Army under Wright and fighters from (among others) Spokane, Yakama, Palouse, Kalispel, and Columbia River Salish communities. Many of Wright’s men were armed with new long-range Sharps carbines (nicknamed “Minies” after the ammunition they used), which forced an early retreat from the other side. This was new. In most conflicts of the War on Illahee, technological disparities had been either non-existent or non-critical. In Steptoe’s ill-considered foray, howitzers had been worse than useless. This time, for the first time, long-range rifles made a decisive difference.<sup>461</sup>

There are several disputes about the events of the Battle of Four Lakes. The number of fighters on the Native side was initially estimated to be between 400 and 500, about half the size of the Euro-American force. Over time, as Euro-American historical memory decoupled from estimates on the ground, estimations of the size of the Native

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<sup>460</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 178 – 183.

<sup>461</sup> Stephen W. Henderson and Michael M. Hamilton, “The Influence of Geology and Geography on the Indian Wars in Eastern Washington Territory,” *Military Geosciences and Desert Warfare*, ed. Eric V. McDonald and Thomas Bullard (New York: Springer, 2016), pp. 67 – 82; “Value of the New Fire-Arms in Indian Warfare,” *New York Times* Nov 2, 1858, p. 8. The cannon in the 1851 clash at Battle Rock, near Port Orford, made a difference in the battle, but ultimately the goals of the Native community (getting the Euro-American invaders to leave) were still achieved. It could be argued that military technology in the form of the warship *Decatur* was decisive in the Battle of Seattle, but the aims of the pan-Native alliance have never been authoritatively established—if all they had intended was to scare the pioneers, they assuredly succeeded.

force doubled, quadrupled, and eventually decupled—rising to “5,000 Indians” by the time a monument to the battle was erected in 1926.<sup>462</sup>

The standard account of the Battle of Four Lakes was that it had begun with noble men on horseback from each side charging each other in the morning light, with the Native side struck by surprise with a wave of unexpectedly accurate Minie balls shot from a distance by the infantryman. But one account, from the packer and hangman Thomas J. Beall (see below), claimed instead that the battle started at dawn, when Wright had his howitzers shell the village where his adversaries rested. This dawn attack would have been in keeping with military practice of the time, although no other account mentions it. Cavalry charges do sound more heroic than shelling at dawn.<sup>463</sup>

The Battle of Four Lakes was followed by a running skirmish on September 5, typically called the Battle of Spokane Plains. The Native force on this occasion shifted strategy, attempting to use fire, smoke, and hit-and-run tactics to neutralize the Euro-American advantage in munitions. But it wasn't enough, and the Native force broke off without having inflicted significant casualties. The Euro-American soldiers killed everyone who surrendered, and killed anyone wounded they could catch—although many of the wounded were evacuated from the battle before they could be executed, a particular traditional focus of the women fighters in Spokane and Coeur d'Alene armies.<sup>464</sup>

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<sup>462</sup> At some point between 2006 and 2016, a person or persons unknown helped correct the Battle of Four Lakes Monument by effacing the last inaccurate zero. For 2006 as the earliest date of effacement, see Dan Webster, “Monumental Struggle: Craig Bickerton’s Dying Wish? To Set Record Straight on Battle of Four Lakes,” *Spokane Spokesman-Review*, Aug 13, 2006; for effacement since, see Cutler, “*Hang Them All*”, p. 196.

<sup>463</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 183 – 192;

<sup>464</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 192 – 194; The Spokane Tribe and Jim Sijohn, ““Whist-alks Way—Woman Warriors—Then and Now’ snemsci (woman who goes into battle),” “Renaming of Ft. George Wright Drive to Whistalks Way,” Spokane City Council Agenda packet, Dec 14, 2020,

After the two major battles, Wright made war on Native livelihood. His men pillaged or burnt foodstuffs necessary to make it through the upcoming winter, shot ponies and cattle, and (most infamously) methodically slaughtered around 700 horses over the course of two days. Unlike the killing of Native people, Wright and many of his men had significant qualms about the execution of horses—as historian Donald Cutler put it, some “attribute[ed] more of a human quality to the animals than... [they] ascribed to the Indians.” Others “appeared to exult” in the killing.<sup>465</sup>

Throughout his campaign, Colonel George Wright tortured people to death to make his point. In lieu of a conventional hanging, where the spinal cord is severed by the noose when the executed is dropped, Wright had his victims strangled. There were no trials for the men Wright killed, although the proceedings were sometimes labelled as such in records and histories. Sometimes he would ask a few questions of the condemned before having them tortured to death, as in the case of the Palouse man named Jo-Hout, accused of murder without evidence and tortured to death on September 8, 1858 (mentioned at the beginning of this chapter). A Spokane peace negotiator named Amtoola was comparatively lucky—he was fatally shot earlier that same day by Wright’s soldiers, while holding a white flag, and at least died quickly. There were many other killings and executions committed by Wright and his men over the first weeks of September—for most, neither the names nor the alleged crimes of the victims appear in Euro-American

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<https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/projects/renaming-fort-george-wright-drive/renaming-ft-george-wright-drive-whist-alks-way-women-warriors-then-now.pdf>.

<sup>465</sup> Cutler, “*Hang Them All*”, pp. 202 – 212. Attacking food supplies was a common Euro-American tactic in the War on Illahee; see among others David G. Lewis, “Starving the Deschutes Tribe into Submission, 1856,” *Quartux Journal* March 16, 2021, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2021/03/16/starving-the-deschutes-tribe-into-submission-1856/>.

records. The frequency of these executions undoubtedly shaped the experiences of those hostages he took that survived their captivity.<sup>466</sup>

Wright's most (in)famous execution was of Qualchan/ᑕwáłchin, a Yakama leader well known for his part in the war effort. By September 23, 1858, Wright had begun talking surrender terms with a number of Native leaders. One of the leaders who came in to talk peace was the Yakama leader Owhi/Áwᑕay, Qualchan/ᑕwáłchin's father. Wright seized him, put him in chains, and sent word to Qualchan/ᑕwáłchin that his father would be executed unless Qualchan/ᑕwáłchin showed himself. When Wright was among his Euro-American compatriots, he vowed to "hang [Qualchan/ᑕwáłchin] in fifteen minutes after I catch him." Rather than being caught, Qualchan/ᑕwáłchin came in willingly, possibly before the message reached him. And it turned to be only ten minutes.<sup>467</sup>

Qualchan/ᑕwáłchin, accompanied by his wife Whist-alks and a younger sibling, rode in to talk, apparently before Wright was ready for him. Thomas J. Beall, a packer and Wright's chosen hangman, described Wright asking a nearby packer of partially Native descent to stall for time:

"Can you talk to this indian and make him understand[?] [I]f so do it, tell him anything, lie if necessary."

While talking, The Col had some soldiers to surround Qalchen, and take him off his horse and make a prisoner of him. ....

[The Col] gave orders to take him out and hang him, so Qalchen was not ten minutes in camp 'til he was hung and the rope was good and did not break.

Another incident connected with Qalchens death. After he was buried it was

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<sup>466</sup> Cutler, "Hang Them All", p. 204. See also Lin Tull Cannell, "William Craig: Governor Stevens's Conduit to the Nez Perce," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 97:1 (2005/2006), pp. 19 – 30, esp. pp. 26 – 29.

<sup>467</sup> Cutler, "Hang Them All", pp. 225 – 226.

reported to the Col that Qalchen had considerable money on him in a belt. He was ex[h]umed but nothing in the shape of mon[e]y was found on him.<sup>468</sup>

The hanging, as was typical for Wright, was of the slow, torturous kind.

Qualchan/Ḳwáľchĩn was lynched from a tree limb by the soldiers in attendance, with Beall wielding the rope. Before the hanging, Whist-alks was able to drive a beaded lance into the ground in defiance and ride away. After the failed grave-robbing the Euro-American soldiers, Qualchan/Ḳwáľchĩn's body was reclaimed by his sisters and given a funeral with full honors. His father Owhi/Áwḡyay was lethally shot ten days later on October 3, 1858—supposedly while trying to escape.<sup>469</sup>

Wright finished his campaign with more hostage taking and hangings. In one illustrative incident on September 30, 1858, Wright gathered around a hundred Palouse people who had assembled for peace talks. He declared them captives in their own country, forbade them from consorting with other Native groups he deemed hostile, and threatened “if I come here again to war, I will hang them all, men, women, and children.” He demanded that the assembled Palouse produce the person or persons who had killed Euro-American miners in the region earlier in the year—though he had little evidence that would lead him to think that the killer(s) were present or even Palouse. His audience talked among themselves, and one of them came forward—quite possibly a man innocent

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<sup>468</sup> Thomas Beall to L.V. McWhorter, Dec 13, 1916, Folder 434, Box 45, Cage 24, Lucullus Virgil McWhorter Papers, Washington State University Libraries Special Collections, Pullman, WA.

<sup>469</sup> Multiple witnesses recall Whist-alks defiantly driving a beaded lance into the ground, but they disagree about whether this before Qualchan/Ḳwáľchĩn's arrival or just after he was betrayed. Cutler, “*Hang Them All*”, chap. 11; Thomas Beall to L.V. McWhorter, Dec 13, 1916, Folder 434, Box 45, Cage 24, Lucullus Virgil McWhorter Papers; John E. Smith, “A Pioneer of the Spokane Country,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 7:4 (1916), pp. 267 – 277, esp. p. 272. In a modern day coda to the story in December 2020, the city of Spokane changed the name of Fort George Wright Drive to Whist-alks Way. Ted McDermott, “We Decided to Honor a Woman Warrior”: Spokane Tribe Proposes New Name for Fort George Wright Drive,” *Spokane Spokesman-Review* Nov 2, 2020; Catherine Ferguson, “Long-Time Effort Results in Whist-alks Way,” *The Fig Tree* Jan 21, 2021.

of the purported crime, but willing to die to save his people. To drive the point home, Wright decided to lynch three men alongside the Palouse volunteer. The three were identified only as “notorious marauders”; they may well have been chosen at random. All four men were slowly choked to death from a nearby tree. Wright and his men marched on. The night after torturing the four men to death, Wright and his men dined on “grass-fed beef and a basket of champagne” to celebrate their success.<sup>470</sup>

As historian Donald L. Cutler has put it, Wright’s “two-month-long sortie” was part of a “campaign of fear and terror... sparked by greed for Indian lands.... a bloody and vindictive march featuring hangings, burned villages, lies and coercion, and the slaughter of nearly 700 Indian horses.”<sup>471</sup> Wright and his men had better guns and more discipline than the volunteers, but had the same goals and many of the same tactics as earlier bands of Euro-American marauders. The volunteers under Kelly had killed Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox while he was under a flag of truce; the regulars under Wright killed Amloops in similar circumstances, though perhaps without similar post-mortem butchery. Volunteers and regulars alike killed capriciously, although the volunteers may have been more wide-ranging in their capriciousness. There was less violence against non-combatants reported regarding the regulars than the volunteers—but given that many of the surviving reports on the wanton violence of the volunteers *came* from those in charge of the regulars, the reasons for this disparity are open to interpretation (see Chapters 2

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<sup>470</sup> Lawrence Kip, *Army Life on the Pacific: A Journal of the Expedition against the Northern Indians, the Tribes of the Coeur d’Alenes, Spokans, and Pelouzes, in the Summer of 1858* (New York: Redfield, 1859), pp. 116 – 117; cf. Cutler, “*Hang Them All*”, pp. 231 – 233; Netta W. Phelps, “Dedication of Steptoe Memorial Park,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 2:4 (1908), pp. 344 – 351.

<sup>471</sup> Don[ald L.] Cutler, “‘Your Nations Shall Be Exterminated’: In the Summer of 1858, Col. George Wright Decided to Fight Terror with Terror, Pacifying the Northwest Indian Warriors Using Sabers, Treaties, Lies—and the Hangman’s Noose,” *MHQ: The Quarterly Journal of Military History* 22:3 (2010), pp. 46 – 53, quotation on p. 47. Uncomfortable phrasing and interpretation of Native actions in this piece had been fixed by the time of Cutler’s 2016 book on Wright.

and 7).<sup>472</sup> The difference between Wright's campaign and the murderous ravages of volunteers was mostly a matter of effectiveness. If the campaigns of the regulars involved fewer acts of wanton violence, it was only because Wright and men like him believed the goals of White supremacy were better served by (somewhat) more targeted attacks.

In eastern Washington, many Euro-American historians put the end of the "Indian wars" somewhere in the end of the 1850s, after Wright's campaign or after the treaties that followed it. The War on Illahee as defined by pioneer historians came to close by 1859. But the war on Native independence did not. Lynchings and murders continued within and beyond the law, perpetrated by soldiers, sheriffs, and civilians. Outright war continued too, in the so-called "Snake" War against plateau and mountain peoples (see Chapter VII).

At least some pioneers considered lynchings to be an extension of the wars. Joseph Henry Brown, who had worked as a courier during the Indian Wars of the mid-1850s and soldiered as a cavalryman during the "Snake" War of the early 1860s, turned to writing of history late in life. Few traces remain visible of Brown's planned book on the "Indian Wars of Oregon and Washington," which was most likely scuppered due to ill health (he identified himself as the author of said book on his 1890s letterhead, with an optimistic date of publication listed as "189\_").<sup>473</sup> But his sparse remaining notes demonstrated a view of Indian Wars volunteers that went beyond the bounds of

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<sup>472</sup> Maurice Fitzgerald, a regular who fought in a number of wars across the West, wrote that "no quarter was to be given" to at least some of the Native groups he made war on. He made clear from context this included women and children. The unpublished story in which he related these facts was a panegyric for assimilation (!), about a young "Apache" boy who was spared by the soldiers who murdered the rest of his community and eventually "given" to a White farming family in Oregon. Maurice Fitzgerald, "The Apache Indian Boy," Folder 24, Box 5, Clarence Bagley Papers, Acc. 0036-001, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, OR.

<sup>473</sup> Joseph Henry Brown letterhead, Folder 9, Box 1, Joseph Henry Brown Papers, Mss 1002, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.



conventional wars. A small collection of unidentified newspaper clippings reporting on hangings following warfare he stored under the label “Much material on Oregon volunteers Save!”<sup>474</sup> Killings after the wars seem to have been, to Brown, part of volunteer service. They were certainly a part of pioneer life.

Pioneer killings of Native people continued, and many were seemingly never investigated or reported. In the early 1870s, a resident of Rosalia named James Madison Richardson shot a Native visitor, and buried him under the barn. The circumstances leading to this killing were a subject of some debate in the community, but there seems to be no record that any real investigation (much less a trial) was ever attempted. The killing was broadly known, by Indigenous and Euro-American locals alike; indeed, Richardson’s family recalled that the slaying made him “a mark for the Indians.” His property was damaged multiple times in the years following, and his family was sure that local Native people (who identified him as a “bad man”) were responsible—perhaps exacting some small measure of justice for murdered kin.<sup>475</sup>

William H. Osterman lynched Native people, but it is unclear just how many. The records point to lynchings in northwestern Washington in the 1880s, but there may have been others. There was one vigilante murder for which he was regionally (in)famous: the 1884 lynching of Louie Sam, a Stó:lō man framed for murder of a White shopkeeper named James Bell, pursued by a mob of about 100 settlers across the border, arrested in Canada, then dragged from the Canadian jail and lynched by the American mob. This lynching created an international incident, and a subsequent investigation by the

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<sup>474</sup> 1879 note, Folder 8, Box 1, *ibid.*

<sup>475</sup> Katherine Richardson, “James Madison Richardson,” 161 – 162, Vol 5, Folder 5, Box 1, DAR Family Rec. of Wash. Pioneers, Cage 472, Washington State University Special Collections.

Canadian government found that Osterman had likely committed the murder of Bell and been part of the lynching of Sam.<sup>476</sup>

Osterman's family remembered a different lynching story. As his daughter Susan Osterman [Alverson] put it:

Father came on to Washington where he got employment with the Postal Telegraph Co. He had many thrilling experiences, especially with Indians and, one time, was about to be lynched for murder which he knew nothing about and was only saved by the timely arrival of a mail carrier who had noticed the Indians around his home; and they were traced into British Columbia where (there being two of them) they were hanged in trees.<sup>477</sup>

This could be the same story through a distorted lens. It could also be a separate murderous incursion to lynch those seeking refuge with First Nations people in Canada. Or it could be that the many lynchings Osterman seems to have been involved in blended together in family memory. Captain John Kilcup of northwestern Washington, a murderer, boat operator, and cat lover, remembered that Osterman had been part of his "bunch," a gang of White men known for lynching Indians (and possibly others). As one member put it, "I would kill a Chinaman as quick as I would an Indian, and I would kill an Indian as quick as I would a dog." Another, Peter Harkness, posed for photos near trees from which he remembered hanging at least one Native person in his youth.<sup>478</sup>

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<sup>476</sup> Keith Thor Carlson, "The Lynching of Louie Sam," *BC Studies* 109 (Spring 1996), pp. 63 – 79.

<sup>477</sup> Susan Osterman [Alverson], "Wm. H. Osterman," Part 2, Vol. 3, p. 74, Folder 3, Box 1, DAR Family Rec. of Wash. Pioneers, Cage 472, Washington State University Special Collections, Pullman, WA.

<sup>478</sup> Carlson, "The Lynching of Louie Sam," quotation on p. 74; Johnnie Kilcup, "First White Settlers in Lynden District," Folder 20, Box 8, Percival R. Jeffcott Papers, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Heritage Resources, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA; Percival R. Jeffcott, "Billy Clark Stories," p. 6, Folder 23, Box 7, *ibid.* See also Jared Farmer, "Taking Liberties with Historical Trees," *Journal of American History* 105:4 (2019), pp. 815 – 842.

In the extant records, Osterman and the vigilante group(s) to which he belonged to acted with relative impunity. In one case, after torturing an Indian boy whom they (falsely) believed had information on a crime, the vigilantes were briefly detained—but the event did not seem to cause them any legal or social harm, according to Kilcup:

Captain Roder had the bunch ar[r]ested for being so rough with the young Indian. The bunch consisted of Moultry, Osterman, Bud Walker, Sam Harkness, Birt Hopkins, was leader. When the trial was over at Whatcom we all went to a dance, and the floor man[a]ger jokingly war[ned] the ladies that it would be a disgrace for any of them to dance with the Convicts, but his advi[c]e was not he[e]ded, and the boys were shown a very pleasant evening.<sup>479</sup>

Murder and torture of Indigenous persons did not, it seems, bring much legal or social censure. Released from a courthouse where they faced no consequence for the assault they had just committed, the lynching “bunch” found plenty of willing dance partners among the ladies of Whatcom County, Washington. Without much outcry it remained a local story. Because lynching Indians in the Pacific Northwest was typically the handiwork of small bands of men rather than a spectacle for the entire White community, the kinds of evidence ubiquitous in the Jim Crow South are less common in the region. The killing[s] in northwestern Washington have slipped through counts of the number of lynchings in the Pacific Northwest; none appear in Michael J. Pfeifer’s discussions of lynching in the territory.<sup>480</sup>

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<sup>479</sup> Kilcup, “First White Settlers in Lynden District.”

<sup>480</sup> Pfeifer, *The Roots of Rough Justice*, Appendix; Michael J. Pfeifer, *Rough Justice: Lynching and American Society, 1874 – 1947* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), p. 19. On lynching as public spectacle in the South, see Amy Louise Wood, *Lynching and Spectacle: Witnessing Racial Violence in America, 1890 – 1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998), chap. 5.

Some lynchings and other vigilante violence may have passed beneath historical notice because they were not seen as vigilantism by White people in much of the nineteenth-century Pacific Northwest. In southern Oregon in August of 1852, newspapers of the time reported, a Native man known to Euro-Americans as “Warty” was accused of stealing bread in a threatening way, whereupon local White men “hearing the alarm, and knowing the Indian character, arrested him, summoned the neighborhood, tried, condemned and hung him on the same day.”<sup>481</sup> In Eastern Oregon, Elizabeth Laughlin Lord remembered the community hanging of a “handsome and saucy” Native man accused of attempted sexual assault in the 1850s as a righteous and lawful act.<sup>482</sup> Elijah L. Bristow Jr. discussed his father’s casual acts of vigilante murder inflicted on Indigenous persons in 1840s with historians in 1878 (see Chapter II) and remembered even more intense mob violence against Native people in the gold mining regions of southern Oregon. But he proclaimed, in the same interview, that he had “never heard of any vigilance committee” in the region. The only vigilantes that counted, for Bristow Jr., were those that had executed White people. For him, like his father, killing Indians was just part of pioneer life.<sup>483</sup>

Some lynchings can be inferred, if not proven. In 1893, the controversial Puyallup leader Peter Stanup was embroiled with Indian Agent Edwin Eells in a fight over the allotment of Puyallup land. Both agreed allotment was inevitable, but Eells wanted

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<sup>481</sup> *Oregonian* Aug 14, 1852 p. 2; originally found at <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/hangings.html>.

<sup>482</sup> Elizabeth Laughlin Lord, *Reminiscences of Eastern Oregon* (Portland: The Irwin-Hodson Company, 1903), pp. 163 – 164. Elizabeth Laughlin Lord differentiated this killing from the hanging of a White person accused of a crime by a “vigilance committee,” in 1863. See *ibid*, p. 195.

<sup>483</sup> E. L. Bristow [Jr.], “E.L. Bristow’s Narrative,” June 13, 1878, p. 4, Folder: E. L. Bristow, Box 5, Willamette University and Northwest Collection, WUA014, Willamette University Special Collections, Salem, OR. Emma Holm Davis of southeastern Washington State implied something similar, based on her childhood recollections. See “Paper by Mrs. Emma Holm Davis, Given June 12, 1946,” Folder 7, Box 1, Eloise Thomas Papers, Mss 1717, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

continued wardship for the Puyallup and for land sales to go to Euro-Americans; Stanup wanted all the profits to go to the Puyallup, and for most of the land to be retained individually. As events reached a crescendo in Stanup's favor in May of 1893, Eells called in the military. By the end of the month, Stanup was found dead in the river, with a broken neck and possible defensive wounds on his arms. A brief perfunctory investigation was dropped without progress, despite a Puyallup petition declaring Eells's involvement. Land speculators seized Puyallup lands without permission or remuneration. Puyallup Nation investigators noted at least six more Puyallup deaths under suspicious circumstances in years following Stanup's mysteriously broken neck—each one resulting in yet more land transfers out of Native hands.<sup>484</sup>

Familiarity and friendliness did not necessarily halt vigilante violence. Mattie Cole Houston Gallaway, who grew up in Eastern Washington in the late nineteenth century, remembered that “the Indians were friendly but the family always kept a gun in case of emergency and never lost a sense of fear.”<sup>485</sup> Lummi nation member Julius Charles remembered that in the 1890s and 1900s (and perhaps later), he had been warned by “friendly whites” whenever there appeared to have been a murder, so that he knew to “keep away from certain neighborhoods where ill will existed against the Indians.” The assumption that all Native people were responsible for any suspicious act of violence persisted for decades in some quarters.<sup>486</sup>

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<sup>484</sup> Kurt Kim Schaefer, “The Promise and Price of Contact: Puyallup Indian Acculturation, Federal Indian Policy and the City of Tacoma, 1832 – 1909,” PhD dissertation (University of Washington, 2016), esp. pp. 286 – 294 and p. 289, n. 13; Nathan Roberts, “The Death of Peter Stanup,” *Columbia* 22:3 (2008), pp. 24 – 31. Cf. George Pierre Castile, “Edwin Eells, U.S. Indian Agent, 1871 – 1895,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 72:2 (1981), pp. 61 – 68.

<sup>485</sup> DAR Family Rec. of Pioneers, Vol 2, p. 88, Folder 2, Box 1.

<sup>486</sup> Howard E. Buswell interview with Julius Charles [Lummi], April 13, 1943, Folder 16, Box 5, Howard E. Buswell Papers and Photographs, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Heritage Resources, Western Washington University, Bellingham WA

The lynching of Native people, during wars and after them, through show trials and no trials, needs much more attention from scholars, in the Pacific Northwest and elsewhere. The judicial murder of Leschi is well-known regionally. The hanging of 38 Dakota prisoners of war in 1862 is rightly infamous nationally, and growing more so. But there were legions of other hangings, by the military and civilians, with even less due process than those unjust events—often with little more than “Damn the Indians.” Vigilante killings and opportunistic murder predated and continued long after those few legal lynchings that garnered widespread Euro-American attention—attack that in some cases were still only constrained by fear of Native reprisal.<sup>487</sup>

As Louie Wapato of the Moses Band Colville put it during an interview in 1973:

There was many killings of whites and Indians, see, they fought. You don't find that in the history but they did. There was several, several murders that was in the history, but a lot of them aren't, see. Just a dead Indian, or a dead white man found, and that, nobody knows what happened... I don't expect you [historians] to put those in, but I want you to know, have an understanding, have a history of the people before. Before the state of Washington, in the early history, there was a lot of Indians. And a lot of whites coming, and they were taking advantage of the Indians, see. In some ways, the government would not protect the Indian, they

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<sup>487</sup> David Martínez, “Remembering the Thirty-Eight: Abraham Lincoln, the Dakota, and the U.S. War on Barbarism,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 28:2 (2013), pp. 5 – 29; Carol Chomsky, “The United States-Dakota War Trials: A Study in Military Injustice,” *Stanford Law Review* 43 (1990), pp. 13 – 98; John Robert Legg, “Unforgetting the Dakota 38: Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Resurgence, and the Competing Narratives of the U.S.-Dakota War, 1862 – 2012,” Master’s thesis (Virginia Polytechnic Institute, 2020); Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, “Little Crow, Leader of the Santee War of 1862,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 29:2 (2014), pp. 98 – 103; Larry D. Mansch, “Abraham Lincoln and the Dakota War in Academic and Popular Literature,” *Madison Historical Review* 13 (2016), pp. 80 – 103.

would not prosecute, they would not try to find the murderer of an Indian. A dead Indian was just a dead Indian, you see? That was the idea.<sup>488</sup>

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<sup>488</sup> Louie Wapato, interview with Jeff Wilner, May 15 1973, Folder 10, Box 1, Northwest Tribal History Interviews, Western Washington Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Bellingham, WA.

CHAPTER VII: “NO FRIENDLY INDIANS EXIST WITHIN THE JURISDICTION  
OF THIS COMMAND”: THE “SNAKE” WAR AS A CONTINUATION  
OF THE WAR ON ILLAHEE

In October 1861, Elisha Lindsay (“Lish”) Applegate sent a letter to Senator James Nesmith demanding that the federal government establish a new military post in southern Oregon to continue the conquest of Native lands. The presence of numerous Native people was, he argued, reason enough:

On the Eastern frontier of Jackson County there are numerous bands of savages. Persons that have passed through that Klamath Lake Country report thousands of them. It is a grea[t] country for indians\_\_ those grea[t] lakes affording an abundant supply of fish, and the rich vall[neys] abounding with roots, which they dig\_\_ so much so that those tribes are distinguished far and wide as the diggers. These savages are not in open war as yet with our settlements; but what of that? Nor are they friendly with them; and what if they will? We know they cannot live in close proximity with the whites without difficulty and war. They have murdered and robbed our people im[m]igrating through ~~our~~ their country. This they have practiced as we all know for years and years.<sup>489</sup>

The fact that the varied Native polities that Lish Applegate lumped together were not “in open war” was immaterial to him. They were not “in open war as yet,” and Lish Applegate saw war as inevitable. Applegate originally referred to Native land as “our”

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<sup>489</sup> E[lisha] L[indsay] Applegate to James W. Nesmith, Oct 29, 1861, Folder 2, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers, Mss 577, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. Letters proclaiming bounteous land and demanding military intervention (without obvious cause) were not uncommon, nor were they relegated to remote areas. The historian Kurt Kim Schaefer has unpacked an almost identical 1860 letter from Pierce County settlers in the Puyallup region of Washington. Kurt Kim Schaefer, “The Promise and Price of Contact: Puyallup Indian Acculturation, Federal Indian Policy and the City of Tacoma, 1832 – 1909,” PhD Diss. (University of Washington, 2016), pp. 147 – 148.



country before correcting himself to write “their” country; a perhaps half-conscious assumption of future Euro-American conquest. His brother Jesse Applegate had been eyeing the Klamath Lake region as a business opportunity for years. And Lish Applegate knew his audience—James Nesmith could be counted on to despise Native people.<sup>490</sup>

Klamath, Modoc, and other Native peoples had been coming to Jacksonville to trade for much of the 1850s, risking the notoriously brutal tempers of the White residents there to exchange goods and renew relationships.<sup>491</sup> But commerce between Americans and Native bands was, Applegate insisted, only another reason for suspicion:

Grea[t] bands frequent our settlements now[,] Jacksonville and the various mining camps, and tra[de] peltry... receiving in exchange for their commodities, articles which it is against the laws for them to have, such as arms and whiskey. They have become an almost [unbe]arable nuisance. If something is not done, and that pretty shortly[,] war must inevitably follow.

There ought to be a military post established near the Klamath Lake as soon as possible next Spring. A reservation and agency should also be established there at an early day.

It is positively necessary that these things be done at the present session of Congress\_\_ necessary to the saf[e]ty and satisfaction of the people. And if promptly attended to, even if the effort should prove unsuccessful, it will disarm

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<sup>490</sup> Theodore Stern, “The Klamath Indians and the Treaty of 1864,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 57:3 (1956), pp. 229 – 273, esp. pp. 247 – 248.

<sup>491</sup> Stern, “The Klamath Indians and the Treaty of 1864,” esp. p. 246; Patience Collier, “The Failure of Reservation Policy in Oregon,” Master’s thesis (University of Oregon, 2018), pp. 1, 5.

our political enemies, and increase the confidence of the people in their Friend at Washington.<sup>492</sup>

The threat of political repercussions was serious—southern Oregon was seen as a hotbed of Confederate sentiment, and being seen as an “Indian sympathizer” was a potent insult across party lines.<sup>493</sup> Lish Applegate’s letter demanding military action concluded with a petition signed by a number of Oregonians—including at least a few who would join in the killing of some of the Native people being discussed, only a few years later.<sup>494</sup> This petition made clear that the core drivers of these settlers’ demands were land hunger and White supremacy. It began:

This Klamath Lake Country, so called, embraces a large area of arable land, well adapted to granging and agricultural purposes, containing a population of several hundred Indians, who gain a precarious living in the summer by fishing and hunting, and in winter depend ch[ie]fly for their subsistence on the generosity of the contiguous white settlements, to whom it is exceedingly annoying, and which must ultimately and inevitably lead to a war between the races; as all past experience goes to prove that to have peace between the white man and the Indian[,] a free and multilined intercourse must not be tolerated.<sup>495</sup>

A “war between the races,” Applegate and his few dozen signatories proclaimed, was inevitable. But first and foremost they wanted the “large area of arable land.” Fort

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<sup>492</sup> E[lisha] L[indsay] Applegate to James W. Nesmith, Oct 29, 1861, Folder 2, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers.

<sup>493</sup> Jeff LaLande, “‘Dixie’ of the Pacific Northwest: Southern Oregon’s Civil War,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 100:1 (1999), pp. 32 – 81, quotation on p. 61; K. Keith Richard, “Unwelcome Settlers: Black and Mulatto Oregon Pioneers, Part II,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 84:2 (1983), pp. 173 – 205, esp. p. 184.

<sup>494</sup> At the least, J. M. McCall, who became a member of the First Oregon Cavalry, and probably J. M. Wait (although that signature is harder to read).

<sup>495</sup> E[lisha] L[indsay] Applegate to James W. Nesmith, Oct 29, 1861, Folder 2, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers.

Klamath was eventually established, in 1863, by Charles S. Drew—the same man who had suggested during the Rogue River Wars that acts of violence which would be considered war crimes normal circumstances should be standard procedure when attacking Native communities (see Chapter III).

Drew’s belief in the justice of wanton killing had not dimmed. Whenever there was a whisper of trouble, per the standing orders of George Wright, he would execute some people without trial. Just before treaty negotiations with Klamath peoples in 1864, Drew seized and killed two Native men with only vague justifications—and while noting that both men were against accommodation with the Whites. The 1864 treaty was pushed through shortly afterwards. The Applegates profited off of it for years.<sup>496</sup>

The threat of force—and of being “given up to the soldiers for punishment”—hung over treaty negotiations in southeastern Oregon in the 1860s, just as it had in the 1850s. And there was, as usual, an undeclared and ill-defined war, not only in southeastern Oregon but across the Pacific Northwest.<sup>497</sup> As Charles S. Drew put it when describing one 1864 encounter with a Native group he identified as P[a]iute:

He and his comrades do not wish to be considered belligerents, and treated accordingly.... Though appearing every way friendly with our whole force

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<sup>496</sup> Stern, “The Klamath Indians and the Treaty of 1864,” pp. 257 – 258 [killing of “Scoocum John” and “the Indian commonly known as George”]; Collier, “The Failure of Reservation Policy in Oregon” [Applegates’ profiting].

<sup>497</sup> Stern, “The Klamath Indians and the Treaty of 1864,” quotation on p. 258; Charles S. Drew, *Official Report of the Owyhee Reconnoissance* [sic] (Jacksonville, OR: Oregon Sentinel, 1865), p. 3 – 6; Notably, Drew found some of the actions of volunteers and vigilantes in the 1860s over the line—again, more as a matter of pragmatism than morality. See Scott McArthur, *The Enemy Never Came: The Civil War in the Pacific Northwest* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 2012), p. 126.

present[ly].... They are doubtless assassins by nature, but are too cowardly to attack any party of armed white men unless by surprise.<sup>498</sup>

Drew and many, many other White pioneers would always be suspicious of Native people, no matter the circumstance. They were “assassins by nature” to him, untrustable even if they “appeared in every way friendly.” Rasher men than Drew (like Loren L. Williams, below) would shoot first and ask questions later.

This chapter argues that in the Pacific Northwest the “Snake” War was, on the ground, an extension of the War on Illahee. One of the least-known, least-discussed, and least-researched U.S. wars against Native communities, the “Snake” War in the 1860s Pacific Northwest was fought for similar reason, with similar goals, in many cases by the same volunteers, as the more famous conflicts of the 1850s. It was similarly prosecuted but differently remembered. To an even greater extent than the wars of the 1850s, war in the 1860s was waged against an amorphously defined enemy—essentially, any and all Native polities perceived as independent. Even its standard title refers to a general insult rather than a specific polity—“Snake” is a slur indicating an inherent enemy, likely borrowed from Indigenous communities, rather than a specific referent. Some pioneers used the slur to refer to any Native group coded as especially hostile. In the 1850s, it might be used in reference to Cayuse, Palouse, or Walla Walla peoples. In the 1850s *and* 1860s, Euro-Americans in the far West appended it to Northern Paiute peoples, various Shoshone peoples, many Bannock peoples, Modoc communities, and (seemingly) almost

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<sup>498</sup> Drew, *Official Report of the Owyhee Reconnoissance*, p. 17. Drew distinguished between those he called “Piute” and those he called “Snake” in southeastern Oregon, but it is not clear how he made those distinctions. The people described in this quotation were mostly likely part of a predominantly Northern Paiute community.

any other Native polity or ethnics they found threatening in the Great Basin and Plateau regions.

Periodization is even messier for the “Snake” War than for the other amorphous wars of the region. Gregory Michno, whose problematic book *The Deadliest Indian War in the West* is at present perhaps the closest thing to a monograph on the “Snake” War, uses a periodization of 1864 – 1868, as did many early twentieth-century Oregon historians. But neither Michno nor others discuss what distinguishes the 1864 military expeditions of the volunteer infantry across eastern Oregon from earlier military operations by volunteer cavalry drawn from the same pool (what Michno labels “antecedents”).<sup>499</sup>

The most infamous act that was arguably a part of the “Snake” War has not typically been included under its mantle. The Bear River Massacre, on January 29, 1863, was the largest known single mass killing of Native people by the U.S. Army in the mainland United States. Colonel Patrick Edward Connor, who had been a part of genocidal attacks against Native communities across the West throughout the 1850s, led a regiment of regulars from California to kill hundreds of mostly Northwestern Shoshone people—at least 280, possibly more than 400 people were killed, and many more were wounded and raped. The massacre was singular in its horror and scale. But the pursuit of mass killings of those labeled “Snake”—in Idaho Territory, Oregon, and elsewhere—was not. Arbitrary periodization of the “Snake” War has caused what would be the most

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<sup>499</sup> Gregory Michno, *The Deadliest Indian War in the West: The Snake Conflict, 1864 – 1868* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 2007). For 1864 as a standard long-standing start date for the war by Oregonians, see Lewis A. McArthur, “Oregon Geographic Names,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 26:4 (1925), pp. 309 – 423, esp. p. 325. For recruitment of volunteers, see Ted van Arsdol, *Northwest Bastion: The U.S. Army Barracks at Vancouver, 1849 – 1916* (Vancouver, Wash.: Heritage Trust of Clark County, 1991), pp. 20 – 21.

infamous war crime of the conflict to instead be discussed as a separate, perhaps isolated, event. Michno's *Deadliest Indian War in the West*, in perhaps the most racist passage of a book full of them, severs the Bear River Massacre from the broader "Snake" War, largely omits the mass killing and raping, and lauds the massacre as a U.S. battle victory.<sup>500</sup>

Perhaps because United States embarked on it as an unusually amorphous war against Native people generally, there has not been an agreed-upon periodization for the "Snake" War. Nineteenth-century historians Frances Fuller Victor and Hubert Howe Bancroft did not date the "Snake" War(s) (and mentioned the term only in a footnote in their *History of Oregon*), but seemed to frame it as from 1862 to around 1868.<sup>501</sup> In Idaho, a periodization beginning in 1866, when volunteer troops were mustered across Idaho Territory, is not uncommon—but there had been violent attacks by bands of volunteers and soldiers in the region for years, since before the Idaho Territory was created in 1863—very much including the Bear River Massacre.<sup>502</sup> Some on the Warm Springs Reservation Oregon argued that a war—or something close to it—inhered in lethal clashes between some reservation residents and some Northern Paiute communities

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<sup>500</sup> Kass Fleisher, *Bear River Massacre and the Making of History* (New York: SUNY Press, 2012), esp. pp. 59 – 64; Brigham D. Madsen, *The Shoshoni Frontier and the Bear River Massacre* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985), chaps. 9 and 10; Harold Schindler, "The Bear River Massacre: New Historical Evidence," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 67:4 (1999), pp. 300–308; and esp. Darren Parry, *The Bear River Massacre: A Shoshone History* (Salt Lake City: By Common Consent Press, 2019), chaps. 3 and 4. Cf. Michno, *The Deadliest Indian War in the West*, chap. 3. In this as in most of his chapters, Gregory Michno sticks too closely to his military sources, mirroring much of their language, attitudes, and assumptions when it comes to violence against Native people.

<sup>501</sup> Frances Fuller Victor [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Oregon, Volume 2*, Ed. Matthew P. Deady [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888), p. 508 n. 35. Victor and Bancroft also discuss the "Shoshone War of 1866 – 1868" in their next chapter, reflecting perhaps their (unusual for the time) understanding that Northern Paiute communities and Shoshone communities were quite distinct. See *ibid.*, chap. 21. However, they still used the slur liberally, as "Snake in its popular sense and for convenience. The several bands of this tribe, the Bannacks, and the wandering Pah Utes were all classed as Snakes... and it is impossible for [us] to separate them."

<sup>502</sup> Merle W. Wells, "Caleb Lyon's Indian Policy," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 61:4 (1970), pp. 193 – 200. For the creation of the Idaho Territory, see John R. Wunder, "Tampering with the Northwest Frontier: The Accidental Design of the Washington/Idaho Boundary," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 68:1 (1977), pp. 1 – 12.

in 1859.<sup>503</sup> Oregon Governor George Lemuel Woods, who took office in 1866, opined that the “Snake” War had effectively been underway since the so-called “Ward Massacre” of 1854, arguing that the (presumed) role of Eastern Shoshone women in that incident justified his public and repeated calls for the extermination of all “Snake” Indians, regardless of age or gender.<sup>504</sup>

Most of the fighters on the Euro-American side of the “Snake” War were short-term volunteers, even the regulars. With the experienced troops marching off to fight in the U.S. Civil War, locals, often with experience in the wars of the 1850s, were recruited into U.S. Army regiments in the Pacific Northwest to inflict violence (when deemed necessary) on Native communities. Lieutenant John W. Hopkins of the First Oregon Cavalry was sure that with “extra arms and plenty of clothing” one could “raise a good many men among the Emigrators and disgusted miners” to have a “bully fight” with what he called “the Bloody Snakes”—any and all independent Native people found by the Army in the Great Basin. They did fill up the ranks, although some officers complained of soldiers leaving to try their hand at mining (again). Enlisted men wrote to newspapers, under pseudonyms, of how they pined for violence. As a soldier who called himself “Snake Hunter” put it, “If the boys had a chance there would be a fine slaughter of

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<sup>503</sup> Ralph M. Shane, “Early Explorations through Warm Springs Reservation Area,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 51:4 (1950), pp. 273 – 309, esp. pp. 290 – 298.

<sup>504</sup> Donna Clark and Keith Clark, “William McKay’s Journal, 1866-67: Indian Scouts, Part I,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 79:2 (1978), pp. 121 – 171, esp. pp. 128 – 131. The attackers, known among Euro-Americans as the “Winass Band,” may have been Pohogwe Eastern Shoshone, although the sources currently available make a definitive claim unlikely. On George Lemuel Woods, see Simone Smith, “Governor George L. Woods: ‘The Exterminator’ Governor,” in Soo Hwang *et al*, “Northern Paiute History Project Paper Collection 2014” (Eugene: University of Oregon Honors College, 2014), pp. 96 – 118.

Snakes, and that too in a short time.” Many of those who volunteered hoped that they, too, could be a part of something like the Bear River Massacre.<sup>505</sup>

And as in the wars of the 1850s, many of the killers in the 1860s were neither regulars nor volunteers. Decades after the events in question, the pioneer Susan Gregg Walton remembered a murderous raid committed by some members of her 1862 wagon train to Oregon. Particularly, she remembered her father’s rigorous objections to the wanton murder of Native locals (most likely Western Shoshone)—objections which did not, in his case, stem from moral qualms.

Susan Gregg Walton recalled a Mr. Young, whose brother had been wounded in an ambush during a previous sojourn through the same region. Although he had not seen his brother’s attackers, Young was apparently sure they were local, and rallied men to “get up before daylight and go kill every Indian they could find” at a local village.<sup>506</sup>

There were no objections over issues of identity, equivalence, or morality—the notion that these particular Native communities might not be those responsible for a particular attack the previous year was not raised, the idea that a non-fatal wounding should be answered with mass killing was not challenged, and the planned murder of combatants and non-combatants alike was not addressed as such. Rather, Walton’s father argued against Mr. Young on the grounds that there might be a counterattack:

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<sup>505</sup> J[ohn] W. Hopkins to John M. Drake, May 22, 1863, Folder 1, Box 1, John Miller Drake Papers, Mss 80, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR; “Snake Hunter,” “Letter from Fort Hall,” Aug 23 1863, transcribed in James Robbins Jewell, ed., *On Duty in the Pacific Northwest during the Civil War: Correspondence and Reminiscences of the First Oregon Cavalry Regiment*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2018), pp. 71 – 73.

<sup>506</sup> Susan Gregg Walton [Mrs. C. W. Walton], “Wagon Days with Mother Walton,” [1931?], 325 – 326, Vol 7, Folder 7, Box 1, DAR Family Rec. of Wash. Pioneers, Cage 472, Washington State University Special Collections. Walton may have been projecting even this level of surety onto the man proposing mass killing. As John D. Unruh put it in a classic text, “The next Indians emigrants happened to come across were frequently punished for misdeeds they had not committed.” John D. Unruh, Jr., *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840 – 60* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993; orig. 1979), pp. 186 – 189, quotation on p. 187.



There were a number just “raring to go.” This raised trouble among the men, of course. Some could see how Young felt but thought he should have more concern for the [White emigrant] women and children than to run such risks simply for a matter of getting a little revenge. One word brought another until the whole crowd was angry. My father told them they would be responsible for more trouble if they carried on like this[,] for the Indians would likely raise in mass and massacre the whole train; for them to act like men and just go to bed, forget all this foolishness and in the morning they would be glad. But this did not have the desired effect.<sup>507</sup>

Young and a number of other men of the train left in the night to “kill every Indian they find,” and returned

carrying fish poles, fish baskets, moccasins, beads, and in fact, everything they could find, and telling how they had made those Indians run – all that they did not leave dead... I heard my father scolding Tom Potts for hanging a fish-basket in top of his wagon bows right over his head and strapping a fish pole on the outside of his wagon cover and [my father] told him there was not an Indian in fifty miles from there who would not recognize that basket and fish pole, adding that we were sure to be overtaken and would have more trouble. Now, I disliked to have father talk that way to him for he was such a nice boy and a friend to us.<sup>508</sup>

Again, the objections were not to the looting or the killing but to the potential danger that violence and theft brought. And Susan Walton, writing decades later, still seemingly had no sympathy for the Indigenous people who had been killed for the stated reason that some White person had been wounded by some Indian some months earlier. Her

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<sup>507</sup>Walton, “Wagon Days with Mother Walton,” pp. 325 – 326.

<sup>508</sup> Walton, “Wagon Days with Mother Walton,” pp. 325 – 326,

sympathy was for the killers. Looking back, Walton expressed regret that Potts had lost face when her father scolded him for the murders—and no regret that Potts had committed them. He was, in her memory, “such a nice boy”—the killings he committed did not matter.

The train split, and those whom Walton’s family left behind seem to have died in what appears to have been a counterattack a few days later. Walton’s breakaway train, that did not contain those who had killed and looted, was stopped by Native fighters. They inspected the wagons, presumably for plundered Native possessions. Finding none, they let the emigrant pioneers go on without consequence.<sup>509</sup> The plunderers, Walton heard later, were attacked (she presumed by the same force that had stopped her family), and ten of them killed. The killing of some of the pioneers who had raided and pillaged a (likely Western Shoshone) Native village in the night was folded into the half-fictitious narrative of “Massacre Rocks,” a site in Idaho (now a state park) dedicated to Euro-American pioneers killed in 1862. That at least some of the killings appear to have been a reciprocal response to immediate and specific White wanton violence does not, as yet, appear to have been made part of the narrative of “Massacre Rocks.” Alternatively, it is possible that Walton had mistakenly connected the actions of her train to a more

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<sup>509</sup> Cf. Unruh, Jr., *The Plains Across*, p. 187. After discussing Euro-American tendencies to act violently against all Native people for the perceived crimes of one community, Unruh claimed that “Indians who came in peace to trade and were unsuspectingly fired upon were equally likely to attack subsequent trains, also without warning,” but provides little evidence to substantiate this claim—odd, given the high evidentiary confidence implied by his use of “equally.” The note for his assertion refers only to an instance where, following a pioneer attack on his community, the [Northern] Paiute leader Truckee [Wuna Mucca] “persistently refused to exact retribution from those [Euro-Americans] innocent of the initial attack.” Thus the only evidence he cites suggests the opposite of what he claims. *Ibid*, p. 458 n. 160.

notorious incident of violence, and that the men of her train who murdered and pillaged never faced any consequence at all.<sup>510</sup>

“Big” George L. Freeman claimed to have fought in the “Snake” War from 1861 to 1866. Speaking to a Baker City, Oregon interviewer in 1913, he remembered “several encounters with the Indians” wherein he and his fellow soldiers ensured that “several r\_dsk\_ns were made to bit[e] the dust and left unburied.” Their Indian-ness, in his memory, was enough to prove hostile intent, and the livestock pillaged from them was assumed to have “been stolen from emigrant wagon trains.”<sup>511</sup>

Many of Freeman’s anecdotes are hard to track onto other historical and contemporary narratives. He free-associated about killings and hardships without providing much contextual information. However, he was wounded in one of the encounters he described—and the historical records for that battle differed significantly from Freeman’s memory. As Freeman told it to journalist W. W. Stevens:

[We] started out to locate the rascals. About 200 of them... A charge was made and a hot fight ensued for a time, but the renegades beat a hasty retreat and scattered back into the hills. Seventeen dead Indians were left behind and 200

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<sup>510</sup> Violence between emigrants and Native communities in 1860s Idaho Territory is critically understudied. Justin Smith, “The Massacre That Never Happened,” *Idaho State Journal* Feb 7, 2020; Evans Smith McComas, *A Journal of Travel by E. S. McComas, Together with an Introduction by Martin Schmitt* (Portland: Champoeg Press, 1954), pp. 14 – 16; Carol Kammen, “On Doing Local History: When the Past Speaks,” *History News* 54:1 (1999), pp. 3 – 4; Leslie L. Sudweeks, “The Raft River in Idaho History,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 32:3 (1941), pp. 289 – 305. Sudweeks notes that there were efforts from some of Native participants in the attacks grouped under “Massacre Rocks” to parlay under a white flag, which ended when one of the emigrants “unable to restrain his anger,” fired on them—echoing similar events in the Yakima War(s) of the 1850s. See *ibid*, p. 298. See also Donald H. Shannon, *Massacre Rocks and City of Rocks: 1862 Attacks on Emigrant Trains* (Caldwell, ID: Snake Country Publishing, 2008), esp. chap. 7.

<sup>511</sup> W. W. Stevens, “The Old Oregon Trail as Told By the Trailers,” Chap. 6 (George L. Freeman, 1913), Baker County Library digital collection.

head of stock recaptured that had been stolen from emigrant trains. Five government soldiers were killed and six wounded.<sup>512</sup>

The casualty counts for U.S. forces are the only portions of this memory that match with other records of the time. Freeman's commanding officer John M. Drake estimated a little under 70 fighters he presumed to be (Northern) Paiute, who suffered perhaps three casualties before making an orderly retreat. The "stock recaptured" was about 50 "Indian horses." This encounter was at best a draw between Euro-American and Northern Paiute forces, with Euro-Americans seizing Native livestock as plunder in the aftermath.

Whether through distortions in the interview, the transmogrifying effects of memory, or outright lies, W. W. Stevens and George Freeman transformed the inconclusive clash into a victory against raiders. "Indian horses" were turned into "stock stolen from emigrant trains," Northern Paiute fighters were turned into "renegades," and their casualties more than doubled in memory.<sup>513</sup>

John M. Drake's papers suggest that this kind of manipulation of memory was common. Drake, a gold miner and pioneer in California and southern Oregon, was most famous for leading "an Indian campaign in Eastern Oregon in the year 1864," where he kept a diary of his experiences and actions. When he and his daughter Ruth Drake were preparing this diary for publication (unsuccessfully) forty years later, they edited out or altered a few key passages to soften Drake's image in history. Both the original and the

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<sup>512</sup> Stevens, "The Old Oregon Trail as Told by the Trailers." George Freeman's descendants reported that he had also been involved in the Rogue River conflicts—it remains unclear whether this was the case. Pearl Jones, "George Freeman," *Baker City Herald* Apr 24, 2006 (updated Oct 2, 2019).

<sup>513</sup> Michno, *The Deadliest Indian War in the West: The Snake Conflict, 1864 – 1868*, pp. 34 – 38. According to Drake, some of the horses belonged to "friendly Indians," and the rest (which belonged to those they had attacked) were taken by the quartermaster or taken as plunder by the Euro-American soldiers. Captain John M. Drake, "Private Journal," p. 17, Folder 4, Box 1, John Miller Drake Papers.

altered version were retained and eventually donated by Ruth Drake—allowing for an unusual view of what material the Drakes had attempted to alter.<sup>514</sup>

Notably, the Drakes did not soften John M. Drake’s scorn for the volunteers and pioneers who critiqued the regular armed forces in that period, nor his assumptions about the genocidal intent of Native people generally. As he opined in 1864

the Web-foot nation.... have persistently heaped reproach on their own troops while in the protection and defense of their own frontiers; sneering at brass buttons at sight of an officer of the Cavalry on the street. Were it not for the helpless women and children I would rejoice to see the Indians wipe out the Columbia River country one of these days, just to let the people of Portland and Dalles know what slippery ground they stand on. The thing will be done as surely as the troops are withdrawn from this upper country. The different tribes of Indians would confederate under the leadership of some Pi-li-ni [Paulina], and the white settlement from the head of the Columbia to the Dall[e]s would be swept out of existence. Three thousand men and ten millions of dollars would become necessary to subdue the revolt.<sup>515</sup>

It is unclear whether Drake’s vitriol toward pioneers (“the Web-foot nation”) played a role in the difficulties of finding a publisher in 1905. There might be reason to believe that Drake’s repeated assertions that “the citizen volunteers that went out... behaved

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<sup>514</sup> Captain John M. Drake, “Private Journal,” Priscilla K. Knuth, annotator, p. i, Folder 4, Box 1, John Miller Drake Papers; “Accessions,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 45:4 (1944), p. 386. In the John Miller Drake Papers, there is a copy of the original 1864 journal in Folder 5, and both a clean copy of the 1905 edition and a copy annotated by Priscilla K. Knuth noting the differences between the two in Folder 4. Finding Knuth’s annotations to be scrupulously accurate, I have elected to cite that version throughout. For Drake as a gold miner see “John M. Drake Called,” *Oregonian* Dec 14, 1913, p. 10.

<sup>515</sup> Drake, “Private Journal,” Knuth, annotator, pp. 66 – 67.

badly”<sup>516</sup> might not have been the sort of copy that moves books (see Chapters 7 and 9). His opinion of the “different tribes of Indians” is very clear. With or without the perceived leader of the moment (Chief Paulina of the Northern Paiute), Drake believed they would sooner or later attempt to sweep White settlement out of existence. Notably, he also characterized such violence as a “revolt”—a renunciation of subjection rather than a war by a foreign power. Drake viewed the independent Indigenous polities he attacked as always-already subjugated. Like John Minto, Drake had learned from youth on that a Native person was a “savage” and a “wol[f],” dedicated only to “his hunt in the abode of his forefathers” and to his “barbarous orgies.”<sup>517</sup>

Unlike Loren L. Williams (see below), Drake welcomed Indigenous persons he saw as under Euro-American control to his side of the war. A detachment of (presumably mostly Wasco) fighters from the Warm Springs Reservation (whom Drake referred to as “our friendly Indians” in the original 1864 text and “the Indian scouts” in 1905) fought and suffered casualties alongside the Euro-American troops.<sup>518</sup> Just as Native fighters allied with Euro-American forces in the Puget Sound War had worn white swashes on their hats, Drake’s Warm Springs auxiliaries were given special cloth in an attempt to

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<sup>516</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>517</sup> J. M. Drake [age 11], “Composition for Stroudsburg, PA Academy,” 1841, Folder 10, Box 1, John Miller Drake Papers.

<sup>518</sup> Drake, “Private Journal,” Knuth, annotator, p. 15; Jewell, *On Duty in the Pacific Northwest during the Civil War*, p. 89. Some of the “Warm Springs Scouts” were definitely Wascos, along with other ethnies. See George W. Aguilar, Sr., *When the River Ran Wild!: Indian Traditions on the Mid-Columbia and the Warm Springs Reservation* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 2005), pp. 194 – 196, 209 – 211. But there is also evidence that “Wasco” (along with “Warm Springs”) was believed to be one of the few Native identities that might keep one from getting shot by White strangers. Colonel William Thompson, *Reminiscences of a Pioneer* (San Francisco: Alturas Plain Dealer, 1912), p. 52; Carson C. Masiker, “Stock Whitley and Kloshe Nesika Illahee,” *Oregon Native Son* Vol. 2 (Portland: Native Son Publishing, 1901), p. 427. Heroic portrayals of the “Warm Springs Scouts” are an ongoing source of tension within the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs (which now includes descendants of peoples on both sides of the conflicts of the 1850s and 1860s). See Clara Gorman, “Inter-Tribal Dynamics of the Warm Springs and Grand Ronde Reservations: A Historical Legacy of Discrimination, Prejudice, and Settler-Colonialism,” Honor’s Thesis [B.A.], (University of Oregon, 2018), esp. p. 76.

keep his Euro-American troops from shooting at them—“bright red scarfs to be worn by the friendly Indians to distinguish them from the hostiles.”<sup>519</sup> Edmond Clare Fitzhugh had advocated sending hired Native fighters into the more dangerous situations in the Puget Sound in 1856. In the 1860s, Orlando Humason (a race-baiting politician, gold speculator, and volunteer since 1856) similarly suggested “the substitution of Indian risk for white risk.”<sup>520</sup>

And there may have been other Native people with Drake’s force. Drake wrote that the Warm Springs Indian Agent William Logan “brought me an Indian boy for a servant,” a boy that was not mentioned again in his journal. Was this “servant” kept for the duration of the campaign, or only for the evening at Warm Springs proper? Was this boy unfree, like the Native boys kept by Joseph Lane in southern Oregon and Edward Steptoe in southern Washington a decade prior? The record is thus far unclear.<sup>521</sup>

The 1905 change from “friendly Indians” to “Indian scouts” was mirrored by a change from “the Indians” (in 1864) to “the hostile Indians” (in 1905), at least at the

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<sup>519</sup> John W. Hopkins to John M. Drake, March 24, 1864, Folder 6, Box 1, John Miller Drake Papers.

<sup>520</sup> On Orlando Humason as a race-baiting politician, see K. Keith Richards, “Unwelcome Settlers: Black and Mulatto Pioneers,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 84:1 (1983), pp. 29 – 55. On Humason as a speculator, see Verne Bright, “Blue Mountain Eldorados: Auburn, 1861,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 62:3 (1961), pp. 213 – 236; Lewis A. McArthur, “Reminiscences of John Y. Todd,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 30:1 (1929), pp. 70 – 73; T. C. Elliott, “The Dalles-Celilo Portage; Its History and Influence,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 16:2 (1915), pp. 133 – 174. On Humason as a volunteer, see J. W. Reese, “OMV’s Fort Henrietta: On Winter Duty, 1855 – 1856,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 66:2 (1965), pp. 132 – 160. Kimi Lerner, “A History of Racism and Prejudice: The Untold Story of the Northern Paiute,” in Soo Hwang *et al*, “Northern Paiute History Project Paper Collection 2014” (Eugene: University of Oregon Honors College, 2014), pp. 31 – 60, quotation on p. 43.

<sup>521</sup> Drake, “Private Journal,” Knuth, annotator, p. 7; Ron McFarland, “Frontier Soldier,” *Columbia* 31:2 (2017), pp. 20 – 27. According to racism-inflected memories of the amateur historian Lulu Donnell Crandall, William Logan had a Black woman, remembered as a “servant” who ran away, in his household, along with a Black child purportedly raised as a ward. Their relative status and freedom in the Logan household is murky. See Lulu Crandall, “Autobiography,” n.p. n.d., Folder 5, Box 1, Cage 249, Lulu Donnell Crandall Papers, Washington State University Libraries Special Collections, Pullman, WA.

beginning of certain passages.<sup>522</sup> This change seems to have been part of Drake's broader reappraisal of his Native allies. In 1865 he wrote

the first little skirmish will flatten them [the Warm Springs fighters] out; they will wilt like a leaf and stampede for the Warm Springs like a herd of deer. I am afraid they are going to give us trouble in some way. They will become unmanageable and uncontrollable. As scouts they might make themselves very useful if they can muster energy to get themselves actively at work.... I doubt very much if they will succeed in finding any Indian encampment. These Snake Indians are entirely incompatible, so far as white men are concerned.

In 1905, this was changed to

I fear they are going to gain us some trouble in some way. They are likely to become unmanageable. As scouts they may make themselves useful if they can muster energy enough to get themselves at work.... I doubt very much whether they find any Indian camp.<sup>523</sup>

Looking back, Drake remained a racist but blotted out his assumptions of Native cowardice and lessened (or perhaps simplified) his fear of his allies. The Drakes in 1905 also erased his 1864 assertion that the Native ethnies he was making war on were "entirely incompatible" with "white men."

The Drakes also attempted to soften the section of the journal dealing with the capture of an unnamed Native woman and her child. Both versions mentioned (without exact explanation) that her captors "didn't show her much leniency, handling her pretty roughly and taking her child away from her." They also stripped her of at least some of

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<sup>522</sup> Drake, "Private Journal," Knuth, annotator, p. 16.

<sup>523</sup> Drake, "Private Journal," Knuth, annotator, p. 23.



her clothing, with Drake himself taking possession of “a fine robe made of the skins of the long-tailed deer.”<sup>524</sup> And with only minor variations, both the 1864 and 1905 versions argued that ripping their captive’s child from them was necessary for the purposes of interrogation. However, the updated version added details (remembered or invented) to attenuate the story:

[1864 original] She clung with the utmost tenacity to her child; It seemed cruel to take the little thing away from her forcibly, but she was so stubborn that it could not be avoided if we wanted to get her to camp, which I was anxious to do for the purpose of questioning her. After reaching camp, she softened down very much and was somewhat communicative, but I place no confidence in her stories.

[1905 edited version] She clung with great tenacity to the child. It was a cruel thing to take the little creature away from her forcibly, but she was so stubborn that nothing else could be done if wanted to get her to camp, which I was anxious to do in order to extract some information from her if possible. After reaching camp, she softened down very much and became somewhat communicative, under the stimulus of a chunk of meat and some bread. I place no confidence in her stories.<sup>525</sup>

The new version made Williams more human, and the seizure of the captive Native woman’s child arguably less grievous. “[H]er child” shifting to “the child” was a small shift, subtly neutralizing the woman’s right to her baby. The phrase “little thing” was commonly used as a term of endearment for children among Euro-Americans; the change

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<sup>524</sup> *Ibid*, p. 28. Drake mentioned only the scouts from Warm Springs in connection the “rough treatment” of the captive. It is unclear whether this is because they were the only fighters who partook in this “rough treatment,” or whether this is because theirs was the only gendered violence Drake felt moved to write down.

<sup>525</sup> Drake, “Private Journal,” Knuth, annotator, p. 28.

to “little creature” shifted to language that seems to have been more commonly used for animals and Indians in the 1900s.<sup>526</sup>

The woman managed to escape two days later, fleeing with her child into the night in the midst of a June snowstorm. In both versions, Drake claimed to have been on the verge of releasing her anyway. But he added even more cost-free grace in the 1905 version:

[1864 original] The Snake sq\_\_w captured a few days ago made her escape last night, in the storm, taking her child with her. I am glad of it and would have released her to day at any rate. I am determined not to allow any more sq\_\_ws to be brought into camp.

[1905 edited version] The sq\_\_w captured a few days ago made her escape last night, in the storm, taking her child with her. I am glad she is gone and would have released her to day at any rate. And meant to give back the robe that was taken from her. That is the last sq\_\_w that shall be brought into camp.<sup>527</sup>

A cynical reader might be skeptical of Drake’s 1905 claim that he had meant to give back the plundered robe, which might have kept this woman and her child warm as she fled from the “pretty rough” treatment of his company into the stormy night.<sup>528</sup> Northern

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<sup>526</sup> L. T. Meade [Elizabeth Thomasina Meade Smith], *Deb and the Duchess: A Story for Boys and Girls* (New York: W. L. Allison, 189?), p. 31 [“little thing,” for a White child], p. 379 [“little creature,” for an Indian child]; Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, *Loveliness: A Story* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1900), p. 27 [“little sickly thing” for a White child], p. 3 [“little creature” for a dog]; Mary Hazelton Wade, *Our Little Brown Cousin* (Boston: L. C. Page, 1901), p. 26 [“little thing” referring to a potentially human infant], p. 27 [“little creature” once it has been identified as an “orang-outang”]; Pansy [Mrs. G. R. Alden], *Mag & Margaret: A Story for Girls* (Boston: Lothrop Publishing Company, 1901), p. 50 [“little thing” referring to a delicate child], p. 140 [“little creature” when the child is being rendered metaphorically as a mouse]. My assertion of the distinction between “little thing”/ “little creature” is suggestive rather than exhaustive—quantitative linguistic study of the two phrases in the early 1900s is beyond this work.

<sup>527</sup> Drake, “Private Journal,” Knuth, annotator, p. 29; Donald H. Clark, “Remember the Winter of \_\_\_\_\_? Weather and Pioneers,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 54:2 (1953), pp. 140 – 148, esp. p. 145.

<sup>528</sup> Drake specifically attributed the harsh treatment of the captive woman and child to the Warm Springs scouts who accompanied his command—and this may well have been the case. But it may also have been a

Paiute oral histories recall bands of settlers and soldiers roving and raping in the 1860s. It is unclear if this is what Drake meant by “rough” treatment. But even if his company didn’t, others did.<sup>529</sup>

Drake and other career military officials complained about the volunteers—what they called “the enterprising part of [their] command”—both for their inconstancy and their incompetence. “[Nathan] Olney,” Drake moaned in a letter about volunteer commanders, “pays no attention to and will not obey his orders.”<sup>530</sup> Another regular officer, Reuben F. Maury, warned that in the countryside “[t]he citizens behaved badly... [i]ndependent bodies are always dangerous to the success of military movements.”<sup>531</sup> And as in the 1850s, the objections to the “bad behavior” of the volunteers was predicated on pragmatism. Maury was perfectly willing to lynch Native people without noticeable evidence (see Chapter 5), but strove for domination rather than destruction. Like John E. Wool in the 1850s, Maury argued in 1864 for interning all of the remaining free Native people in the Northwest:

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narrative choice, deliberately attributing the suspect treatment of captives exclusively to his Native auxiliaries rather than his Euro-American troops. Some records suggest that it was Warm Springs scouts who attempted to moderate the Euro-American regulars’ behavior, worried that attacks on non-combatants during the war would spur reciprocal violence against those at Warm Springs. See Clark and Clark, “William McKay’s Journal, 1866-67: Indian Scouts, Part I, esp. p. 130. I have thus consigned this assertion from Drake’s diary to the notes. Others suggest that the Warm Springs fighters, like many of the Euro-American volunteers “went out there to kill babies, old people, women.” Quotation from Myra Johnson-Orange, 2014, quoted in Lerner, “A History of Racism and Prejudice, p. 44. Both reticence and determination in the killing of non-combatants may well be true, reflecting different periods of the war(s).<sup>529</sup> Rosemary Stremmlau, “Rape Narratives on the Northern Paiute Frontier: Sarah Winnemucca, Sexual Sovereignty, and Economic Autonomy, 1844 – 1891,” *Portraits of Women in the American West*, ed. Dee Garceau-Hagen (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 37 – 62; Frederick E. Hoxie, *This Indian Country: American Indian Political Activists and the Place They Made* (New York: Penguin, 2012), chap. 4; Jennifer Bailey, “Voicing Oppositional Conformity: Sarah Winnemucca and the Politics of Rape, Colonialism, and ‘Citizenship’: 1870 – 1890,” Master’s thesis, (Portland State University, 2012), esp. ch. 3.

<sup>530</sup> Drake, “Private Journal,” Knuth, annotator, p. 45. As in the wars of the 1850s, officers in the 1860s once again complained about men cycling back and forth between soldiering and prospecting for gold. See Donna L. Sinclair, *Our Manifest Destiny Bids Fair for Fulfillment: An Historical Overview of Vancouver Barracks, 1846 – 1898, with suggestions for future research* (Vancouver, Wash: Center for Columbia River History and the National Park Service, 2004), p. 44.

<sup>531</sup> R. F. Maury to John M. Drake, April 23, 1864, Folder 6, Box 1, John Miller Drake Papers.

It is perfectly practicable and desirable to the Government and Indians to collect and settle all these roving tribe[s].... Considerations of Humanity and economy prompt immediate steps to remedy both evils—ext[ermination] and the cost of fitting out expeditions every summer.<sup>532</sup>

Economic concerns were at least as important as humanitarian ones, and the notion that the government could or should try to stop exterminatory attempts Maury appears not to have dwelt upon. This was common. In 1863, Captain John Mullan included very similar advice for the government in his report on the just-built military road between Fort Walla Walla in Washington Territory and Fort Benton in what was about to be Montana Territory. “[S]warms of miners and emigrants... must pass here year after year,” he proclaimed:

This... is to be regretted; but I can only regard it as the inevitable result of opening and settling the country. I have seen enough of Indians to convince me of this fact, that they can never exist in contact with the whites; and their only salvation is to be removed far, far from their presence. But they have been removed so often that there seems now no place left for their further migration; the waves of civilization have invaded their homes from both oceans, driving them year after year towards the Rocky Mountains; and now that we propose to invade these mountain solitudes, to wrest from them their hidden wealth, where under heavens can the Indians go? And may we not expect to see these people make one desperate struggle in the fastnesses of the Rocky Mountains for the maintenance of their last homes and the preservation of their lives. It is a matter that but too strongly commends itself to the early and considerate attention of the

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<sup>532</sup> Col R. F. Maury to John W. Hopkins, n.d. but likely April 1864, *ibid.*

general government. The Indian is destined to disappear before the white man, and the only question is, how it may be best done, and his disappearance from our midst tempered with those elements calculated to produce to himself the least amount of suffering, and to us the least amount of cost.<sup>533</sup>

Maury and Mullan's stance (and that of John E. Wool, in the previous decade) can be considered humane only when compared to many of the volunteers and civilians. In 1865, Euro-American miners along Dixie Creek, in eastern Oregon, would call out "Indians or White Men?" if they heard someone in the dark of night. The former could expect gunfire without any further questions. Recent arrivals acclimated quickly to this murderous norm.<sup>534</sup> Small wonder that Maury saw the pursuit of extermination as unstoppable, and Mullan predicted it would reach into every corner of the mountains.

For many participants, the "Snake" War was simply another chapter in the continuing battle for White supremacy in the Pacific Northwest. This was certainly the case for Nathan Olney, longtime trader and Indian Agent celebrated as an "Indian fighter" by his Euro-American contemporaries and their immediate descendants. He fought as a volunteer officer in the Cayuse War in 1848.<sup>535</sup> He was part of Granville O. Haller's killing spree through what would become the Idaho Territory following the attack on the Ward wagon train in 1854 (see Chapter IV), at one point taking an arrow to

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<sup>533</sup> Capt. John Mullan, *Report on the Construction of a Military Road from Fort Walla-Walla to Fort Benton* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1863), 52. The period after "preservation of their lives" is retained from the original text. See also W[illiam] J. Trimble, "American and British Treatment of the Indians in the Pacific Northwest," *Washington Historical Quarterly* 5:1 (1914), pp. 32 – 54.

<sup>534</sup> Ralph Fisk, "Ralph Fisk Relates Some Pioneer History: Came to Canyon [w]ith Father in 1864," *Blue Mountain Eagle* March 17, 1922; Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, *Life Among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims*, ed. Mrs. Horace [Mary Tyler Peabody] Mann (Boston: Cupples, Upham, + Co, 1883), p. 177.

<sup>535</sup> *Oregon Sentinel*, Sept 17, 1879

the head.<sup>536</sup> He helped to spur the expansion of the Yakima War in October of 1855, using his role as an Indian Agent and his supposed expertise on Native issues to help convince Governor George Curry of Oregon that there was already a wide alliance of Native people that had “either commenced open hostilities upon the whites, or are concentrating their forces for that purpose”:

I am doing all in my power to check the gathering storm, but I fear nothing but a large military force will do any good towards keeping them in check. The regular force now in this country, I do not consider sufficient for the protection of the settlers, and the chastisement of the Indians.

One thousand volunteers should be raised immediately and sent into this part of Oregon and Washington Territories. Delay is ruinous. Decisive steps must immediately be taken. They must be humbled, and in all conscience send a force that can do it effectively and without delay. These Indians must be taught our power.<sup>537</sup>

Pushing for “chastisement” as well as protection, Nathan Olney was one of many voices pushing for war on “the Indians” in general that year. He was also one of many to take part in the murder and dismemberment of Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox.<sup>538</sup>

Nathan Olney was thus celebrated with a parade when he raised a unit of volunteers in The Dalles to join in the “Snake” War. One keynote speaker praised Olney

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<sup>536</sup>On 1854, see George N. Belknap, “Oregon Miscellany,” *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 57:2 (1963), pp. 191 – 200, esp. 199 – 200; Benjamin Franklin Dowell to Nathan Olney, Feb 21, 1865, Folder 1, Box 1, Benjamin Franklin Dowell Papers, Ax 031, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR.

<sup>537</sup> Nathan Olney to George Curry, Oct 12, 1855, transcribed in Roscoe Sheller, *The Name Was Olney* (Astoria, OR: S Dot S Publishing, 1993), pp. 79 – 80. Although Sheller eschews footnotes and engages in some troubling tropes, he does transcribe a few locally and privately held primary sources verbatim.

<sup>538</sup> Donald L. Cutler, *“Hang Them All”: George Wright and the Plateau Indian War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 77 – 81.

and his men and proclaimed that the regimental flag could not and would not be soiled, for “the more the flag was drenched in the blood of the foe, the cleaner and the whiter it would be.”<sup>539</sup> Olney’s expedition failed to be the bloodbath his fellow White Oregonians had called for. This campaign, as was perhaps typical for “Snake” War campaigns, was left off of later plaques honoring Olney’s military career. But the speaker was right; Nathan Olney fought for White supremacy in the Pacific Northwest until his death in 1866.<sup>540</sup> And there were others like him, volunteer veterans of the 1850s who during the Civil War rose again to attack Native polities.

Loren L. Williams’s career as a serial killer of Native people spanned a quarter century, from at least 1851 (see Chapter II) to the mid-1870s. On October 5 of 1865, Loren L. Williams was serving as a lieutenant in the U.S. 1<sup>st</sup> Oregon Infantry, a federal force made up of local volunteers, raised in 1864 to replace the regulars who had been sent east to fight in the U.S. Civil War. Camped in southeastern Oregon a few days northwest of Malheur Lake, Williams wrote out what he considered to be one of the most noteworthy official orders of his military career. He read the orders to his men, then saved a copy for posterity, eventually attaching it to the six-volume journal-cum-autobiography he would produce about a decade later. As he proclaimed to his troops:

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<sup>539</sup> Carson C. Masiker, “Reminiscences [sic] Early Settlers on Fifteen Mile Creek,” 1911, p. 4 (emphasis in the original), Folder 23, Box 4, Cage 249, Lulu Donnell Crandall Papers. It is unclear when (or how often) Olney raised his unit of volunteers. Crandall implied this took place in 1864, records from the state suggest instead the date of July 23, 1863. See Cyrus A. Reed, “Adjutant’s Report for 1868,” p. 20, located in *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Oregon* (Salem, OR: William A. McPherson, State Printer, 1870).

<sup>540</sup> “Captain Nathan Olney,” Memorial Plaque, Fort Simcoe Historical State Park, 1956; Sidney Teiser, “Cyrus Olney, Associate Justice of Oregon Territory Supreme Court,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 64:4 (1963), pp. 308 – 322, esp. p. 317; Ronald Todd, “Reader’s Scrapbook,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 47:3 (1956), pp. 95 – 96. It is possible that Olney’s failure to achieve the bloodshed hoped for in the “Snake” War may also have played a role; as the pioneer Carson C. Masiker put it, “Olney seemed to have lost his grip as an Indian fighter and nothing resulted from all this flourishing of trumpets.” See Masiker, “Reminiscences [sic] Early Settlers on Fifteen Mile Creek,” p. 4.

No friendly Indians exist within the jurisdiction of this command.... They will therefore wherever found be pursued and punished as [hostile], regardless of any profession of friendship they may make, or any certificates of good character they may hold from Indian Agents, or other persons....

The experience of the last four years, has taught us that paper treaties are productive of no permanent good, they are only made to be broken by the Indians the first opportunity.... a more permanent treaty than a paper one is required to be made for the better protection of our frontiers, and this expedition is expected to make the desired treaty within its jurisdiction and it is not to be made by Agents, Missionaries and Indian sympathizers, on paper and parchment, with pen, ink and pencil, but is to be made by soldiers and made on the mountains and plains and in the Valley of Harney Lake, Malheur and Silvies River, and with the musket and Bayonet and Carbine and Saber.<sup>541</sup>

Williams told his men to attempt broad-based genocide. He rejected the very notion of Native allies or neutrals, and called for killing any and all “Indians” his men found. Mass murder, he proclaimed, was the “more permanent treaty than a paper one” required. And he ordered his officers to pursue genocide to the end, even joking (?) that they should commit cannibalism, if necessary, to do so. Each officer, he proclaimed, must

exhaust[t] every means in his power [to] overtake and punish [the Indians] as they deserve, even subsisting themselves and their men upon wild game, horseflesh, and *dead Indians*.... depredations and cruelties must cease and treaties be

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<sup>541</sup> Loren L. Williams, “General Orders No 7: Troops to Be Ready to Pursue Hostile Indians +c +c +c,” Camp Wright Ogn Oct 5, 1865, pasted between pages 85 ½ and 86, Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 3, Graff 4683, Newberry Library Special Collections, Chicago, IL. Other military men of the period also killed despite “certificates of good character.” See Ari Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling over the Memory of Sand Creek* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), esp. pp. 35 – 36.



respected, or the more permanent treaty will soon be closed by the extermination of their entire warlike tribes.<sup>542</sup>

This was not one-off; Williams had long believed in a policy of exterminatory warfare. Accepting the surrender of Native men, he wrote elsewhere, was part of a “mistaken policy of extending too much leniency to a barbarous digger Indian.”<sup>543</sup> Williams killed Native people for at least twenty-five years, but he never achieved the scale of massacre that he hoped for (and ordered his men to pursue). The confirmed killings he wrote about were individual, typically surprise attacks on unaware or outnumbered Native men. Sometimes, Williams killed as an officer in the U.S. Army. During the campaign where he gave his order to exterminate, Williams’s men achieved only one confirmed kill. They ambushed a fisherman, gunning him down in cold blood and then seizing his fish.<sup>544</sup> Sometimes, Williams killed as a civilian. One of the last primary sources he stuck into his autobiography was a letter describing his trip through the Great Plains in 1875, where he “met no Indians who were at open war with the whites. Yet had the satisfaction of killing [a] couple”—one man for chasing a bison too near to where Williams was camping, the other man “on suspicion” because he looked like he might be thinking about stealing Williams’s horse.<sup>545</sup> And sometimes Williams killed as a volunteer, shooting down an unknown number of Native people during the invasions of the Port Orford region in 1851 – 1852 (see Chapter II).

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<sup>542</sup> Williams, “General Orders No 7: Troops to Be Ready to Pursue Hostile Indians,” (emphasis mine).

<sup>543</sup> Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 3, page 60 ½. Based on the overall tone of his journal, his use of the term (and, typically, slur) “digger” was meant to encompass nearly all Native people in the far West.

<sup>544</sup> Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 3, page 83 ½. Such killings were standard practice. Capt. George B. Currey killed at least four Native fishermen (probably Northern Paiute) along the Malheur River the previous summer, in 1864. Jewell, *On Duty in the Pacific Northwest during the Civil War*, p. 92.

<sup>545</sup> Loren L. Williams to Nephew, July 22, 1876, Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 4, attached to frontispiece. “@” changed to “[a]” for clarity, although it is possible Williams meant something specific by his occasional deployment of “@” in his writing.

Williams was bald in his call for mass extermination, his disgust at civilian treaty-makers, and his jokes (?) about cannibalism. But his October 1865 General Order hid as well as revealed. Williams was writing from a position of weakness, not strength: he was resting his men after losing a pitched battle that had begun with a failed attempt at killing an adolescent boy and his caretaker (see below). Williams's declaration that there were "no friendly Indians" nearby was based in an abhorrent moral philosophy, not objective experience—if nothing else, there were other (more successful) Army contingents in southern and eastern Oregon, like John M. Drake's, that relied on Native fighters as scouts and auxiliaries. As for the "treaties [that must] be respected," most of the Northern Paiute polities Williams and his men were trying and failing to exterminate had not signed any treaties—not that Williams distinguished much between different Indian peoples.

Loren L. Williams's most famous act looked very different in his reports than it did in his journal. The primary incident for which Williams has been known is what sometimes called the Silvies River Battle, or Conflict, or Encounter, a story that has remained more or less unchanged in most histories, from Frances Fuller Victor and Hubert Howe Bancroft's *History of Oregon Vol. II* in the 1888 through to Gregory Michno's *Deadliest Indian War in the West* in 2007. The official story, in brief, was that Williams and his troops were patrolling on foot for "Snake Indians" in southeast Oregon near Malheur Lake, spotted two Native men, and pursued them. However, before Williams and his troops could catch the two, other Native people with horses and guns arrived. Williams and his men ended up conducting a slow hours-long retreat under fire, killing fifteen of their pursuers while suffering only two casualties and no fatalities of

their own—what Victor and Bancroft called “the best fighting of the season under the greatest difficulties.” The story of this retreat was taken uncritically from Williams’s letter to his commanding officer, and repeated and repeated since.<sup>546</sup>

In the more detailed account in Williams’s journal, certain troubling aspects of the story are clearer. The “two Indian men” were, in fact, a man and a boy, probably Northern Paiute people. As Williams put it:

[t]he men were eager for [a] chase as this was the first sight we had had of a hostile Snake Indian, the most dreaded of all the Western Tribes.... We soon found ourselves gaining upon the Indians, and not long afterwards observed that one of them was a boy who appeared to be unable to make as fast progress as his larger companion. This was encouraging to the men and a greater effort on our part was made!<sup>547</sup>

Before Williams and his men could run down and attack the boy and his caretaker, “two Indian horsemen came out of the swamp” and rescued them, pulling them onto horseback and whisking them away. Assuming that was the end of the matter, Williams called for a short rest, only to find more Native cavalry riding up on his position and harrying his forces—first (by his estimation) 14 horsemen, then 40. Williams and his men were encircled and driven off.

The (presumably) Northern Paiute fighters never closed for battle, instead taking potshots from the edge of firing range while keeping up a steady war cry. Williams assumed that this was because of the doughty resilience of his men, and there might have

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<sup>546</sup> Frances Fuller Victor [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Oregon, Volume 2*, Ed. Matthew P. Deady [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888), p. 514; Michno, *The Deadliest Indian War in the West*, chap. 12.

<sup>547</sup> Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 3, p. 71 ½.

been some truth in his assertion that the Native fighters preferred to shoot only when they could dodge return fire, and then “glide away to... watch for another or more favorable opportunity.” The Native fighters may well have valued their own lives more than the deaths of hapless Euro-American volunteers. Or they may have simply been achieving their goal of driving the U.S. Army away for the present, without needing to inflict casualties.<sup>548</sup>

Williams’s counts of the number of casualties his men inflicted appear to be a series of exaggerations. To historians after the fact, he claimed they had killed fifteen Native fighters. This was an inflation of his estimate in his journal, of ten casualties. But both numbers were likely incorrect—the guesses of men whose pride and persons had been wounded in an hours-long retreat. Unlike most other clashes in his journal, Williams gave no account of how or by what means the casualties he claimed had been inflicted. His men had fired 300 shots, and felt sure they had killed at least ten people, and wounded many more. But they had no proof. And Williams throughout his journal had a habit of presuming himself particularly effective at killing when there had been no Euro-American to check his facts or his math.<sup>549</sup>

Beyond Williams, Euro-Americans in the Pacific Northwest often claimed to be especially deadly in retreat. While fleeing from the band of Native fishers his men had attacked in January 1848 (see Chapter II), William Stillwell claimed to have killed an uncountable several of his pursuers, each shot being lethal. “[M]y gun was to be respected,” he wrote, “and whenever it spoke, there was another good Indian in the land

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<sup>548</sup> Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 3, pp. 71 ½.

<sup>549</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 70 ½, 78 – 78 ½. For Williams’s earlier assertions of lethality in retreat (without evidence), see especially Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 1, p. 75 [“I was killing some of the Indians. I knew that I was striking down at least one at every blow”].

of ‘The Happy Hunting Ground.’”<sup>550</sup> Euro-American volunteers in the Rogue River War were nearly always “certain they killed some” whenever they retreated.<sup>551</sup> Edward Steptoe, reporting on his famed and disorganized 1858 retreat (see Chapters 3 and 10), declared that that where the two senior-most officers were killed “twelve dead Indians were counted” and “[m]any others were seen to fall.” Who did the counting was unclear—after all, the Euro-American soldiers had fled.<sup>552</sup> Williams’s claims to a heroic and deadly retreat were part of a long tradition of military fantasy, likely imagined lethality as a salve for punctured pride.

Noting the difficulties he and other companies fighting the “Snake” War had in finding the Native people they were hunting—and carefully omitting his recent experience finding and running away from a Native force—Loren L. Williams in 1865 suggested that the end of the Civil War would enable the import of technologies of racial violence from the South:

[t]o relieve the Troops in the field from great embarrassment, and to insure the extermination or capture of the last remnant of the hostile tribes of Oregon during the summer of 1866, I would most earnestly recommend that Bloodhounds from the Southern States, be brought to the Country, and employed to search out the Savages in their mountain fastnesses.<sup>553</sup>

Williams’s suggestion was in a way an evolution of Isaac Stevens’s 1854 hopes for riflemen in snowshoes—a yearning for some tool to overcome Native fighters’ superior

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<sup>550</sup> William D. Stillwell to Conrad C. Walker, Jan 21, 1915, Folder 20, Box 1, Military Collection, Mss 1514, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>551</sup> Harvey Robbins, “Journal of Rogue River War, 1855,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 34:4 (1933), pp. 345 – 358, quotation on p. 353.

<sup>552</sup> T. C. Elliott, “Steptoe Butte and Steptoe Battle-Field,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 18:4 (1927), pp. 243 – 253.

<sup>553</sup> Loren L. Williams to “Cmndg Officer, Dept of Columbia, Ft Vancouver,” Nov 13, 1865 (emphasis in the original), found between pages 94 ½ and 95, Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 3.

knowledge of the terrain and environment. There is no record that his suggestion was acted upon—that the dogs trained to hunt escaping enslaved persons were redeployed to the Northwest to hunt Native people. But the end of the Civil War did shift the responsibilities for the ongoing “Snake” War back onto the regular troops. By most accounts, they too pursued exterminatory violence, with little quarter given to those Native people they strove to make “*permanently* friendly”—to kill, in the parlance of the time. Their complaints about the violence of gold miners and others were often about efficacy rather than morality. As one officer complained in 1864, “We did not get any indians during our expedition up the Owyhee—cause: a party of miners got the start of us and Scared them off.”<sup>554</sup> As in Wright’s campaigns of the 1850s, the regulars were (occasionally) more effective than the volunteers, but about as brutal—still taking scalps, still killing children, and still shooting Native leaders when they “tried to escape.”<sup>555</sup>

Williams and his men would have committed a war crime like the Bear River Massacre if they could have. They mostly failed in their attempts at genocide, outwitted or outfought by the Native peoples they were trying to kill. But incompetence should not be mistaken for morality. Williams murdered when he could, and still dreamed of mass killings when he couldn’t.

The “Snake” War attracted less attention—and far less controversy—than the Pacific Northwest wars of the 1850s. Fought mostly by local volunteers hired as regulars on the federal payroll, the killings attempted and sometimes perpetrated in the “Snake” War did not attract the same clashes over compensation as the volunteer forays of the

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<sup>554</sup> F. B. White to John M. Drake, Sept 19, 1864, Folder 1, Box 1, John Miller Drake Papers.

<sup>555</sup> Michno, *The Deadliest Indian War in the West*, chap. 13.

1850s. Although there were occasional frictions about violence seen as unhelpfully wanton by some military figures, these frictions did not endanger anyone's pay or posterity significantly. Coming after the wars that were seen by pioneer historians as essential to the origins of Oregon or Washington, the "Snake" War did not need the same level of attention, veneration, or equivocation from those invested in forging a mythic past.<sup>556</sup> Euro-American media did not durably latch onto any singular narratives from the general war the way they did in covering the Modoc or Nez Perce Wars of the 1870s. Perhaps most critically, the U.S. Civil War of 1861 – 1865 loomed (and looms) so large in the American historical imagination that much of the "Snake" War is nearly invisible in its shadow.<sup>557</sup>

Although the American conquest of Native land and war on Native independence continued for decades in the Pacific Northwest (and much of the rest of the country), pioneer history writers in the region tended to focus on the "Indian war(s)" of the 1850s. In large part, this was because those wars punctuated the origin stories of Oregon and Washington—how residents of both would distinguish "pioneers" from later settlers. Posterity and profit for volunteers was still at stake for the wars of the 1850s. And the infamies of those wars—particularly a few famous signature acts of horror—presented a

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<sup>556</sup> There was a brief flurry of interest in the "Snake" War in the 1900s. See Frances Fuller Victor, "The First Oregon Cavalry," *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 3:2 (1902), pp. 123 – 163; Jewell, *On Duty in the Pacific Northwest during the Civil War*, pp. xv – xx; "Veterans Association First Oregon Cavalry and Infantry Volunteers, Roster 1907," Folder 7, Box 42, Associations Collection, Mss 1511, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections.

<sup>557</sup> Stacey L. Smith, "Oregon's Civil War: The Troubled Legacy of Emancipation in the Pacific Northwest," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 115:2 (2014), pp. 154 – 173; McArthur, *The Enemy Never Came*. Despite focusing much of his book on the "volunteer soldiers who battled Native American renegades" [back cover] and vigilante mobs that "exercised self help" by going "out and—right or wrong—kill(ing) the Indians they felt had it coming" [p. 133, n. 32], Scott McArthur titled his book reflecting the perceived lack of a Confederate enemy rather than the continuing presence of Native people whom White society made war on. In this as in so many other aspects of his book, McArthur mirrors the focus as well as the racism of many of the sources he uncritically draws upon.

stumbling block for simplistic heroic histories, which different would-be historians reckoned with in disparate ways.



CHAPTER VIII: “EXCUSE, IF NOT JUSTIFY, THE HORRIBLE FACTS OF  
HISTORY”: SETTLER COLONIAL SIN EATERS AND THE  
ISOLATION OF ATROCITY

Captain Thomas Jefferson Cram, a talented engineer and mediocre map-maker, became a surveyor in more ways than he bargained for. After years spent mapping the Pacific coastline of lands claimed by the United States, in June of 1855 Cram was sent to complete a topographical memoir of the far West. By the time he submitted it, in March 1858, his report had also become an ad hoc investigation into the origins of the war(s) of the Pacific Northwest over those years. Drawing from interviews with other army officers (and perhaps guided by his patron, General John E. Wool), Cram found credible ways to pin the errors and expenses of the war on political leaders like Isaac I. Stevens and the “self-constituted volunteer service,” rendering the U.S. Army blameless.<sup>558</sup> He disparaged volunteers, and had a particular scorn for gold miners—among whom there were “some well-disposed persons,” but “many of the most unprincipled and ungovernable white men from all countries.”<sup>559</sup> He blamed miners particularly in his discussion of the onset of the Yakima War:

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<sup>558</sup> Thomas J. Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram, on Territories of Oregon and Washington*, H.R. Exec. Doc. No. 114, 35th Cong., 2nd Sess. (1859), pp. 2 – 3; Donald L. Cutler, “Hang Them All”: *George Wright and the Plateau Indian War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 73 – 77. For Cram’s skills as technologist and setbacks as a map-maker, see Judkin Browning and Timothy Silver, “Nature and Human Nature: Environmental Influences on the Union’s Failed Peninsula Campaign, 1862,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 8:3 (2018), pp. 388 – 415; Earl B. McElfresh, “Make Straight His Path: Mapmaking in the Civil War,” *Civil War Times* 46:4 (June 2007), pp. 36 – 43; John W. Larson, *Those Army Engineers: A History of the Chicago District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* (Chicago: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District, 1979), pp. 49 – 53; T[homas] J. Cram, “Decay and Preservation of Timber,” *Journal of the Franklin Institute* 96:3 (1873), pp. 177 – 184. Cram also argued that a Northwest Passage could be created by canalization, an implausibility which required a creative and ambitious reading of topographical surveys of the time. See Thomas J. Cram, *Memoir Upon the Northern Inter-Oceanic Route of Commercial Transit, between the Tide Water of Puget Sound of the Pacific, and, Tide Water on the St. Lawrence Gulf of the Atlantic Ocean* (Detroit: Detroit Board of Trade/Detroit Daily Post, 1869?).

<sup>559</sup> Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram*, p. 40.

Hundreds of whites went flocking to the auriferous district [near Fort Colville]... and as the whites passed, some of them committed excess and outrages of the grossest kinds upon the hitherto unoffending Indians of the very tribes the proceedings of the council [led by I. I. Stevens] had so much and so recently disturbed. The bare recital of some of the crimes committed by these Anglo-Saxon devils, in human shape, is sufficient to cause the blood of every virtuous man, whether of red or white skin, to boil with deep indignation. They were not satisfied with stealing the horses and cattle of the Indians, but they claimed the privilege of taking and ravishing Indian women and maidens *ad libitum*. What wonder, then, that the Indians who had been so grossly outraged should have retaliated, as they did, by killing some half dozen of these miscreants?<sup>560</sup>

Throughout, Cram praised those whom he perceived as part of the regular armed forces, and disparaged the more roguish elements of the volunteers. The southern Oregon exploratory killings by Silas Casey in 1851 he framed as a “smart successful conflict”; Joseph Lane in 1853 was a “gallant general” of “sound judgement” (see Chapter II).<sup>561</sup> But he denounced the “notorious Ben Wright” for having engaged in “infernal acts of cruelty”—that is, his well-known acts of rape and murder—and suggested Wright’s violent death was “just retribution for his own treachery.”<sup>562</sup> Cram similarly disparaged Lamerick, Lupton, and others for having started the wars of Oregon, accusations accurate

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<sup>560</sup>Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram*, p. 86. The historian Kent D. Richards described this part of Cram’s report as “pure fabrication.” Richards provided no evidence as to why he thought the assertion that the gold miners had attempted rape was a “fabrication”; the only citation in the section is to Cram. Kent D. Richards, *Isaac I. Stevens: Young Man in a Hurry* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1979), p. 336. Selective skepticism and credulity is a hallmark of Richards’s biography.

<sup>561</sup>Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram*, pp. 34, 43.

<sup>562</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 43, 40, 43. The “just retribution” quotation technically refers to Cram’s assumption about the motivations of Wright’s killers. But given the tone and thrust of Cram’s gloss of Wright, the text makes clear that Cram was inclined to agree that the killing was just.

in their essentials if perhaps debatable in their specifics.<sup>563</sup> And he blamed the spread of war in Washington not only the wanton violence of miners but on the pecuniary pursuits of volunteers attacking erstwhile “friendly Indians.” When Stevens, Cram reported:

sends an armed force of volunteer into a fertile valley in which the Indians are known to have fine, fat beeves and excellent horses in herds of great abundance.... it would be a very easy matter, upon the smallest pretext, to draw or provoke the Indians into a fight, and afterwards justify the act, particularly as in such cases there is only one side whose story is seldom, if ever, told to the world.<sup>564</sup>

Cram, like his patron John E. Wool, was not a humanitarian, nor did he have much sympathy for Native people as such. He predicted but did not necessarily mourn that “another less fortunate race will be crushed—blotted out of existence—to make the way clear for the ‘Bostons.’”<sup>565</sup> He echoed claims of grotesque Indigenous Otherness, including accusations of cannibalism.<sup>566</sup> In a later text he wrote eagerly that military funding to beat back the “cupidity and hostility of the red men” was imperative for the “Northwest to be filled up” with “at least twenty millions of civilized [C]hristian people.”<sup>567</sup> Native people, he declared, should be colonized on reservations, where “the practice should be to have a sufficient [military] force at all times immediately on the spot to prevent encroachment and to *enforce obedience*.”<sup>568</sup> The problem, for Cram, was not with the conquest but with a particular subset of the would-be conquerors, “bad

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<sup>563</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 45 – 46.

<sup>564</sup> Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram*, p. 98.

<sup>565</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 36 – 37.

<sup>566</sup> *Ibid*, p. 64.

<sup>567</sup> Thomas J. Cram, *Memoir Upon the Northern Inter-Oceanic Route of Commercial Transit, between the Tide Water of Puget Sound of the Pacific, and, Tide Water on the St. Lawrence Gulf of the Atlantic Ocean* (Detroit: Detroit Board of Trade/Detroit Daily Post, 1869?), pp. 7, 5.

<sup>568</sup> Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram*, p. 123 (emphasis added).

citizens” who fomented unnecessary war and lacked respect for the military, rather than “orderly” settlers who would be “civilized Christian people.”<sup>569</sup>

Some early histories of the Pacific Northwest reckoned with the infamous thefts, rapes, murders, and other wanton violence of the 1850s more or less as Cram did. Written to valorize and venerate, these histories resigned whatever violent or cupiditous Euro-American acts they had to discuss to the actions of a blemished few. Cram’s official report was not necessarily a part of these discussions—it was prefaced upon publication in 1859 by a denunciation from Secretary of War John B. Floyd, who deemed the history “irrelevant,” decried the author for his “animadversions toward public functionaries,” and declared that the whole was “in so sense sanctioned or endorsed” by the War Department.<sup>570</sup> But military and national critiques of notorious volunteer incidents nonetheless had to be dealt with by early historians.

For some settlers and historians, criticism of the worst excesses of pioneer violence could be a means of absolving settler society as a whole. Euro-American writers of the nineteenth century often bemoaned the more infamous atrocities committed by those at the fringe of settler society while nonetheless reaffirming the divine righteousness of manifest destiny. They were thus able to reap the fruits of settler colonialism while blaming a small subset for its moral costs. This instrumentality does not necessarily indicate duplicity; no doubt many Euro-Americans were earnestly horrified by reports of pioneer rape, murder, and mutilation. But condemnation of the violent fringe also served to absolve America as a whole. The volunteers who committed

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<sup>569</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 122, 63.

<sup>570</sup> Cram, *Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram*, pp. 2 – 3, 1.

the worst of the atrocities were turned into what I call “settler colonial sin-eaters” — the violent few whose condemnation could rhetorically render blameless the Euro-American majority that had profited from that violence.<sup>571</sup> As the southern Oregon Indian Agent George Ambrose put it in 1856, responding in his official capacity to (accurate) assertions that the wanton murder of Native people in the region was customary:

While I am forced to admit some acts of violence have been perpetrated by some bad, irresponsible and reckless white men upon the Indians, our population as a general thing are composed of good men....

It is a foul slander upon the settlers of Oregon to thus accuse them. The people in this valley deserved peace and sought to maintain it by every means in their power until forbearance ceased to be a virtue any longer with them. I am speaking of the mass of the people, not of the acts of a few transient individuals.<sup>572</sup>

A broadly shared project of genocide could be rhetorically contorted into the “acts of a few transient individuals”—in more modern parlance, a few “bad apples” whose attacks were “isolated incidents.”<sup>573</sup> As the Pacific Northwest lawyer and newspaper editor William Lair Hill put it in 1883:

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<sup>571</sup> On the uses and transformations of settler memory and settler guilt, see Rebecca Weaver-Hightower, *Frontier Fictions: Settler Sagas and Postcolonial Guilt* (New York City: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018); Lorenzo Veracini, “Settler Collective, Founding Violence and Disavowal: The Settler Colonial Situation,” *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 29:4 (Fall 2008), pp. 363 – 379, esp. p. 370; Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1:1 (Fall 2012), pp. 1 – 40; and David M. Wrobel, *Promised Lands: Promotion, Memory, and the Creation of the American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), esp. 125.

<sup>572</sup> George H. Ambrose to Joseph Lane, June 3 1856, taken from <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/jolaneletters.html>.

<sup>573</sup> Attempts to separate wanton murderers from the more broadly held ideologies of hatred they draw upon, of course, continue to the present. For studies of modern-day instances of the same, see among many others Peter Eglin and Stephen Hester, *The Montreal Massacre: A Story of Membership Categorization Analysis* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003), chap. 1; Ellen Goodman, “The Myth of the Lone Shooter,” *Boston Globe* June 5, 2009; Kelly Lytle Hernández, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771 – 1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), pp. 177 – 180; Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the*

[T]he pioneers were strong and brave... [l]eaving out the small element of gold-hunters and the smaller one of reckless adventurers—classes inconsiderable in number in comparison to the true Oregonian of the earlier days.<sup>574</sup>

Some early historians took a similar approach, artificially segregating the sins of colonialism to a few classes of men rather than the Euro-American population as a whole.

One of the earliest major histories of Oregon, Herbert O. Lang's *History of the Willamette Valley* (1885), used the perfidious violence of the volunteer soldiers to differentiate them from "the Pioneers of Oregon," whom the author exalted. Building his book from primary sources, pioneer informants, and personal reminiscences, Lang hoped to commemorate and celebrate the "Discovery and Settlement by the White Man" of the Pacific Northwest. Lang wanted to redeem the "virtuous" settlers from the violent reputation Oregonians had acquired on the national stage. Other early histories, such as A.J. Walling's *History of Southern Oregon* (1884), bemoaned famous episodes of wanton violence, including the Lupton Massacre. But Lang was unusual in reach and extent of his narrative and source base, and in his efforts to grasp at Native peoples' motivations. *History of the Willamette Valley* was Lang's attempt to square a heroic pioneer history with the torrid violence in some of his sources.<sup>575</sup>

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*Persistence of Racial Inequality in America*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018, orig. 2003).

<sup>574</sup> William Lair Hill, "Annual Address of Hon. W. Lair Hill," *Transactions of the Eleventh Annual Re-Union of the Oregon Pioneer Association* (Salem, Ore: E. M. Wait, 1884), pp. 10 – 21, quotation on p. 14. I have moved one clause of the quotation for readability, while keeping the original meaning intact. Another section of William Lair Hill's speech, where he suggested that pioneers might not have been utterly selfless, stirred up controversy at the same meeting (see Chapter X).

<sup>575</sup> Herbert O. Lang, *History of the Willamette Valley: Description of the Valley and Its Resources, with an Account of its Discovery and Settlement by White Men, and its Subsequent History*, (Portland, Ore.: Himes and Lang, 1885), pp. 2 – 4; Minnie Roof Dee, *From Oxcart to Airplane: A Biography of George H. Himes*

Like most White intellectuals of his day, Lang believed that “Indians” were an inferior race rapidly headed to extinction in an unavoidable Darwinian struggle with Euro-Americans. Native people were, in his view, “so warlike, so brave, so intelligent, and so numerous” but were fatally undermined by “treachery . . . the predominating trait of the Indian character.” Although Lang assumed and supported an inevitable Caucasian triumph, he recognized that Native resisters were fighting to defend their homelands. The wars in the Pacific Northwest, Lang proclaimed:

[S]prang from the one great fountain head of all our Indian wars—the aggressiveness of the higher civilization and the natural resistance of a warlike people to the encroachments of a superior race. It was an effort . . . to expel white intruders from the home of their ancestors, superinduced by special acts of ill-treatment by the invaders [in some cases]; and [in others] an attempt to ward off the same evils [Native people] saw had befallen the tribes of other regions.<sup>576</sup>

Lang’s appalling beliefs about race did not prevent him from determining that the Native causes for war were largely defensive, predicated on present outrages and/or accurate visions of the future.

Echoing one of his principle primary sources, Lang divided White settlers in the early Northwest into “two classes of persons, rogues and honest men”—or, as he put it elsewhere, “invaders” and “pioneers.” His heroes were White missionaries and administrators, gentlemen who he saw as fair dealers — whether British factors or American governors and generals. He also praised Native peacemakers and negotiators — at least those who, like Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox (“killed while unjustly a prisoner of the . . .

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(Portland, Ore: Binfords and Mort, 1939), 107; A. J. Walling, *History of Southern Oregon, Comprising Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Curry and Coos Counties* (Portland, Ore: Self-Published, 1884), esp. 242.

<sup>576</sup> Lang, *History of the Willamette Valley*, pp. 366 – 367.

white[s]”), were tragically dead rather than inconveniently alive.<sup>577</sup> The archetypal buckskin-clad frontiersmen, and the rough-and-ready volunteer soldiers more generally, were far from heroic in Lang’s telling. They were “a class of wild, reckless and brutal men” for whom “Indian fighting was one of their chief accomplishments.” Setting gentlemen like himself apart from the violent conquest of Oregon territory, Lang condemned trappers and frontiersmen as “the lowest stratum of American society . . . guilty of many acts of injustice.”<sup>578</sup>

However, those Lang registered as “brave pioneers” he interpreted as innately just, which shaped his portrayal of foul deeds.<sup>579</sup> And Native people were typically generalized “Indians,” particularly when Lang saw them as hostile. Lang saw Hamilton G. Maxon as a gentleman, for reasons unknown, and this shaped his narration of the Maxon Massacre:

Governor Stevens... was fearful that if something was not done at once to humble the hostiles, they would corrupt the Nez Perces, Spokanes, Colvilles, and Coeur d’Alenes, and a most powerful combination be formed against the whites. Quiet had been restored to the Sound, the last sign of war being a brief battle on the N[*i*]squally early in April, between Indians and Captain Maxon’s company.<sup>580</sup>

Lang’s assessment of “rogues and honest men” shaped how he narrated racial conflict. Where missionaries such as the Whitmans had “fallen before the treacherous blows of ungrateful savages,” the Rogue River War, Yakima War, and most other “trouble with

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<sup>577</sup> *Ibid*, p. 188.

<sup>578</sup> *Ibid*, 229, 139, 188; Lang got his keystone quote “rogues and honest men” from John McLoughlin, Chief Factor of Fort Vancouver in the years before it was handed over to the Americans.

<sup>579</sup> *Ibid*, p. 313.

<sup>580</sup> Lang, *History of the Willamette Valley*, p. 456.



Indians” were caused by “wanton murder” inflicted by violent racists. He framed such violence as inevitable and regrettable,

but a continuation of that fierce race conflict which began with the first advent of settlers into the valley, and ended only with the extermination or removal of the native proprietors of the soil. [In the Rogue River valley], more than at any other place, had race prejudice been developed to its extreme pitch by four successive years of conflict. Indians were both despised and hated. The least “insolence” on their part met with swift retribution, while on the other hand, indignities put upon them, even, in instances, to the taking of life, went uncondemned by the better portion of the community, and by the more irresponsible and less morally developed, were approved as being “good enough for them.”<sup>581</sup>

Lang was particularly sharp about the Lupton Massacre—what he labelled “The Lupton Affair,” and designated key inciting incident of what he called “The Great Outbreak of 1855.”<sup>582</sup> He framed the perpetrators as intemperately violent and lacking in class as well as decorum. As Lang wrote it:

On the seventh of October, 1855, a party of men, principally miners and men-about-town, in Jacksonville organized themselves... under the nominal leadership of Captain Hays and Major James A. Lupton.... [who] was a man of no experience in bush fighting, but was rash and headstrong. It is the prevailing opinion that he was led into the affair through a wish to court popularity, which is almost the only incentive that could have occurred to him. Certainly, it could not have been plunder; and the mere love of fighting Indians, which drew the greater

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<sup>581</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 266, 231, 306–308, 367–68.

<sup>582</sup> Lang, *History of the Willamette Valley*, p. 366.

part of the force together, was, perhaps, absent in his case. The reason why the particular band at Butte Creek was selected as victims also appears a mystery, although the circumstances of their location being accessible and their numbers small, possibly were the ruling considerations. This band of Indians appear to have behaved themselves tolerably.

John Beeson had written dolefully of broad community involvement in the killings; some of the most notorious murderers, like Martin Angell, had been farmers. Lang recorded the Lupton party as “principally miners and men-about-town.” But he was unblinking when it came to the violence they inflicted:

Lupton and his party fired a volley into the crowded encampment, following up the sudden and totally unexpected attack by a close encounter... and the Indians were driven away or killed without making much resistance. These facts are matters of evidence, as are also the killing of several sq\_\_ws, one or more old decrepit men, and a number, probably small, of children....

Accounts vary so widely that by some it has been termed a heroic attack, and others have called it an indiscriminate butchery of defenseless and peaceful natives. To temporize with such occurrences does not become those who seek the truth only, and the world would be better could such deeds meet at once the proper penalty and be known by their proper name.

Lang suggested Lupton’s men should not have been allowed to get away with murder.

And like many Euro-Americans, he mourned the counterattack most of all:

As usual, the storm of barbaric vengeance fell upon the heads of the innocent and defenseless. Swift and cruel was the revenge of the Indians for this great and

unexpected outrage which had been committed upon them, and the massacre of defenseless settlers, unwarned of their danger, is one of the saddest pages of Oregon's pioneer history. Language can not too strongly condemn the act which precipitated such a bloody scene, and much of the time and breath spent in abuse of General Wool and execration of the Indians should have been devoted to the denunciation of this brutal and unwarranted act.<sup>583</sup>

Most of the rest of the chapter was standard fare about pioneer heroes triumphing in face of numerically superior "red devils." Lang's condemnation of the Lupton Affair was unusually unsparing, though even Lang conformed to the custom that only the killings of White people would be labelled massacres. The book was mostly stories of White heroism, faith, and agricultural production, with several hundred pages of thumbnail pioneer biographies. But passages like the excoriation of Lupton may have been what so badly tanked his sales.<sup>584</sup>

Herbert Lang and his publisher George Himes had bet big that a large pioneer audience would want to buy a thoroughgoing history of the region—especially one in which they themselves would be listed in a place of honor. But the book provoked immediate outcry, both among those Lang classed as "rogues" and the "better portion" that had refused to restrain them. *The History of the Willamette Valley* helped spur the creation of a regional group for volunteer veterans of the War on Illahee; the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast made it their first order of business to condemn the book and its author (see Chapter IX). With a high page count and low sales, *History of*

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<sup>583</sup> Lang, *History of the Willamette Valley*, pp. 372 – 374.

<sup>584</sup> Lang, *History of the Willamette Valley*, p. 375.

*the Willamette Valley* flopped, hard enough to sink George Himes's first publishing business entirely.<sup>585</sup>

Hubert Howe Bancroft's mammoth *History of Oregon* (1888), ghost-written largely by local historian Frances Fuller Victor and ghost-edited by Judge Matthew Deady, also used the famous incidents of Euro-American volunteer depredations to separate violent fringe from pioneer posterity, balancing respect for the historical record with a heady mix of Darwinian scientific racism and manifest destiny.<sup>586</sup> "The fate of the savages was fixed beforehand; and that not by volunteers, white or black," they wrote, "but by almighty providence, ages before their appearing, just as we of the present dominant race must fade before a stronger, whenever such a one is sent." As Victor had publicly put it in 1871, "Decidedly, I am not... sympathetic on the Indian question."<sup>587</sup>

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<sup>585</sup> Dee, *From Oxcart to Airplane: A Biography of George H. Himes*. Lang condemned an unusually broad swathe of the Euro-American populace, but many other early histories of Oregon and Washington shared a frame that deliberately differentiated heroic settlers from violent rogues. See among others Arthur A. Denny, "Pioneer Days on Puget Sound," 1888, Folder 7, Box 1, Eloise Thomas Papers, Mss 1717, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. Notably, Denny skipped over the wars themselves almost entirely, instead covering the lead-up to them and the trials following them. See also Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi: Narrative and the Politics of Historical Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), pp. 176 – 177.

<sup>586</sup> On Hubert Howe Bancroft's ghostwriters and semi-industrialized system of history-making, see Thomas G. Andrews, "Toward an Environmental History of the book: The Nature of Hubert Howe Bancroft's Works," *Southern California Quarterly* 93:1 (2011), pp. 33 – 68; Ricardo D. Salvatore, "Progress and Backwardness in Book Accumulation: Bancroft, Basadre, and Their Libraries," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 56:4 (2014), pp. 995 – 1026, esp. 1009 – 1010; Harry Clark, *A Venture in History: The Production, Publication, and Sale of the Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), chap. 3. Bancroft's distaste for the violent fringe, epitomized by rough gold miners, got him kicked out of the Society of California Pioneers in 1893. See David M. Wrobel, *Promised Lands: Promotion, Memory, and the Creation of the American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), pp. 124 – 126.

<sup>587</sup> Frances Fuller Victor [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Oregon, Volume 2*, Ed. Matthew P. Deady [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888), pp. 379; Frances Fuller Victor, "The Oregon Indians, Part I" *Overland Monthly* Oct 1871, pp. 344 – 352, quotation on p. 348. Frances Fuller Victor's primary academic biographer, Sheri Bartlett Browne, has sidestepped questions of race generally and Native people specifically in her otherwise deep examinations of Victor's feminist writings and philosophy. Sheri Bartlett Browne, "'What Shall Be Done with Her?' Frances Fuller Victor Analyzes 'The Woman Question' in Oregon," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 113:3 (2012), pp. 286 – 311, esp. p. 286, p. 294, and p. 310 n. 16; cf. Margaret D. Jacobs, "Getting Out of a Rut:

To Victor and Bancroft, average settlers (men and women alike) were heroes, “whose brave deeds during these savage wars of southern Oregon must forever remain unrecorded.” They either downplayed most settler violence or framed it as justified retribution for Native aggression. Victor and Bancroft blamed the more famous episodes of unprovoked settler violence on a small subset who alone acted “with the avowed purpose of waging a war of extermination against the Indians without respect to age or sex.” The “mangled bodies . . . [of] mostly old men, women, and children” found in the aftermath of the Lupton Massacre of 1855, Victor and Bancroft wrote, “incited great indignation among the better class of white men.” The “better class” could include almost anyone and almost everyone.<sup>588</sup> Where Lang had decried broad swathes of the territory and the people of the Pacific Northwest when writing of atrocity, Victor and Bancroft portrayed such violence as anonymous and anomalous, the work of a few bad men to which the “better class” was unattached.

Bancroft, after all, was in the book *business*. As Richard White flintily put it, “[Bancroft] was a man who quite literally made history pay, and history that pays is often

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Decolonizing Western Women’s History,” *Pacific Historical Review* 79:4 (2010), pp. 585 – 604. Victor called for the “nationalization” of reservation lands and wanted the “inferior race” to be subject to the laws and education of America, under instruction from “men *and women* of well-known ability and integrity” rather than “politicians” or “philanthropists. Frances Fuller Victor, “The Oregon Indians, Part II” *Overland Monthly* Nov 1871, pp. 425 – 433, quotations on pp. 433, 426, 432 (emphasis in the original). See also June Johnson Bube, “Frances Fuller Victor’s Promotion of Strong, Independent Womanhood: Women and Marriage Reconstructed in ‘The New Penelope,’” in *Portraits of Women in the American West*, ed. Dee Garceau-Hagen (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 63 – 90.

<sup>588</sup> Frances Fuller Victor [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Oregon, Volume 2*, Ed. Matthew P. Deady [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888), pp. 373, 385, 372; Jim Martin, *A Bit of a Blue: The Life and Work of Frances Fuller Victor* (Salem, Ore.: Deep Well Publishing, 1992); William A. Morris, “Historian of the Northwest: A Woman Who Loved Oregon,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 3:4 (1902), pp. 429 – 434. Frances Fuller Victor’s creation of the work, while uncredited, appears to have been known by many Pacific Northwest pioneers—see John C. Ainsworth, *Autobiography*, Oct 20, 1889, p. 125, Folder 4, Box 1, John C. Ainsworth Papers, Coll. 250, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR. Ainsworth began his autobiography in 1877, and returned to it many times over the years, noting the date for each entry. I have thus chosen to note the date of authorship for the passage cited (1889) rather than the date written on the front of the unpublished autobiography (1877).

not a particularly critical history.”<sup>589</sup> In pursuit of making history pay, Bancroft sent door-to-door salesmen to the Pacific Northwest, offering books of pioneer posterity as one major class of offering. Homer Jenne, who worked in the “subscription part of the business” in the summer of 1880, described a bustling world of itinerant book peddlers in letters to his family. His patch was “W[ashington] T[erritory] and Oregon, the Eastern parts” where, he was assured, book sellers in previous years had done well.<sup>590</sup>

Jenne had some diffident success in The Dalles, complaining chiefly that too many other book peddlers had flooded the market. While he preferred to push business books (which netted him the most profit), he recognized interest in the history books he had with him. A standard part of his pitch was showing the books in question to prospective customers, as objects of worth in themselves. Jenne did not record exactly what drew his buyers to one book over another—but his experiences are indicative of the potential impact perceived salability might have on the writing of history in the era.<sup>591</sup>

According to Oregon steamboat captain and pioneer John C. Ainsworth, Bancroft tried to make money in production as well as sales. In a semi-private autobiography written for his descendants, Ainsworth claimed that Bancroft had interviewed him for both *The History of Oregon* and planned book “The Chronicles of the Kings,” and that Bancroft had insisted on a “large sum” of money from him in both cases—possibly for pre-orders, possibly as an out-and-out bribe. Ainsworth claimed that after he refused to pay, he was excised from both volumes. He nursed a “determination not to have anything

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<sup>589</sup> Richard White, “The Gold Rush: Consequences and Contingencies,” *California History* 77:1 (Spring, 1998), pp. 42 – 55, quotation on p. 44. See also Albert L. Hurtado, “Professors and Tycoons: The Creation of Great Research Libraries in the American West,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 41:2 (2010), pp. 149 – 169.

<sup>590</sup> Homer Jenne to “Leno at Home,” n.d., Folder 1, Box 1, Homer Jenne Papers, Cage 4961, Washington State University Libraries Special Collections, Pullman, WA; Clark, *A Venture in History*, pp. 61 – 68

<sup>591</sup> Homer Jenne to Mother, July 18, 1880, Folder 1, Box 1, Homer Jenne Papers; Homer Jenne to Mother, July 19 1880, *ibid*; Homer Jenne to “Cous at Home,” Oct 20, 1880, *ibid*.

to do with Mr. Bancroft” into old age.<sup>592</sup> Whatever the legitimacy of Ainsworth’s grievance, it was certainly the case that Victor and Bancroft were effusive in their praise, prolific in their name-dropping, and driven to make history pay.<sup>593</sup>

Unlike in Lang’s work, the better classes in *History of Oregon* were entirely blameless. Both books, however, declared the wanton violence against Native people that had been broadly supported during the 1850s and beyond to be inevitable *and* isolated to volunteers, leaving the rest of settler society innocent. Victor and Bancroft framed what they called a “history of aboriginal extermination” as a regretful inevitability, which the “better classes” (usually cordoned off from the “Indians Wars” chapters) had little hand in.<sup>594</sup>

There were those, even among the southern Oregon volunteers, who embraced a version the sort of distinctions that Lang, Bancroft, and Victor proposed. Benjamin F. Dowell was a packer, newspaperman, and former slaveholder who supplied volunteers in the Rogue River region in the early 1850s and in the Yakima river region in the mid-1850s. Like Charles S. Drew, he attracted opprobrium at the time for what many believed

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<sup>592</sup> John C. Ainsworth, *Autobiography*, Oct 20, 1889, pp. 125 – 127. The distrust between Bancroft and Pacific Northwest pioneers was mutual. The scuttlebutt in 1903 was that the Bancroft Library would “remain closed to all North West investigators so long as Bancroft is living. There are too many stolen Mss. to invite North West Coast people there.” R. E. Gosnell to Eva Emery Dye, Oct 31, 1903, Folder 12, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers, Mss 1089, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. Bancroft apparently took plenty of materials from “North West Coast people” too, responding to requests to return documents that had been loaned by historian Clarence B. Bagley (see Chapter X) by assuring him they would remain “‘as safe as possible’ in the Bancroft collection.” Clark, *A Venture in History*, p. 16.

<sup>593</sup> Historian Harry Clark has shown that the planned “Chronicles of the Kings” was planned as a mass vanity biography, with pay from the subjects. The veracity of Ainsworth’s claims that Bancroft’s other histories were the same remains unknown. Clark, *A Venture in History*, chap. 9. See also Julia H. Macleod, “John

G. Downey as One of the ‘Kings,’” *California Historical Society Quarterly* 36:4 (1957), pp. 327 – 331.

<sup>594</sup> Frances Fuller Victor [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Oregon, Volume 2*, Ed. Matthew P. Deady [uncredited] and Hubert Howe Bancroft (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888), p. 636.

was some mix of usury and/or embezzlement.<sup>595</sup> Dowell spent much of 1860s and 1870s as a lawyer trying to extract money for the volunteers (and himself) from various government bodies.<sup>596</sup> But although professionally Dowell pushed hard for volunteer claims and pay, he still tried to differentiate honest men from rogues in his personal accounts.

When he was interviewed for posterity by Bancroft and company, Dowell framed himself as having been an honorable man among villains in southern Oregon in 1853. Dowell claimed he had pushed against the calls to “Exterminate the Indian!” Particularly, he recounted his fruitless efforts trying to keep a Jacksonville mob from lynching a nine-year-old. He fixed the blame for the murder of this child on Martin Angel[l], a notorious Indian killer who had been executed by an unknown Native man a few years later (see Chapter III). As proof of the difference between him and men like Angel[l], Dowell claimed that he had been able to carry the mails throughout the period because the local Native leaders “wouldn't hurt a paper man and one who had tried to save a ‘tenas tillicum,’ little p\_p\_\_se.” Martin Angel[l] was the rogue, Dowell one of the honest men.<sup>597</sup>

In later life, Dowell argued for that all Americans should have suffrage and equal rights “without regard for race, color, or sex”—the only way to be “not only free in name

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<sup>595</sup> See W.J. Martin, “The Expedition to Fight the Emigrants,” *Umpqua Weekly Gazette* Aug 9, 1855, p. 1; Franklin Daniel Mahar, “Benjamin Franklin Dowell 1826 – 1897: Claims Attorney and Newspaper Publisher in Southern Oregon,” Master’s Thesis (University of Oregon, 1964), pp. 5 – 6.

<sup>596</sup> *Ibid*, chap. 8.

<sup>597</sup> “Benjamin Franklin Dowell Narrative: Jacksonville, Oregon, 1878,” BANC MSS P-A 26, Hubert Howe Bancroft Collection, The Bancroft Library Special Collections, University of California, Berkeley. Transcription accessed via: <http://truwe.sohs.org/files/dowell.html>. Cf. George H. Parker, “Short History of Josephine County” [np?], March 1922, p. 5, George R. Riddle Papers, Mss 1388, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. For Dowell and the killing of Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox, see Benjamin Franklin Dowell to Samuel F. Dowell, Jan 31, 1856, Folder 1, Box 1, Benjamin Franklin Dowell Papers, Ax 031, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR. See also Gray H. Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee: U.S. Empire and the Transformation of an Indigenous World, 1792 – 1859* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), pp. 200 – 201.



but in fact.” This unusually enlightened position, too, may have shaped his interviews—his memories of his younger self filtered through his later curve toward racial justice. Or he may have been responding to his audience. When speaking to those looking for gentlemen among rogues, he told a story of gentle manliness. When speaking to Elwood Evans, a historian hoping for stories of martial glory, Dowell would sing a different tune (see Chapter IX).<sup>598</sup>

Celebrations seem to have found more fertile ground than critique. Jesse Applegate’s most famous work, his 1876 paper “With the Cow Column in 1843,” embraced the tropes of triumphant manifest destiny. Pioneers like himself, he wrote, were “singular people”:

No other race of men with the means at their command would undertake so great a journey [as the overland trail across the continent].

The way lies over trackless wastes, wide and deep rivers, ragged and lofty mountains, and is beset with hostile savages. Yet... they are always found ready and equal to the occasion, and always conquerors. May we not call them men of destiny?<sup>599</sup>

But Jesse Applegate’s unfinished and unpublished attempts at Oregon history were more critical. As he got older, particularly after setbacks and betrayals from friends, he came to

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<sup>598</sup> Benjamin Franklin Dowell, “Letter from B. F. Dowell,” *Oregon Sentinel* Dec. 5, 1868, p. 1 [“Not only free in name”]. Notably, Dowell made the case for his unusually progressive view of equal rights with a stereotyped (and false) counterexample demeaning Indigenous persons: “[there should be] eternal principles of equal rights before the law [including suffrage], without regard to race, color, or sex. Savages compel their women to do all the menial labor, and still give them no voice in the affairs of the nation... We have many women as learned as Queen Victoria. They would make as good a President as Victoria does a Queen.” Benjamin Franklin Dowell, “Letter from B. F. Dowell,” *Oregon Sentinel* Feb. 20, 1869, p. 1.

<sup>599</sup> Jesse Applegate, “A Day with the Cow Column in 1843,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 1:4 (1900), pp. 371 – 383, quotation on p. 377.

critique not only individual atrocities but the broader one-sidedness of Euro-American history. Applegate's description of the Lupton Massacre was unsparing—but, notably, turned James Lupton from a newly elected Territorial Delegate into “a packer,” and thus more of an outsider:

“[S]ome 30 or more, ruffians under the lead of a packer, came out of Jacksonville in the evening, sent spies to the Indian camp to ascertain its position and that there was no dangerous Indians in it. and at daylight next morning rushed upon it slaughtering indiscriminately male and female old age and helpless infancy.... A small boy who escaped from the Massacre found his way to the hunters in the Mountains and told them the whites had killed all that were dear to them. These infuriated Indians did what of course it was expected them to do.—rushed upon the defen[s]eless settlements and committed a long list of savage atrocities. None of them exceeding in cold-blooded fiendishness the provocation.

But in this like the thousand other cases—the Indian atrocities were largely commented on and wide spread -- his provocation not even hinted at.<sup>600</sup>

At least when it came to violence against Native people neither he nor his friends had taken part in (see Chapter II), Jesse Applegate was unusually willing to see the wrongs in wanton violence. Labelling Lupton's killings a “Massacre” and equal in “cold-blooded fiendishness” to the revenge killings they provoked, Applegate even began to plumb the vernacular structures and silences that kept such stories one-sided.

Jesse Applegate's planned critical history of Oregon was never completed or published. This may have been a deliberate choice, out of a sense of decorum (see the

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<sup>600</sup> Jesse Applegate, “Notes Upon Oregon History” [n.d.; 1878?], pp. 18, Folder: Jesse A. Applegate, Box 5, Willamette University and Northwest Collection, WUA014, Willamette University Special Collections, Salem, OR.

“pioneer code” in Chapter X), or because he was sick of the whole enterprise. As

Applegate put it to a friend:

The History of the world at any date is simply the History of the leading or ruling nation of that epoch, and the History of a nation is the History or biography of its leading men or ruling men for the time being....

Oregon... has no history at present worth a student[']s five minutes attention, it has produced no new idea, or any man much out of the common to give it a history in the future.<sup>601</sup>

Applegate’s “Notes Upon Oregon History,” with its sharp critique of pioneering in the Pacific Northwest, ended up hidden in archival collections. “With a Cow Column in 1843,” his celebration of manifest destiny, became one of the most famous records of the Oregon Trail.<sup>602</sup>

Granville O. Haller’s history “The Indian War of 1855-6, in Washington and Oregon,” does not seem to have found a publisher, nor much of an audience, in his lifetime. The book was in some ways a spiritual successor to Haller’s more successful work *The Dismissal of Major Granville O. Haller*, his account of how he came to be (temporarily) dismissed from the Army for disloyalty during the Civil War, only to be later exonerated.<sup>603</sup> Like that book, Haller’s history of “the Indian War of 1855-6” was meant to exonerate as well as educate—after some success as a politician and long

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<sup>601</sup> Jesse Applegate to Joseph Henry Brown, [n.d. but likely late 1870s], Folder 3, Box 1, Joseph Henry Brown Papers, Mss 1002, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR

<sup>602</sup> Applegate, “A Day with the Cow Column in 1843,” quotation on p. 377. On Applegate’s essay as especially famous, see John D. Unruh, Jr., *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840 – 60* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993; orig. 1973), p. 5.

<sup>603</sup> Granville O. Haller, *The Dismissal of Major Granville O. Haller of the Regular Army... and a Few Observations* (Paterson, N.J.: Daily Guardian, 1863).

military career, he remained stung by his most famous act in Washington State being nicknamed “Haller’s Defeat.”<sup>604</sup> Haller’s approach departed both from those like Lang, Victor, and Bancroft, who washed their hands of wanton White violence, and those like Stevens, Drew, and Elwood Evans (see Chapters 3 and 8), who denied the existence of wanton White violence. The eventual narrative he created was clear-eyed about the horror of pioneer violence but nonetheless supportive of exterminatory warfare, especially in what he called a “war of races”:

War is simply savage or civilized Barbarism! Humanity and moral law are out of joint in War times. They cut no figure in a war of races. In a War between the Red and the Pale Faces, there will be no peace until the One or the other Race has been effectually crippled and subdued...

Until paralyzed by fire and sword, accompanied necessarily with the devastation and [horrors] of war; until their means for carrying on war are exhausted or destroyed; until their unyielding spirits are broken and subdued; in brief, until absolute submission to the will of the stronger Race is affected, forbearance and generous conditions are premature and only procrastinate the final result. Wars in Asia and Africa, as well as our own experience with the Natives in the Americas, confirm and illustrate this subject....

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<sup>604</sup> For Granville O. Haller as a political figure, see Austin Mires, “Remarks on the Constitution of the State of Washington,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 22:4 (1931), pp. 276 – 288, esp. p. 278. Haller appears briefly in some accounts of the Seattle anti-Chinese riots of 1885 – 1886, where he commanded the militia that tried to keep would-be vigilante murderers contained. See Clayton D. Laurie, “‘The Chinese Must Go’: The United States Army and the Anti-Chinese Riots in Washington Territory, 1885 – 1886,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 81:1 (1990), pp. 22 – 29. One of Haller’s last vain historiographical battles was an attempt to cast the so-called “Pig War” of 1859 as a deliberate act of treason by General William Harney. Historians then and since remain unconvinced. See Granville O. Haller, *San Juan and Secession: Possible Relation to the War of the Rebellion...* (Tacoma, Wash.: R. L. McCormick, ~1896); Gordon Robert Lyall, “From Imbroglia to Pig War: The San Juan Island Dispute, 1853-71, in History and Memory,” *BC Studies* 186 (Summer 2015), pp. 73 – 93.

Think of it! Our Pilgrim Fathers without warning fell upon the Aborigine [sic] of Massachusetts, and reveled in blood and carnage until tired, when such as escaped their fury were seized as Prisoners of War and sold at Public Auctions for servants or slaves for life.<sup>605</sup>

Haller voiced a position that had been common during the wars he discussed—certainly Isaac I Stevens and George Wright had said as much in their official letters to one another. And Haller connected the wanton violence he had taken part in with the broad sweep of American history, using the killings and enslavements inflicted by the “Pilgrim Fathers” as a perhaps exculpatory comparison. And like Jesse Applegate, Haller noted the hypocrisy of treating violence against Native people as righteous, and violence by Native people as treacherous:

These thoughts have been suggested to the Writer’s mind by frequent derogatory allusions in the histories of Indian Wars. We read of the contemptable Indians,—the deceitful! the treacherous!! the blood thirsty Indians!!! Ad nauseum.

But notwithstanding these historical stereotyped phrases, the Writer’s observations and experience in active Indian Wars, lead him to regard such obnoxious expressions equally applicable to White individuals, whose fancied wrongs or, perhaps whose experience, have embittered them against the Indians. Recall, for a moment, Peo-mox-mox Dead! “They that have done the deed are honourable”. Neverth[e]less, such deeds, by our fellow citizens, cannot fail to rouse the flush of shame.<sup>606</sup>

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<sup>605</sup> Granville O. Haller, “The Indian War of 1855-6, in Washington and Oregon,” [np], Folder 5, Box 2, Granville O. Haller Papers, Acc. 3431-001, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA.

<sup>606</sup> Haller, “The Indian War of 1855-6, in Washington and Oregon.”

Even within his justification of war as “civilized barbarism,” Granville O. Haller still condemned acts that he considered beyond the pale—like the unjust killing of Peo-[Peo-]Mox-Mox. Indeed, Haller framed his erstwhile adversaries as honorable:

it is not love for war that induces [the Indians] to take the war path, but their love for their homes, and their independent habits. It is the conflict of civilization with savage life that worries them, and drives them to arms—the code of last resort.... And, if we are candid, we must admit that the Indians of Washington and Oregon are entitled to some commendation for their patriotic spirit in resisting the tyranny of civilization—if our Revolutionary Fathers were in resisting the tyranny of Royalty—for we find they were loyal to their Indian customs, and rights, [and] fought for them.<sup>607</sup>

Here and elsewhere, Haller was unusually clear-eyed about the motivations of many of the Native people he had spent his life fighting, depicting at least a few figures villainized elsewhere for their war on Euro-American invaders as “mak[ing] a last desperate effort to save [their] Country and people from the baneful presence of the whites.”<sup>608</sup> Haller saw race war as inevitable but horrible, and was far less willing than almost any other Euro-American historian of the period to gloss over violence.

Haller never got his *Indian Wars* book published. His *Civil War* book was a success, and his conspiratorial book on the 1859 “Pig War” at least found a printer.<sup>609</sup> But not so his critical take on the wars of 1855 – 1856. Though cordial in letters with other

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<sup>607</sup> Haller, “The Indian War of 1855-6, in Washington and Oregon.”

<sup>608</sup> Granville O. Haller to Eva Emery Dye, Sept 19, 1893, Folder 13, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers. The passage on “baneful whites” came from Haller’s description of Kamiakin/K’amáyakin, but could reasonably be extended to the broader sweep of his work, which was sympathetic to Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox and others.

<sup>609</sup> Haller, *The Dismissal of Granville O. Haller of the Regular Army*; Haller, *San Juan and Secession*.

pioneer historians, he expressed disappointment at those who “yielded up the vital part of Indian history, by curtailing the truths.” Too many books, he complained, were “ex-parte and a plea to excuse, if not justify, the horrible facts of History.” Haller recommended histories of Oregon be

read with many grains of allowance.

It is needless for us to deny—history testifies to the fact—that our Pioneers were not Saints. As soon as they believed themselves strong enough to overpower the Natives, they treated them like the Hebrews in their migration treated the Heathen inhabitants Wherever they located. Of course, such facts are not the most agreeable for the Descendants of Pioneers of the XIX Century—such statements will not be popular with them, will even be, as they have often been denied, but are nevertheless True!<sup>610</sup>

Such assertions were especially unacceptable to those, like the more notorious volunteers, who had been blamed by historians like Lang and even Bancroft for the “horrible facts” of pioneering.

Truth about the Indian Wars didn’t sell in the nineteenth century Pacific Northwest. But there were some frictions over how much and what kind of deception was warranted in pursuit of a heroic history. Lang, Victor, and especially Bancroft pursued the goal of hagiography by containing the unseemly Euro-American violence to a marginal few among the pioneers—often, those among the volunteers who had been the most publicly and wantonly murderous. But those volunteers wanted special honors, not

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<sup>610</sup> Granville O. Haller to Eva Emery Dye, June 24, 1894, Folder 13, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers. Haller’s descendants have sometimes steered around the questions about pioneer saintliness by absenting the more famous elements of his “pioneering li[fe].” See Martin N. Chamberlain, “Love, Hennie: Writing Home about Pioneer Life on the Columbia, 1853 – 1854,” *Columbia* 17:4 (2003/2004), pp. 12 – 16.

(accurate) critiques, for the roles they had played in the conquest of the Pacific Northwest. There was money, fame, and honor at stake. And they organized to get all three.



CHAPTER IX: “SOLDIERS DEDICATED TO THE AMERICANIZATION OF  
THE WILDERNESS”: INDIAN WAR VETERANS AND THE  
BATTLE FOR NORTHWEST HISTORY

The Washington State Pioneer Association was initially unblushing in its support for genocide. In the first recorded speech inaugurating the organization in 1884, the Hon. Francis Henry reflected on the history of the region (see Chap. 1). Since 1846, Henry proclaimed, “great and wonderful changes have been wrought by the hand of man.”

Among the pioneer achievements he listed:

*The savages have been exterminated, the wilderness subjugated, three States and seven Territories, with a present population of some two millions, have been organized from this domain as parts of the American Union, whose dominion is here undisputed....*

This is the argument of our Association. We have organized ourselves into a society for the reason that we have witnessed, participated in, and in some measure contributed towards reclaiming a portion of the earth from nature and opening it up to the use and enjoyment of civilized men from our own race.<sup>611</sup>

Elwood Evans, a lawyer and historian, gave the keynote address the following year. As was typical for such an address, Evans lavished praise on the pioneers and celebrated the changes they had unleashed. A major purpose of pioneer meetings was to gather (as Francis Henry had put it) “for the purpose of exchanging mutual congratulations.” On this occasion, Evans praised himself and the gathered throng as “pioneers in the real sense of the word — ‘Soldiers who have cleared the way for the advance of an army’.”

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<sup>611</sup> Washington Pioneer Association Transactions 1883 – 1889, p. 31 (emphasis mine), Box 30, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Heritage Resources, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA.

Pioneers of the Pacific Northwest, Evans declared, were “Soldiers dedicated to the Americanization of the wilderness.” The notion that “the Native race . . . had proprietary rights to its lands or rivers or seas” was mere “sentimentalism [to be] repudiated. Practical experience,” Evans proclaimed, “teaches that American supremacy . . . can only be extended by Americans, utilizing the whole continent as the homes of American men, women and children.” In only slightly cagier terms than Henry, he expressed the same support for a White Northwest.<sup>612</sup>

Evans’s attention to the martial roots of the term *pioneer*, when applied to those who arrived in the Pacific Northwest before 1860, matched the predilections of many who attempted to craft the history of Euro-American settlement in the area. There were several former volunteers among the founders of the Washington Pioneer Association. C. C. Hewitt, who had led murderous raids killing in the Puget Sound region (see Chapter IV), was the first vice president. Benjamin F. Shaw, who had commanded the mass killings of Cayuse and other Native people at Grand Ronde Valley (see Chapter IV), was the second vice president and one of the authors of the organization’s Constitution. They had a stake in the martial prowess of pioneering, and in defending local volunteers like themselves as righteous.<sup>613</sup>

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<sup>612</sup> Address of Hon. Francis Henry, 1884, *Washington Pioneer Association Transactions 1883 – 1889*, p. 31; Address of Hon. Elwood Evans, 1885, *ibid*, p. 50. Frederick Jackson Turner would, far more famously, make similar connections in 1910, when he proclaimed “[t]he first ideal of the pioneer was that of conquest.” See Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1940, orig. 1920), p. 269; Kerwin Lee Klein, *Frontiers of Historical Imagination: Narrating the European Conquest of Native America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 78 – 88. Significant portions of this chapter were published in Marc James Carpenter, “Pioneer Problems: ‘Wanton Murder,’ Indian War Veterans, and Oregon’s Violent History,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 121:2 (2020), pp. 64 – 93.

<sup>613</sup> Edmond S. Meany, “The Pioneer Association of the State of Washington,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 8:1 (1917), pp. 3 – 6.

In some of the early transactions of the Washington Pioneer Association there was an edge of defensiveness, as in an 1888 speech from Judge Orange Jacobs:

It must be remembered that from the same wild valley or dark woods in which ascended the smoke from the humble cabin of the pioneer, there also ascended the smoke from the wigwam and the council fire of the savage.... The Indian never chose an open fight. Ambush was his rule. The poisoned arrow or the deadly bullet came from the covert of a thicket, the shade of a tree or the protection of a rock. He was ever ready to start up, like a felon wolf, at midnight in a war of extermination. When he was apparently the most friendly, and his seeming friendship the most demonstrative, there was the greatest danger.<sup>614</sup>

By insisting Native people (rather than Euro-Americans) were inherently duplicitous and always ready, “like a felon wolf” (?!), to commit genocide, Jacobs could justify whatever act of pioneer violence might come up. “[T]he pioneer,” he proclaimed, “was in constant danger from savage beasts and still more savage men.... You say he was cruel; we say he was but obeying the law of self-preservation.”<sup>615</sup> In general, the early speakers at the Washington Pioneer Society wanted pioneers to have the credit but not the blame for their conquest of Native lands and peoples.

Like Elwood Evans, many members of the Oregon Pioneer Association connected “pioneering” to martial roots. Prominent Indian War volunteers like James Nesmith (see Chapter V) and John Minto (see Chapter II) took up leadership positions.<sup>616</sup> The lawyer

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<sup>614</sup> Washington Pioneer Association Transactions 1883 – 1889, p. 118.

<sup>615</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118.

<sup>616</sup> James Nesmith, especially, underlined the martial roots of the term “pioneer,” speaking of his emigrant wagon train as a “gallant battalion” ready to do battle “against the ruthless savages.” See James W. Nesmith, “The Occasional Address of Hon. J. W. Nesmith,” *Transactions of the Third Annual Re-Union of the Oregon Pioneer Association* (Salem, Ore.: E. M. Waite, 1876), pp. 42 – 62, quotation on p. 51. As was

and historian Frederick Van Voorhies Holman made explicit the comparison of pioneer honors to war glories:

You cannot call a man a member of the G.A.R. who might have gone to war and did not, or the man who might have come here in 1842, 1843[,] and 1845 and did not, a pioneer. [To be called a pioneer is a] privilege that is distinctively sacred and honorable, that is due to the hard service, the hard toil, the privations, the fighting, the cutting of the way through the wilderness that was endured by these pioneers.<sup>617</sup>

Just as only those who had fought for the Union in the Civil War could join the Grand Army of the Republic veterans' group, as Holman would have it, only those who had taken part in the toil, privations, and *fighting* that had wrenched the Pacific Northwest into American control should be able to join the Oregon Pioneer Association.<sup>618</sup> Earlier efforts to expand who should count as a pioneer were made with a similar premise. As William Lair Hill put it in an 1883 address, "the circumstances connected with the Indian wars of 1855 – 6 do themselves constitute a just claim of all who were residents of the territory at that time to the same position as pioneers."<sup>619</sup>

In his 1898 address to the Oregon Pioneer Association, Reverend Plutarch Stewart Knight attempted to combine the notion of the pioneer-as-soldier with the idea of pioneer-as-builder:

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typical, he attempted a list of all "persons" present in Oregon when he arrived, which excluded all Native people. See *ibid*, esp. p. 55.

<sup>617</sup> Frederick V. Holman, speech given at the Annual Business Meeting of the Oregon Pioneer Association, 1892, transcribed in Unruh, Jr., *The Plains Across*, p. 383. Holman was born in Oregon Territory in 1852, and embraced his status as a quasi-pioneer.

<sup>618</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 383 – 385; Peter Boag, "Death and Oregon's Settler Generation: Connecting Parricide, Agricultural Decline, and Dying Pioneers at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 115:3 (2014), pp. 344 – 379.

<sup>619</sup> William Lair Hill, "Annual Address of Hon. W. Lair Hill," *Transactions of the Eleventh Annual Re-Union of the Oregon Pioneer Association* (Salem, Ore: E. M. Wait, 1884), pp. 10 – 21.

The Oregon pioneer was preeminently a home seeker and a home builder. It was not as a gold hunter, not as a daring adventurer, not as a mere explorer, not as [a] paid agent of national ag[g]randizement, that he braved with his family the tedious journey of the plains. No one need claim that he was more patriotic or less selfish than ordinary men. Whatever he sought in the far west – change of climate, enlarged opportunity, new scenes of activity – he sought for himself and his own. But that very spirit of independence and singleness of mind in which they sought these things made the early immigrants a better army of occupation for this region than any army of paid emissaries or bold adventurers possibly could have been.<sup>620</sup>

Knight might have defined Oregon pioneers as home seekers and home builders rather than daring adventurers or soldiers, but they were still a de facto “army of occupation” in his telling:

[E]very father and mother of a family who undertook the journey.... we may fitly call an army of occupation, moving by squads toward the scene of its operations of two thousand miles of mountainous and desert region, uninhabited save by savage and hostile tribes.<sup>621</sup>

And among the “army of occupation,” the former volunteer veterans wanted special rewards.

During the late nineteenth century, historians local and national, pioneer associations, veterans’ groups, and others with a stake in history and public memory

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<sup>620</sup> Rev. Plutarch Stewart Knight, “The Pioneer as an Epoch Maker,” Annual Address to the Oregon Pioneer Association, 1898, p. 4, Mss 2250, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. See also Thomas Richards, Jr., “Farewell to America,” *Pacific Historical Review* 86:1 (2017), pp. 114 – 152.

<sup>621</sup> Knight, “The Pioneer as an Epoch Maker,” p. 5.

usually recognized that violence against Native people had been a constituent part of the Euro-American seizure of the region—and wanted to honor the portion of that violence they considered righteous. Although most Euro-Americans celebrated the expansion of the United States into what became Oregon and Washington, struggles over the causes, frequency, and righteousness of the violence that enabled that expansion drove interpretive divisions over the past.

Many former volunteers pushed for histories that glorified race war and excused or erased any war crimes by exalting those who had taken up arms against Native people as especially worthy of pioneer praise. Pioneer organizations and veteran's groups formed for the "purposes of mutual congratulation" were one means of promulgating this narrative. A new generation of historians supported by the perpetrators of those acts, including Elwood Evans, mounted a campaign to simultaneously justify and deny the wanton violence of the era. Their efforts to dispute acts of atrocity were in some cases successful enough falsely contest well-known mass killings. By the turn of the twentieth century, the atrocities acknowledged to the first generation of Northwest historians had been disappeared from many Euro-American history-books. Even the federal government shifted. The original stance of the United states had been that Northwest pioneer violence outside of the bounds of war in the early 1850s was illegitimate. By 1902, federal legislation supported the pioneer view that there had been a single, multi-front war against Indigenous people generally throughout the era. The War on Illahee was given a federal imprimatur.

Much of this chapter focuses on the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast (IWW-NPC), an organization of former volunteer soldiers from Oregon and

Washington who had fought in the region's "Indian wars," which played a key role in reshaping the historical narratives of those wars. Founded in 1885, the IWV-NPC spearheaded a campaign with the paired goals of rehabilitating the historical repute of the volunteers and acquiring for them military pensions from state and national governments. Volunteer veterans, their allies, and their scribes (including Elwood Evans) wanted their place in the vanguard of the violent conquest of the Northwest to mark them as pioneers par excellence, worthy of special praise.

The move to secure a place in history—and a profit—began early for some. In an 1857 letter to Senator Joseph Lane, A.N. Armstrong, an erstwhile government surveyor, claimed to have contributed \$1430 worth of goods "for the use of the volunteers" in "the Oregon war." He helpfully suggested that he could put this claim before Congress to "show... that it was not a war of speculation"—and conveniently, this would make it easier for him to (as he put it) "get pay for my property."<sup>622</sup> Armstrong connected his claim to history-writing:

I have wrote out and have it ready for the press A History of the Oregon War. I have taken great care to give it justice, giving the name and manner in which every person was killed in the territory. I have given the Oregonians justice, showing the position of Gen. Wool and of the two governors.

It will contain about 300 pages octavo. I shall have about 30,000 copies struck.<sup>623</sup> Like William Barnhart, the would-be historian and murderous Indian agent who had hoped in 1856 to complete an authoritative history of the wars (and joked about binding them in the skin of Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox), Armstrong's assurances ran ahead of his

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<sup>622</sup> A. N. Armstrong to Joseph Lane, Feb 23, 1857, taken from <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/jolaneletters.html>.

<sup>623</sup> *Ibid.*:

capabilities—perhaps in hopes of attracting lucrative pre-orders. If Armstrong’s history was ever completed, it has since fallen into absolute obscurity. Armstrong did produce a smaller work about the agricultural potential of the Pacific Northwest in 1857, which ended with an “ADVERTISEMENT” of the same book Armstrong described to Lane. Amidst a book focused on the “beauty [of the] climate,” the “fertility of soil that commends itself to every settler,” and “boundless facilities for stock-grazing,” Armstrong gave snippets in this text of what his book on the “Oregon war” would have been.<sup>624</sup>

As the title implied, Armstrong’s *Oregon: Comprising a Brief History and Full Description of the Territories of Oregon and Washington... Interspersed with Incidents of Travel and Adventure* was mostly a description of promising landscapes, mixed with personal stories and a few anecdotes. Armstrong, whose brother Pleasant M. Armstrong had died fighting as a volunteer in 1853, claimed that “during the war [the Indians] all united, and coöperated [sic] as a band of brothers against the “Bostons”—the whites.” To Armstrong, this very much included “the professedly friendly Indians.” He might be comfortable with individual Native people—perhaps too comfortable, given an anecdote wherein Armstrong pressed to “get a boy, ten or twelve years old, to accompany me home,” and attempted unsuccessfully to coerce a Waillaptu leader to hand over one specific orphan, “fine looking youth of ten years of age.” But collectively, Armstrong perceived Native people as a threat.<sup>625</sup>

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<sup>624</sup> A. N. Armstrong, *Oregon: Comprising a Brief History and Full Description of the Territories of Oregon and Washington... Interspersed with Incidents of Travel and Adventure* (Chicago: Chas Scott & Co., 1857), pp. 147, iv. The author was unable to find any trace of Armstrong’s planned Indian Wars book, in Worldcat or elsewhere.

<sup>625</sup> Armstrong, *Oregon*, pp. 53 [death of Pleasant M. Armstrong], 59 [“all united, and coöperated”], 57 [“professedly friendly Indians”], 113 [“get a boy”]. It is unclear why Armstrong wanted a fine-looking ten-year-old boy; the most likely option is for labor.



Strikingly, the one conflict Armstrong spent significant time and space on was the 1851 clash at Battle Rock/ Ma'-na'-xhay-Thet, near Port Orford (see Chapter II). This may have been because his (mis)conception of the elements of Battle Rock allowed for a familiar colonial narrative. In defiance of the facts but in concordance with contemporary Euro-American conceptions and colonial paradigms, Armstrong framed Battle Rock as a clash between an enormous Native group and a small force of Euro-American defenders, with the latter emerging triumphant due to superior technology and superior grit. This could stand in for the whole colonial experience, in his light. Other incidents—the Whitman killings, even his own brother's death—rated perhaps a paragraph or two at the most.<sup>626</sup>

Other would-be volunteer hagiographers drew on a centuries-old tactic of justifying settler violence by emphasizing and generalizing Native perfidy.<sup>627</sup> Charles S. Drew, a volunteer who had endorsed war crimes and been credibly accused of graft in 1854 (see Chapters 2 and 6), did just this in a memorial to the U.S. Congress in 1860. Drew denounced the reports of John Wool, Thomas Cram, and others like them, submitting instead a fantasy of unremitting and unmotivated Native aggression in the Northwest. He posited an “Indian War in Oregon” across Oregon and Washington territory lasting from 1847 to 1857, composed almost entirely of wanton murder by “the Indians.” Listing the non-Native dead (real and speculated), Drew wrote over and over variations of “All these murders were entirely unprovoked.” Assertions to the contrary, Drew proclaimed, were instances of “[t]he Indians... falsely accusing the whites of being ‘the first aggressors.’” He argued that “the Indians” were throughout the 1850s plotting a

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<sup>626</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 59 – 64.

<sup>627</sup> Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600 – 1860* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), pp. 76 – 77.

general war of extermination against White people—though the mere rumor of White volunteers once again taking the field, Drew asserted, was enough to “thwart their purposes” until government weakness once again encouraged them.<sup>628</sup> In private in 1854, Drew had argued that war crimes against Native communities were a necessary part of Indian war. In public in 1860, he ignored by omission accusations that volunteers had caused conflicts with their war crimes, and argued instead for limitless Indian perfidy—and thus for latter-day government payments to support volunteer actions.<sup>629</sup>

Drew omitted most instances of volunteer violence that couldn’t be easily framed as heroic battles. The Lupton Massacre, alone among the more infamous incidents, appears to have been unavoidable (see Chapter III). Drew threw a number of arguments at the wall in his attempts to downplay the Lupton Massacre: he claimed the volunteers had not known there were women in the camp; he suggested the fact that Lupton had died in the attack indicated that there were plenty of “warriors” present too; he proclaimed Lupton was “not even a private of the volunteer corps,” so even if he had committed wrongs he “had nothing whatever to do with its organization.” Although Drew begrudgingly admitted the existence of Lupton’s killings, this did not stop him from claiming that there had been “[n]o provocation given” for the killings inflicted by Native people in the counterattacks following the massacre. Drew framed the Lupton Massacre as an isolated event, disconnecting it from the violence it had culminated from and unleashed.<sup>630</sup> Other killings Drew denied—using a lack of prosecution as evidence for a

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<sup>628</sup> C[harles] S[tewart] Drew, “Communication from C.S. Drew, Late Adjutant of the Second Regiment of Oregon Mounted Volunteers, Giving an Account of the Origin and Early Prosecution of the Indian War in Oregon” (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1860), p. 17, 20.

<sup>629</sup> As Kathryn Eigen has argued, “[u]ntil well into the 1860s congressional discussion of Oregon centered mainly on debate over funding for the Oregon Indian wars.” Kathryn Eigen, “Oregon Territory’s Struggle for Sovereignty,” *Columbia* 30:4 (Winter 2016/2017), pp. 2 – 6, quotation on p. 6.

<sup>630</sup> Drew, “Communication from C.S. Drew,” pp. 29, 7.

lack of wrongdoing. Responding to one of Palmer's reports on non-combatants being murdered by miners, Drew wrote:

[W]ith regard to the killing of the "seven sq\_\_ws" &c., it is probably that Mr. Palmer derived his information from the Indians themselves who hoped by such a story to elicit his sympathy and thus obtain a larger amount of presents... for, though it was sufficient to incorporate in his report, he did not consider it of sufficient account to cause the arrest of the alleged offenders.<sup>631</sup>

Of course, Palmer would have had great difficulty making such an arrest. Beyond his lack of authority, manpower, or will, Native testimony was forbidden.

Drew ended his letter to the U.S. Congress with a transcription of an 1856 resolution from the Oregon Conference of [Methodist Episcopal] Missionary Bishops:

Whereas, our Territories have been the theater of a disastrous Indian war during the past year; and whereas an impression has, by some means, been made abroad that the people of Oregon and Washington have acted an unworthy part in bringing it on: Therefore,

*Resolved*, That though there may have been occasional individual instances of ill-treatment of the Indians by irresponsible whites, it is the conviction of this body of ministers whose fields of labor have been in all parts of the Territories, at the beginning and during the continuance of the war, that the war has not been wantonly or wickedly provoked by our fellow-citizens, but that it has been

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<sup>631</sup> *Ibid*, p. 36.

empathically a war of defense, and that that defense was deferred as long as Christian forbearance would warrant.<sup>632</sup>

Even God, Drew argued, was on the side of the volunteers. The actions of “individual... irresponsible whites,” according to Drew, the ministers, and legions of other pioneers, should not reflect on the wars or any other aspects of settler life. Acts of genocide were transformed into acts of defense. And Congress should pay up.

The Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast (IWV-NPC) was created in 1885 to pursue pensions and posterity for volunteer soldiers who had fought in the wars of the region during the 1840s and 1850s. The purpose of the organization, according to its constitution, was the building of brotherhood among former soldiers, the transmission of patriotism to future generations, and the creation and propagation of “true history of the Indian wars of the North Pacific Coast” — one that painted the volunteers as unrivalled heroes rather than the useful villains they became in parts of Lang or Bancroft’s works. Over the next four decades, the volunteer veterans largely achieved their goals. They helped bring into being new history books that minimized the wantonness of the violence they had inflicted in and beyond the wars they had fought. By the twentieth century, the volunteer veterans gained eligibility for pensions from the federal government (along with additional payments from the states of Oregon and

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<sup>632</sup> Drew, “Communication from C.S. Drew,” p. 48. See also “Resolution,” May 31, 1856, Folder 36, Box 1, Series 2, Oregon Methodist Episcopal Church Administrative Records, 1851 – 1945, WUA035, Willamette University Special Collections, Salem, OR.

Washington), and they were feted as heroes by local newspapers and the cheering crowds at pioneer events.<sup>633</sup>

The IWV-NPC was one among a welter of heritage groups and fraternal orders attempting to craft a heroic history for the Pacific Northwest during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As discussed at the beginning of the chapter, the IWV-NPC shared some goals and personnel with the Washington Pioneer Association. And the IWV-NPC began as an especially rarefied offshoot of the Oregon Pioneer Association (OPA). The volunteer veterans held their meetings in same locations and near the same times as the OPA, and their proceedings were sometimes published jointly. IWV-NPC members framed themselves as pioneer paragons, a “vanguard of civilization” especially worthy of honor because of their leading role in the conquest of the Northwest. While a standard pioneer procession marched by year, with an earlier date of arrival indicating especial honors, the IWV-NPC marched separately; its members saw their role in the “Indian wars” as marking them out for special praise over and above their seniority as settlers.<sup>634</sup>

The dues-paying membership of the IWV-NPC was likely small but potent, led by men of influence and serving a constituency much larger than the core members who could afford to join. The first Grand Commander elected, T.B. Wait, was the former

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<sup>633</sup> The Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast pursued the interests of volunteer soldiers of early Northwest Indian wars, distinct from those who had enrolled as soldiers with the federal government proper. They thus excluded not only regular troops, but also volunteers in later conflicts such as the “Snake,” Modoc, Nez Perce, and Bannock Wars. These exclusions were lifted briefly in the 1890s, and permanently “after spirited debate” in 1921 (by which time most of the original membership had already died). Article II, Section 1, *Constitution and By-Laws of the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast*, 1885, Folder 2, Box 1, Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Records [quotation in paragraph text]; Article II, Section 1, *Constitution and By-Laws of the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast*, 1890, *ibid*; Article II, Section 1, *Constitution and By-Laws of the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast*, 1898, *ibid*; “Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885 – 1933,” p. 282.

<sup>634</sup> “Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933,” pp. 5, 76.

mayor of Salem as well as a prosperous merchant. Later long-serving Grand Commanders T.A. Wood and Cyrus Walker were similarly successful, and the organization counted among its ranks politicians like John Minto, Elwood Evans, and LaFayette Mosher as well as history-makers such as *Oregonian* editor Harvey Scott and longtime Oregon Historical Society curator George Himes. While initially conceived as a sprawling fraternal order across the Northwest, the IWV-NPC drew most of its dues-paying members from Oregon's Willamette Valley, particularly from Portland, Salem, and (further south) Roseburg. Incomplete records and inconsistent rolls make it difficult to estimate the exact membership during the early decades, particularly because the leadership had good reason to exaggerate numbers. A reasonable estimate would be somewhere around 100 members at the organization's foundation, rising nearer to 150 once widows of volunteer veterans were permitted to join in 1887 and tapering to dozens due to mortality by the 1900s. The few surviving letters from Grand Commanders suggest that the organization enjoyed support and engagement from many more volunteer veterans, perhaps hundreds, unable or unwilling to travel to meetings or pay dues. This support was reciprocated; Grand Commanders helped several indigent non-member "Indian war" veterans get coveted spaces in the Oregon Soldiers' Home (a state-funded retirement community for veterans). Moreover, the IWV-NPC achieved political power beyond its size. By the early twentieth century, the remaining volunteer veterans could reasonably expect not only mayors but also local candidates for national office to attend their meetings and heap praise upon them.<sup>635</sup>

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<sup>635</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 12–13, 219; John F. Winters application to the Oregon Soldiers' Home, January 29, 1899, Folder: "Oregon Soldiers Home Applications: 1898–1933; Wilson - Withrow," Box 29, Military Dept Records, 89A-12, Oregon State Archives, Salem, OR; "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1937–1941," pp. 11–12, Folder 4, Box 1, Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Records; Nan Wood

When the general membership of the IWV-NPC had its inaugural meeting in Oregon City in 1886, the first order of business (after the parades, the celebratory welcoming speeches, and a barbecue lunch) was to proclaim that the organization “[did] not approve of the extreme statements of cruelty by white people toward the Indians” in Lang’s *History of the Willamette Valley*. In 1887, they expanded this statement and accused Lang of being “wantonly malicious” towards them and “flagrantly inaccurate, incorrect and unjust to the early settlers of Oregon and Washington” more generally. The volunteers responded to Lang’s descriptions of the “wanton murder” committed by some among their membership by accusing the historian, in turn, of “wanton malice.”<sup>636</sup>

The IWV-NPC’s attacks on unflattering histories were not limited to Lang’s *History of the Willamette Valley*. They loudly disdained the “loose and incorrect ways of nearly all “so called histories of Oregon,” including those by Victor, Bancroft, and every other not among their ranks. The volunteer veterans believed themselves entitled to be the sole arbiters of the truth about the “Indian wars”; particularly, they pushed against histories that documented the many, many acts of wanton violence their members had performed.<sup>637</sup>

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Honeyman Scrapbooks, Vol. 7, Box 6, Nan Wood Honeyman Collection, Mss 193, Oregon Historical Society; Shelton Hawkins to T.A. Wood, January 4, 1897, Folder 37, Box 4, Military Collection, Mss 1514, Oregon Historical Society; Harvey Kimball Hines, *An Illustrated History of the State of Oregon* (Oregon: Lewis Publishing Company, 1893), pp. 768–69, 909–911. For Harvey Scott on his own volunteer service as a teenager, see Lee Nash, “Scott of the *Oregonian*: Literary Frontiersman,” *Pacific Historical Review* 45:3 (1976), pp. 357 – 378; Leslie M. Scott, Compiler, *History of the Oregon Country By Harvey W. Scott, Fifty Years the Editor of the Morning Oregonian*, Volume 2 (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1924), pp. 38 – 43.

<sup>636</sup> “Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885 - 1933,” pp. 7, 11; Herbert O. Lang, *History of the Willamette Valley: Description of the Valley and Its Resources, with an Account of its Discovery and Settlement by White Men, and its Subsequent History*, (Portland, Ore.: Himes and Lang, 1885), p. 231.

<sup>637</sup> “Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885 – 1933,” pp. 97 [quotation], 109; A.B. Roberts, “Account of the Battle of Walla Walla,” n.d., Folder 1, Box 2, Military Collection, Mss 1514, Oregon Historical Society.

The men (and, after 1887, women) of the IWW-NPC tended to respond to accusations of war crimes with counterattacks rather than direct denial. Their attempts to sanctify their service rested on the creation of a legion of enemies. They painted the national government as inept and out of touch, the regular troops as high-handed and wrong-footed, and historians who relied on the records of either rather than the reminiscences of pioneers as arrogant and unscholarly. Above all, the IWW-NPC evoked an image of Native people as “dreaded red men” who were more “demons of another world” than human beings. It is difficult not to read at least some deliberate duplicity in the IWW-NPC’s objection to “extreme statements of cruelty by white people toward the indians,” not least because Kelly, the leader of the men who had killed and butchered Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox, was among the founding members — and (perhaps justificatory) celebrations of the mutilation of Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox became a recurrent theme in private meetings of the organization.<sup>638</sup> T.B. Wait, the first Grand Commander, proposed as the organization’s motto “Ick Close Tillicum,” Chinook Jargon typically translated as ‘One Good Indian’ — a reference to the adage that “the only good Indian is a dead Indian” — with a matching badge featuring a volunteer shooting down a Native man about to scalp a White woman. This was rejected in favor of “Omne solum forti patria est,” Latin for ‘Every land is homeland for a brave man’ — in part because many members, such as Mosher, found the use of Chinook Jargon to be distasteful.<sup>639</sup>

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<sup>638</sup> “Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933,” pp. 94, 7; “Sons + Daughters of Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Minutes, 1908–1936,” June 17, 1936, Folder 9, Box 2, Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Records.

<sup>639</sup> I use the term “Chinook Jargon” rather than “Chinuk *wawa*” here to indicate the simplified variant of the Indigenous trade language spoken by most Euro-American pioneers. See Henry B. Zenk and Tony A. Johnson, “A Northwest Language of Contact, Diplomacy, and Identity: Chinuk Wawa / Chinook Jargon,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 111:4 (Winter 2010), pp. 444 – 461; Kylie N. Johnson, “‘As Our Elders Taught Us to Speak It’: Chinuk Wawa and the Process of Creating Authenticity,” Master’s thesis (University of Denver, 2013), esp. pp. 21 – 36; cf. Robert Foxcurran, “Chinuk Wawa: The Evolution of a



While IWV-NPC members celebrated wanton Indian-killing when swapping stories among themselves and wanted their part in “Indian wars” celebrated, the “true history” they demanded would leave out the details of volunteer violence. The IWV-NPC’s clearest voice in countering the emerging historical consensus was Elwood Evans’s 1889 book *The History of the Pacific Northwest*. Evans was himself a former volunteer, and he shared writing duties for the section on the Rogue River Wars with Mosher, who was elected Grand Commander of the IWV-NPC in 1888. The two men financed publication of the book in part by having the membership solicit preorders. Taking aim at “certain publications called histories,” Evans and Mosher attempted to redeem “the good name and fame” of the volunteers by highlighting supposed Native atrocities and remaining silent on settler violence. The “mangled bodies . . . [of] mostly old men, women, and children” at the aftermath of the Little Butte Creek Massacre that Victor and Bancroft’s *History of Oregon* had decried were neither mentioned nor specifically denied in Evans and Mosher’s history. Instead, the book described the incident as a “murderous band” getting “the punishment they deserved” in an “attack which resulted in the killing of most of the warriors.” This silence regarding the deaths of Native women and children is palpable throughout much of the book; although mentions

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Pacific Northwest Trade Pidgin into a Community Heritage Language,” *Columbia* 31:4 (2017/2018), pp. 5 – 11. For discussions regarding the mottos and badges for the IWV-NPC, see Thomas B. Wait to LaFayette Mosher, July 9, 1886, Folder 5, Box 2, Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Records; LaFayette Mosher to U[rb]an E. Hicks and Jennings [?] Smith, July 16, 1886, *ibid.* From 1902, Cyrus Walker made songs, performances, and speeches in Chinook Jargon a regular feature at IWV-NPC meetings—see “Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885 – 1933,” p. 143 (and Chapter XI of this dissertation). On the uses and ubiquity of Wait’s favored phrase, see Wolfgang Mieder, “‘The Only Good Indian Is a Dead Indian’: History and Meaning of a Proverbial Stereotype,” *The Journal of American Folklore* 106:419 (1993), pp. 38–60.

of the *capture* of Indian women are relatively frequent, virtually all descriptions of settler violence imply that it was meted out only against Native men.<sup>640</sup>

Evans argued that Native violence against Euro-Americans always had the same cause: “not because of any personal outrages committed by Whites, not because of any injustice sought to be inflicted . . . but solely because it was the Indian purpose to exterminate the white settlements.” Most Euro-American historians of the Northwest at the time agreed with Herbert Lang’s assertion in *History of the Willamette Valley* that “treachery . . . [was] the predominating trait of the Indian character.” But Evans, unlike these historians, made few distinctions between “good” and “bad” Indians, and Mosher, who had been an active participant in the pogroms and wars of the Rogue River region, made none. Treaties and declarations of peace were tricks designed “to allure the white race into a belief of their security.” Indian “perfidy” — Evans’s favorite descriptor — justified and sanctified any white violence. Any Indian group could be considered “a standing menace to the Whites,” and thus could be attacked in an act of proactive defense. The murders of Native leaders during peace negotiations Evans and Mosher excused as “the taking of adequate revenge” upon “implacable savages” by White “men who had lately buried the mutilated bodies of women and children.” That the volunteers also had created plenty of mutilated bodies passed without mention. This formulation rendered officials who protested settler violence as fools, and volunteer veterans who

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<sup>640</sup> “Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885 – 1933,” p. 22; Virgil F. Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2: Washington Territorial Militia and the Indian Wars of 1855-56* (Tacoma: Washington National Guard State Historical Society, 1961), p. 88; Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington, Volume 1*, (North Pacific History Company: Portland, OR, 1889), p. 434; cf. John Maceachern, “Elwood Evans, Lawyer-Historian,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 52:1 (Winter 1961), pp. 15 – 23. Evans acknowledged in the text that Mosher had been in charge of the Rogue River section, and at least one of their contemporaries viewed it as Mosher’s alone. See Oliver Cromwell Applegate to Eva Emery Day, Apr 8, 1927, Folder 4, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers, Mss 1089, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

persisted in the face of federal blandishments as the sole saviors of the White Northwest.

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Victor and Bancroft's condemnation of the more outrageous actions of the volunteers had allowed them to separate the volunteers' violence from America's broader civilizing mission. Evans's assertion of overriding Indian perfidy elevated those volunteers as the necessary shock troops of American empire and excused them from culpability:

However much it is to be regretted... Indian wars are but the essential concomitants of American settlement, the necessary evil from which untold good emanates. It measurably, however, removes the asperity of such cruel fact by the remembrance that the Indian himself invariably selected.... the place and time for the commencement of hostile operations.<sup>642</sup>

In Evans's work, the "perfidious cruelty" of Indians was absolute, and "Indian wars" sprang solely from "repeated and unprovoked outrages which were committed by savages upon unoffending and defenseless white men, women, and children." He discounted any of the voluminous evidence to the contrary as partisan backbiting or the ignorance of those too far removed from events to know.<sup>643</sup>

Many of his informants followed Evans's lead. When the packer, lawyer, and volunteer Benjamin F. Dowell had spoken to Bancroft's team, his stories about trying to defend an innocent Native child from the mob came to the fore. In Evans, this story disappeared from Dowell's account of Indian wars. Dowell instead provided a distorted

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<sup>641</sup> Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest*, pp. 529, 446, 405.

<sup>642</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 528.

<sup>643</sup> *Ibid.*, 529.

narrative of the killing of Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox that Elwood Evans described as “[p]erhaps the most accurate and full description... that ever has been or ever will be written.” This “description” insisted that Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox had been planning treachery from the first (justifying the volunteers forcibly detaining him) and insisted that the slain prisoners had been the aggressors—stabbing volunteers, refusing orders to surrender, grabbing for guns. There was no mention of the volunteers discussing the upcoming murders of the prisoners, of the executions, or of the dismemberment for trophies that followed (see Chapter IV).<sup>644</sup>

In his private correspondence, Evans was more forthright. Writing to Granville O. Haller about the cause behind the Indian wars in Washington, Evans proclaimed:

My own view is that the whole history of American settlement and colonization is a struggle of two civilizations or the conflict between two races for occupation of the country. American settlement means, necessitate[s,] absor[p]tion, appropriation of the country itself—to the exclusion of the aboriginal race. Hence the passage of the Donation Act, and the non observance of treaties[,] were illustrations of the American thought, “The continent is ours” [is] the American

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<sup>644</sup> “Benjamin Franklin Dowell Narrative: Jacksonville, Oregon, 1878,” BANC MSS P-A 26, Hubert Howe Bancroft Collection, The Bancroft Library Special Collections, University of California, Berkeley. Transcription accessed via: <http://truwe.sohs.org/files/dowell.html>. Cf. George H. Parker, “Short History of Josephine County” [np?], March 1922, p. 5, George R. Riddle Papers, Mss 1388, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR; Benjamin Franklin Dowell to Samuel F. Dowell, Jan 31, 1856, Folder 1, Box 1, Benjamin Franklin Dowell Papers, Ax 031, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR; *History of the Pacific Northwest, Oregon and Washington...* Vol. 2, Ed. Elwood Evans [uncredited] (Portland, OR: North Pacific History Company, 1889), p. 306. The second volume of Evans’s history was more explicit in its evocation of the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast, prominently displaying their sigil in the frontispiece of the book.

theory[,] our construction of the 1st great commandment, to subdue the S[oil] and replenish it. <sup>645</sup>

In his private letter to Haller, Evans was willing to grant that Native people had motivations beyond perfidy that brought them into conflict with Euro-Americans:

Kamiakin [see Chapter IV] appreciated what American advancement and occupancy meant. The acts and treaties were not the great underlying cause- nor did they not[e] the initiation of the conflict. They were moments which would be referred to, that the conflict was on—and meant what it always had meant, that the inferior race must yield. <sup>646</sup>

And he framed the Donation Land Claim Act as federal endorsement for mass expropriation:

[Senators] Linn and Benton... ratified their support by American Governmental action in Oregon, and by the Federal Government the strongest character of evidence to support the Statement that the American settlers were expected to appropriate the soil, exclude the Indian therefrom, and that the United States were pledged in advance to uphold the act. <sup>647</sup>

Evans publicly insisted that Native people were always already the aggressors in Indian Wars. When corresponding privately, he agreed with Haller that Native people like Kamiakin/K'amáyakin were simply defending their land, and that the American plan had

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<sup>645</sup> Elwood Evans to Col. Haller, May 6, 1893, Folder 11, Box 1, Granville O. Haller Papers, Acc. 3431-001, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA. See also James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783 – 1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

<sup>646</sup> Elwood Evans to Col. Haller, May 6, 1893, Folder 11, Box 1, Granville O. Haller Papers.

<sup>647</sup> *Ibid.* See also Julius Wilm, *Settlers as Conquerors: Free Land Policy in Antebellum America* (Weisbaden, GE: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2018).

always been exclusionary conquest (see Chapter VIII). But to Evans, honor was more important than truth.

In his capacity as President and co-founder of the Washington State Historical Society, Evans was a key figure in obscuring the Maxon Massacre, the mass killing of Nisqually non-combatants along the eponymous river, from the historical record. These killings had been well-known (and sometimes lauded) by Euro-American residents of Washington Territory in the 1850s, but had not been as nationally famous as the Lupton Massacre (see Chapter IV). When the matter was first brought before the Washington Historical Society in 1893, Evans proclaimed that the well-known killings had not happened, because there was no evidence from contemporary military reports—the same reports he had urged historians to ignore in the case of Oregon. This denial was effective enough to cast doubt on the reality of the killings for decades, despite numerous Nisqually attempts to correct the Euro-American historical record. Evans was a history enthusiast and a diligent collector of records, but his yen for a history of heroic White supremacy trumped any attempt at objective practice. This was not a matter of sloppiness; Evans, “the terror of the old time printers,” was punctilious to a fault about his prose. Yet in spite of the evidence he’d seen, in spite of the stories he must have heard at IWV-NPC meetings, Elwood Evans insisted to the end of his life that “the people of Washington and Oregon did not commit personal outrages against Indians.”<sup>648</sup> Assertions

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<sup>648</sup> Abbi Wonacott, *Where the Mashel Meets the Nisqually: The Mashel Massacre of 1856* (Spanaway, Wash.: Bellus Uccello Publishing, 2008); Richard Kluger, *The Bitter Waters of Medicine Creek: A Tragic Clash between White and Native America* (New York: Random House, 2011): 160 – 165; Elwood Evans, “Response to John Wickersham’s ‘The Indian Side of the Puget Sound Indian War,’ Address Given to the Washington State Historical Society” (Washington State Historical Society, Oct 9 1893); Henry Sicade, “The Indian’s Side of the Story,” Address to the Research Club of Tacoma, April 10, 1917, in *Building a State, Washington: 1889 – 1939*, ed. Charles Miles and O. B. Sperlin (Olympia: Washington State Historical Society, 1940), pp. 490 – 502; Clarence Bagley to A. N. Brown, Aug 2, 1906, Folder 15,

to the contrary were only more of what he called “discolored perversions of truth by people I would wish to behave.”<sup>649</sup>

Lobbied by the IWV-NPC in 1890, the state of Oregon sponsored a new *Early History of the Oregon Indian Wars* along similar lines, hiring Frances Fuller Victor to compile and compose it. One purpose of this work was to craft a record of who had volunteered in which conflicts, because official paperwork was often lacking, and some proof would be needed if the volunteer veterans were ever cleared for pensions. Notably, the Oregon Legislature passed a bill in 1891 giving the IWV-NPC Grand Commander plenary power to certify the service of “Indian wars” veterans, with no further evidence required (according to the letter of the law). Drawing from interviews and records, Victor, a diligent historian, recreated “Indian wars” rolls, preserving evidence that remains a critical resource for proving participation in the “Indian wars.” But the new history the volunteer veterans had pushed the state to commission also supported their version of historical events.<sup>650</sup> In a sharp departure from her work with Bancroft, Victor absolved the volunteers of nearly all blame. While not going as far as Evans, Victor’s discussion of the Lupton Massacre now contained no discussion of “mangled bodies” or “butchery,” but repeated the unlikely volunteer claim that none had known women and

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Box 13, Clarence B. Bagley Papers, Acc. 0036-001, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA; Elwood Evans to Col. Haller, May 7, 1893, Folder 11, Box 1, Granville O. Haller Papers.

<sup>649</sup> Elwood Evans to Eva Emery Dye, Sept 18, 1893, Folder 10, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers. Evans was also capable of posing as a supporter of Native rights, if it achieved his goals. In 1892, he spoke up in favor of allowing Puyallup to sell their land individually using the language of Native rights. See Kurt Kim Schaefer, “The Promise and Price of Contact: Puyallup Indian Acculturation, Federal Indian Policy and the City of Tacoma, 1832 – 1909,” PhD Diss (University of Washington, 2016), p. 257.

<sup>650</sup> Certification from the Grand Commander of the IWV-NPC allowed volunteer veterans to secure spots in the Oregon Old Soldiers’ Home, but it was not enough to secure state money for supplies or back pay. *Oregon Laws: Showing All the Laws of a General Nature in Force in the State of Oregon*, Vol. II, Conrad Patrick Olson, ed. (San Francisco: Bancroft-Whitney Company, 1920): 3482–3483. By 1903, the muster rolls in Victor’s book had become the standard to prove eligibility for state monies set aside for veterans of Indian wars, although the law had not changed—see for example Andrew J. Miner Indian War Claim, June 23, 1903, Folder 25, Box 29, Military Dept. Records, Accession 89A-12, Oregon State Archives.

children were present — and tartly noted that the U.S. regulars who reported the massacre “went out to view the field after the slaughter, instead of preventing it.” Denying the well-established historical truth that the Lupton Massacre had provoked the counterattacks that followed (because “savages do not move with such celerity”), Victor instead embraced the volunteer fantasy of a vast Native conspiracy to make war that had been encouraged by the presence of federal forts and reservations. The IWV-NPC complained that Victor’s history was “incomplete,” a mild critique compared to what they had leveled at previous works. The fact that this mild complaint was attached to a request to furnish all members with a free copy of the book suggests that this book came closer to the “true history” the organization had been founded to transmit. The volunteers’ assertions of their own blamelessness and of the foolishness of the regular troops were now a part of official Oregon history.<sup>651</sup>

The IWV-NPC achieved pensions on the heels of its victories over the historical record. Pensions and/or land grants had been a means for the federal government to recruit and reward Euro-American settlers who had soldiered against Native people since the foundation of the United States. The main barrier for the IWV-NPC was getting the irregular volunteer forces of Oregon’s “Indian wars” counted and included in the expanding pension regime the federal government was then building, primarily for

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<sup>651</sup> Frances Fuller Victor, *The Early Indian Wars of Oregon* (Salem, Ore: Frank C. Baker, 1894), pp. 343, iv; see also Jim Martin, *A Bit of a Blue: The Life and Work of Frances Fuller Victor* (Salem, Ore.: Deep Well Publishing, 1992), pp. 183 – 184. For the IWV-NPC response, see “Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885 – 1933,” p. 109. Victor’s occasional critiques of individual pioneer excesses in her earlier works still leads people to overlook the throughline of her racist embrace of American empire triumphant. Only in a few individual cases was she, as journalist Blaine Harden put it, “one of the few regional writers of her era to criticize racism and jingoism among American pioneers.” More often, she embraced both. Blaine Harden, *Murder at the Mission: A Frontier Killing, Its Legacy of Lies, and the Taking of the American West* (New York: Viking, 2021), p. 121.



veterans of the Civil War.<sup>652</sup> Congress extended eligibility for benefits to veterans of some earlier “Indian wars” in 1892, and to the Oregon volunteers of the IWV-NPC in 1902. Rather than listing all specific conflicts, the 1902 law provided pensions for veterans of the “Cayouse war” and “the Oregon and Washington Indian wars from eighteen hundred and fifty-one to eighteen hundred and fifty-six, inclusive.” United States policy now embraced the volunteer veteran historical narrative of a general period of Northwest “Indian wars,” rather than a narrative of specific inglorious or valorous conflicts. During the 1850s, U.S. federal officials such as Gen. John E. Wool differentiated attacks such as the Lupton Massacre from formal war. By 1902, federal policy no longer made such a distinction.<sup>653</sup>

While they framed themselves as excluded underdogs, the volunteer veterans of the IWV-NPC always enjoyed political support regionally, with a membership that included judges, mayors, and representatives from both political parties. Convincing Oregon and Washington politicians to request national funds for local veterans was relatively straightforward; the pursuit of federal recompense for the costs of Oregon “Indian wars” had been a state-level campaign issue since Joseph Lane and Isaac I. Stevens had run for Congress in the 1850s. The expectation of federal funding may even

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<sup>652</sup> Laura Jensen, *Patriots, Settlers, and the Origins of American Social Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), chap. 2; Franklin M. Aaronson, “Pensions and Compensation to Veterans and Their Dependents,” *Social Security Bulletin* 5:11 (Fall 1942), pp. 10–24.

<sup>653</sup> “An Act To extend the provisions, limitations, and benefits of an Act entitled ‘An Act granting pensions to the survivors of Indian wars...,’” Public No. 174, U.S. 57th Congress, 1st Session, *Congressional Record* (June 27, 1902), 399–400. Of course, the right to pursue pensions did not make acquiring them easy or straightforward. In 1903, IWV-NPC Grand Commander T.A. Wood was found guilty of pension fraud after fudging the dates (although not other facts) on an affidavit and was compelled to pay \$1,000. See *Hillsboro Argus*, June 14, 1904; and *The Federal Reporter* 127 (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Company, 1904), pp. 171–73. Oregon state policy would eventually go further, expanding the period from 1847 to 1858 in a 1920 law. Hon. Conrad Patrick Olson, Code Commissioner, *Oregon Laws: Showing All the Laws of a General Nature in Force in the State of Oregon*, Vol. II (San Francisco: The Bancroft-Whitney Company, 1920), pp. 3482 – 3484.

have helped spur some of the Rogue River conflicts. And even before their triumph over the historical record, the largely Oregon-based IWV-NPC was able to get their constituents included in Oregon soldiers' home legislation.<sup>654</sup>

But during the nineteenth century, convincing the state itself to set aside funds for veterans' claims was more difficult. William Paine Lord, elected governor of Oregon in 1895, likely echoed many previous governors when he politely rejected the volunteer veterans' entreaties and declared pensions a national rather than state issue. By the twentieth century, however, the volunteer veterans' cause was popular enough, and their ranks thin enough, that the state of Oregon could be convinced to pick up the some of the costs federal pensions would not cover. In 1903, the Oregon state legislature set aside up to \$100,000 for outstanding "Indian war" claims from 1855 to 1856. After the 1912 election, during which representatives from both parties promised to do more, a bill setting aside an additional \$50,000 for Indian war claims related to horses passed the Oregon state legislature, and the Pacific Coast delegation in the national Congress got federal pensions for Indian war veterans raised from eight dollars to twenty dollars a month. In a triumphant speech before the remaining volunteer veterans of the IWV-NPC, Grand Commander Cyrus Walker declared "a jubilee, a season of rejoicing[,] for after long years of waiting our National Government has recognized to a more adequate degree the heroic and valuable service you endured." Men who had perpetrated the worst violence of the colonial conquest of Oregon and Washington, men who had previously

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<sup>654</sup> An Act To Provide for the Relief of Indigent Union and Mexican War Soldiers, Sailors, Mariners, and Indian War Volunteers...., Feb 25, 1889, William Lair Hill, Compiler and Annotator, *The Codes and General Laws of Oregon*, Vol. 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (San Francisco: Bancroft-Whitney Company, 1892), pp. 1841 – 1843.

been used as a foil to excuse other settlers, were officially now recognized as the heroes they believed themselves to be.<sup>655</sup>

The IWV-NPC did not shift the historical narrative alone; many pioneer organizations and historians beyond the IWV-NPC and Evans put a premium on pioneer honor over historical truth. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there were active efforts to bowdlerize the unseemly aspects of the Euro-American conquest of the Northwest. Victor's *Early History of Oregon Indian Wars* was carefully sourced in both senses, leaving aside some of the contemporary primary sources she had relied on when working with Bancroft in favor of those that painted Oregonians in a more flattering light. Careful use of sources in the creation of deliberately incomplete narratives, moreover, gave authority to the careful erasure of violence. Victor's book was scrupulously sourced compared to Lang's; a careful reader might assume, then, that Victor's story was truer, even though Lang more accurately described the violence of Oregon's creation. Evans's objections to other histories were typically framed as an issue with evidence, even though there was no consistency in what kind of evidence he would demand. And financial realities continued to shape what history was told. As Oregon Historical Society President Frederick V. Holman warned rising historian Clarence B. Bagley in 1908, "there is not the great interest in books of historical interest on the Northwest Pacific Coast to make it profitable to publish" on a sales rather than a subscription model, especially when a book "takes the unpopular side of most of the

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<sup>655</sup> *The General Laws... Adopted by the Twenty-Second Regular Session of the [Oregon] Legislative Assembly* (Salem, Ore.: J.R. Whitney, 1903), pp. 228–29; *Oregon Laws* (1920), pp. 3483–3484; "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933," pp. 69–70. On the uses and misuses of "Indian wars" claims, see Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee*, chap. 8. On the ways pension policy can shape historical narratives, see Adam H. Dombay, *The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2020), chaps. 3 and 4.

questions involved.”<sup>656</sup> And much of the pioneer purchasing public preferred prideful pabulum to critical candor.

Professionalization would not end the distortion of the Pacific Northwest’s history of violence. Many of the omissions and lies of the pioneer generation were now engraved in the historical record. And often omission rather than outright fabrication was the tool of choice; as Haller had argued, pioneer societies distorted (and distort) historical narratives when they ignored violence by settlers while condemning retributive violence by Native people (see Chapter VIII). Many professional historians, too, would choose a variation of “pioneer code,” pursuing histories free from outright fabrications, but filled with gaping silences and willful blindness.

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<sup>656</sup> Frederick van Voorhies Holman to Clarence B. Bagley, Nov 20 1908, Folder 6, Box 10, Clarence B. Bagley Papers.

CHAPTER X: “RAKE UP NO OLD STORIES OF EVIL”: SETTLERS, SCHOLARS,  
AND THE SILENCING OF PIONEER VIOLENCE

In 1883, William Lair Hill caused a hubbub among the members of the Oregon Pioneer Association. In his annual address, Hill had as usual praised the pioneers for their strength, their “patriotic intelligence,” their virtue, and their part in “securing to [their] country dominion over a vast empire.” But then Hill had the temerity to suggest that the early Euro-American arrivals “were not mere missionaries of civil liberty, nor patriots voluntarily sacrificing themselves in unselfish devotion to the extension and aggrandizement of their mother land,” but had come primarily to seek individual liberty and (he hinted) free land.<sup>657</sup>

To many pioneers, this was outrageous. Responding to an angry letter regarding the speech from John Minto, Jesse Applegate gave his own opinion with his characteristic and increasingly embittered wit.

I read the address of Mr. Hill soon after it was delivered. I thought it in bad taste, Not because it was untrue, but [because it was] not suited to the occasion or the audience. I regard the Pioneer Associations as a kind of Mutual Admiration Society which [are] assembled annual[l]y to praise and be praised by each other. As these assemblages were not a public nuisance, and seemed to afford those concerned great pleasure, those not in sympathy with them have no... right in any way to defeat the objects of their meetings.<sup>658</sup>

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<sup>657</sup> William Lair Hill, “Annual Address of Hon. W. Lair Hill,” *Transactions of the Eleventh Annual Re-Union of the Oregon Pioneer Association* (Salem, Ore: E. M. Wait, 1884), pp. 10 – 21.

<sup>658</sup> Jesse Applegate to John Minto, Dec 12, 1883, Folder 7, Box 1, John Minto Papers, Mss 752, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. See also Abner S. Baker III, “Experience, Personality, and Memory: Jesse Applegate and John Minto Recall Pioneer Days,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 81:3 (1980), pp. 228 – 251, 253 – 259.

Applegate was making acerbic reference to the “pioneer code,” an unofficial understanding that stories destructive to heroic images of pioneers should not be made public. As D.J. Holmes put it in at the beginning of his laudatory address to a Polk County Oregon pioneers’ reunion in 1901:

The history of mankind comes down to us frequently written in blood through honor or disgrace. The good, we emulate and point to with pride. From the evil and wrong, we blush and shrink and turn it back into the eternal darkness of our memories never to be referred to save in sorrowful recollection.<sup>659</sup>

Although only occasionally spelled out, a widespread belief in the need for Euro-American pioneers to be heroes shaped history for generations—both in what was said, and what was shared.<sup>660</sup> John Minto, in conversations with multiple historians in the 1890s, screened access to his trove of letters carefully. As he wrote to Eva Emery Dye regarding requested letters from the missionary William Tolmie, “I shall not let any of them go out of my hands without a very definite understanding as to the manner of their use.”<sup>661</sup> Only those who obeyed the pioneer code and told the right kind of stories, Minto believed, could be permitted to see the letters in his possession.<sup>662</sup>

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<sup>659</sup> “D. J. Holmes’ Address to the Pioneers of Oregon, at their Annual Reunion Held in Dallas, Polk County, Oregon, June 22, 1901,” p. 1, Mss 2236, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections.

<sup>660</sup> The pioneer code was often most noticeable in the breach, as in the sectional tensions that heritage organizations in the Pacific Northwest attempted to put aside or mend. The Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast kept in mind both Northern and Southern sentiment when choosing symbols for the organization. The Washington State Pioneer Association stipulated in their Constitution that “No political or sectarian questions shall be introduced or debated during any meeting of this Association.” Lafayette E. Mosher to Urban E. Hicks, Sept 20, 1886, Folder 5, Box 2, Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Records, Mss 364, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR; Washington Pioneer Association Transactions 1883 – 1889, p. xi, Box 30, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Heritage Resources, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA.

<sup>661</sup> John Minto to Eva Emery Dye, June 9, 1899, Folder 10, Box 2, Eva Emery Dye Papers.

<sup>662</sup> The pioneer code shaped primary source availability for decades. In 1937, J. Orin Oliphant, responding to a request from a fellow amateur historian to quote a letter on the early Northwest, gave his permission with the stipulation that “some of the language... is too undignified for quotation,” and should thus be

But which stories needed to be altered or suppressed for the sake of pioneer posterity varied a great deal between organizations, people, and time periods. At the same meeting where Hill had raised hell by suggesting early pioneers were motivated by anything other than selfless patriotism, Matthew Deady related the history of Bates, the southern Oregon man who had lured almost an entire Native community into his tavern and murdered them (see Chapter III). Deady told this history as one of evolution—with Deady’s own arrival in 1853 marking the point at which “the word of the law superseded the edge of the sword” in southern Oregon (cf. Chapter III). With this framing, Deady’s isolated stories of Euro-American butchery and horror did not attract the same opprobrium as Hill’s seemingly mild suggestion of widespread self-interest.<sup>663</sup>

This chapter examines the influence of the unofficial “pioneer code” on which histories were told or suppressed. Because this code was not stable, stories were not suppressed evenly—indeed, much of the evidence in this work as a whole comes from those who subscribed to a version of the “pioneer code” that permitted braggadocio about wanton violence. The chapter begins with a discussion of one of the more enduring erasures—the sexual violence and partner abuse that was almost never seen as appropriate for pioneer annals. It then moves to the new norms of erasure that emerged in the 1900s and 1910s, as new historians blotted out more of the historical record of violence. For some, like historian and novelist Eva Emery Dye, violence was reduced to create a more romantic narrative of the past. For others, like historian Clarence B. Bagley, omission seemed like the appropriate middle ground between a responsibility for

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altered or excised. J. Orin Oliphant to Dr. C. M. Drury, Oct 24, 1937, Folder 33, Box 16, J. Orin Oliphant Papers, Cage 232, Washington State University Libraries Special Collections, Pullman, WA.

<sup>663</sup> Matthew P. Deady, “Southern Oregon Names and Events,” *Transactions of the Eleventh Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1883* (Salem, Ore.: E.M. Waite, 1884), pp. 23 – 24, quotation on p. 26.

historical accuracy and a desire to make history heroic. For nearly all, the “pioneer code” demanded decorous silence on certain issues.

Pioneer rape culture appears to have been a vast and shadowy phenomenon. As discussed in the previous chapters, Native communities complained of and struck back against Euro-American rapists, from the southern reaches of Oregon to the northern expanses of Washington.<sup>664</sup> And these accounts were affirmed by Euro-American administrators charged with keeping the peace. George Ambrose, who spent the mid-1850s trying to seize Indigenous lands in southern Oregon while minimizing the costs the colonialism, complained of a

transient, reckless, irresponsible se[t] of m[e]n, whose only occupation would seem to be to create disturbances and difficulties with the Indians, who are constantly tampering with the sq\_\_ws.<sup>665</sup>

Similar complaints came from Army officers in eastern Washington, particularly after Colville-bound gold seekers who attempted rape were executed—a key inciting incident for the Yakima War (see Chapter IV).<sup>666</sup> The pan-Native alliance that gathered to fight the Yakima War in late October 1855 included mention of rape in their discussion of war and peace terms. According to Father Charles Pandosy:

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<sup>664</sup> Gray H. Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee: U.S. Empire and the Transformation of an Indigenous World, 1792 – 1859* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), p. 174.

<sup>665</sup> George Ambrose to Col. Ford, Jan 7, 1856, found in David G. Lewis, “We Are Willing to Remove Anywhere, Where We Can Obtain Peace: Removal of the Rogue River Tribes To the Grand Ronde Reservation,” *Quartux Journal* Sept 16, 2017, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2017/09/16/we-are-willing-to-remove-anywhere-where-we-can-obtain-peace-removal-of-the-rogue-river-tribes-to-the-grand-ronde-reservation/>

<sup>666</sup> George Crook, *General George Crook, His Autobiography*, ed. Martin F. Schmitt (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1946; orig. ~1885 – 1890), p. 16. See also Sarah Deer, *Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), pp. 33 – 34.



They would consent to a peace if the Americans wished a peace and would grant a reserve on their own lands, and not exile them from their native country. But in case that their conditions were not accepted, they were resolved to fight to the last extremity, determined, even if they succumbed (these are their literal expressions) they would sooner destroy their wives and their children, than to have them fall into the hands of the Americans, who would gratify with them their infamous passions.<sup>667</sup>

The “infamous passions” of Americans were well-known enough by 1855 to stiffen the resolve of those calling for war. Many knew already that some Euro-Americans would try to rape Native women and children. And they knew, undoubtedly, that Euro-American society would typically refuse to prosecute or perhaps even recognize such crimes. As Rosemary Stremmler has suggested, Anglo-American rape culture, like settler colonialism generally, was (and is) structural—“sexual violence [experienced] as a process and a persistent threat instead of a single event.” And across the Pacific Northwest, Native communities knew it.<sup>668</sup>

In the Pacific Northwest as elsewhere, gold miners were especially associated with rape. This no doubt reflected a truth. Although seldom stated in such terms, scholars have long noted the frequency of rapists in American gold mining camp cultures—with White rapists typically tolerated as long as they targeted non-White women. But it is unclear the extent to which the notorious connection between those who raped and those

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<sup>667</sup> Transcribed in Granville O. Haller, *The Dismissal of Major Granville O. Haller of the Regular Army... and a Few Observations* (Paterson, N.J.: Daily Guardian, 1863), p. 40.

<sup>668</sup> Deer, *Beginning and End of Rape*, esp. p. 24; Rosemary Stremmler, “Rape Narratives on the Northern Paiute Frontier: Sarah Winnemucca, Sexual Sovereignty, and Economic Autonomy, 1844 – 1891,” *Portraits of Women in the American West*, ed. Dee Garceau-Hagen (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 37 – 62, quotation on p. 49.

who mined is a function of rapists being more prevalent in mining camps than other Euro-American social circles. Just as gold miners especially but by no means exclusively pursued genocide, there is reason to believe that the pursuit of rape was part of a broader pioneer culture beyond the mines.<sup>669</sup>

Accounts from Native people make clear such horrors were (and very much remain) frequent.<sup>670</sup> But among Euro-American records, there are only whispers of evidence. Even those pioneers proud of their part in genocide mostly knew that stories of rape were not fit to print. Many mass killers would avoid even a cursory mention of it; Loren L. Williams prattled gleefully in his journal about bloody murder, but never expressed a whiff of sexual impropriety. Prosecuting rape in court was difficult for anyone in nineteenth-century America; for Native women in the Pacific Northwest, it would have been nearly impossible. But there are signs and shadows.<sup>671</sup>

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<sup>669</sup> Albert L. Hurtado, *Indian Survival on the California Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), chap. 9; Rodman Wilson Paul and Elliott West, *Mining Frontiers of the Far West, 1848 – 1880*, revised edition (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001; orig. 1963), p. 205; Clifford E. Trafzer and Joel R. Hyer, *Exterminate Them: Written Accounts of the Murder, Rape, and Enslavement of Native Americans during the California Gold Rush* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1999); Brian Roberts, *American Alchemy: The California Gold Rush and Middle-Class Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), pp. 192, 240 – 242; Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities around Puget Sound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p. 99.

<sup>670</sup> Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, *Life Among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims*, ed. Mrs. Horace [Mary Tyler Peabody] Mann (Boston: Cupples, Upham, + Co, 1883), p. 229; Sarah Deer, Bonnie Clairmon, Carrie A. Martell, and Maureen L. White Eagle, eds., *Sharing Our Stories of Survival: Native Women Surviving Violence* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2007); Jasmine Owens, “‘Historic’ in a Bad Way: How the Tribal Law and Order Act Continues the American Tradition of Providing Inadequate Protection to American Indian and Alaska Native Rape Victims,” *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 102:2 (2012), pp. 497 – 524; Sherene H. Razack, “Gendered Racial Violence and Spatialized Justice: The Murder of Pamela George,” in *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society*, ed. Sherene H. Razack (Toronto: Between the Lines Press, 2002), pp. 125 – 156; Roe Bubar and Pamela Jumper Thurman, “Violence Against Native Women,” *Social Justice* 31:4 (2004), pp. 70 – 86; Roxanne Chinook, “My Spirit Lives,” *ibid.*, pp. 31 – 39.

<sup>671</sup> Estelle B. Freedman, *Redefining Rape: Sexual Violence in the Era of Suffrage and Segregation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013); Michelle J. Anderson, “Women Do Not Report the Violence They Suffer: Violence against Women and the State Action Doctrine,” *Villanova Law Review* 46:5 (2001), pp. 907 – 950, esp. 924 – 927; Karen Dubinsky, *Improper Advances: Rape and Heterosexual Conflict in Ontario, 1880 – 1929* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 83 – 84.

One of the clearest comes from Matthew Deady, a prominent Oregon political figure and judge, whose private description of the 1855 race for Oregon territorial representative described Joseph Lane and John Gaines each bragging of having “taken ‘a turn at the sq\_\_ws’” in the wars of the early 1850s. Deady included this description in a letter to James Nesmith, likely knowing that Nesmith liked scuttlebutt generally and sexual stories specifically. Both Lane and Gaines knew that bragging about (implied) sexual violence would be a hit with a southern Oregon audience (see Chapter III). No word of this part of the political speeches reached the papers. But men knew.<sup>672</sup>

Among Euro-Americans writing for a public audience, the subject could be nearly unspeakable. Reticence extended even to those Euro-Americans who wanted to present themselves as sympathetic to Native people. J.G. Rowton had been a “citizen volunteer” during the Nez Perce conflicts and War of the 1870s. He stipulated to sympathetic Euro-American historian Lucullus Virgil McWhorter that, contrary to pioneer beliefs that Native people had started the conflicts, in the lead-up to the war “[a]ll the shooting was done by the [White] citizens who was excited. There was no cause for shooting and when the shooting started the indians run to the woods and hid.”<sup>673</sup>

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<sup>672</sup> Matthew Deady to James W. Nesmith, Apr 29, 1855, Folder 16, Box 1, James W. Nesmith Papers Mss 577, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. I am here asserting a primarily but not necessarily exclusively masculine vernacular culture regarding sexual violence. Although rapists are typically male, there are oral histories that recall sexual assaults on Native people from other genders too (in a boarding school, in the case below). See Charlene Ann LaPointe, “Sexual Violence: An Introduction to the Social and Legal Issues for Native Women,” in *Sharing Our Stories of Survival: Native Women Surviving Violence*, ed. Sarah Deer, Bonnie Clairmon, Carrie A. Martell, and Maureen L. White Eagle (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2007), pp. 31 – 46.

<sup>673</sup> J. G. Rowton to Lucullus Virgil McWhorter, August 15, 1930, Folder 263, Box 29, Lucullus Virgil McWhorter Papers, Cage 24, Washington State University Libraries Special Collections, Pullman, WA. On Lucullus V. McWhorter’s unusual sympathies, see Lucullus V. McWhorter, *The Crime Against the Yakimas* (North Yakima, Wash.: Republic Print, 1913); Donald M. Hines, “The History and Traditional Lore of the Inland Pacific Northwest: Archival Materials,” *Journal of Folklore Institute* 13:1 (1976), pp. 91 – 103; Trevor James Bond, “From Treasure Room to Archives: The McWhorter Papers and the State College of Washington,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 102:2 (2011), pp. 67 – 78.

Although willing to see his condemnation of murder and accusation of White citizens put into print, Rowton did not want implications of rape to appear. Apparently Rowton had mentioned sexual violence in an earlier conversation with McWhorter, and he was worried that McWhorter might put his memories on the subject in print. After a reminiscence written in long, flowing paragraphs, Rowton added a set of staccato sentences in the postscript:

I mentioned the las[s]oing of the sq[ ]\_ws as a conversation I heard between two fellows

They were talking to each other

I do not believe the story worth consideration

They were telling each other of their experience with the sq\_\_ws

Each for all I know might have been trying to out do the other

I do not believe the story is worth tak[i]ng notice of

I tell it merely to indicate what the indians had to induce from some of the white men when the indians w even peaceable and friendly.<sup>674</sup>

With his scattered sentences and repetitions that the story was not worth writing about, Rowton expressed an almost visceral concern that McWhorter might publish a story breaking perhaps the greatest taboo of the pioneer code. It may be difficult to determine exactly what Rowton and the two men he referred to were talking about, but it seems clear that Rowton believed something illicit and unmentionable—worse than casual killing—had occurred, despite his prevarications about hearsay. There are multiple accounts of White settlers and soldiers lassoing and raping Native women. But Rowton

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<sup>674</sup> J. G. Rowton to Lucullus Virgil McWhorter, August 15, 1930, Folder 263, Box 29, Lucullus Virgil McWhorter Papers.

repeatedly asserted that the story was not “worth tak[i]ng notice of.” Whatever the two men had bragged about doing to Indigenous women, whatever they had done, Rowton did not want it in the history books.<sup>675</sup>

What other correspondents preferred is more ambiguous. Christina McDonald McKenzie Williams, who identified as being of White, Iroquois, and Nez Perce descent, wrote about the rapes invading soldiers perpetrated in eastern Washington to the historian Eva Emery Dye (see below).<sup>676</sup> Nellie Garry, the daughter of the famous Spokane leader Spokane Garry, told Williams stories of sexual assaults:

She said it was only too true + shameful what the soldiers did... [they] abuse[d] her, this lame woman [name redacted’s] daughter. This Nellie G[a]rry’s eyes filled with tears when relating the affair to me.... The soldiers ~~were~~ + officers were a little too familiar with the Indian women when they could overtake them or found them with tired horses of course this naturally made the men more desperate towards the whites. [T]ogether with taking their country +c.<sup>677</sup>

Williams identified sexual violence, both specific and general, perpetrated against Native people by Euro-American soldiers in eastern Washington. In the 1850s, sexual violence against Native people *was* sometimes reported—usually as something gold miners did.

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<sup>675</sup> Settlers lassoing and raping Native women has been noted elsewhere; see Antonia I. Castañeda, “Sexual Violence in the Politics and Policies of Conquest: Amerindian Women and the Spanish Conquest of Alta California,” in *Sexual Violence in Conflict Zones: From the Ancient World to the Era of Human Rights*, ed. Elizabeth D. Heineman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), pp. 39 – 55; Hopkins, *Life Among the Piutes*, p. 229; Strelau, “Rape Narratives on the Northern Paiute Frontier.”

<sup>676</sup> I use “Iroquois” rather than Haudenosaunee here in a mirror of Christina Williams’s assertion. The context suggests that she claimed descent from one or more Eastern Woodlands groups, but wasn’t sure from which or whom.

<sup>677</sup> Christina Williams to Eva Emery Dye, March 28, 1904, Folder 15, Box 2, Eva Emery Dye Papers. It appears from context that Nellie Garry knew her stories were being sent to a historian, so I have included her name in deference to her apparent wishes. However, as there is not a record as to whether the woman who was attacked (or her descendants) would have wanted her named in print, I have omitted that name.

The testimony of Nellie Garry and Christina Williams accused the soldiers *and* officers of the same crimes.<sup>678</sup>

Dye, who had been reaching out to Williams about a different topic, never breathed a word of this sexual violence in her writing (see below). Dye ignored the testimonies of Nellie Gerry and Christina Williams. In a public-facing interview about Native life in pioneer Washington that Williams was solicited for in 1915 by the historian William S. Lewis (see Chapter XI), no acts of violence against women were discussed. It is unclear if this silence was Williams's, Lewis's, or both.<sup>679</sup>

In 1996, historian of violence David T. Courtwright associated rape in West (and across America) with single men, culminating in a troubling proposal to marry off young men to minimize how much raping (and other violence) they would commit. Beyond the other problems with this formulation, any scholar of women's studies and/or the nineteenth-century American South (among other topics) could have informed Courtwright that marriage has not historically barred married Euro-American men from committing sexual assault—particularly against women of color. Both Lane and Gaines were married, and so were many of the gold miners. Married men might be even less likely to have their atrocities recorded, but that does not mean they committed none.<sup>680</sup>

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<sup>678</sup> Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins's autobiography differentiated good American officers who acted with honor from bad volunteers and pioneers who attempted rape. It is unclear the extent to which this represents Winnemucca's experiences, and the extent to which officers had to be portrayed as honorable for the book to achieve its goals. Hopkins, *Life Among the Piutes*; Stremmler, "Rape Narratives on the Northern Paiute Frontier"; A. Laurie Lowrance, "Resistance to Containment and Conquest in Sarah Winnemucca's *Life Among the Piutes* and Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton's *Who Would Have Thought It?*," *Western American Literature* 52:4 (2018), pp. 379 – 401; Carolyn Sorisio, "'I Nailed Those Lies': Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, Print Culture, and Collaboration," *J19: The Journal of Nineteenth-Century Americanists* 5:1 (2017), pp. 79 – 106.

<sup>679</sup> Christina McDonald McKenzie Williams with William S. Lewis, "The Daughter of Angus McDonald," *Washington Historical Quarterly* 13 (1922), pp. 107 – 117.

<sup>680</sup> David T. Courtwright, *Violent Land: Single Men and Social Disorder from the Frontier to the Inner City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 279 – 280; Roberts, *American Alchemy*, pp. 240 – 242;

Spousal rape and other intimate abuse that was legal in the nineteenth century is especially difficult to trace—even more so in those marriages and marriage-adjacent relationships that did not leave a paper trail through the courts. Excellent work has been done in recent decades examining Indigenous survivance, persistence, and resilience through the traditional tool of exogamous marriages. But this historical fact can lead to oversimplification. “Commerce and sex, sometimes both at the same time, and not violence, defined most of the relations between the Northern Indians and non-aboriginals,” one historian of northwestern Washington proclaimed (cf. Chapters 3 and 5). But of course, commerce, sex, and violence are not mutually exclusive.<sup>681</sup>

Marriages—or perceptions of marriages—between Native people and Euro-Americans should not be read as unassailable proof of loving relationships. Nor should they be assumed to be hostile, violent, or exploitative, without proof. Especially, marriage to women of Native descent should not alone be taken as a signifier of friendliness towards or allyship with Native people. Martin Angell, a notorious Indian-hater who murdered an Indigenous child in southern Oregon (see Chapters 2 and 7), was remembered as being married to a Native woman.<sup>682</sup> Nathan Olney, the volunteer who spent much of the 1850s and 1860s fighting Native communities in pursuit of (White) American supremacy, was married to a woman of Wasco descent named Twa-Wy “Annette” Hallicola—according to custom by 1853, made official in Euro-American law in 1859. The nature of this marriage is unclear from the sources, but unlike some mixed

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<sup>681</sup> John Lutz, “Inventing an Indian War: Canadian Indians and American Settlers in the Pacific West, 1854 – 1864,” *Journal of the West* 38:3 (July 1998), pp. 7 – 13, quotation on p. 12; see also Emma Milliken, “Choosing between Corsets and Freedom: Native, Mixed-Blood, and White Wives of Laborers at Fort Nisqually, 1833 – 1860,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 96:2 (2005), pp. 95 – 101; Chelsea Rose, “Lonely Men, Loose Women: Rethinking the Demographics of a Multiethnic Mining Camp, Kanaka Flat, Oregon,” *Historical Archaeology* 47:3 (2013), pp. 23 – 35; Deer, *Beginning and End of Rape*, pp. 65 – 67; Dubinsky, *Improper Advances*, chap. 2.

<sup>682</sup> Bill Miller, “The Ambush of Martin Angel,” *Medford Mail Tribune* June 15, 2009.

marriages of the period it was public and widely acknowledged. Olney seems to have (at least sometimes) acknowledged and provided for his Native family members, and his descendants were community leaders. But he was still a murderous crusader for White supremacy in several wars (see Chapter VII).<sup>683</sup>

One of the rare detailed accounts of typically-invisible spousal abuse perpetrated by pioneer men against Native women in the archival records comes from the Snohomish/Samish leader (and sometime chairwoman of Tulalip Reservation) Harriette Shelton Dover/Hi-ahl-tsa and her mother Ruth Sehome Shelton/Sh-yas-tenoe. Contacted in the 1950s by Euro-American historian Percival Jeffcott for help with the historical names of their relatives, the Sheltons over time informed Jeffcott of (some of) the wrongs done to their family by one of the men he was planning to write about—Edmond Clare Fitzhugh.<sup>684</sup>

Fitzhugh, who variously gained money and influence in the region as a lawyer, volunteer soldier, government functionary, and would-be coal baron, seized Native land in northwestern Washington from 1854 on.<sup>685</sup> Drawing on his status (and perceived

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<sup>683</sup> “Annette Hallicola,” found in “Early Oregonian Search,” Public Records System, Oregon State Archives, Salem, OR, Nathan Olney’s son Franklin P. Olney believed his father had purchased his mother when she was fifteen, in 1853. Franklin Pierce Olney to Editor, *Yakima Herald*, Oct 18, 1889, printed as “A Prominent Pioneer: A Son of Nathan Olney Denies Some Statements Made by the Correspondent of an Eastern Journal,” *Yakima Herald* Oct 24, 1889, p. 3. For his descendants as leaders, see Michelle M. Jacob and Wynona M. Peters, ““The Proper Way to Advance the Indian’: Race and Gender Hierarchies in Early Yakima Newspapers,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 26:2 (2011), pp. 39 – 55. A reminiscence from Elizabeth Laughlin Lord had it that Olney left his Native wife for a more “respectable” marriage in 1856, taking one of the children and leaving the other, only to return to his first wife when that marriage fell apart. Given the sanctimonious racism that elides facts in other areas of Lord’s account, additional evidence would be needed to establish the historical likelihood of this assertion. Lord may have been confusing two different Native women. Elizabeth Laughlin Lord, *Reminiscences of Eastern Oregon* (Portland, OR: The Irwin-Hodson Company, 1903), pp. 155 – 157.

<sup>684</sup> Ruth and Harriette Shelton to P[ercival] R. Jeffcott, Nov 18, 1953, Folder 7, Box 1, Percival R. Jeffcott Papers, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Heritage Resources, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA. Snohomish Lushootseed orthography was transcribed directly from the original letters, and may depart somewhat from modern orthography.

<sup>685</sup> Edmond Clare Fitzhugh to Isaac I. Stevens, Apr 5, 1857, found in Ronald Todd *et al*, “Letters of Isaac I. Stevens, 1857 – 1858,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 31:4 (1940), pp. 403 – 459; Daniel L. Boxberger, “In



threat) as an agent of the United States government, Fitzhugh demanded of local Native leaders that he be provided with a “Chief’s daughter.” Ruth Shelton/Sh-yas-tenoe’s sister Julia/E-yam-alth (S’Klallam/Samish) was eventually procured and coerced into “marriage” with Fitzhugh against her will. Soon Fitzhugh inveigled Julia/E-yam-alth’s aunt Whelas/Xwelas into the household as well, under murky circumstances. As Ruth Shelton/Sh-yas-tenoe put it, “E-yam-alth... first was the consort of Mr. Fitzhugh... my sister Julia didn’t want to be his wife; she cried and cried.” The rest of her immediate family moved to be near to her, hoping to be some comfort during her forced marriage.<sup>686</sup> Although “Julia”/E-yam-alth’s descendants and relatives had different stories about the exact sequence of events that led up to the Indigenous teenager “marrying” the middle-aged Euro-American, there was agreement that she had not wanted to marry Fitzhugh and had been unhappy in the marriage. As historian David Peterson del Mar has found, murky evidence of both such coerced marriages and “more episodic forms of rape” occasionally persists at the margins of the records of soldiers, officers, miners, and other settlers.<sup>687</sup>

Edmond Clare Fitzhugh has always had the repute of a violent killer. He participated in a duel in San Francisco, and killed a man named Wilson in a gambling dispute in northwestern Washington. He was indicted and then released—with oral histories claiming he had more or less served as the judge on his own murder case—and

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and Out of the Labor Force: The Lummi Indians and the Development of the Commercial Salmon Fishery of North Puget Sound, 1880 – 1900,” *Ethnohistory* 35:2 (1988), pp. 161 – 190, esp. p. 165; George Gibbs, “Physical Geography of the North-Western Boundary of the United States,” *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York* 4 (1873), pp. 298 – 392, esp. p. 315; Coll-Peter Thrush and Robert H. Keller, Jr., “‘I See What I Have Done’: The Life and Murder Trial of Xwelas, A S’Kallam Woman,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 26:2 (1995), pp. 168 – 183.

<sup>686</sup> Ruth and Harriette Shelton to P[ercival] R. Jeffcott, Nov 18, 1953, Folder 7, Box 1, Percival R. Jeffcott Papers; Ruth and Harriette Shelton to P[ercival] R. Jeffcott, Feb 5, 1953, *ibid*.

<sup>687</sup> David Peterson del Mar, *Beaten Down: A History of Interpersonal Violence in the West* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), p. 37.

may have been involved in additional killings.<sup>688</sup> Like Isaac I. Stevens, Fitzhugh believed in harsh treatment of Native people. As he wrote in 1856

The Indians of course, are willing to play quits, save all their people and stop the war. If they succeed in doing that, as soon as they are well prepared to carry on the war with any prospects of success, the government will have the same expense and trouble over again.<sup>689</sup>

It is, as usual, difficult to tell how expansive Fitzhugh's conception of "the Indians" was. He wrote of "Our Indians" (those he viewed as provisionally friendly and tractable) and "the Indians" (whose entreaties for peace could not be trusted). Both, of course, were Other.

He also abused both of his Native wives, who left him. Ruth Shelton/Sh-yas-tenoe remembered that the breaking point had been when Fitzhugh kidnapped the children he had with them:

Fitzhugh took his two children to Seattle, and placed them in an all-white family.... When he took the two children, my sister Julie and our Aunt Whelas walked out of his home, and never returned. And although they tried to locate the children, they never really knew what happened to them until years later, when Mason Fitzhugh returned to Bellingham; looking for his mother; and he was about seventeen years old when he returned. They had had some years of hardship,

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<sup>688</sup> For the duel and the gambling murder, see Sidney Teiser, "Obadiah B. McFadden, Oregon and Washington Territorial Judge," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 66:1 (1965), pp. 25 – 37, esp. p. 34 n. 31. For memories of Fitzhugh absolving himself of a murder charge, see James F. Tulloch, *The James Francis Tulloch Diary 1875 – 1910*, ed. Gordon Keith (Hillsboro, Ore: Binford & Mort, 1978), p. 16; Howard E. Buswell interview with Mrs. Hallie Lyle Campbell, Feb 23, 1944, Folder 16, Box 5, Howard E. Buswell Papers and Photographs, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Heritage Resources, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA; Thrush and Keller, Jr., "I See What I Have Done."

<sup>689</sup> Edmond Clare Fitzhugh to Isaac I. Stevens, June 20, 1856, found in Virgil F. Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard, Volume 2: Washington Territorial Militia and the Indian Wars of 1855-56* (Tacoma: Washington National Guard State Historical Society, 1961), pp. 52 – 53.

when the original family with which they were placed, had a death—the father of the family died, so they just drifted for a time, until they were taken in by a kind-hearted family.<sup>690</sup>

One of Fitzhugh’s children never made it back home, taken from her mother and moved (abandoned?) somewhere in California by the White father who did not acknowledge her as legitimate. Mason Fitzhugh, as Harriette Shelton Dover/Hi-ahl-tsa remembered decades later, suffered abuse at the hands of the White family he had been “given” to, but did find his way back to his people as a teenager—and “told his father to go to ‘you know where.’”<sup>691</sup>

Harriette Shelton/Hi-ahl-tsa remembered a different version of how the family parted from Fitzhugh. According to an account from her aunt Julia/ E-yam-alth, some time after taking the children away Fitzhugh attempted to beat both of his wives. After the first hit, as the story went, Julia/E-yam-alth struck back, pummeling him half to death with a length of firewood—badly enough that he was still walking with a limp when he left Washington Territory on his way back to Virginia (where he fought for the Confederacy in the Civil War).<sup>692</sup> Fitzhugh’s other wife from the period, Julia/E-yam-alth’s aunt Whelas/Xwelas, responded similarly to intimate violence—shooting down her abusive White husband George Phillips in 1878, in a case that became locally famous.<sup>693</sup>

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<sup>690</sup> Ruth and Harriette Shelton to P[ercival] R. Jeffcott, Feb 5, 1954, Folder 7, Box 1, Percival R. Jeffcott Papers.

<sup>691</sup> “The Fitzhugh Family (Concluded),” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 9:1 (1901), pp. 99 – 104; Ruth and Harriette Shelton to P[ercival] R. Jeffcott, Feb 5, 1954, Folder 7, Box 1, Percival R. Jeffcott Papers; Harriette Shelton Dover, *Tulalip from My Heart: An Autobiographical Account of a Reservation Community*, ed. Darleen Fitzpatrick (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), pp. 73 – 74; Ruth and Harriette Shelton to P[ercival] R. Jeffcott, Feb 5, 1954, Folder 7, Box 1, Percival R. Jeffcott Papers.

<sup>692</sup> Dover, *Tulalip from My Heart*, pp. 71 – 74. See also Percival R. Jeffcott, “Romance and Intrigue on Bellingham Bay: A Story of Old Sehome,” (unpublished, 1955), pp. 30 – 37, Folder 13, Box 4, Percival R. Jeffcott Papers.

<sup>693</sup> Thrush and Keller, Jr., “I See What I Have Done.”

Percival R. Jeffcott, a local historian of Bellingham WA who in the 1930s took an interest in interracial marriages, saw such dynamics as common. In his sympathetic (!) account of a spousal abuser named Billy Clark, he intimated that Euro-American men attacking the Native women they were married to was considered normal:

Billy Clark [was] not overly ambitious himself, yet with the help of his Indian “woman” and the assistance of his two daughters he managed to make a fair and easy living [in the 1870s]. It is said that he was overbearing to his wife but *that was the lot of most Indian women*, and he and his stepson, George Kinley, did not get along well together... Trouble with the boy probably led to trouble with his mother and she finally rebelled against Billy’s harsh treatment and left him...

Trouble seldom visits its victims singly, and so it was with Billy.<sup>694</sup>

Clark was clearly abusive—and it is not unreasonable to read a history of physical violence into descriptors like “overbearing” and “harsh.” Oral histories collected (but not published) by other historians of the region found similar patterns.<sup>695</sup> As David Peterson del Mar has shown, spousal abuse was common across the Pacific Northwest in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.<sup>696</sup> And as Katrina Jagodinsky has suggested, Native women in northwestern Washington may have been both more societally vulnerable to abuse by Euro-American men because of colonial circumstances *and* more

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<sup>694</sup> Percival R. Jeffcott, “Billy Clark Stories,” p. 7 (emphasis mine), Folder 23, Box 7, Percival R. Jeffcott Papers. Strikingly, Jeffcott framed Billy Clark, not the wife he mistreated, as the victim of this narrative.

<sup>695</sup> Howard E. Buswell interview with Mrs. E. Graham, Jan 6 1958, Folder 13, Box 5, Howard E. Buswell Papers and Photographs, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Heritage Resources, Western Washington University, Bellingham WA. Both Buswell and Jeffcott were reticent to publish allegations of spousal abuse—though this may simply have been part of a broader discomfort with “outing” local people of mixed race descent. See Howard E. Buswell interview with P.R. Jeffcott & wife, Folder 40, Box 5, Howard E. Buswell Papers and Photographs, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Heritage Resources, Western Washington University, Bellingham WA.

<sup>696</sup> del Mar, *Beaten Down*, p. 4.

prepared to fight against that abuse through Indigenous mores and support systems.<sup>697</sup>

Many marriages between Euro-Americans and Native people were loving and supportive—including, according to her family, Julia/E-yam-alth's third marriage, to a Euro-American man named H. G. Barkhousen who was the polar opposite of the horrors of Fitzhugh.<sup>698</sup> But the presence of marriage, or sex, or commerce between Native and White persons does not in itself necessarily mean an absence of racial violence, White supremacist thought, or genocidal dreams.

Unlike sexual violence, many pioneer accounts were open about killing Native women, children, and other perceived noncombatants. According to James Twogood (see Chapter III), the genocidal axiom “Nits breed lice” was common currency among volunteers, similar to the famous phrase “the only good Indian is a dead Indian” but even more specific in its targeting of children.<sup>699</sup> There seems to have been some dissention over how appropriate it was to pursue (or discuss) the killings of noncombatant Native women. Gabriel Rains, in his public-facing missive promising to wipe the Yakama from the face of the earth (see Chapter IV), risibly claimed that Euro-Americans did not kill women and children.<sup>700</sup> Loren L. Williams, in his genocidal order meant for the record

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<sup>697</sup> Katrina Jagodinsky, *Legal Codes and Talking Trees: Indigenous Women's Sovereignty in the Sonoran and Puget Sound Borderlands, 1854 – 1946* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2016), esp. p. 84. See also Oliver C. Applegate, “The Applegate Report,” Apr 1, 1905, orig. unknown, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Tribal Library Collections, Chachalu Museum and Cultural Center, Grande Ronde, CTGR/OR.

<sup>698</sup> Ruth and Harriette Shelton to P[ercival] R. Jeffcott, Feb. 5, 1954, Folder 7, Box 1, Percival R. Jeffcott Papers

<sup>699</sup> James Twogood to Dudley & Michener, Nov 10, 1897, pp. 10 - 11, James Henry Twogood papers, 1888-1910, Graff coll. 4224, Newberry Library Special Collections; Wolfgang Mieder, “‘The Only Good Indian Is a Dead Indian’: History and Meaning of a Proverbial Stereotype,” *The Journal of American Folklore* 106:419 (1993): 38–60.

<sup>700</sup> G[abriel] J. Rains “to Kam-i-ah-kan,” Nov 13, 1855, Miscellaneous Letters Received August 22, 1853 – April 9, 1874, Records of the Washington Superintendency of Indian Affairs 1853 – 1874, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, RG 75, National Archives and Records Administration, accessed via microfilm

(see Chapter VII), suggested that his troops should try not to deliberately kill any Native women—although they might accidentally do so when “mercilessly” attacking Native settlements.<sup>701</sup> Others, like Abigail Malick and Oregon Governor George Lemuel Woods, proudly proclaimed a policy of killing men and women alike (see Chapters 3 and 6).<sup>702</sup>

It was common to omit the killings of Native women from military reports, but the motives of those who so omitted are unclear. When Benjamin Shaw reported only six official casualties inflicted among the mass killings at Grand Ronde Valley (in which dozens of mostly non-combatant Cayuse people were killed), it is not clear whether shame, an eye on posterity, or a perceived need to report only those casualties considered fighters shaped his response (see Chapter IV). Edward O.C. Ord, when he was killing in his campaign along southwestern Oregon coast, wrote in his diary on March 26, 1856 of killing “8 Indians, besides squaws and wounded at least as many more” in a battle the day before. This implies not shame but indifferent to killings of Native women; as perceived non-combatants, he thought they didn’t count (see Chapter III). The same logic may have shaped Hamilton Maxon’s undercount of “Eight Hostiles Killed” in the massacre that bears his name—it is possible he listed only the men, because he did not

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(M5, Roll 23). Originally found in Jo N. Miles, *Kamiakin Country: Washington Territory in Turmoil, 1855 – 1858* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 2016).

<sup>701</sup> Loren L. Williams, “General Orders No 7: Troops to Be Ready to Pursue Hostile Indians +c +c +c,” Camp Wright Ogn Oct 5, 1865, pasted between pages 85 ½ and 86, Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 3, Graff 4683, Newberry Library Special Collections, Chicago, IL.

<sup>702</sup> Abigail Malick to Mary and Michael Albright, Sept 1, 1861, Folder 39, Box 1, Malick Family Papers. Donna Clark and Keith Clark, “William McKay’s Journal, 1866-67: Indian Scouts, Part I,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 79:2 (1978), pp. 121 – 171, esp. p. 129.

view the other presumably Nisqually people he and his fellow volunteers murdered as needing to be counted (see Chapter IV).<sup>703</sup>

Early pioneer histories tended to be mournful or silent about the killing of Native women and children. Herbert Lang found the deaths of Native women to be proof positive of the ungentlemanly nature of many southern Oregon White men. Hubert Howe Bancroft mentioned such deaths only occasionally (and Frances Fuller Victor even less), but typically portrayed them as unfortunate and/or accidental. Elwood Evans, characteristically, ignored the deaths of Native women almost entirely, and amplified every story of purported Native perfidy he could find (see Chapters 7 and 8).

In the early twentieth century, historians and heritage groups followed the lead of those like Evans, and omitted wanton violence by settlers. Though many edited out pioneer violence they viewed as iniquitous — rapes, attacks on the unarmed, mutilation (sometimes), mass murder — they embraced American imperialism as a virtue. They celebrated “pioneers” as the vanguard of an American army conquering a new land. Indeed, while they omitted illicit violence, they depicted purportedly righteous violence against Native people as part of the legacy of all pioneers, not just the volunteers. Early twentieth-century histories were more likely to tell bounded stories of righteous violence

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<sup>703</sup> Clifford E. Trafzer and Richard D. Scheuerman, *Renegade Tribe: Palouse Indians and the Invasion of the Inland Pacific Northwest* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1986), pp. 72 – 74; Edward Otho Cresap Ord, “Diary of E.O.C. Ord 3<sup>rd</sup> Art U.S. Army,” transcribed in Ellen Francis Ord, “The Rogue River Indian Expedition of 1856,” Master’s thesis (University of California, 1922), p. 27; “Complete Surprise on an Indian Encampment! Eight Hostiles Killed,” *Olympia Pioneer and Democrat*, Apr 11, 1856, p. 2. Ord, or at least some of his men, were marginally less cavalier about children. Describing an April 29, 1856 encounter: “an Indian started from the brushes near [a canoe] to run – two or three shots fired at it & it dropped. Men examined and found had killed Indian and child – only saw flutter of blanket in brush when they fired.” The flutter of blanket was worth mentioning for Ord to tell a story of the child-killing as an accident. Note also the use of “it” rather than “he.” Ord, “Diary of E.O.C. Ord 3<sup>rd</sup> Art U.S. Army,” p. 43.

against “bad Indians” alongside stories of “good Indians” who had aided explorers, welcomed settlers, and then mythopoetically faded into the background.<sup>704</sup>

This emerging metanarrative is perhaps best demonstrated in the works of early-twentieth-century historical novelist Eva Emery Dye, who celebrated righteous violence *and* peacemaking in the service of race and empire. She based her creations on extensive historical research, filling gaps in the historical record and details in the historical fabric with her own imagination, creating fictions that sometimes had more evidence behind them than conventional histories of the time. Dye leaned variously into her reputation as a historian and as a novelist, depending on the situation. This mix did not always sit well with other Northwest historians. As Frances Fuller Victor put it in a book review that cooled the friendship between herself and Dye,

the necessity of... melodrama does not excuse the perversion of history.... when, either by assertion or implication, it leads the reader to believe which is essentially erroneous[,] it becomes mischievous.<sup>705</sup>

Omission, such as Victor practiced, was one thing (see Chapters 7 and 8). Invention, however, was “perversion” to Victor.

Dye’s most successful work, *The Conquest* (1902), brought popular attention to the Lewis and Clark Expedition and to Sacagawea’s role within it (see Chapter XI). It was, as the title implies, a celebration of conquest, putting Lewis and Clark *and*

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<sup>704</sup> On questions of historical memory and shifting metanarratives in Oregon and the West, see among many others Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1987); Mark Axel Tveskov, “A ‘Most Disastrous Affair’: The Battle of Hungry Hill, Historical Memory, and the Rogue River War,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 118:1 (Spring 2017), pp. 42 – 73; Lisa Blee, *Framing Leschi: Narrative and the Politics of Historical Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

<sup>705</sup> Frances Fuller Victor, “Review of *McLoughlin and Old Oregon* by Eva Emery Dye,” *American Historical Review* 6:1 (1900), pp. 148 – 150; W[illiam] A. Mowry to Eva Emery Dye, Oct 10, 1900, Folder 3, Box 2, Eva Emery Dye Papers.



Sacagawea within a broader story of generations of righteous violence. The conquest of Oregon had followed on the conquest of Missouri had followed on the conquest of Illinois; the “conquest” of a “weaker race” by a stronger one was inevitable to Dye, as it had been to Victor and Bancroft. But in place of the long Indian Wars Elwood Evans had praised as a necessity, Dye framed the invasions as short and successful—brief violent clashes, won by White supremacy and immediately followed by peace. Dye ended her mammoth book with praise for those “fighting new battles, planning new conquests.... of the Poles and Tropics,” celebrating the seizure of the Philippines and pointing to further imperial expansion as the natural corollary of Anglo-Americans’ manifest destiny.<sup>706</sup> And indeed, Pacific Northwest Indian War veterans were known to pass on war relics to children shipping out for colonial wars in Pacific.<sup>707</sup>

Dye was not the first to explicitly connect the pioneer invasion of the Pacific Northwest with imperial seizures overseas. When the Reverend Plutarch Stewart Knight gave a keynote address at the Oregon Pioneer Association in 1898, he made an explicit and approving connection between the ongoing Spanish-American War and the actions of pioneers like himself back in the 1850s—and connected this to a call for bellicose colonialism in the name of civilization overseas:

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<sup>706</sup> Eva Emery Dye, *The Conquest: The True Story of Lewis and Clark* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1902), pp. 404, 443. See also Sheri Bartlett Browne, *Eva Emery Dye: Romance with the West* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2004), esp. 98 – 99; Richard W. Etulain, “Telling Lewis and Clark Stories: Historical Novelists as Storytellers,” *South Dakota History* 34:1 (2004), pp. 62 – 84, esp. 63 – 66. Dye’s publisher informed her that “‘The Conquest’ is not put out as fiction, and cannot be.... ‘The Conquest’ is history pure and simple, written I grant in a unique style, but still history, and its appeal must be very materially limited by this fact.” See F. G. Browne to Eva Emery Dye, Nov 28, 1903 [?], Folder 5, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers.

<sup>707</sup> William Painter, who claimed to have fought as a volunteer against the Yakima and the Nez Perce (!) in 1855, and in the Bannock War in 1878, gave “a handsome sword” he had been awarded for that service for his son Harry Painter to carry in the Philippines in 1898. Vera J. Maxwell to Eva Emery Dye, May 24, 1917, Folder 3, Box 2, Eva Emery Dye Papers.

While statesmanship debated, hesitated and protested, [the pioneer] with his ox whip and his rifle went forward and settled the issue. While statesmanship would have confined our young life to the eastern rim of the continent and made our national interest narrow and provincial, the pioneer led it across plains and mountains[,] spreading it from ocean to ocean and making it continental.

If an epoch in national policy was created by a hand full of pioneers who pushed into the unknown regions and compelled the recognition of hesitating statesmen, is it not possible that another epoch is dawning? <sup>708</sup>

Knight drew a direct line between the pioneering of the West Coast and the American overseas invasions:

What is the meaning of this petition from Hawaii on one side, this cry from long-tortured Cuba on the other? What means this sound of battle from the distant Phi[ilippines], this sailing of thousands of our best young men, a goodly number of them sons of the pioneers, across the western seas? Does all this imply that our march is ended, our mission closed? Or does it imply, rather, that our last Chinese wall has crumbled before its foundations were half laid? <sup>709</sup>

Knight, Dye, and others saw American colonial conquests overseas as a natural extension of the conquest of the continental American West. Many federal and military officers, as historian Katharine Bjork has shown, saw the new imperial conquests in the same way. <sup>710</sup>

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<sup>708</sup> Rev. Plutarch Stewart Knight, "The Pioneer as an Epoch Maker," Annual Address to the Oregon Pioneer Association, 1898, pp. 9 – 11, Mss 2250, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>709</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>710</sup> Katharine Bjork, *Prairie Imperialists: The Indian Country Origins of American Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).

While praising righteous violence, Dye deliberately ignored misdeeds she knew from her research had occurred. Dye knew that historically Toussaint Charbonneau, who had bought Sacagawea as a “wife” and claimed her wages for the expedition, had beaten her viciously enough to attract rebuke from William Clark. But Dye had her character “Sacajawea” praise her fortune at being married to a White man. Dye knew from Christina Williams (see above) that Euro-American volunteers had sexually assaulted Native women during the wars of the 1850s — but the fictional volunteer soldiers across her works are almost unfailingly gallant. Dye knew from every facet of her research that many trappers had been “loose and lawless in almost every particular,” but she broke from historians like Lang and Bancroft to make them into rustic champions of her novels. Dye wrote heroic historical fiction, and such stories had no place in it. As one of her major informants, John Minto, approvingly put it, the focus was on “the Sentiment more than the Story.” Dye prided herself on being “as impartial as any one” in the creation of what she called her “living histories,” but her impartiality only went one direction. She might mint new heroes, but any sense of settler crimes was generally scrubbed from her narratives. Dye’s “living histories,” anticipating popular memory to follow, typically framed “Indian wars” as short outbursts of violence spurred by a few treacherous Native people amidst a sea of honorable men and women on both sides, after which Native communities would obligingly fade into the background.<sup>711</sup>

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<sup>711</sup> For Dye’s knowledge of Toussaint Charbonneau’s abuse and her use of the phrase “living histories,” see Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 90; for Dye’s knowledge of pioneer rape and violence, see among others Christina Williams to Eva Emery Dye, March 28, 1904, Folder 15, Box 2, Eva Emery Dye Papers; for the quotation from John Minto, see John Minto to Frederick G. Young, Oct 21, 1901, Folder 6, Box 1, John Minto Papers Mss 752, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections; for Dye’s assertion of herself as an impartial historian, see Eva Emery Dye, “A Paper for the Future Historian of Oregon,” n.d., Folder 7, Box 5, Eva Emery Dye Papers. See also Wanda Pillow, “Searching for Sacajawea: Whitened Reproduction and Endarkened Representations,” *Hypatia* 22 (2007), pp. 1 – 19.

Dye's books, particularly *The Conquest*, significantly shaped the popular narrative of Oregon pioneering in the early twentieth century. Her stories of Oregon were read across the country and locally, admired by some historians and adopted by Pacific Northwest Indian Schools and universities alike. Attendees at the Salem Chemawa Indian School in 1902 were encouraged to read Dye's *Stories of Oregon*. Perhaps administrators there found her mix of praise for "good Indians," pioneers, and the westward course of American empire instructive. Or perhaps it was the stories of honorable submission. Joseph Lane was presented in this work as a stern patriarch; James Lupton was absent, and so were the many analogous acts of wanton White violence. But for settlers, "[m]assacre followed massacre." White invaders were the victims, not the aggressors. Inevitably in Dye's *Stories of Oregon*, the Indian characters all learn they "must give up the vast areas over which [they were] wont to roam, and come under the laws of civilized life."<sup>712</sup>

Dye was not the only writer to place the invaders of the Pacific Northwest in the long sweep of imperial American history. John Minto, a volunteer who took a decades-long interest in shaping regional history, argued in 1902 early "Oregon pioneers" in the 1840s "were largely of the same blood as those who took permanent possession of the

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<sup>712</sup> Lisa Blee, "Completing Lewis and Clark's Westward March: Exhibiting a History of Empire at the 1905 Portland World's Fair," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 106:2 (2005), pp. 232 – 253; Donna J. Kessler, *The Making of Sacagawea: A Euro-American Legend* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996), pp. 81 – 88, esp. 88. For Dye's books being assigned at Chemawa, see Tirzah (Trask) Garnier to Eva Emery Dye, Feb 11, 1902, Folder 12, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers. For Dye's books being assigned at universities, see Robert Moulton Gatke, Instructor in Oregon History, Willamette University, to Eva Emery Dye, May 20, 1921, *ibid.* Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. This letter was in part a request for Dye to deliver instruction gratis to Willamette University students, so it is possible that the letter-writer exaggerated her influence. Eva Emery Dye, *Stories of Old Oregon* (San Francisco: The Whitaker and Ray Company, 1900), esp. pp. 163 – 181; quotations on pp. 176 ["Massacre followed massacre"], 181 ["must give up"].

“Dark and Bloody ground” in the 1700s—in other words, of those pioneers who had made war to seize Kentucky.<sup>713</sup> By 1903, he was writing

a paper designed to show the spiritual and indicat[ing] the strong probability of family connection between the winners of the Ohio Valley from the native race and British power and those who help[ed] win The Willamette Valley seventy year[s] later.<sup>714</sup>

Minto and other volunteer veterans saw the wars they had fought in Oregon a part of a multi-general war of conquest against “the native race.” Minto remained proud of this conquest, and saw no contradiction in celebrating both the wars and his claim that “the race prejudice against Indian or negro blood the American homebuilder brought with him from Missouri to Oregon” had been “well nigh conquered” by 1903.<sup>715</sup> Minto’s own reflections about the “diverse tribes” of “savage men” who pursued “massacre, rapine[,] and death” along the Oregon, “whose general mode of attack was that of the wolf” was somehow not, in his estimation, a function of Minto’s “race prejudice.”<sup>716</sup> After all, he had Indian friends.<sup>717</sup>

And some Northwest historians moved from celebrating the wars to ignoring them entirely. As the engineer and pioneer historian Hiram Chittenden, primarily a historian of the fur trade, put it in his essay on the “Pioneer Way”:

[T]he ceaseless, steady flow of colonization from the Atlantic to the Pacific...

was throughout a spontaneous, individual movement by a liberty-loving people—

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<sup>713</sup> John Minto to Frederick G. Young, Oct 27, 1902, Folder 6, Box 1, John Minto Papers

<sup>714</sup> John Minto to Frederick G. Young, Aug 12, 1903, *ibid.*

<sup>715</sup> John Minto to Frederick G. Young, Oct 30, 1903, *ibid.*

<sup>716</sup> John Minto, “Motives of Oregon Pioneers,” pp. 5 – 6, Folder 10, Box 2, John Minto Papers. See also Sarah Keyes, “From Stories to Salt Cairns: Uncovering Indigenous Influence in the Formative Years of the Oregon Historical Society, 1898 – 1905,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 121:2 (2020), pp. 186 – 211.

<sup>717</sup> John Minto to Frederick G. Young, June 7, 1901, Folder 6, Box 1, John Minto Papers.

not organized by military force nor compelled by a thirst for armed conquest. It was a process of pathfinding and up-building all the way, distinguished by heroic toil, by battle with savage foes and with unfriendly Nature, yet withal by an indomitable spirit and steadfastness of purpose that do high honor to human nature.<sup>718</sup>

Rather than celebrating or condemning the wars of conquest in the 1850s, he ignored their existence as such—the wars had presumably been a part of battling “savage foes and... unfriendly Nature,” but did not need separate mention.

Later, in 1917, Chittenden did reference mass killings and Native people, in a condemnation of the Armenian genocide. But he framed American Indians as the aggressors rather than the aggrieved:

We have stood by, in this Twentieth Century of Christian civilization idle spectators of the most atrocious barbarism which human history records. Nothing which we can recall from the bloodiest annals of the race even approaches in infamy the recent Armenian persecutions. Something like a million human beings have been swept out of existence under circumstances of barbarity which even the untamed American savage could not surpass.<sup>719</sup>

Chittenden, like so many of his fellows, was a fervent believer in White supremacy. He saw the Armenian genocide for what it was (and argued that “Virile Americanism” was needed to stop it), but portrayed the genocides perpetrated against Native people by Americans only as “that evolutionary process by which a weaker race disappears before a

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<sup>718</sup> Hiram Chittenden, “Pioneer Way,” [n.d., likely 1911 - 1915], Series 2, Vertical File 1, Accession No. 4632-001, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA.

<sup>719</sup> Hiram Chittenden, “‘He Kept Us Out Us Out of the War’ A Plea for a More Virile Americanism,” [1917?], in *ibid.*

superior.” He ignored Indian Wars, but maintained the attitude that Native people were always already the aggressors.<sup>720</sup>

Not all settlers agreed on what heroic history should be. A man named James M. Marden spent much of the 1850s chasing gold rushes up and down the Pacific Coast, before eventually settling near The Dalles, in eastern Oregon. In 1861, there was a murder nearby, and locals assumed it had been committed by an Indian. While “investigating,” Marden shot an unarmed Native man he suspected of the deed—supposedly while the man was attempting to grab Marden’s gun. The killing, however righteous it may or may not have been, was not made a part of Marden’s biography in the mammoth 1905 *Illustrated History of Central Oregon*. But it was of vital local interest, remembered and recounted at local pioneer gatherings. And the gun with which Marden had shot the unarmed Native man (in supposed self-defense) was at first kept as an heirloom by the family, then donated to the local museum.<sup>721</sup>

Clarence B. Bagley, a government functionary, Northwest pioneer, and avid history buff, has sometimes been labelled Washington State’s “first and preeminent historian.”<sup>722</sup> Though he did not touch upon the subject often, Bagley’s approach to the Pacific Northwest Indian Wars was an evolution of Elwood Evans and Charles Drew’s.

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<sup>720</sup> Gordon B. Dodds, *Hiram Martin Chittenden: His Public Career* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1973), pp. 97 – 99, quotation from p. 98.

<sup>721</sup> Arthur P. Rose, Richard F. Steele, and A. E. Adams, editors, *An Illustrated History of Central Oregon: Embracing Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler, Crook, Lake, and Klamath Counties* (Spokane, Wash.: Western Historical Publishing Company, 1905), pp. 307 – 308; Kate D. Moody, “Notes on a Conversation with John Todd,” 1917, pp. 5 – 6, enclosed in Kate D. Moody to Lulu Crandall, Sept 11, 1927, Folder 36, Box 7, Cage 249, Lulu Donnell Crandall Papers, Washington State University Libraries Special Collections, Pullman, WA.

<sup>722</sup> Quotation from contextual notes, James Wehn, “Clarence B. Bagley at grave of Chief Seattle, 1931,” photograph, POR0045, Clarence Bagley Collection, PH Coll 160, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA; Edmond S. Meany, “Clarence Booth Bagley,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 23:2 (1932), pp. 131 – 132; Christine A. Neergard, “Clarence B. Bagley: A Brief Biography,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 26:2 (1935), pp. 109 – 118; George A. Frykman, “Development of the ‘Washington Historical Quarterly,’ 1906 – 1935: The Work of Edmond S. Meany and Charles W. Smith,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 70:3 (1979), pp. 121 – 130.

Bagley omitted pioneer misdeeds while acknowledging that they existed in the abstract, yet separated the crimes of pioneers entirely from Native reactions to them. Bagley in the 1906 inaugural issue of the *Washington Historical Quarterly* heaped praise on

volunteers, who left their homes and family to go to the Indian country in defense of the outlying settlers or to avenge the unprovoked and brutal crimes against them....

It has been the fashion among a class of persons, absolutely ignorant of conditions on the frontier, to prate loudly of the wrongs visited upon the poor Indian. No one, with any knowledge of the facts, will deny that the Indians were oftentimes wrongfully treated by the whites, but as General Sheridan wrote in 1870, “So far as the wild Indians are concerned the problem to be decided is, ‘Who shall be killed, the whites or the Indians?’”<sup>723</sup>

On the same page, Bagley both noted that Native people were “oftentimes” mistreated *and* insisted that attacks on White people or communities were “unprovoked.” Like Charles Drew, Bagley seems to have reflexively described Native aggression as unprovoked when discussing the volunteers, even though he acknowledged later in the essay that “the ‘land greed’ of the Americans... has caused most of the disturbances and wars between them and the Indians.”<sup>724</sup> Taking a less duplicitous version of the position taken by Isaac

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<sup>723</sup> Clarence B. Bagley, “Our First Indian War,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 1:1 (1906), pp. 34 – 49, esp. pp. 34 – 35.

<sup>724</sup> *Ibid*, esp. p. 36. Clarence Bagley sometimes let pioneer hyperbole overrun historical fact. In a speech extolling pioneer historians, he proclaimed “our friend George Himes came in 1853. Mr. Meeker and my wife and I came in 1852. You must remember that was before the Crimean War, the Indian Massacre, before the days of the Atlantic telegraph, ten, twelve, thirteen years before the beginning of the Civil War.... there were no white people on this [side] of the Missouri River when we came in 1852”—striking, for someone who had written extensively about the actions of White people in the region in the 1840s. See Typescripts of addresses to the Pioneer Association, relative to markers on the Oregon Trail, p. 9 (C.B. Bagley), Volume 2, Box 21, Clarence B. Bagley Papers, Acc 0036-001, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.



I. Stevens (whom Bagley framed as a hero), Bagley argued that bad treatment by Whites did not ultimately matter, quoting Philip Sheridan’s justifications for genocide generally and the notorious Marias Massacre of 1870 specifically.<sup>725</sup> To Bagley, “Indian fighting” had been a self-evident good, and “the mixture of races... ha[d] been unalloyed evil.”<sup>726</sup> Bagley was intellectually (and financially) interested in Native people and stories, collecting “legends” for publication.<sup>727</sup> And he was in favor of seizing Native land, segregating Native people, and killing any Indian who got in the way.

Bagley counted two pioneer wars with “the Indians”: The Cayuse War following the Whitman killings, and a “general” Indian War from 1855 – 1858. The focus on the Cayuse War—with its seemingly clear inciting incident and a comfortable narrative of victimhood—was normal. Survivors from the Whitman killings were much prized on the pioneer circuit. Nancy Jacobs, a Euro-American child survivor in 1848, toured the Pacific Northwest speaking and writing about the Whitman killings. She was, along with the rest of the living Euro-American survivors, made an honorary member of the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast in 1897—a relative rarity for that organization.<sup>728</sup> She spoke among other places at the Walla Walla Pioneer Association in 1909, its

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<sup>725</sup> Philip Sheridan to William Tecumseh Sherman, Feb. 28, 1870, printed in “The Piegan Indians,” pp. 9 – 10, *Executive Documents Printed by Order of the House of Representatives during the Second Session of the Forty-First Congress, 1869 – ’70* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1870); Rodger C. Henderson, “The Piikuni and the U.S. Army’s Piegan Expedition: Competing Narratives of the 1870 Massacre on the Marias River,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 68:1 (2018), pp. 48 – 67, 69–70, 93 – 96.

<sup>726</sup> Clarence B. Bagley, “Pioneer Seattle and Its Founders,” (1925), p. 15, Pacific Northwest Historical Documents, University of Washington Digital Collection, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/community.29377558>; Clarence B. Bagley, “‘The Mercer Immigration’: Two Cargoes of Maidens for the Sound Country,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 5:1 (1904), pp. 1 – 24. See also John M. Findlay, “Pioneers and Pandemonium: Stability and Change in Seattle History,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 107:1 (2015/2016), pp. 4 – 23, esp. pp. 11 – 13.

<sup>727</sup> Clarence B. Bagley, *Indian Myths of the Northwest* (Seattle: Shorey Books, 1971; orig. 1930), esp. pp. 11 – 12.

<sup>728</sup> “Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885 - 1933,” p. 87, Folder 3, Box 1, Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Records, Mss 364, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections.

successor the Inland Empire Association in 1912,<sup>729</sup> and the Oregon Pioneer Association in 1917.<sup>730</sup> The slain were at least as cherished; hairs supposedly belonging to Narcissa Whitman took on the status of relics, passed between pioneers and historians as sacred objects. Although there were disagreements about Marcus Whitman (see below), the war that followed his death appeared to Euro-Americans to be righteous. With some of the other wars, there were murmurs of dissension that broke through the pioneer code.<sup>731</sup>

Ezra Meeker was warned. An old Washington pioneer who had made and lost a fortune running a hops empire, Meeker in the 1900s launched a second act in life as a history entrepreneur. But as he tried to bring his first book to print, he was warned that it had content that would wreck his reputation and sink his potential sales. Clarence Bagley and amateur historian Edward Huggins both advised Meeker that “there was too much ‘Leschi’” in his book, and too much “Venom and bitterness” toward Governor Isaac I. Stevens. Meeker edited out an unknown but significant amount of the Leschi and Stevens content. But some venom remained. Meeker’s 1905 autobiography-cum-history *Pioneer*

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<sup>729</sup> Notes on the Walla [Walla] Pioneer Association, July 1909, Nellie G. Day [?], Folder 4, Box 1 Eloise Thomas Papers, Mss 1717, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. Notes on the Inland Empire Association, 1912, Nellie G. Day [?], *ibid*.

<sup>730</sup> Oregon Pioneer Association Reunion Program, 1917, Folder 2, Box 29, Associations Collection, Mss 1511, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

<sup>731</sup> On suspiciously provenanced locks of Narcissa Whitman’s hair, see Cassandra Tate, *Unsettled Ground: The Whitman Massacre and Its Shifting Legacy in the American West* (Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 2020), pp. 179 – 180. Just as he was embarking on his “life work” as a historian in 1895, Edmond Meany proved his interest and bona fides to Elwood Evans by loaning him a supposed “lock of Mrs. Whitman’s hair.” Edmond Meany to Hon Elwood Evans, n.d. but very likely early 1895, letterpress book], p. 119, Box 3, Edmond S. Meany Papers, 1883 to 1935, Acc. 106 – 001, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA. For the “life work” quotation, see Edmond Meany to Mary Sheldon Barnes, Aug 10, 1895, letterpress book], p. 422, Box 4, Edmond S. Meany Papers. See also George A. Frykman, *Seattle’s Historian and Promoter: The Life of Edmond Stephen Meany* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1998), chap. 5.

*Reminiscences of Puget Sound: The Tragedy of Leschi* broke from the pioneer code enough to get the author in trouble.<sup>732</sup>

Ezra Meeker set himself out as an exception on issues of race in his autobiography. When he and his family had first come to the Pacific Northwest in 1852, he remembered, “[we had] guns by our sides if not in our hands for nearly half the time... We took it for granted that Indians were our enemies and watched them suspiciously.” It was only after learning how to bake clams and communicate in Chinook Jargon from a Native woman that their attitude began to change. Native people, in Meeker’s eyes, changed from “enemies” to “little children”—but more “short lived.”<sup>733</sup>

Like Jonathan McCarty (see Chapter IV), a fellow pioneer who also seized land in the Puyallup region in the early 1850s, Meeker’s opinion of Native people shifted more permanently when he came to view them as an exploitable labor force. McCarty had been an avid pursuer of genocide in a way that Meeker does not seem to have been, and Meeker found far more success in his hop-growing empire than McCarty did in anything. But both attributed the change in their attitudes towards Native people to the wealth each man hoped to glean from Native labor, and both embraced pernicious assumptions of Indian subordination. McCarty believed he ruled by fear over his Native laborers. Meeker believed Native people lacked “mental capacity” and “the power to discriminate in the abstract as to right or wrong,” but could be compelled to work industriously (and

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<sup>732</sup> Dennis Larsen, *Hop King: Ezra Meeker’s Boom Years* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 2016); Peter A. Kopp, *Hoptopia: A World of Agriculture and Beer in Oregon’s Willamette Valley* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016), pp. 36 – 46; Ezra Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound: The Tragedy of Leschi* (Seattle: Lowman & Hanford, 1905); Edward Huggins to Eva Emery Dye, Feb 1, 1904, Folder 15, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers.

<sup>733</sup> Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, pp. 47 – 48, 53, 272.

cheaply) if treated honestly and firmly by White employers like Meeker—whom he labeled “the superior race.”<sup>734</sup>

Meeker’s version of Social Darwinism held up pioneers, especially, as fit.

Reflecting on the notion of “pioneer stock,” he wrote:

I do not look upon [the pioneer] generation of men and women as superior to the present generation, except in this: The pioneers had lost a large number of physically weak on the trip, thus applying the great law of the survival of the fittest; and further, that the great number were pioneers in the true sense of the word—frontiersmen for generations before—hence were by training and habits eminently fitted to meet the exigencies of the trip and conditions to follow.<sup>735</sup>

As much as Lang, Bancroft, and sometimes Victor before him, Meeker framed pioneers as heroes. Thus, those who had been unheroic had not been real pioneers. The Indian War of 1855 – 1856, he wrote, “brought to the front many vicious characters.... yet there were genuine pioneer settlements.” Instead of “rogues and honest men,” Meeker had “the unsettled class” and “genuine pioneers.” “A majority of the... volunteer forces,” Meeker wrote, “were sturdy pioneers who went to the war from a sense of duty.” The “cruel murders” committed were the work of a few “poltroons” within an otherwise honorable

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<sup>734</sup> Jonathan McCarty, “Hard Times in the Early Fifties,” *Tacoma Ledger* Sunday, June 12, 1892, found in Volume 4, Folder 4, Box 1, DAR Family Rec. of Wash. Pioneers, Cage 472, Washington State University Special Collections; Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, pp. 224, 226; cf. Larsen, *Hop King*. My investigation of Meeker’s unfortunate racial attitudes should not imply that the Native people who worked in his fields did not attempt to make good jobs out of the labor. Indeed, Meeker inadvertently reported how the women working in the hop fields managed extract a small but significant amount of maternity pay from him, insisting that he give them a week’s salary each time they had a baby. See Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, p. 221; Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005), chap. 4.

<sup>735</sup> Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, p. 103. Meeker was, as was typical for White men in the early twentieth century, a vocal opponent of what he called the “motley mess” of mixed-race families. See *ibid*, p. 119.

body. What got Meeker into trouble was that he counted Governor Isaac I. Stevens among the poltroons.<sup>736</sup>

Meeker's accusations that Isaac I. Stevens had been a drunkard raised much more ire than Meeker's assertions that Stevens's deceptions had led to the wars.<sup>737</sup> Meeker presented Stevens's supposed drunkenness as a sort of exculpation. If the governor was not a drunkard, Meeker wrote, "we must... write Stevens down as a *very* bad and dishonest man."<sup>738</sup> In truth, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound* painted him as both. Meeker traced failed treaties and attempts at extermination alike back to Stevens, laying the few atrocities against Native communities mentioned in the text—the [James] Lake killing of "Indian Bob" and the Maxon Massacre (see Chapter IV)—ultimately at the feet of the Governor. Even in this critical history, the actions of C. C. Hewitt, Benjamin F. Shaw, and George Wright were presented as heroic.<sup>739</sup>

The culmination of Meeker's book was his argument that Leschi had been "judicially murdered.... a sacrifice to a principle, a martyr to a cause, and a savior of his people."<sup>740</sup> Meeker's discussion of Leschi has been a vital source for historians since he wrote it, not least because he interviewed multiple Native people (mostly Puyallup and Nisqually people) to make the case that the first Medicine Creek Treaty defrauded Native communities. He may have been, as historian Alexander Olson put it, "less a historian than an eccentric memorialist," but he at least spoke to Native people, and sometimes indicated which stories he had gotten from whom. And Meeker drew on his own

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<sup>736</sup> Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, pp. 154, 163, 315 – 316, 343. See also Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi: Narrative and the Politics of Historical Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), p. 69.

<sup>737</sup> Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, pp. 258 – 260, 403 – 405.

<sup>738</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 260 (emphasis in the original). Meeker was quick to praise Stevens's work as a surveyor and military man; see *ibid.*, pp. 260 – 262.

<sup>739</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 48. James Lake's killing of Mowitch was not mentioned, and may not have been known.

<sup>740</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 212.

(claimed) experience as one of the jurors in Leschi's first trial to argue that the case had been a miscarriage of justice, marred by jurisdictional issues, bias, and perjury. Although Meeker removed some of his material on Leschi on the advice of his editors, what remained has been useful supporting evidence for some Indigenous accounts of Leschi's story for more than a century.<sup>741</sup>

Meeker decried the first Medicine Creek treaty as "one-sided" and "completely [ignoring] the interests of the Indians." But more generally, he despised treaties and "the fiction of Indian Nationalities." He celebrated the 1871 Indian Appropriations Act for ending treaty-making, and wished that no treaties had been made in the Pacific Northwest at all. Maintaining his view of infantilized Indians, he believed they could have and should have been coaxed off most of their land, if only they had been treated gently and firmly by a paternal and unyielding state.<sup>742</sup> Like Jesse Applegate in the 1850s, Meeker wanted Native land and believed in White supremacy; both men simply preferred not to kill for it.

Edmond Meany, a historian, politician, and professor at the University of Washington, led many of the public attacks against Ezra Meeker's 1905 book. In a series of newspaper articles, Meany (with the support of Clarence Bagley and several others) took aim at Meeker's sources and his tone. Many pointed to the contradictions between the evidence Meeker brought forth and the recollections of Hazard Stevens, Isaac I. Stevens's son, who had accompanied his father to many events as a young adolescent.

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<sup>741</sup> Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, esp. pp. 242 – 246, 418 – 419; Alexander Olson, "Our Leschi: The Making of a Martyr," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 95:1 (2003/2004), pp. 26 – 36; Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi*.

<sup>742</sup> Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, pp. 256, 227.

Meany, Bagley, and Huggins all apparently agreed Hazard Stevens's account should carry more weight than some "story Meeker got from an Indian." It was actually several stories from several Native people, versus the story of a man reporting on his own father, who had been at most 13 years old at the time of events. But for many historians, personal bias is no match for racial bias.<sup>743</sup>

Meany kept his attacks on Meeker mostly civil, praising much of *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound* while arguing that Meeker had been gravely mistaken on the subject of Stevens. In private letters, Meany was concerned about reputation more than accuracy. In a letter indicative of his own historical approach, Meany argued that "Leschi's greatness can be shown without throwing mud at Stevens or anyone else." Meany approved of histories that celebrated a few "Great Men" among the Indians; his own master's work, started under famed Western historian Frederick Jackson Turner, had been a project building up the historical reputation of the Nez Perce leader Chief Joseph. But Meany objected to any project of valorization that might threaten pioneer hagiography.<sup>744</sup>

Other Meeker detractors were more menacing. In a letter to Meany, Hazard Stevens, after insisting on the "remarkable and uniform success of [his father Isaac I. Stevens's] management of the Indians and the volunteer forces," suggested Meeker's historical actions should be scrutinized:

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<sup>743</sup> Clarence Bagley to Edward Huggins, Aug 2, 1905, Folder 14, Box 13, Clarence B. Bagley Papers; Frykman, *Seattle's Historian and Promoter*, esp. p. 73.

<sup>744</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 93 – 94, 99 – 100; quotation on p. 100; John M. Findlay, "Brides, Brains, and Partisan Politics: Edmond S. Meany, the University of Washington, and State Government, 1889 – 1939," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 99:4 (2009), pp. 181 – 193. Cf. Chelsea Kristen Vaughn, "Playing West: Performances of War and Empire in Pacific Northwest Pageantry," PhD Dissertation, (University of California, Riverside, 2016), p. 161.

Would it not be well to look up Meeker's own conduct and attitude during the Indian War? Is it not possible that he nourishes some ancient grudge, or grievance against Gov. Stevens? Did he take any part in defending the settlements? Or did he hang around the post at Steilacoom and spend his efforts in sympathizing with an Indian enemy, and the treacherous Hudson Bay Co. halfbreeds and the rascally clique that were striving so hard to pdrag down Gov. Stevens?<sup>745</sup>

Amateur historian and former Hudson's Bay employee Edward Huggins's anger at the man he dubbed "Misery Meeker" led him to privately attack not only the author but the author's family. Writing in secret to Eva Emery Dye, Huggins shared a salacious story about Meeker's son, who (Huggins claimed) had abandoned his wife for a fling with a married woman. Huggins had gotten the story from Meeker himself, who had come to his old friend "with tears in his eyes." "[A]fter reading what [Meeker] said" about fellow pioneers, Huggins told Dye, he felt "no hesitancy" about sharing this "cruel" story. A warning, intentional or not, about what might happen to those who broke the pioneer code.<sup>746</sup>

Huggins was at least as incensed that Meeker made mention of "Kitty," a Nisqually woman married to (or as Huggins later phrased it, "kept by") Lieut. Augustus V. Kautz of the U.S. Army in the 1850s. After working to make sure that the children of

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<sup>745</sup> Hazard Stevens to Professor Meany, Apr 4, 1905, Folder 21 – 6, Box 21, Edmond S. Meany Papers.

<sup>746</sup> Edward Huggins to Eva Emery Dye, June 18, 1905, Folder 15, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers. Huggins may have been a slippery character generally. He once agreed to write an unlettered Native acquaintance a character reference, a piece of paper to show to potentially hostile White people. Huggins wrote only that he did not know the man. This could have had potentially fatal results for the unknowing recipient. E.L. Huggins to Whom It May Concern, May 18, 1885, Folder 90: Huggins, E.L., U.S. Indian Service, 5-18-1885, Box 3, Cull A. White Papers, Cage 203, Washington State University Libraries Special Collections, Pullman, WA. Huggins was still outraged but may have been more constrained the following year, still complaining about Meeker but without the same pernicious gossip in a letter to Roxa [Cock] Shackelford that was later posthumously published in the *Washington Historical Quarterly*. However, it is unclear whether Huggins softened, or whether instead it was the editors who took his letter to print snipped out that which might have been embarrassing. Edward Huggins, "Familiar Letter about Pioneers," *Washington Historical Quarterly* 18:4 (1927), pp. 266 – 270.



the union between Kautz and Kitty did not get a claim to their father's estate, Huggins had worked to try to erase them from public memory entirely—perhaps for the sake of Kautz's second, White family. Huggins's sensitivity may have been acute because his own wife was of partially Native descent—a fact he apparently kept close to the vest.<sup>747</sup>

One particularly striking letter to Edmond Meany on the issue came from pioneer historian George E. Blankenship. He began by noting that Meeker was “evidently biased,” then almost immediately turning to the family involvement of the letter writer. “My interest in the matters is well founded,” he wrote, before explaining the family connections to the events in question he had. The historian saying things he did not care for was biased. Blankenship's own bias was, by his lights, simply “well founded” “interest.” His main objection was not to facts but to what was said and how. “Meeker's anecdote often rises to the point of brutality,” Blankenship wrote toward the close of his letter. Readers like Blankenship were much more concerned with the rough treatment of historical figures than with the truth of the violence those figures had inflicted.<sup>748</sup>

Even those willing to grant Meeker's evidence legitimacy might still resent publication. As Anne Huggins wrote to Eva Emery Dye:

Like you I do not especially care for Mr. Meeker's book—Historically it may be of value but he most certainly makes unkind remarks about people to whom he

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<sup>747</sup> Edward Huggins to Eva Emery Dye, Feb 1, 1904, Folder 15, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers; Cecelia Svinth Carpenter, Maria Victoria Pascualy, and Trisha Hunter, *Nisqually Indian Tribe* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2008), p. 14; Nicole Ann Kindle, “The Many Wives of General August V. Kautz: Colonization in the Pacific Northwest, 1853 – 1895,” Master's thesis (Portland State University, 2019), esp. pp. 20 – 21. In a letter full of condescending and occasionally contemptuous references to “half-breeds,” Huggins rhapsodized about his wife with no mention of her mixed-race background. See Edward Huggins to Eva Emery Dye, Feb 8, 1904, Folder 15, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers.

<sup>748</sup> George E. Blankenship to Prof. E. J. Meany, May 9, 1905, Folder 21 – 6, Box 21, Edmond S. Meany Papers.

owes nothing but favors. I do not know[;] but what I like is Bagley's end of it[,]  
better than I do Mr. Meeker[']s.<sup>749</sup>

The truth, to this reader, apparently to Dye, and to many others, should not be repeated if  
“unkind,” and “favors” owed should shape historical narrative.

Bagley bore no grudge against Meeker. He was one of the first to praise the  
“stubborn as a mule” Meeker for the Oregon Trail oxteam re-enactments that eventually  
catapulted him to national celebrity.<sup>750</sup> But Bagley did warn others not to repeat the same  
risks. Eva Emery Dye, one of those so warned, assured him that she would not (in his  
words) be “unduly influenced.” She proclaimed at the close of her letter “I am glad Mr.  
Meeker has persisted and succeeded. We cannot have too many pioneer books, it takes  
them all to illuminate the period.”<sup>751</sup> But her own work would remain firmly celebratory.

Meeker's bucking of the pioneer code had financial effects. Subscriptions—what  
might now be called pre-orders or similar—were a key part of book publishing at the  
time. After Huggins, and perhaps others, spread the word of Meeker's “spiteful attack[s]”  
on figures such as Isaac I. Stevens, “the paucity of subscribers” came close to keeping the  
book from print altogether.<sup>752</sup> Meeker took out loans himself to publish it, finally  
recouping costs only based on the strong sales of his later works, which celebrated

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<sup>749</sup> Anne Huggins to Eva Emery Dye, June 2, 1905, Folder 15, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers. Huggins was likely referring to Clarence B. Bagley, “In the Beginning,” published in Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, pp. 464 – 554.

<sup>750</sup> Clarence Bagley to Edward Huggins, Dec 31, 1906, Folder 14, Box 13, Clarence B. Bagley Papers; Dennis M. Larsen, *Saving the Oregon Trail: Ezra Meeker's Last Grand Quest* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 2020).

<sup>751</sup> Eva Emery Dye to [Clarence] B. Bagley, Feb 13, 1905, Folder 24, Box 9, Clarence B. Bagley Papers.

<sup>752</sup> Edward Huggins to Eva Emery Dye, July 10, 1904 Folder 15, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers; Edward Huggins to Eva Emery Dye, Sept 12, 1904, *ibid*.

pioneering uncritically. Despite Meeker's eventual celebrity, sales of *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound* remained slow for years.<sup>753</sup>

By contrast, Edmond Meany's 1909 *History of the State of Washington*, with Isaac I. Stevens as its foremost hero, enjoyed near-immediate success—particularly after it was adopted in schools. For decades, history students in Washington would learn from Meany's lightly-sourced book that Isaac I. Stevens had been upright in every way, and that the wars of the 1850s were incited by Indians who “simply endeavored to make one more stand against the wave of civilization.” The only White wrongdoer in Meany's discussion of the wars was General John E. Wool, a “weak, evasive... pitiful spectacle of a man” who should have “used sensible coöperation with the citizen soldiery instead of giving rein to his violent prejudices [against Stevens and the volunteers].” In Meany's telling, Wool's prejudices, not the volunteers, had been the real violence. Other leaders, like Charles Mason and George Wright, he occasionally critiqued for “relying on the promises of good behavior on the part of... plotting savages,” but were redeemed in Meany's writing because of their later embrace of stern violence. After the federal ratification of treaties in 1859, Native people more or less disappeared from Meany's narrative of the state—and thus, presumably, from many of the state history lessons founded on his text in the first half of the 1900s. Indians came up only indirectly, as when Meany blamed mixed-race marriages for the initial failure of White women's suffrage in Washington Territory [!].<sup>754</sup>

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<sup>753</sup> Edward Huggins to Eva Emery Dye, Oct 18, 1906, *ibid*; Larsen, *Saving the Oregon Trail*, pp. 9 – 15.

<sup>754</sup> Frykman, *Seattle's Historian and Promoter*, pp. 134 – 137; Edmond S. Meany, *History of the State of Washington* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1909), pp. 187 – 188, 218 – 219 [Stevens as Meany's foremost hero]; 168 [“against the wave of civilization”]; 187 [Wool as “weak, evasive”], 216 [Wool's “violent prejudices”]; 181 [“plotting savages”], 198, 212 [Wright's surfeit of mercy {!}]; 163 [“at least one of the who [voted down “white women's suffrage”] had an Indian woman for a wife... [which] may help to explain the defeat of the measure”].

In the summer of 1911, Clarence Bagley wrote Edmond Meany a letter on the duties of a historian—weighty indeed, for two of the most prominent regional historians of the Pacific Northwest. Much of the letter had to do with then-current debates over Marcus Whitman—whether Whitman had “saved Oregon” for the United States, and whether the killings of members of the Whitman household were martyrdoms or evidence of folly (see Chapter II). In this private letter, at least, Bagley described Marcus Whitman as “a mediocre man, stubborn beyond reason, and very ready to take offense,” and blamed the missionary for the deaths in his household. Bagley urged Meany to set aside his inclinations toward the “interesting, romantic, patriotic” interpretation of the Whitman story and instead look to the sources. “I grew up surrounded by missionary influences,” Bagley explained, “and imbibed the Whitman Story from the air, and have had to revise and change the prepossessions and convictions of a life time, almost.” “[W]e should dump no error into the stream of history,” Bagley proclaimed, “and when we discover that the stream has been polluted, it is our duty and should be a pleasure to correct the error.”<sup>755</sup> He was not alone among regional historians in his vexation. Frances Fuller Victor fought the Whitman mythos in the 1880s and 1890s, struggling largely in vain against pioneer disinterest locally and the misogynist elitism of the *American Historical Review* nationally.<sup>756</sup> Frederick V. Holman had expressed similar frustrations about the ever-growing exaggerations of the Whitman story, writing in 1910 “I suppose it will be

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<sup>755</sup> Clarence Bagley to Edmond Meany, June 12, 1911, Folder 26 – 24, Box 26, Edmond S. Meany Papers. Bagley attributed this quotation to John H. McGraw, a former governor of Washington State who was a patron of both men’s historical work. Steven E. Houchin, “McGraw Square: Tribute to a Self-Made Man,” *Columbia* 23:2 (2009), pp. 10 – 12; Robert Rydell, “Visions of Empire: International Expositions in Portland Seattle,” *Pacific Historical Review* 52:1 (1983), pp. 37 – 65.

<sup>756</sup> Blaine Harden, *Murder at the Mission: A Frontier Killing, Its Legacy of Lies, and the Taking of the American West* (New York: Viking, 2021), pp. 279 – 280.

ultimately claimed that [Marcus Whitman] was the cause of the discovery of the North Pole. But I doubt it.”<sup>757</sup> Historians, up to a point, knew better.

But Bagley’s paean to the historical method came with a caveat. He planned to keep the full measure of his historical interpretation of Whitman private. Expanding from his assessment of the missionary as a “mediocre man,” Bagley wrote:

[H]e had no right to sacrifice the lives of innocent people confided to his care. It was little short of murder.

I am willing to “let the dead bury their dead,” and so I do not give expression to these sentiments in public. What is the good?<sup>758</sup>

Bagley knew that the various legends swirling around Marcus Whitman were false. But he largely held his tongue.<sup>759</sup> And Bagley applied this sort of strategic silence liberally:

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<sup>757</sup> Frederick van Voorhies Holman to Clarence B. Bagley, Oct 31, 1910, Folder 6, Box 10, Clarence B. Bagley Papers. As Sarah Koenig has pointed out, Frederick V. Holman played a role in shifting the Oregon Historical Society away from Whitman worship. See Sarah Koenig, “The Legend of Marcus Whitman and the Transformation of the American Historical Profession,” *Church History* 87:1 (2018), pp. 99 – 121, esp. p. 118.

<sup>758</sup> Clarence Bagley to Edmond Meany, June 12, 1911, Folder 26 – 24, Box 26, Edmond S. Meany Papers. It is unclear whether the “good” here refers to the uselessness of trying to change pioneer minds, the lack of profit in such work, or both. Clarence Bagley was not above a little honest graft, reflecting fondly that because of his political connections he had “cleaned up several thousand dollars on a three week job” by overcharging the government as a subcontractor, back in the pioneer era. W. A. Katz, “Public Printers of Washington Territory, 1853 – 1863,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 51:3 (1960), pp. 103 – 114. The easiest legal means for printing graft was for the government to order an obscene number of copies, and a printer to actually print only on demand. Another was pass legislation calling for reprints of existing bills, thus ensuring work for the politically connected printer. Bagley’s time as an official government printer in the 1870s was less lucrative. See W. A. Katz, “Public Printers of the Washington Territory, 1863 – 1889,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 51:4 (1960), 171 – 181. Bagley may have (perhaps unwittingly) engaged in a little light forgery too. See George N. Belknap, “Oregon Twenty Acts: A Tale of Bibliographical Detection,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 67:2 (1976), pp. 63 – 68.

<sup>759</sup> In 1906, Bagley diplomatically noted “abundant evidence of record that [Marcus Whitman] knew he stood over a powder magazine that was liable to explode at any time, but he was of the stuff from which martyrs are made and felt that duty commanded him to remain at his post at all hazards.” Clarence B. Bagley, “Our First Indian War,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 1:1 (1906), pp. 34 – 49, quotation on p. 39. On the Whitman story as sacred history, see Koenig, “The Legend of Marcus Whitman and the Transformation of the American Historical Profession.”

I feel about this as I do about some matters nearer home. Sometime I shall write a history of Seattle, and while what I shall say will be the truth I shall not give all the truth. I shall rake up no old stories of evil....

[In Seattle and in] the early missions in Old Oregon, a history of failure, weakness, jealousy, dishonesty, and so along the whole gamut. I have kept my mouth pretty well shut so far but sometime I may “slop over.”<sup>760</sup>

Clarence Bagley’s commitment to “rake up no old stories of evil” was part of his historical work, whether it came to monographs or monuments (see Chapter XI). Flagrant falsehoods of the sort Elwood Evans had embraced were, perhaps, to be avoided. But omission of pioneer evils was standard practice—for him, for Edmond Meany, and for much of the world of historical and heritage societies of which they were a part.<sup>761</sup>

At a 1913 pioneer meeting, the doctor and amateur historian George Kuykendall spoke to the softening power of nostalgia:

I do not know how it may be with others of the old pioneers, of 30 to forty years ago in this country, but I notice that as time goes by, there is a distinct tendency

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<sup>760</sup> Clarence Bagley to Edmond Meany, June 12, 1911, Folder 26 – 24, Box 26, Edmond S. Meany Papers. Bagley did find an indirect way of “slopp[ing] over” about the Whitmans. He edited (with an unknown amount of input) a critical historical work about the Whitmans written by a now-deceased man, and solicited enough money to get it published. The critique was out there, but under a different man’s name and with Bagley’s fingerprints only faintly visible. William I. Marshall, *Acquisition of Oregon and the Long Suppressed Evidence about Marcus Whitman*, Part 1 (Seattle: Lowman & Hanford, 1911), Foreword. Bagley claimed not to have changed the manuscript at all.

<sup>761</sup> Frykman, *Seattle’s Historian and Promoter*, esp. chap. 8. Sometimes Meany raked up no stories of Native people at all. His multi-page speech on “Seattle’s First Half-Century 1853 – 1903” had room for “law-abiding citizens [like himself, who] shouldered their riles and patrolled the streets during the Anti-[C]hinese rights—to uphold the laws of humanity.” But it contained no mention of Native people at all—no mythical or historical tales of Chief Seattle, and no stories of the Indian Wars that had touched Seattle and its environs. Edmond S. Meany, “Seattle’s First Half-Century 1853 – 1903,” Folder 33, Box 60, Edmond S. Meany Papers.

for the unpleasant memories to fade out, the asperities to soften and mellow, and for the memories of the bright and beaut[iful] incidents to come to the front.<sup>762</sup>

This “tendency for the unpleasant memories to fade out” was in many cases deliberate. The informal “pioneer code” was chosen and sometimes enforced by most of those who created Euro-American history in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The obfuscation of pioneer violence seen as wanton was a choice as well as tendency. Sometimes it was a choice of which sources to believe, and which to ignore. Often it was a choice of which stories historians thought they should tell, and which stories historians thought they could sell.

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<sup>762</sup> George Kuykendall, “Written for the Pioneer Meeting June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1913,” Folder: “Addresses to the Garfield County Pioneer Association 1911 – 1920, Box 5, Cage 60, Washington State University Libraries Special Collections, Pullman, WA.

CHAPTER XI: “TWO RACES OF MEN HAVE LEARNED THE MEANING OF  
CLASPED HANDS”: MEMORY-MAKING AND MONUMENT-MAKING  
IN THE PROGRESSIVE-ERA PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Joseph Nathan Teal was the picture of a pioneer booster. His father, Joseph Teal, had come to Oregon in 1851, “participated helpfully in a number of early Indian troubles Wars” (as his son put it), and made a fortune in cattle ranching, shipping, and real estate investment. The elder Teal was a power broker in the Oregon Democratic Party. He was also a slaveholder, illegal and unremarkable in pioneer Oregon.<sup>763</sup>

His son Joseph Nathan Teal built on the family’s political and economic power, becoming a successful lawyer, making lucrative investments, and taking on a number of civic and government positions. The younger Teal acquired yet more connections and fortune from his father-in-law David P. Thompson, a successful banker and politician who had patrolled the reservation internment camps as a youth in the 1850s (see Chapter IV). Thompson and the younger Teal wanted to shape a lasting legacy honoring the pioneer generation. Thompson and Teal opted for statuary, funding three of the earliest such monuments in Oregon. Roland Hinton Perry’s *Elk*, dedicated in downtown Portland

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<sup>763</sup> “Teal Family History,” Folder 1, Box 1, Thompson and Teal Family Papers, Coll 168, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR; Joseph Nathan Teal, “Autobiography,” [undated, but likely ~1929], Folder 1, Box 3, *Ibid*, pp. 38, 62. On page 38, the quoted phrase originally read “Indian troubles” instead of “early Indian wars”—this edit was most likely made by his wife Bessie M. Teal (née Thompson). Joseph Nathan Teal claimed his first memory was of being pulled through the streets of Eugene by “a big Newfoundland dog named Jedde hitched up with a negro boy named Coleman, both of which we owned,” demonstrating both his family’s unblushing embrace of enslavement and the impunity with which enslavers like them acted. *Ibid*, p. 1 On the enslavement of Black people in Oregon, see Kenneth R. Coleman, *Dangerous Subjects: James D. Saules and the Rise of Black Exclusion* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2017); Quintard Taylor, “Slaves and Free Men: Blacks in the Oregon Country, 1840 – 1860,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 83:2 (1982), pp. 153 – 170; Fred Lockley, “Some Documentary Records of Slavery in Oregon,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 17:2 (1916), pp. 107 – 115; R. Gregory Nokes, *Breaking Chains: Slavery on Trial in Oregon Territory* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2013). More study and attention is needed regarding the *normalcy* of slavery in pioneer Oregon. Laws against it went virtually unenforced (Nokes’s *Breaking Chains* studies perhaps the only notable exception in depth), and no records have been found of a White person being found criminally liable practicing slavery.



in 1900, was meant to evoke the primeval “wilderness” of the region (in elk form). Herman A. McNeil’s *Coming of the White Man*, unveiled in 1904 and installed in Portland’s Washington Park, depicted two elegiac Native figures “bravely facing a fate [they] could not avoid” at the approach of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. And Alexander Phimister Proctor’s *The Pioneer*, erected in Eugene in 1919, depicted a rough-and-ready Indian killer in heroic pose. White conquest of Native people and land was central to the memory Teal wanted to engrave on the landscape.<sup>764</sup>

Pacific Northwest pioneers pushed for monuments in the early twentieth century, but only occasionally achieved statuary. The broader push to memorialize the Euro-American wars of conquest in the Pacific Northwest took many forms, playing a part in ephemeral parades and pageants as well as more permanent parks and plaques. Created largely by a new generation of settlers, in consultation with their pioneer forebears, these monuments tried to engrave a heroic story of White supremacy triumphant upon the landscape.<sup>765</sup>

Pioneer memory-making in the 1900s and 1910 was also inflected by rising fascination with (often mythic) Indian-ness and debates over the nature of American

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<sup>764</sup> Teal, “Autobiography,” pp. 55, 61, 70, 93, 77, 54; Terence O’Donnell and Thomas Vaughan, *Portland: A Historical Sketch and Guide* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1976), pp. 80 – 82; David P. Thompson Will, Dec 17 1901, Folder 2, Box 1, Thompson and Teal Family Papers; Joseph Nathan Teal, “*Coming of the White Man* presentation address,” Folder 12, Box 10, Marshall Newport Dana Papers, Mss 1798, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR; Marc James Carpenter, “Reconsidering *The Pioneer*, One Hundred Years Later,” report submitted to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, June 27, 2019, <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/OH/Documents/Fellow2019MarcCarpenterReconsideringThe%20Pioneer.pdf>.

<sup>765</sup> Those pioneers less enthused about White supremacist triumphalism were less likely to try and engrave the past on the landscape. Jesse Applegate eschewed memorialization. “I want no stone monument,” he told his niece Lillian Applegate. “[W]hen a man fails to accomplish his ideals as I have, let him be forgotten with his works.” Lillian Gertrude Applegate to Eva Emery Dye, Aug 5, 1904, Folder 3, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers, Mss 1089, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR.

imperialism. Although virtually all monuments to the wars celebrated American empire, many in the era focused on (perceived) Native participation in Americanization. Stories of a few “good Indians” supplemented rather than replaced stories of White “civilization” triumphant against Indians generally. Such stories were popular, opening avenues for fundraising. And in at least a few cases, Native people were able to leverage the pioneer nostalgia for such stories to gain Euro-American audiences for fights against injustices past and present.

There had been calls for monuments even as the War on Illahee was underway. Following the news of the Walla Walla conflicts during which Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox was murdered in 1855, the Washington Territorial Legislature included in their declaration of praise for the perpetrators a call for “a monument to the memory of the fallen patriots of Oregon... to perpetuate their names and fame to the latest posterity.”<sup>766</sup> Speakers at pioneer events would often stress the need for monuments, including calls to “erect a monument to the pioneer mothers of Oregon” at least as far back as 1883.<sup>767</sup> Some organizations, like the Pierce County Pioneers Association, made “rais[ing] monuments” part of their charters.<sup>768</sup>

But monuments cost money. Fundraising or patronage for controversial or partisan figures could be difficult. The politician and historian Edmond Meany was a major agonist for monuments across the state of Washington. But his most ambitious

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<sup>766</sup> Quotation taken from Mary Ellen Rowe, *Bulwark of the Republic: The American Militia in the Antebellum West* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), p. 166.

<sup>767</sup> William Lair Hill, “Annual Address of Hon. W. Lair Hill,” *Transactions of the Eleventh Annual Re-Union of the Oregon Pioneer Association* (Salem, Ore: E. M. Wait, 1884), pp. 10 – 21, quotation on p. 21.

<sup>768</sup> Pioneer Association Form: Pierce County Pioneers Assn. [~1914 – 1916], Folder 2, Box 78, Edmond S. Meany Papers, 1883 to 1935, Acc. 106 – 001, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA.

plans did not come to fruition. While serving in the 1894 state legislature, Meany attempted to drum up political and financial support to send two statues to the National Statuary Hall in Washington D.C. His choices for Washington State’s exemplars were Marcus Whitman and Isaac I. Stevens. In correspondence with acclaimed sculptor Henry Hudson Kitson, Meany suggested not only two figures for the National Statuary Hall, but also a “large heroic statue of Stevens in the public square of Seattle,” in his mien as a Union officer in the Civil War. “This supreme picture of bravery and patriotism,” Meany mused, “properly reproduced in a fine statue would be as good as a police force, especially in any city of this State where [Stevens’s] name is revered.”<sup>769</sup> But Meany could never get the money together. In 1953, Avard T. Fairbanks’s fantastical statue of Marcus Whitman in fringed buckskin as a “ripped, muscular frontiersman” was installed in the National Statuary Hall, where Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas praised the missionary for having “showed us a new empire” on the Pacific Coast.<sup>770</sup> Meany’s dream of an Isaac I. Stevens statue, on the other hand, never came to be.<sup>771</sup>

Many of the earliest statues celebrating the pioneer era in the Pacific Northwest were representations of Native people. In 1904, Joseph Nathan Teal unveiled Herman A.

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<sup>769</sup> Meany to Henry H. Kitson, n.d. but likely Nov 1894, [letterpress book], p. 94, Box 3, Edmond S. Meany Papers..

<sup>770</sup> Cassandra Tate, “Reckoning with Marcus Whitman and the Memorialization of Conquest,” *History News Network* Nov 15, 2020 [“ripped, muscular frontiersman”]; W. L. Davis, “These Men We Recognize,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 44:3 (1953), pp. 129 – 134, quotation on p. 134 [“showed us a new empire”]; Clifford M. Drury, “Marcus Whitman, M.D., Pioneer Presbyterian Missionary,” *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society* 31:4 (1953), pp. 205 – 228; Blaine Harden, *Murder at the Mission: A Frontier Killing, Its Legacy of Lies, and the Taking of the American West* (New York: Viking, 2021), pp. 279 – 280.

<sup>771</sup> C[ornelius] H. Hanford to Prof. Edmond S. Meany, Jan 27, 1905, Folder 21 – 2, Box 21, Edmond S. Meany Papers; “Statue of Marcus Whitman Unveiled in Capital Rotunda,” *Spokane Spokesman-Review* May 23, 1953, p. 7. Edmond Meany was involved in raising awareness and monument for the 1897 Whitman monument, a stele rather than a statue. The two images attached to his account in support of the monument are especially striking—as there are no extant images of Marcus Whitman, either the Whitman-as-goateed-mountain-man or Whitman-with-fresh-face-and-sideburns could be correct. See Edmond Meany, “In Memory of Marcus Whitman and Narcissa, His Wife,” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* Nov 21, 1897, p. 24.

McNeil's *Coming of the White Man* in Portland, Oregon. His deceased father-in-law David P. Thompson had wanted as a bequest to create a memorial "emblematic of the earliest history of this country."<sup>772</sup> Teal and McNeil had chosen as their subject "Chief Multnomah" (with an unidentified young Native man by his side). Multnomah was a half-mythical Native leader along the Columbia River, made famous in Euro-American author Frederic Homer Balch's influential novel *Bridge of the Gods*.<sup>773</sup> Teal's dedication speech underlined the future bloodshed and elegy the monument implied:

Imagine, if you can, proud old Multnomah when he first caught a glimpse of the white stranger coming unbidden to his land.... Haughty, defiant, as became a mighty chieftain, resentful yet interested, wise with the wisdom of age, feeling forebodings of disaster, he stood sternly on the rock, bravely facing a fate he could not avoid, resolved as a great warrior to fall, if fall he must, as only warriors fall....

It seems to me that as one looks on the bronze figures standing on the rock gazing up Columbia gorge, one cannot but feel for old Multnomah and his falling star, and pity the youthful innocence of the boy who did not know that before civilization's march barbarism falls, as disappears the dew before the rising sun.<sup>774</sup>

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<sup>772</sup> David P. Thompson Will, Dec 17 1901, Folder 2, Box 1, Thompson and Teal Family Papers; Joseph Nathan Teal, "Coming of the White Man presentation address," Folder 12, Box 10, Marshall Newport Dana Papers; "Gleanings from American Art Centers," *Brush and Pencil* 11:5 (1903), pp. 388 – 393, esp. p. 393.

<sup>773</sup> Ann Fulton, "The Restoration of an Ihkák'mana: A Chief Called Multnomah," *American Indian Quarterly* 31:1 (2007), pp. 110 – 128; Chelsea Kristen Vaughn, "Playing West: Performances of War and Empire in Pacific Northwest Pageantry," PhD Dissertation, (University of California, Riverside, 2016), chap. 1; Richard W. Etulain, "Frederic Homer Balch (1861 – 1891): Romancer and Historian," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 117:4 (2016), pp. 604 – 635.

<sup>774</sup> Joseph Nathan Teal, "Coming of the White Man presentation address." See also Jeffrey Uecker, "Picturing the Corps of Discovery: The Lewis and Clark Expedition in Oregon Art," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 103:4 (2002), pp. 452 – 479.

Although the discussion of dew made disappearance sound like a natural inevitability, Teal's speech made oblique reference to the wars his father, uncle, and father-in-law had been a part of. The younger figure in the monument makes a welcoming gesture—which Teal pitied, as ignorant of what was to come. To Teal's father, uncle, and father-in-law, and perhaps to him, the march of civilization had been somewhat literal, the tramping boots of irregular pioneers and regular soldiers ready to force Native communities to fall.<sup>775</sup>

Alice Cooper's monumental statue *Sacajawea and Jean-Baptiste* (1905), featuring the famed guide pointing west in a near-salute as she energetically strides forward, was similarly a celebration of American empire. The statue features a representation of a famous Native woman, was largely planned and funded by suffragists, and was unveiled at the Portland Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition and World's Fair in 1905. Each of those aspects is a lure for academics, and the statue has attracted attention from numerous scholars and artists across multiple disciplines; it is perhaps the most analyzed pioneer statue in the Pacific Northwest.<sup>776</sup>

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<sup>775</sup> Mrs. George T. Gerlinger [Irene Strang Hazard Gerlinger], "A Tribute to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph N. Teal," 1944, Box 9, UA Ref 2, University Archives Biographical Files, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR.

<sup>776</sup> Patricia Vettel-Becker, "Sacagawea and Son: The Visual Construction of America's Maternal Feminine," *American Studies* 50:1/2 (2009), pp. 27 – 50; Donna J. Kessler, *The Making of Sacagawea: A Euro-American Legend* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996), pp. 81 – 88; Carl Abbott, *The Great Extravaganza: Portland and the Lewis and Clark Exposition* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1981); Cindy Koenig Richards, "Inventing Sacagawea: Public Women and the Transformative Potential of Epideictic Rhetoric," *Western Journal of Communication* 73:1 (2009), pp. 1 – 22; Jeffrey Uecker, "From Promised Land to Promised Landfill: The Iconography of Oregon's Twentieth-Century Utopian Myth," Master's thesis (Portland State University, 1995), pp. 73 – 78; Gail H. Landsman, "The 'Other' as Political Symbol: Images of Indians in the Woman Suffrage Movement," *Ethnohistory* 39:3 (1992), pp. 247 – 284; Cynthia Culver Prescott, *Pioneer Mother Monuments: Constructing Cultural Memory* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019), pp. 32 – 35.

After the success of Eva Emery Dye's 1902 book *The Conquest* (see Chapter 9), there was a broad-based movement, led by suffragists, to erect a statue of "Sacajawea" in time for the 1905 Exposition. Many women's suffrage groups and advocates in the Pacific Northwest had long drawn on women's part in pioneering to build audiences and advocates for the vote. Abigail Scott Duniway, in her lifetime probably the most famed and prolific suffragist in the Northwest, drew on her status as a "pioneer champion" to fight for women's rights. As scholar Tiffany Lewis has argued, suffragists like Duniway portrayed the franchise as an earned right for Western women, proven by their shared pioneer struggle.<sup>777</sup> And the language of pioneering suffused Duniway's writing—temporary setbacks would not end the fight for suffrage and against the "men's rights microbe," she proclaimed, any more than "the Whitman massacre [marked] the end of progress for the Oregon Pioneers."<sup>778</sup> And Duniway's own status as a pioneer helped her build alliances for women's suffrage among various heritage organizations.<sup>779</sup> Along with the celebrity guest Susan B. Anthony, Duniway was one of several speakers at the *Sacagawea and Jean-Baptiste* unveiling.

Eva Emery Dye, also a suffragist, became president of the Sacajawea Statue Association in 1903. Arguing in promotional materials that "Sacajawea" was "the first pioneer mother to cross the Rocky [M]ountains and carry her baby into the Oregon

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<sup>777</sup> Tiffany Lewis, "Winning Woman Suffrage in the Masculine West: Abigail Scott Duniway's Frontier Myth," *Western Journal of Communication* 75:2 (2011), pp. 127 – 147. See also Mari J. Matsuda, "The West and the Legal State of Women: Explanations of Frontier Feminism," *Journal of the West* 24:1 (1985), pp. 47 – 56.

<sup>778</sup> Abigail Scott Duniway to Editor Post Express, July 30, 1906, Folder 1, Box 1, Abigail Scott Duniway Papers, Coll 232B, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR. See also Vaughn, "Playing West," chap. 3.

<sup>779</sup> Abigail Scott Duniway, "A Pioneer Incident," esp. p. 4, enclosed in Abigail Scott Duniway to Dr. Annice J. Jeffereys, Dec 21, 1902 [?], Folder 8, Box 1, Abigail Scott Duniway Papers; Abigail Scott Duniway to Editor Post Express, July 30, 1906, Folder 1, Box 1, *ibid.* See also Albert Furtwangler, "Reclaiming Jefferson's Ideals: Abigail Scott Duniway's Ode to Lewis and Clark," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 98:4 (2007), pp. 159 – 168.

country,” Dye and other members raised money not only from suffragist gatherings and the Daughters of the American Revolution (see below), but also from redface heritage groups.<sup>780</sup> The Improved Order of Red Men (and their auxiliary group the Ladies of the Degree of Pocahontas) helped fund Cooper’s statue.<sup>781</sup> As Dye put it in her appeal:

[T]he statue [will be] erected as a joint memorial of the Red Men and the white women of the country, to the bravest maiden of the Indian race. Of course this statue can be and is typical of all the Indian women who literally gave their country to America, by aid and succ[o]r like that of Pocahontas and Sacajawea, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific.<sup>782</sup>

The Euro-Americans who made up these groups playacted Native ritual as part of their meetings and civic events, dressing in a pastiche of presumed Native costume (often with facepaint) and dropping mannerisms associated with White stereotypes of Native speech into their communication—although some Northwesterners used the simplified “Boston”

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<sup>780</sup> Jan C. Dawson, “Sacagawea: Pilot or Pioneer Mother?,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 83:1 (1992), pp. 22 – 28; Eva Emery Dye to Sarah Evans, Oct 19, 1903, Folder 6, Box 4, Eva Emery Dye Papers; Deborah M. Olsen, “Fair Connections: Women’s Separatism and the Lewis and Clark Expedition,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 109:2 (2008), pp. 174 – 203; Lisa Blee, “Completing Lewis and Clark’s Westward March: Exhibiting a History of Empire at the 1905 World’s Fair,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 106:2 (2005), pp. 232 – 253.

<sup>781</sup> For redface and the Improved Order of Red Men, see David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), p. 114; Elliott Young, “Red Men, Princess Pocahontas, and George Washington: Harmonizing Race Relations in Laredo at the Turn of the Century,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 29:1 (1998), pp. 48 – 85; Dale T. Knobel, “To Be an American: Ethnicity, Fraternity, and the Improved Order of Red Men,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 4:1 (1984), pp. 62 – 87; Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 60 – 68; Madeline Bourque Kearin, “The Many Lives of Chief Kisco: Strategies of Solidarity and Division in the Mythology of an American Monument,” *Public Historian* 39:3 (2017), pp. 40 – 61; Lucy Maddox, “Politics, Performance and Indian Identity,” *American Studies International* 40:2 (2002), pp. 7 – 36. Work on the “Degree of Pocahontas” Ladies Auxiliary, proposed in 1854 and enacted in 1888, is still thin; see Elaine A. Peña, “More than a Dead American Hero: Washington, the Improved Order of Red Men, and the Limits of Civil Religion,” *American Literary History* 26:1 (2014), pp. 61 – 82; Dawson, “Sacagawea”; Rebecca McClanahan, “Klan of the Grandmother,” *Southern Review* 32:2 (1996), pp. 344 – 372, and (with the caution that befits an unfootnoted emic institutional history) Robert E. Davis, *History of the Improved Order of Red Men and Degree of Pocahontas, 1765 – 1988* (Waco, Tex.: Great Council of the United States Improved Order of Red Men and Davis Brothers Publishing, 1990), pp. 689 – 716.

<sup>782</sup> Eva Emery Dye to “Great Sachem” [William M. Risley], July 17, 1904, Folder 6, Box 4, Eva Emery Dye Papers.

version of Chinook Jargon instead of or in addition to the “ughs” and “hows” that were typical.<sup>783</sup> “Red Men” in Oregon City, for example, raised money for the Cooper statue by means of “a pantomime from Fenimore Cooper’s ‘Last of the Mohicans.’”

Membership might or might not denote fascination or sympathy with Native people—Lafayette Mosher, one of the more strident political voices calling for genocide, was also member of the Improved Order of Red Men.<sup>784</sup>

Speakers at the dedication of *Sacajawea and Jean-Baptiste* used the language of benevolent conquest. Thronged with White “Red Men” and Native children on a field trip from the (abusive) Chemawa Indian School in Salem, speaker after speaker turned Sacajawea into a tool of American empire.<sup>785</sup> Susan B. Anthony praised her “patriotic deeds,” a representative from the Improved Order of Red men her “efforts” in effecting “[t]he transformation of a wilderness into a marvelous commonwealth of wonderful cities

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<sup>783</sup> The Oregon Improved Order of Redmen, in addition to using Chinook Jargon in communications, took Native names for persons, communities, or objects when creating the “Tribes” that made up what they called the “Reservation” of Oregon—different groups seized on Concomley and Pocahontas, on Chetco and Wasco, on Wickiup and Wapato. Great Council of Oregon Improved Order of Red Men, “Record of the Great Council of Oregon Improved Order of Red Men,” 1913 [?], pp. 56 – 57, Folder 17, Box 1, Associations Collection.

<sup>784</sup> Eva Emery Dye to Whom It May Concern, March 8, 1904, Folder 6, Box 4, Eva Emery Dye Papers; J.W. Todd, Notes on Mosher from Theodore Phillips, Folder: Genealogy, Box 1, Mosher family records, 1853-1898, Acc. 0136.001, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA. The national Improved Order of Red Men explicitly forbade “Indians of any tribe” from becoming members in 1871—the same year they adopted “the wigwam, the sacred home of the Red Men” as their “badge or totem.” They sued to keep Black fraternal and sororal organizations from using similar names to theirs in 1903. In 1972, there was talk of a push within the Order to fundraise for American Indian charities. Davis, *History of the Improved Order of Red Men and Degree of Pocahontas*, pp. 233, 330, 498 – 499.

<sup>785</sup> On the abusiveness of Chemawa school in this era, see Cary C. Collins, “The Broken Crucible of Assimilation: Forest Grove Indian School and the Origins of Off-Reservation Boarding-School Education in the West,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 101:4 (2000), pp. 466 – 507; Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer, eds, Haa Shuká, *Our Ancestors: Tlingit Oral Narratives* (Seattle: University of Washington Press and Juneau: Sealaska Heritage Foundation, 1987), p. 474. On the sanctification of empire through the use of monuments to women (though with a more violent valence), see Barbara Cutter, “The Female Indian Killer Memorialized: Hannah Duston and the Nineteenth-Century Feminization of American Violence,” *Journal of Women’s History* 20:2 (2008), pp. 10 – 33.



and great commercial enterprises.”<sup>786</sup> A poet named Bert Huffman, who apparently overlooked the sensible footwear on the statue, suggested in doggerel verse:

“The wreath of Triumph give to her;  
She led the conquering Captains West;  
She charted first the trails that led  
The host across yon mountain crest!  
....  
Beside you on Fame’s pedestal,  
Be hers the glorious fate to stand—  
Bronzed, barefoot, yet a patron saint,  
The keys of Empire in her hand!”<sup>787</sup>

Duniway at least allowed for inadvertency, saying of “feminine atlas” (Duniway’s term for Sacagawea) “little did she know or realize that she was helping to upbuild a Pacific empire, whose borders the white man and white woman would unite.” Dye went further,

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<sup>786</sup> “Red Men March through Streets,” *Oregonian* July 7, 1905, p. 10; “Statue of Bird Woman Unveiled,” *Oregonian* July 7, 1905, pp. 10 – 11; Kat Cleland, “Disruptions in the Dream City: Unsettled Ideologies at the 1905 World’s Fair in Portland, Oregon,” Master’s thesis (Portland State University, 2013), chap. 1; Rydell, “Visions of Empire.” On the language of benevolent conquest, see Blee, “Completing Lewis and Clark’s Westward March”; Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), chap. 2; Priscilla Murolo, “Wars of Civilization: The US Army Contemplates Wounded Knee, the Pullman Strike, and the Philippine Insurrection,” *International Labor and Working-Class History* 80 (Fall 2011), pp. 77 – 102; Laura R. Prieto, “A Delicate Subject: Clemencia López, Civilized Womanhood, and the Politics of Anti-Imperialism,” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 12:2 (2013), pp. 199 – 233; Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019), esp. chap. 5.

<sup>787</sup> Bert Huffman, “Sacagawea,” [1903?], SB 110 p113, Oregon Historical Society Oregon History Project, <https://www.oregonhistoryproject.org/articles/historical-records/ode-to-sacagawea/#.YHZ7gehKhEY>. For evidence of the recitation, see “Statue of Bird Woman Unveiled,” *Oregonian* July 7, 1905, pp. 10 – 11.

suggesting that Sacajawea had “beckoned the white man on” to Asia as well as America, two continents on one set of shoulders.<sup>788</sup>

The speakers did not agree on the subject of Indian wars. Dye more or less argued that they did not exist, or at least that they were at least immaterial. “The Indians expected to see an army with banners when the white man came,” she proclaimed, “but no, the mother and the child took Oregon.” She had written about the Indian wars only a few years earlier, including a section on how women had helped provide banners to the volunteer army in the lead-up to the Cayuse War. But the wars were already disappearing from her conception of pioneering. She praised Joseph Lane for his chivalry, not his soldiery.<sup>789</sup>

The last speaker of the day, Portland Mayor Harry Lane, did talk about the Indian wars—and critiqued them, along with wanton White violence more generally:

The Indians have many sterling traits of character that we do not possess. When they have not been contaminated by the evils of the white race, they are the personification of tireless energy, patience[,] and hospitality. All of the wars resulted from the white people ill-treating the Indians who had befriended them. This was unusual for a Euro-American leader, shockingly so for the grandson of the notorious Joseph Lane (see Chapters 1 – 3). But Harry Lane had created a version of his grandfather as a “friend of the Indians” from half-truths and whole cloth. As the younger Lane moved from Portland mayor to U.S. Senator in 1912, he was unusually supportive

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<sup>788</sup> “Statue of Bird Woman Unveiled,” *Oregonian* July 7, 1905, pp. 10 – 11. Richards, “Inventing Sacagawea.” Perhaps coincidentally, Dye’s call for American imperialism in Asia was printed just beneath a racial caricature, a political cartoon about boycotts of American goods in China.

<sup>789</sup> “Statue of Bird Woman Unveiled,” *Oregonian* July 7, 1905, pp. 10 – 11; Eva Emery Dye, *Stories of Old Oregon* (San Francisco: The Whitaker and Ray Company, 1900), esp. pp. 128 – 129. See also Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire*, chap. 1.

of Native peoples and Native issues. He fought against allotment, supported the continuance of traditional lifeways, and amplified the concerns of the Native activists he spoke with. But Harry Lane also believed in a false pioneer history of rogues and honest men—with the rogues largely undefined, and the honest men including his grandfather, the members of the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast, and any number of other murderers and rapists.<sup>790</sup> The wars might have been “resulted” from the actions of bad White people, but for Harry Lane the people who *fought* in the wars were mostly noble. “[H]ospitality” justified Euro-American presence, with conquest recast as “ill-treatment.” Harry Lane was a believer in a version of Native rights, *and* a believer in the inherent rightness of American ownership of the land. He departed from many of his fellow citizens in believing Native Americans should continue to own *all* of their land that had not yet been taken, under United States jurisprudence. As a U.S. Senator in the 1910s, this was enough to make him (by comparison to his contemporaries in government) a radical fighter for Native rights.<sup>791</sup> Similarly, the *Sacajawea* monument has not yet come in for the same level of criticism as other pioneer monuments in the early decades of the twenty-first century (see Conclusion). Compared to other statuary of the era, the *Sacajawea* monument at least shows a Native woman in pose of power, despite the celebration of empire it was meant to embody.

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<sup>790</sup> “Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885 - 1933,” p. 219, Folder 3, Box 1, Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Records, Mss 364, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections; Harry Lane to Nina Lane, June 22, 1907, Folder: Harry Lane Correspondence, Box 1, Nina Lane Faubion Papers, Ax 185, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR. Harry Lane was not alone in his misconceptions of Joseph Lane. Joseph Nathan Teal remembered him as “sweet old General,” in his kindly twilight years. Joseph Nathan Teal, “Autobiography,” p. 99.

<sup>791</sup> Marc James Carpenter, “‘Justice and Fair Play for the American Indian’: Harry Lane, Robert Hamilton, and a Vision of Native American Modernity,” *Pacific Historical Review* 87:2 (2018), pp. 305 – 332; Robert D. Johnston, *The Radical Middle Class: Populist Democracy and the Question of Capitalism in Progressive Era Portland, Oregon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), chap. 3.

The Seattle monument *Seattle, Chief of the Suquamish* (conceived in 1907, dedicated in 1912) was in much the same way a representation of a Native person read as handing over land to White people.<sup>792</sup> James A. Wehn, the sculptor, had originally been brought in to “erect a statue... emblematic of commerce”—but the city officials and architect who had arranged for the project found little agreement on what that might mean. Given free reign to “proceed as [he] though[t] best” and bored with the idea of simply putting up some classical god or other, Wehn lit upon the idea of a sculpture of Sealth/Seattle/Si?al, a Suquamish and Duwamish leader who signed the Treaty of Point Elliot with Isaac I. Stevens in 1855 (and who was most famous for a valedictory address of murky provenance). With the eager approval of Clarence Bagley (and soon Edmond Meany), Wehn pursued art to cement the leader’s place as the face of the city that had taken a garbled version of his name as its own.<sup>793</sup>

Wehn came of age as an artist at a time when sculptural representations of Indians were common and marketable. His primary professional mentors gained fame from portraiture of Oscharwasha/“Old Jennie,” a Tututni/Takelma woman in southern Oregon who was feted (falsely) as the “last representative of the famous Rogue River Indians” in 1892. In this last year before her death, Oscharwasha used her fame to tell stories of

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<sup>792</sup> Statues of Native people peacefully giving land to Euro-Americans were a staple of monumental statuary in the 1890s and 1900s. See Paul Scolari, “Indian Warriors and Pioneer Mothers: American Identity and Closing of the Frontier in Public Monuments, 1890 – 1930,” PhD dissertation (University of Pittsburgh, 2005), esp. chap. 2.

<sup>793</sup> James Wehn to Clarence B. Bagley, Oct 7, 1930, Folder 27, Box 12, Clarence B. Bagley Papers, Acc 0036-001, University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle, WA; Robert Spalding, *Monumental Seattle: The Stories Behind the City’s Statues, Memorials, and Markers* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 2018), chap. 3. On Sealth/Seattle/Si?al’s famous speech and its provenance, Albert Furtwangler, *Answering Chief Seattle* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997); Arnold Krupat, “Chief Seattle’s Speech Revisited,” *American Indian Quarterly* 35:2 (2011), pp. 192 – 214. On the long-standing American fascination with “last Indian” oratory, see Carolyn Eastman, “The Indian Censures the White Man: ‘Indian Eloquence’ and American Reading Audiences in the Early Republic,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 65:3 (2008), pp. 535 – 564.

wrongs perpetrated by pioneers—including how she had been “captured by the whites, and later rescued by her people,” and, as the Jacksonville newspaper reporter put it

the grievous outrages and nameless wrongs perpetrated upon her people, and their consequent annihilation from the face of the earth, [stories which] would touch the stoutest heart with sympathy, and almost make one wish he could face again the brawny braves who fought and died for this fair heritage.<sup>794</sup>

One might well wonder whether it was the journalist or the speaker who left the “grievous outrages and nameless wrongs” indistinct—and what the journalist wanted to do in the do-over he imagined. This moment of sympathy was short-lived, with the journalist cracking wise about Indian backwardness and dreaming of “Old Jennie” as young and naked before the end of the paragraph. The artists, meanwhile, were most interested in her robe, formal traditional raiment that Oscharwasha had made herself. Rowena Nichols (later Leinss), Wehn’s first art teacher, had painted a picture of Oscharwasha in raiment to be displayed alongside a commissioned painting of Table Rocks for the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair. August Hubert, Wehn’s primary mentor as a sculptor, collaborated with Leinss to create a sculpture of “Old Jennie” from that portrait for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition of 1909.<sup>795</sup>

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<sup>794</sup> “Last of the Mohicans,” *Jacksonville Democratic Times* May 20, 1892, p. 3, transcribed at <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/takelma.html>. For Oscharwasha’s death, see “Last of Her Tribe,” *Jacksonville Democratic Times*, May 19, 1893, p. 3, *ibid*. See more broadly Jean M. O’Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010). There have been claims for Oscharwasha as both Takelma and Tututni; in choosing to list both, I mean no disrespect to alternate interpretations of her heritage.

<sup>795</sup> Fred Poyner IV, *The First Sculptor of Seattle: The Life and Art of James A. Wehn* (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Publishing, 2014), chap 4 [Leinss] and chap 6 [Hubert]; Peter and Emil Britt, “Lady Oscharwasha, portrait (Rogue Tribe),” photograph, 1892?, Peter Britt Photograph Collection, Southern Oregon University Hannon Library Special Collections, Ashland, OR; “Last of the Mohicans,” *Jacksonville Democratic Times* May 20, 1892, p. 3, transcribed at <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/takelma.html>; “‘Old Jennie’ in Marble: Statue of Last Survivor of Rogue River Indians to Be in Exhibit,” *Spokane Spokesman-Review* Dec 27, 1908, p. C2, transcribed at <https://truwe.sohs.org/files/rowenanichols.html>; *Pacific Coast Architect* 3:3 (1912), p. 433.

From 1907, James Wehn collaborated with Clarence Bagley and Edmond Meany to create a statue of Chief Sealth to celebrate commerce and the city. Bagley was useful politically as well as historically, making sure the “open” contest to create the statue (along the lines suggested by Wehn) was a mere formality.<sup>796</sup> Wehn modeled the body for his statue first after a local émigré and débauche who claimed to be a German count, then after a former U.S. soldier who had fought in the Nez Perce War. The face he patterned after an image of the historical Chief Sealth, pictures of Native people he took without their knowledge when visiting regional communities, and pilfered skulls he had dug up in Duwamish country. Wehn’s grave-robbing, as his biographer Fred Poyner IV has shown, made it impossible for him to coax local Native people to model for his artwork. An early model had found out what Wehn had done, and he “passed the word around.” The sculpting continued without live Native models. The statue, which had been renamed “Chief Seattle” after Wehn’s preferred spelling of “Sealth” had been attacked, was unveiled in a grand parade and ceremony on “Founder’s Day,” November 13, 1912.<sup>797</sup>

Much of the fundraising for the statue, and the ceremonies around its unveiling, were managed by yet another redface heritage group—the self-titled “Tilikums of Elttaes.” The “Tilikums” were a civic fraternal organization in Washington State,

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<sup>796</sup> Poyner IV, *The First Sculptor of Seattle*, chap. 8; James A Wehn to Clarence B. Bagley, Oct 7, 1930, Folder 27, Box 12, Clarence B. Bagley Papers.

<sup>797</sup> Poyner IV, *The First Sculptor of Seattle*, chap. 9; Thomas W. Prosch, “Seattle and the Indians of Puget Sound,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 2:4 (1908), pp. 303 – 308; Clarence B. Bagley, “Chief Seattle and Angeline,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 22:4 (1931), pp. 243 – 275. The renaming to “Seattle” from “Sealth” was largely from the impetus of the historian Thomas W. Prosch, who also changed the original inscription from “Chief of the Nisquallies” to the more accurate but still incomplete “Chief of the Suquamish.” A 1928 attempt, perhaps supported by James Wehn, to change the name to “Seattle—Chief of the Suquamish and Duwamish Tribes” went nowhere. Pageantry and redface had been a part of Seattle celebrations before this point; see Eva Emery Dye to Mr. Freeman, Apr 26, 1909, enclosed in Joseiah Collins to Edmond Meany, May 5, 1909, Folder 24 – 14, Box 24, Edmond S. Meany Papers.

dedicated to civic boosterism, economic development, and redface pantomime. Each branch combined the Chinook Jargon word for “friend” with the name of their city spelled backwards—a few days after the unveiling of the *Chief Seattle* statue, the “Tilikums of Elttaes” announced their annual meeting with the “Tilikums of Enakops,” in a press release replete with Chinook Jargon, bonhomie, and racial slurs. Just as the Improved Order of Red Men had raised money for the *Sacajawea* statue with redface pageantry, the Tilikums of Elttaes raised money for the *Chief Seattle* statue through “stunts.” One recorded “stunt,” in May of 1912, involved crowds of White men in redface costume (and sometimes pseudo-Shakespearean dress) posing in tableaux next to the stolen Tongass Tlingit totem pole at Seattle’s Pioneer Place.<sup>798</sup> Just as Chemawa Indian School students had been brought to witness the *Sacajawea* statue, at least some students from the (abusive) Tulalip Indian School attended the unveiling of *Chief Seattle*.<sup>799</sup> One such student, identified as Seattle’s descendant Myrtle Loughery, did the

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<sup>798</sup> Don Sherwood, “[Tilikum Place](#),” Jan 24, 1974, p. 2, Don Sherwood Parks History Collection, ID 5801-01, Seattle Municipal Archives, Seattle, WA; “Tilikums to Unveil Statue of Seattle,” *Seattle Daily Times* Nov 10, 1912, p. 20; “Celebrate Seattle’s Birthday,” *Seattle Star* Nov 14, 1912, p. 7; Tilikums Off for Spokane Pow Wow,” *Seattle Star* Nov 15, 1912, p. 8; “Tilikums of Elttaes Invitation,” April 27, 1912, ID 2018.3.3.43, Seattle Museum of History and Industry Digital Collection, Seattle, WA; “Tilikums of Elttaes Touch Off Potlatch Enthusiasm in City,” *Seattle Times* May 12, 1912, p. 1; Nowell & Rognon, “Sourdough Club on Ship ‘Portland’ During Golden Potlatch, Seattle, July 17, 1912,” ID 1954.776.1, Seattle Museum of History and Industry Photograph Collection, Seattle, WA. On the stolen Tongass Tlingit totem pole (one of several stolen in the 1890s, see Spalding, *Monumental Seattle*, chap. 1; Daniel Monteith, “Tongass, the Prolific Name, the Forgotten Tribe: An Ethnohistory of the Taantakwaan Tongass People,” PhD dissertation, (Michigan State University, 1998), pp. 183 – 186. The stolen pole was burned by an arsonist in 1938. Replacement versions of the pole were crafted by mostly Tlingit Indigenous artists.

<sup>799</sup> Harriette Shelton Dover, *Tulalip From My Heart: An Autobiographical Account of a Reservation Community*, ed. Darleen Fitzpatrick (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), chap. 6. It appears to have been standard practice to corral students from Indian Schools to monument dedications. For the 1899 dedication of neoclassical statue-topped ornate drinking fountain erected in honor of Narcissa Whitman, unveiled in [Charles] Wright Park, Tacoma, the Daughters of the American Revolution announced, “the Indian band of twenty members from the state school for Indians took part in the exercises. They were descendants of those who perpetrated the massacre. This feature was unique and more than unusually impressive.” The D.A.R.’s assertion that the students were descendants of those who killed the Whitmans was almost certainly a racist generalization; it is unlikely (but not impossible) that any of them were even Cayuse. *Third Report of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution: October 11, 1898 – October 11, 1900* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1901), pp. 267 – 268 and plate

unveiling. Bagley, Meany, Wehn, and “Tilikums of Elttaes” leader Edgar L. Webster did the talking.<sup>800</sup>

As Paul Scolari, Jean O’Brien, Lisa Blee, and others have argued, monumental statues of peacemaking Native figures have been among other things a means of dispelling doubts about the rectitude of American empire.<sup>801</sup> In Pacific Northwest at least as much as elsewhere, they were also a part of a rising fascination with representations of Native people as art objects—and not just as peacemakers. As Oregon art dealer Norwood Curry wrote in 1904, images of

Sacajawea [or of] an Indian scene on the plains attacking an immigrant train... appeal very strongly to our people in the northwest. More so... [than] old masters works. Many of our people cannot appreciate old art but many can an Indian scene, of the Northwest.<sup>802</sup>

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83; Metro Parks Tacoma, “Master Plan for Wright Park,” (January 2005), Appendix 2; Patrick Stephen Lozar, “‘An Anxious Desire of Self Preservation’: Colonialism, Transition, and Identity on the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 1860 – 1910,” Master’s thesis (University of Oregon, 2013), pp. 152 – 169; [Henry Sicade with] Cary C. Collins, editor, “Hard Lessons in America: Henry Sicade’s History of Puyallup Indian School, 1860 to 1920,” *Columbia* 14:4 (Winter 2000/2001), pp. 6 – 11.

<sup>800</sup> Poyner IV, *The First Sculptor of Seattle*, chap. 10; “Statue Dedicated to Chieftain Who Guarded Pioneers,” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* Nov 13, 1912, p. 1; “Seattle’s Birthday, Sixty-One Years Old,” *Seattle Star* Nov 13, 1912, p. 6; “Celebrate Seattle’s Birthday,” *Seattle Star* Nov 14, 1912, p. 7; It is unclear whether Webster wore the standard redface outfit of his organization for the occasion, or his “Potlatch King” quasi-Victorian Orientalist pastiche get-up of moccasin-inspired booties, cape, pseudo-Roman tunic, scepter, and crown. George Marsden, “Portrait of Potlatch King Edgar L. Webster,” Photograph, 1911, ID 1977/6531.2, Seattle Museum of History and Industry Photograph Collection, Seattle, WA.

<sup>801</sup> Scolari, “Indian Warriors and Pioneer Mothers,” esp. chap. 2; Jean M. O’Brien and Lisa Blee, *Monumental Mobility: The Memory Work of Massasoit* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019). In Seattle specifically, see Joshua Reid, “Remarks,” “Set in Stone: What Should We Do with Controversial Monuments?,” *Humanities Washington*, Dec. 9, 2020 (roundtable).

<sup>802</sup> Norwood Curry to Eva Emery Dye, June 20, 1904, Folder 8, Box 1, Eva Emery Dye Papers. See also Alexander I. Olson, “Heritage Schemes: The Curtis Brothers and the Indian Moment of Northwest Boosterism,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 40:2 (2009), pp. 158 – 178. Pursuit of “Indian scenes” also spurred increased interest in Native-themed pageantry—sometimes with White people in redface, sometimes with actual Native people, often with both. See Vaughn, “Playing West”; Sec. Walla Walla Committee to Spokane Betterment Organization (~1924?), Folder 13, Box 5, T.C. Elliott Papers, Mss 231, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR; Katrina M. Phillips, *Staging Indigeneity: Salvage Tourism and the Performance of Native American History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021).



A particularity of the (objectifying) Euro-American fascination with Native culture and/or caricature in the Northwest was the rise of what might be called “Chinook mania” in the 1900s and 1910s—a full examination of which is beyond this study. A simplified version of Chinook *wawa* suitable for communication with linguistically indexterous White people—Chinook Jargon—had been the primary means of communication between Indigenous and European-descended people in the Northwest from the early 1800s to the 1860s or beyond. By design easy to learn, with a syllabary of only a few hundred words, it had been viewed as a badge of pioneer identity by many from the earliest invasions of American settlers. But in the late nineteenth century, there were many who viewed the trade language as undignified. When the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast had floated the idea of a Chinook motto of “Ick Close Tillikum,” meaning “One Good Indian,” LaFayette Mosher had shut down the idea as unsuited to an organization that wished to be seen as august (see Chapter IX). William Fraser Tolmie, a Hudson’s Bay Factor who served as a key informant for many early histories of Washington, derided the trade language as a “vile compound,” an unpleasant necessity unsuited for the civilized.<sup>803</sup>

But by the 1900s, Chinook Jargon had gone from “vile compound” to what Edmond Meany labeled “an elixir” of memory among heritage groups and other Euro-Americans committed to nostalgia. The Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast, the Improved Oregon of Red Men, the Washington State Pioneer Association, and the Oregon Pioneer Association all made Chinook Jargon a semi-regular feature of their summer meetings in the 1900s and 1910s. Flyers and menus for organizational dinners

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<sup>803</sup> Tolmie quotation excerpted from John Sutton Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008), p. x.

were often almost entirely in Chinook Jargon, with no translation.<sup>804</sup> In a “Camp-Fire” meeting of the 1909 Oregon Pioneer Association gathering—typically a lighter entertainment towards the end of a day—there was a series of five-minute talks, short pieces of music, a poetry reading, and (singled out for special praise)

the conversation in the Chinook jargon language between Cyrus H. Walker, of Albany, Oregon, born December 7, 1838, the oldest native son of white parents now living, and Mrs. Abigail Scott Duniway, a pioneer of 1852, and Dr. Owens-Adair, a pioneer of 1843.<sup>805</sup>

The performance and pioneer identity par excellence of the participants was connected. The ability to converse in Chinook jargon was a marker of pioneer prowess for all three of these formidable figures (Walker in charge of the IWV-NPC, Duniway a leading women’s rights advocate who connected suffrage to the sufferings of pioneer women, Owens-Adair a doctor and eventually a leading proponent of involuntary sterilization in the Pacific Northwest; all three were amateur historians). In the 1910s, Cyrus Walker regularly led the singing of hymns in Chinook Jargon at pioneer gatherings, building on a more generic entertainment of “Indian songs” begun the decade before.<sup>806</sup> Heritage

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<sup>804</sup> Invitation to “St. James Muckamuck Wikuap, Washington D.C., Feb , 1901,” Folder 3, Box 17, Associations collection, Mss 1511, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR; Edgar Bryan to “Sir and Madam” [Clarence and Alice Mercer Bagley], May 9, 1903, Folder 25, Box 11, Clarence B. Bagley Papers; Flyer for “The Stillaguamish Valley Association of Washington Pioneers of Snohomish County Sixth Annual Reunion and Picnic,” Pioneer Association Form: Yakima Pioneer Association [~1914 – 1916], Folder 2, Box 78, Edmond S. Meany Papers. It was standard in the 1900s and 1910s for no translation of the Chinook Jargon to be provided.

<sup>805</sup> “Oregon Pioneer Association Thirty-Seventh Annual Session [1909],” p. 294, *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association* [1906 – 1912] (Portland: Chausse Pudhomme Co., 1915). On Bethenia Owens-Adair, see Bethenia Owens-Adair, M.D., *Human Sterilization: It’s [sic] Social and Legislative Aspects* (Portland: Metropolitan Press, 1922); Alexandra Minna Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), esp. p. 23; Mark A. Largent, “‘The Greatest Curse of the Race’: Eugenic Sterilization in Oregon, 1909 – 1983,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 103:2 (2002), pp. 188 – 209.

<sup>806</sup> Oregon Pioneer Association Reunion Program, June 16, 1897, Folder 2, Box 29, Associations Collection [no “Indian songs” or Chinook Jargon mentioned]; Pioneers Programme Dallas, July 2, 1904,

organizations like the Native Daughters of Oregon now saw no conflict between their insistence on the superior “royal blood” of those of pioneer lineage and their Chinook Jargon motto (Klose Nesika Illahee, which they translated as “our country is good, or best”).<sup>807</sup>

In 1914, use of Chinook Jargon at the Oregon Pioneer Association Reunion included not just songs and dialogue but whole skits in redface. White pioneers put on shows as members of the “Unimproved Order of Red Men”—a racist reference to the Euro-American organization the Improved Order of Red Men. E.B. [Ebenezer Barnes] McFarland put on a skit early in the day giving “an impassioned ‘wa-wa,’ protesting against the habit of ‘Boston men’ in poaching upon aboriginal preserves.”<sup>808</sup> McFarland was remembered for fighting Native people in the Rogue River region in the early 1850s, although he did not appear on the official muster rolls.<sup>809</sup> It is unclear exactly what was intended by his redface performance, but a presumption that it was meant to mock Native people complaining about White thievery does not seem unreasonable. Later in the same day the Oregon Pioneer Association put on a

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*ibid* [“Indian song”]; Oregon Pioneer Association Reunion Program, 1911, *ibid*; Oregon Pioneer Association Reunion Program, 1912, *ibid*; Oregon Pioneer Association Reunion Program, 1913, *ibid* [“Song, by Chinook Choir” in 1911 – 1913]. See also Michael V. Pisani, *Imagining Native America in Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), chap. 8; Paige Clark Lush, “The All American Other: Native American Music and Musicians on the Circuit Chataqua,” *Americana: The Journal of Popular Culture* 7:2 (2008); Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), pp. 236 – 289.

<sup>807</sup> Native Daughters of Oregon Pamphlet, quotations on pp. 23, 21, Folder 18, Box 23, Associations Collection.

<sup>808</sup> Oregon Pioneer Association Program, June 18, 1914, Folder 2, Box 29, Associations Collection,

<sup>809</sup> Delia Coon, “Klickitat County: Indians of and Settlement by Whites,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 14:4 (1923), pp. 248 – 261.

Chinook Dialogue between representatives of the “Unimproved Order of Red Men,” led by a kloochman who will scold her lazy man for failing to do his share in digging camas and other household duties.<sup>810</sup>

Walker and McFarland’s Chinook dialogues were again featured in 1915, 1916, and 1917.<sup>811</sup> Pioneers and their descendants in Steilacoom, Washington dressed in redface and sang “My Country ‘Tis of Thee” in Chinook Jargon—with “my country” replaced with the Chinook Jargon term for homeland, Illahee.<sup>812</sup> In Oregon Pioneer Association programs through the 1920s, alongside the lyrics to “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” and “Dixie” (the latter helpfully rendered in blackface dialect[!]), the remaining pioneers found an enjoinder: “Pioneers, greet each other. Then you will have a ‘good time.’ You may find an old sweetheart, or an old til-li-kum you have not seen for years.”<sup>813</sup> The regular reference to “an old til-li-kum” ceased in 1931, perhaps reflecting a feeling that Chinook Jargon was no longer widely known among group members.<sup>814</sup>

The historian Edmond Meany was fascinated by Chinook Jargon, and by almost any other element of Native culture he could lay his hands on. He interviewed and collected stories from numerous Native people, and tried to possess—for himself, and perhaps posterity—Native objects when he could. Fascination did not mean respect. The

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<sup>810</sup> Oregon Pioneer Association Program, June 18, 1914, Folder 2, Box 29, Associations Collection.

<sup>811</sup> Oregon Pioneer Association Program, 1915, Folder 2, Box 29, Associations Collections; Oregon Pioneer Association Program, 1916, *ibid*; Oregon Pioneer Association Program, 1917, *ibid*.

<sup>812</sup> Nancy Covert, “Laura Belle Downey Bartlett: Stalwart Steilacoom Settler and Woman of Many Talents,” *Columbia* 27:1 (2013), pp. 5 – 7.

<sup>813</sup> Oregon Pioneer Association Program, 1922, Folder 2, Box 29, Associations Collections [“Dars buckwheat cakes an’ ing\_n batter”].

<sup>814</sup> Oregon Pioneer Association Program, 1931, Folder 2, Box 29, Associations Collections. Such assumptions were common. One stage adaptation of Eva Emery Dye’s *The Conquest*, most Native speech was rendered in grunts, which another character would then translate. The Native characters from Oregon, however, spoke in Chinook Jargon—sometimes without a translation at all. Eva Emery Dye[?], “The Conquest” [stage play script], n.d., Folder 15, Box 5, Eva Emery Dye Papers. It is unclear when or if the play was ever formally staged; if the logy logorrhea of the text is any indication, it was unlikely to have run for long.

Suquamish site D'Suq'Wub (“Place of Clear Waters” in Lushootseed), known to Euro-Americans as “Old Man House,” was wrested from the Suquamish in 1904.<sup>815</sup> Euro-American artefact hunters did their best to brush aside Native objections to get a piece of what remained. Edmond Meany got assistance in his acquisitive pursuit in 1907 from Cyrus B. Pickrell, at the time the Indian Agent to the Suquamish. As Pickrell wrote:

About a year ago I received a request... to ship you... the last remaining post of the famous “Old Man House” formerly standing at this place. At the time this request came there were some objections made by a few of the old indians to its removal, and I thought it best to wait until these were overcome. I think I can ship it to you now without any trouble if you care for it, as the indian had died who made the strongest objections to the removal.<sup>816</sup>

To Meany and Pickrell, Native objects were prized, while Native objections were an annoyance to be brushed aside. Meany was interested in Native people’s stories, but not their wishes. He once wrote that “Indian Songs and Legends are the soul-voices of a primitive people who lived closer to nature than any other race of men.” Although the tone generally (and the “primitive” specifically) are grating to a modern reader, there was perhaps a note of veneration in this reflection. A note made more discordant by the place where Meany wrote it: as an endorsement for the singer and “impersonator of the North American Indian” Louise Merrill-Cooper. Meany called for a “greater appreciation of Indian ways and days,” and thought redface impersonations were a means of building that

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<sup>815</sup> Leonard Forsman, “We Continue to Build on Chief Seattle’s Legacy,” *Seattle Times* Aug 22, 2019.

<sup>816</sup> C[yrus] B. Pickrell to Edmond Meany, Dec 5, 1907, Folder 23 – 3, Box 23, Edmond S. Meany Papers.

appreciation.<sup>817</sup> Meany viewed the “Indian... days” as being in past—and he wanted to “appreciate” the people who had dispossessed them, too.

In the Pacific Northwest, the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.) were the most prolific organization that raised monuments commemorating the wars of the region—especially so in Washington State, where they had Edmond Meany’s help. As historian Simon Wendt has shown, D.A.R. chapters in the West “highlighted primarily the heroic accomplishments of pioneer men whom they regarded as masculine warriors for their violent confrontations with Native Americans.” Other heritage organizations shared members and methods with the D.A.R. Many pioneer heritage organizations used the same genealogical forms (with fewer steps) as those embraced by the D.A.R.<sup>818</sup> Like other heritage organizations focused on pioneers, the D.A.R. spent plenty of effort on “firsting”—marking the first White house, the first White baby, the first White church. And they funded many of the early Oregon Trail monuments. But the D.A.R. was unusually interested in the battles.<sup>819</sup>

When thousands of people, including Washington state governor Albert E. Mead, gathered in 1908 for the dedication of Steptoe Memorial Park, they were treated to a

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<sup>817</sup> Flyer for “Indian Lecture-Musical featuring Louise Merrill Cooper,” May 28, 1915, Folder 32, Box 86, Edmond S. Meany Papers; Frykman, *Seattle’s Historian and Promoter*, pp. 83 – 84.

<sup>818</sup> Folder 86 [entire], Box 5, Edmond S. Meany Papers; Simon Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution and Patriotic Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2020), p. 59; Woden Sorrow Teachout, “Forging Memory: Hereditary Societies, Patriotism and the American Past, 1876 – 1898,” PhD dissertation (Harvard University, 2003), pp. 118 – 119; Michael S. Sweeney, “Ancestors, Avotaynu, Roots: An Inquiry into American Genealogy Discourse,” PhD dissertation (University of Kansas, 2010), pp. 50 – 54. Mary A. O’Neil, “Henry Francis,” History of Thurston County Pioneers before 1870 [form], Feb 1918, Washington State Library—Historical Department, Washington State Library Manuscript No. 134, Pullman, WA; cf. D.A.R. Family Records of Washington Pioneers.

<sup>819</sup> Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution and Patriotic Memory*, chap. 3; O’Brien, *Firsting and Lasting*; [George H. Himes], “News and Comment,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 18:3 (1917), pp. 225 – 230; Dennis M. Larsen, *The Missing Chapters: The Untold Story of Ezra Meeker’s Old Oregon Trail Monument Expedition* (Puyallup, Wash.: Ezra Meeker Historical Society, 2006), pp. 20 – 21.

series of speeches celebrating violent White supremacy. The park was set to play host to one of the earliest projects of the Spokane, Washington D.A.R.—the erection of a monument to the May 17, 1858 event known variously among Euro-Americans as Steptoe’s Defeat, Steptoe’s Retreat, and the Battle of Te-hots-nim-me, when a mixed force of Indigenous fighters had routed a Euro-American expedition that had invaded their territory (see Chapter VI).<sup>820</sup> The ceremony was part of a broader push in early 1900s Spokane to appropriate and appreciate a whitewashed Native history of the region for Euro-American consumption.<sup>821</sup>

The keynote address came from Colonel Lea Febiger, a veteran of the Philippine-American War and the commanding officer of Fort Wright—itsself named after George Wright, who had killed his way across Washington Territory following Steptoe’s retreat in 1858 (see Chapter VI). When Febiger’s speech touched on the wars at all, he largely discussed Wright’s scorched earth invasion rather than the battle. But much of his speech waxed more broadly, aligning the armed services with the patriotism of pioneering. Mirroring Elwood Evans’s proclamation of pioneers-as-soldiers a few decades earlier, Febiger titled his speech “The Value of Soldiers as Pioneers,” proclaiming

The history of the world shows the soldier always as the advance agent of civilization or conquest, or both, and savage[s] have either had to conform or cease to exist. The centers of civilization of all times have been extended not by the quiet arts, so-called, but by arms, and the so-called wars of conquest [for civilizations across all epochs] were all against barbarian tribes[—]eventually

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<sup>820</sup> Elizabeth F. Tannatt, compiler, *Indian Battles of the Inland Empire in 1858* (Spokane, Wash.: Daughters of the American Revolution, 1914); Mahlon E. Kriebel, *Battle of To-Hots-Nim-Me: The U.S. Army vs. the Coeur d’Alene Indians* (Colfax, Wash.: Whitman County Historical Society, 2008).

<sup>821</sup> John W. W. Mann, “Slough-Keetcha: Spokane Garry in History and Memory,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 104:1 (Winter 2012/2013), pp. 3 – 20, esp. pp. 11 – 12.

extending to them, in spite of the slaughter incident to the process, the ben[e]fits of the highest civilization of their respective days....

We are now approaching a stage in the world's history where there are practically no more barbarous people or uncivilized countries, and the soldier of today will soon cease to act as a pioneer for lack of raw material[,] and confine himself more and more to his dual duty of national and universal policeman.<sup>822</sup>

Notably, Febiger denoted soldier's conduct against "barbarous people or uncivilized countries"—when soldiers they were "act[ing] as a pioneer[s]"—as something different. Indigenous people, presumably whether in the Americas or the Philippines, were the "raw material" that pioneering acted upon and eliminated. "Indian warfare," with all of what he called "the slaughter incident to the process," was (to Febiger) pioneering.<sup>823</sup>

Following this talk of beneficent slaughter, Governor Mead thanked the "army which has been such a great factor in compelling peace and maintaining the reign of law in the

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<sup>822</sup> Netta W. Phelps, "Dedication of Steptoe Memorial Park," *Washington Historical Quarterly* 2:4 (1908), pp. 344 – 351, quotation on p. 346. For the title of Lea Febiger's speech, see Elizabeth F. Tannatt, compiler, *Indian Battles of the Inland Empire in 1858* (Spokane, Wash.: Daughters of the American Revolution, 1914), p. 2. Tannatt spelled the name as "Feabiger," but Febiger is the correct spelling. See *The United States Army and Navy Journal and Gazette of the Regular and Volunteer Forces* 45 (New York: Army and Navy Journal Incorporated, 1908), p. 138 [Oct. 12, 1907]; "Garrison Gossip," *Army and Navy Life* 12:4 (1908), p. 508. For Febiger in the Philippines, see "Report Commanding Officer, Cotabato, June 4 1902," *Annual Reports of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1902*, Vol. 9 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), pp. 522 – 529; Oliver Charbonneau, "Civilizational Imperatives: American Colonial Culture in the Islamic Philippines, 1899 – 1942," PhD Dissertation (University of Western Ontario, 2016), pp. 216 – 223.

<sup>823</sup> For Febiger's philosophy applied against Moro people in the Philippines, see Robert A. Fulton, *Moroland: The History of Uncle Sam and the Moros, 1899 – 1920*, Revised Edition (Bend, OR: Tumalo Creek Press, 2016, orig. 2007), chaps. 14 and 15; Charbonneau, "Civilizational Imperatives," chap. 5, esp. p. 218 ["Shoot-on-sight orders were given for any Moro male acting suspiciously, and structures outside of designated reconcentration areas were burned"]. Comparisons between the wars in the Pacific Northwest and the wars in the Philippines were not uncommon; one fund-raiser for a memorial to "veterans of the four wars--Civil, Mexican, Indian and Spanish-American" at Portland's Lone Fir Cemetery featured a "sham battle" with brownface "wicked Filipinos." See "Fight Sham Battle: Veterans and Militia Present Realistic Spectacle," *Oregonian* May 30, 1903, p. 11; "James H. McMillen," *Portrait and Biographical Record of Portland and Vicinity Oregon* (Chicago: Chapman Publishing Company, 1903), pp. 107 – 109, esp p. 109. On playing Indian while connecting the Philippine-American War and other attacks on Indigenous people, see Katharine Bjork, *Prairie Imperialists: The Indian Country Origins of American Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019), esp. chap. 6.



Indian country.” Although there might still be a few grumbling IWW-NPC members, many official events of the 1900s and 1910s Northwest buried early tensions between local pioneers and troops in service of the national government.<sup>824</sup>

The other major speaker at the Steptoe Memorial Park dedication was Thomas J. Beall, George Wright’s former hangman and one of the last living Euro-American survivors of the battle. Beall’s insistence on the vital role Nez Perce allies played in keeping most of Steptoe’s regiment alive shaped the focus of the monument. And this was also the focus of his speech, wherein he remembered that “many of the soldiers” thought the Nez Perce poised for betrayal at every step, and were instead saved only through their assistance.<sup>825</sup>

Eventgoers in 1908 were already looking ahead to future monuments and markers. They asked Beall for help locating the site where General Wright had ordered him to hang “Qual-Shon” and his associates. Beall claimed to have found the spot (where “old Kaintuck trail crosses Hangman Creek” [named for another lynching by Wright]), and remembered that

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<sup>824</sup> Phelps, “Dedication of Steptoe Memorial Park,” quotation on p. 348; Joseph N. Teal, “Columbia River,” Speech given at a Banquet to the Secretary of War, Aug 2, 1913, Folder: Speeches, Box 1, Joseph Nathan Teal Papers, Ax 171, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR [“It was to the boys in blue in days now gone the hardy settlers of this country largely looked for protection”].

<sup>825</sup> Phelps, “Dedication of Steptoe Memorial Park,” quotation on p. 349; Tannatt, *Indian Battles of the Inland Empire in 1858*, pp. 7 – 8. Thomas J. Beall gave much of the credit to Nez Perce Chief Timothy. T.C. Elliott, who wrote an influential history of the battle in 1927, noted that other soldiers had not mentioned Chief Timothy’s presence at the battle proper, and thus discounted this element of Beall’s story. However, Elliott’s assertion that “Colonel Steptoe and other officers... [were] entirely silent as to Timothy” in their letters was provably false. See T. C. Elliott, “Steptoe Butte and Steptoe Battle-Field,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 18:4 (1927), pp. 243 – 253; cf. Tannatt, Compiler, *Indian Battles of the Inland Empire in 1858*, p. 4.

Four of the Indians that were hung were of the Umatilla tribe and were hung on general principles. The fifth Indian was of the Yakima tribe and was known as Qual-Shon. He was hung for the murder of Indian Agent Bolon.<sup>826</sup>

Official records might imply guilt on the part of all who were hanged. But Beall remembered that four out of the five had been “hung on general principles.” In general, the memorialization of the Battle of Te-hots-nim-me focused at least as much on the lethal campaign by General Wright that followed it. “Steptoe’s Defeat” thus served a role similar to the “Whitman Massacre,” a tragedy that justified and glorified the violence that followed. In the 1900s and 1910s, there seems to have been attempts in Washington State to put up tragic monuments to nearly every American-aligned soldier known to have died in the wars of the 1850s.<sup>827</sup>

The 1908 Steptoe dedication was meant in part to raise awareness and support for an envisioned marble monument to be placed at the park. This process lasted until 1914. State government support for the monument was not widespread enough to shake loose funds from Congress, and the D.A.R. and affiliate private groups raised the money for the obelisk themselves. The part of the eventual inscription they thought most important reflected Beall’s account of the battle and a settler worldview that separated a few “good Indians” from a mass enemy:

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<sup>826</sup> Phelps, “Dedication of Steptoe Memorial Park,” quotation on p. 350. Beall was most likely conflating two different hanging episodes.

<sup>827</sup> [Monuments Contributor List], Folder 216, Box 25, Lucullus Virgil McWhorter Papers, Cage 55, Washington State University Special Collections, Pullman, WA; [Hembree Monument Correspondence], Folder 217, Box 25, *ibid*; Bolon Monument Map, Folder 535, Box 51, *ibid*; [Slaughter Memorial Program], Folder 25, Box 86, Edmond S. Meany Papers; “Battle of Pa Ho Ti Cute – Two Buttes” [Monument Description], Folder 6, Box 24, *ibid*; [Tow – Tow – Nah – Hee Monument Description], Folder 6, Box 24, *ibid*.

Sacred to the memory of the officers and soldiers of the United States Army who lost their lives on this field in desperate conflict with the Indians in the Battle of Te-hots-nim-me, May 17<sup>th</sup> 1858

In memory of Chief Tam-mu-tsa (Timothy) and the Christian Nez Perce Indians—rescuers of the Steptoe Expedition.

Erected by the Esther Reed Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, Spokane, Washington June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1914.<sup>828</sup>

In D.A.R. memory, “the Indians” were the enemy, not any of the semi-specific tribal designations they had at their fingertips, like Palouse or Umatilla. Only perceived allies, “the Christian Nez Perce Indians,” got to be specific.<sup>829</sup>

Forced internment got monuments too. Fort Yamhill was a blockhouse built on the outskirts of the Grand Ronde Reservation in 1856, what was called “a defense against Indian treachery” as the internment process was reaching its heights. Soldiers went out from it to scour the countryside for Native people, sometimes going house to house in attempts to seize “runaway Indians” for (re)internment.<sup>830</sup> In 1858, it was moved onto the reservation, and used as a jail as well as a stronghold. In 1912, the blockhouse that had originally been built to house the regulars and volunteers keeping armed watch over the Native peoples of Grand Ronde Reservation was moved to Dayton, OR, and rededicated

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<sup>828</sup> Tannatt, compiler, *Indian Battles of the Inland Empire in 1858*, p. 16. For the praise of specific Native allies alongside general discussions of Indian perfidy at D.A.R. events, see Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution and Patriotic Memory*, pp. 100 – 104.

<sup>829</sup> The D.A.R. erected a small monument to the Battle of Seattle in 1916. But compared to the grand festivities of the unveiling of the Wehn Chief Seattle statue in 1912, the celebrations of the rock with a couple of bronze tablets on it were comparatively subdued. “Will Give Fountain,” *Seattle Star* June 1, 1916, p. 2; “Tablet Shows City’s Advance,” *Seattle Star* Aug 16, 1916, p. 6.

<sup>830</sup> George B. Wasson has shared a family tradition that his great-grandmother Gishgiu hid from Fort Yamhill soldiers in the era of internment, first in the woods near Coos Bay, then under a staircase when the soldiers arrived and started rifling through the family home. See George Bundy Wasson, Jr. “Growing Up Indian: An Emic Perspective,” PhD Dissertation (University of Oregon, 2001), pp. 217 – 220.

as a monument to Indian Superintendent General Joel Palmer.<sup>831</sup> Politician and professor Melvin Clarke George gave a speech in which he proclaimed that the threat embodied in Palmer's fort had helped keep the residents of the Grand Ronde Reservation from allying with the Yakama in the east. His dedication glossed over the vigilantes with guns that had played a signature role in that overwatch, focusing instead on the famous military figures who had fought in Oregon's Indian Wars before fighting in the Civil War. George ended his oration with a celebration of violence, "civilization," and eventually assimilation:

Block houses are symbols of the Pioneer past. They were scattered far and near in Oregon and Washington. They were the outposts of civilization.... [Now] Indian barbarity and danger [is] extinct. Civilization triumphant and progressing....

Here the old soldiers of our country, and here the Indians of Grand Ronde, now citizens of our common land, may come and dream of the days long ago, when the war clouds hung low, and here Pioneers may recall the times of their early hardships and their struggles to build themselves a home on the soil of Oregon.<sup>832</sup>

The blockhouse had served as a base for soldiers patrolling the reservation, and for patrols that went out hunting for Indians to intern there. But amidst the unvarnished colonialist celebration of "[c]ivilization triumphant," there was a call for shared appreciation by "the Indians of Grand Ronde." Professor George celebrated what he called the extinction of "Indian barbarity and danger," but was at least rhetorically open

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<sup>831</sup> "Rees," "Dayton Historic Resource Inventory: Courthouse Square Park," Nov 10, 1984, National Register of Historic Places #87000336, National Park Service, [https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/87000336\\_text](https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/87000336_text). Perhaps by coincidence, building the blockhouse also stood to put government money in Joel Palmer's pockets (as co-owner of the local sawmill). Helen Delight Stone, "The Archaeology of the Smith House (ORYA3), Dayton, Oregon," Master's thesis (Oregon State University, 1997), p. 9.

<sup>832</sup> M[elvin] C[larke] George, "Address Delivered at Dedication of Grand Ronde Military Block House at Dayton City Park, Oregon, Aug. 23, 1912," *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 15:1 (1914), pp. 64 – 70.

to the idea of shared citizenship with contemporary Native people. This was the part of the speech that wore best; when the park was rededicated decades later in 1971, Joel Palmer's part in the wars were all but disappeared, and he was praised instead as a "friend of the Indian." Much scholarship since has reiterated that view, reading past Palmer's dogged pursuit of dispossession to focus on his distaste for genocide.<sup>833</sup>

The most prolific sculptor of monumental statuary in twentieth-century Oregon began his relationship with the state in a grand celebration of pioneer violence. Alexander Phimister Proctor made a name for himself as a Western sculptor in multiple senses, a man proud of his refined training in art and unrefined habits in nature. In his unexpurgated and unpublished autobiography, *From Buckskins to Paris*, he wrote endlessly of his three great loves: family, art, and shooting. In passages mostly omitted from the published version of his autobiography, Proctor reveled in stories of his own (perceived) violent mastery: hunting anecdotes and episodes of animal cruelty, but also stories about pulling a gun on a rude chauffeur, shooting near peddlers on the road he deemed overly ethnic, shooting near a neighbor's guests whom Proctor perceived as drunk, shooting near a hired hand named Jake that Proctor presumed was thinking about getting drunk, shooting (and wounding in the buttocks) a man Proctor perceived as a "tramp" (who had knocked on Proctor's door looking for work), and (when Proctor was a

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<sup>833</sup> "Rees," "Dayton Historic Resource Inventory: Courthouse Square Park," Nov 10, 1984, National Register of Historic Places #87000336, National Park Service, [https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/87000336\\_text](https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/87000336_text); Terence O'Donnell, *An Arrow in the Earth: General Joel Palmer and the Indians of Oregon* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1991).

young man) pining for a chance to shoot down hostile Indians—a chance which apparently never came.<sup>834</sup>

Proctor identified as a Westerner as well as a shootist, and lionized Indian killers—particularly a man named “Big Frank, a typical frontiersman and Indian Fighter.” Proctor met Frank as a teenager, and venerated him as a masculine ideal for a lifetime—described by Proctor as tall, broad, bewhiskered, and “sinuous,” Big Frank’s

face was that of a killer, but not the murder type.... [a face] of the kind developed only in the Wild West, where dangers and hardships are the order of the day....

Killing an occasional Inj\_n was all in the day’s work with him.<sup>835</sup>

And indeed, Proctor wrote and rewrote the story of Big Frank’s killing of a Ute man named Yellow Moccasin, in 1870s Colorado, when Proctor had come closest to getting a chance to shoot at Indians.

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<sup>834</sup> Carpenter, “Reconsidering *The Pioneer*”; cf. Alexander Phimister Proctor, *Sculptor in Buckskin: The Autobiography of Alexander Phimister Proctor*, 2nd Ed., ed. Katharine C. Ebner (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009; orig. 1971); Peter H. Hassrick with Katharine C. Ebner and Phimister Proctor Church, *Wildlife and Western Heroes: Alexander Phimister Proctor, Sculptor* (Fort Worth, Tex.: Amon Carter Museum, 2003). On Proctor’s animal cruelty, see Alexander Phimister Proctor, “Lassoing Dog,” Folder: Early Denver Days, Box 1, Alexander Phimister Proctor Papers, Mss. 5352, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR [“{The dog} kept up a continuous screech till the rope drew too tight, then dwindled to a gurgling, choking wail and ended in convulsions”]; Proctor, “The Fawn and the Panther, p. XVII ...9, Folder: The Fawn and the Panther, *ibid* [executing stray cats for dissection, which Proctor did not enjoy]. For pulling a gun on a chauffeur, see Proctor, “Little Wolf: Adventures with Indians in Custer Country, Wyoming 1914,” pp. XXIX.....16 - XXIX.....18, Folder: Little Wolf, *ibid*. On Proctor and his friends shooting at an ethnic (Polish?) peddler and running him off the road, see Proctor, “Stokes Peddler,” Folder: Short Stories by APP - #1, *ibid*. On Proctor shooting near his neighbor’s guests, see Proctor, “Typescript Autobiography [draft],” p. XXV ...4, Folder: Typescript + Autobiography Ch 24 – 34, *ibid*. For Proctor shooting near a hired hand because he suspected the man might be heading into town for whiskey, see Proctor, “Hired Hand,” Folder: Alexander Phimister Proctor- Experiences on Farm in Westchester County, *ibid*. For Proctor shooting a jobseeker, see Proctor, “Shooting Up Tramp,” Folder: Alexander Phimister Proctor- Experiences on Farm in Westchester County, *ibid*. On Proctor’s youthful desire to shoot Indians, see Alexander Phimister Proctor, “Biog. of A.P.P. [1931],” p. 2, Folder: Birth and Childhood Reminiscences, *ibid*; Alexander Phimister Proctor, “Indian Outbreak – Bill Cousins,” esp. pp. 4 – 7, Folder: Indians 1877, *ibid*. Alexander Phimister Proctor’s archival records in Portland use idiosyncratic page numbers and folder names, which I have reproduced here to the extent possible.

<sup>835</sup> Proctor, Untitled, p. IX-10, quotation on pp. IX-2 – IX-3, Folder: Indians, *ibid*.

Alone among the seven-plus monumental sculptures Alexander Phimister Proctor designed for Oregon's public spaces, his 1919 work *The Pioneer* was from the beginning his own notion rather than the vision of a sponsor.<sup>836</sup> Carrying his love for "typical frontiersmen" through his arts education in New York and Paris, Proctor came to Oregon to experience the annual Pendleton Round-Up in 1914, and found inspiration—staying through to 1916. The still-running Round-Up had rodeo events, Native arts, parades, and pageants. But the performances differed from other Wild West shows, as historian Katrina M. Phillips has shown, in that "organizers wanted to celebrate their history without highlighting hostilities"—which seems to have meant an aversion to war scenes, but not to re-enactments of individual violence.<sup>837</sup>

Proctor modelled at least three sculptures of riders and buckaroos during his stay (Native and White—he did not put into sculpture the Black cowboy who was nearly murdered during his stay). Another source of inspiration was the winner of an Indian Beauty Contest at the Round-Up, whom Proctor later re-imagined naked with a deer in his *Indian Maiden and Fawn* (1917?).<sup>838</sup> And the sculptor met and modeled his "typical frontiersman," a trapper named Jess Cravens who (like Big Frank) was tall, taciturn, and

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<sup>836</sup> The major sculptural monuments Alexander Phimister Proctor crafted for Oregon include *The Pioneer* (1919), *Theodore Roosevelt, Rough Rider* (1922), *Circuit Rider* (1924), *Til Taylor* (1929), *The Pioneer Mother* (1932), and the two statues that represent Oregon in the National Statuary Hall as well as being displayed in Salem (designed by Alexander Phimister Proctor, completed after his death by his son Gifford): *Reverend Jason Lee* (1953) and *Dr. John M. McLoughlin* (1953). See also Peter H. Hassrick, "The Oregon Art of Alexander Phimister Proctor," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 104:3 (2003), pp. 394 – 413.

<sup>837</sup> Phillips, *Staging Indigeneity*, chap. 1, quotation on p. 30, description of fantastical and racist staged scene of violence, pp. 45 – 46. See also Renee M. Laegreid, "Rodeo Queens at the Pendleton Round-Up: The First Go-Round, 1910 – 1917," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 104:1 (2003), pp. 6 – 23.

<sup>838</sup> Proctor, *Sculptor in Buckskin*, chap. 22; Hassrick with Ebner and Church, *Wildlife and Western Heroes*, pp. 75, 170 – 173, 208 – 209; Rowena L. Alcorn and Gordon D. Alcorn, "Jackson Sundown, Nez Perce Horseman," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 33:4 (1983), pp. 46 – 51; Madeline Luella Jenkins, "Monuments of Multiple Meanings: Alexander Phimister Proctor's University of Oregon Representation of Pioneers and Native Americans Over Time," Honor's thesis [B.A.], (University of Oregon, 2017).

keen-eyed. When Joseph Nathan Teal put out the call for a pioneer sculpture, Proctor was ready. Teal had envisioned something like a pilgrim, akin to the sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens *The Puritan* (1886). Proctor coaxed him into funding something more like Big Frank—a mountain man primed for violence, with a gun and a whip at the ready.<sup>839</sup>

Proctor's *The Pioneer* was unveiled before a crowd of hundreds of students and elderly pioneers in 1919, to general acclaim. Robert Asbury Booth, a lumber baron who supported history education, spoke of how the statue represented pioneer bravery, “unselfish devotion,” and the courage of those that had fought to take Oregon. He was impressed enough with *The Pioneer* as an “interpretation of frontier life” that he hired Proctor to sculpt his *Circuit Rider* monument (1924) for the capitol grounds in Salem.<sup>840</sup>

Frederick V. Holman, the keynote speaker for the event, once again praised the martial virtues of pioneers—just as he had over two decades earlier, when he was fighting against the expansion of the Oregon Pioneer Association (see Chapters 8 and 9).

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<sup>839</sup> Nona Proctor Church, authenticator, *Studies in Bronze by A. Phimister Proctor: From the Original Patterns and Models* (Kalispell, Mont.: Thomas Printing, 1975), p. 25; Prescott, *Pioneer Mother Monuments*, pp. 42 – 45; Alexander Phimister Proctor, Untitled, pp. 4 – 5, Folder: ‘A Close Call Mayo Clinic to Denver + Idaho 1916 – 1917, Box 1, Alexander Phimister Proctor Papers, Mss. 535; Erika Doss, “Augustus Saint-Gaudens’s *The Puritan*,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 46:4 (2012), pp. 237 – 270. Proctor’s statue of John McLoughlin was much closer to *The Puritan* in design. Also in 1917, Joseph N. Teal immortalized his family’s part in the violence of Oregon by donating a portion of his father’s gun collection to the Oregon Historical Society. [George H. Himes], “News and Comment,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 18:3 (1917), pp. 225 – 230. On mountain men as archetypes of rough and righteous violence in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, see Patrick McCarthy, “‘Living History’ as the ‘Real Thing’: A Comparative Analysis of the Modern Mountain Man Rendezvous, Renaissance Fairs, and Civil War Reenactments,” *ETC: A Review of General Semantics* 71:2 (2014), pp. 106 – 123.

<sup>840</sup> Robert A. Booth, “The Outlook from the End of the Trail,” *Dedication of the Pioneer: An Heroic Statue in Bronze Erected on the Campus of the University of Oregon by Hon. Joseph N. Teal of Portland, May 22 1919* (Eugene: University of Oregon, 1919), p. 13; R. A. Booth to Gov. Ben W. Olcott, Jan 6, 1921, transcribed in “Exercises on the Occasion of the Dedication and Unveiling of the Equestrian Statue ‘The Circuit Rider’ Salem, Oregon, April 19, 1924,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 25:2 (1924), pp. 79 – 100, quotation on p. 82; Proctor, *Sculptor in Buckskin*, p. 190. Robert A. Booth was a beneficiary of the land schemes that ensnared many in the Oregon Land Fraud cases, although he was never convicted of anything criminal. Joan M. Kelley, “Booth-Kelly Lumber Company: An Empire in the Douglas Fir Country,” *Lane County Historian* 35:3 (1990), pp. 55 – 58; John Messing, “Public Lands, Politics, and Progressives: The Oregon Land Fraud Trials, 1903 – 1910,” *Pacific Historical Review* 35:1 (1966), pp. 35 – 66.



As he wrote to a friend after the dedication of *The Pioneer*, the monument reminded him of his uncle “a very forceful man, a typical pioneer.”<sup>841</sup> But though Holman praised racial violence in his speech, he said little of war:

The instincts and traditions of the Anglo-Saxon race have ever been to move westward. The star it had followed, which showed the westward course of empire, at last stood and shone over Oregon.... “the land where dreams come true.” There were great numbers of savage Indians to be encountered and forced to respect the rights and property of these immigrants.<sup>842</sup>

In standard settler colonial rhetoric, Holman posed the pioneers as both imperialists and defenders, the land of Native people immediately and already transformed into pioneer property upon the arrival of White men. Holman praised the Oregon pioneers for having prevented “a long and bloody war” with Great Britain, but made no mention of the wars of conquest by which so much land had been seized. Joseph Nathan Teal, at the *Circuit Rider* dedication only a few years later, similarly skipped over the wars his fathers had fought in, mentioning only the Cayuse War before moving swiftly to statehood in 1859.<sup>843</sup> Many in the early twentieth century still valorized Indian-fighting, but now as a generic and individual act common to pioneers generally rather than volunteers

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<sup>841</sup> Frederick V. Holman to T.C. Elliott, Dec 29, 1919, Folder 15, Box 5, T.C. Elliott Papers. Holman may well have been referring to his uncle-in-law, James Lyburn Clinkinbeard. See James L. Clinkinbeard to Joseph Lane, Sept 14, 1854, Folder 17, Box 1, Joseph Lane Papers, Mss 1146, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR; James L. Clinkinbeard Headstone, Cleveland Cemetery, Roseburg, Douglas County, Oregon.

<sup>842</sup> Frederick V. Holman, “Qualities of Oregon Pioneers,” *Dedication of the Pioneer*, pp. 23 – 24. See also Frederick V. Holman, “Qualities of the Oregon Pioneers: An Address at the Unveiling of ‘The Pioneer’...,” *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 20:3 (1919), pp. 235 – 242; Lisa Philips, “Later Revisions: (Re)constructing the Cast of US and Canadian Pioneers,” *Before and After the State: Politics, Poetics, and People(s) of the Pacific Northwest* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2018), pp. 207 – 232, esp. 211 – 214.

<sup>843</sup> Holman, “Qualities of the Oregon Pioneers: An Address at the Unveiling of ‘The Pioneer,’” quotation on p. 238; Joseph N. Teal, “The American Pioneer,” “Exercises on the Occasion of the Dedication and Unveiling of the Equestrian Statue ‘The Circuit Rider,’” esp. pp. 93 – 100.

specifically. *The Pioneer* was a paean to Indian-killing, not Indian wars. Those were already starting to disappear.

Pioneer pride was near immutable among first several generations of Euro-Americans in the Pacific Northwest; Native people fighting against the harms being done to their communities might find more success in channeling it than challenging it. Inscribing memories and histories of peaceful coexistence and/or honorable battle could serve Euro-American and Native goals. Playing along with sweetened version of the pioneer past allowed at least some Native people a platform to speak to the broader Euro-American world about their communities—and perhaps, to shift pioneer history away from the mix of erasure and violence monuments like *The Pioneer* represented. At times, portraying the wrongs being done to Indians as an aberration from (the fantasy of) American greatness was effective in recruiting White allies. If pioneer pride was unavoidable, a narrative of rogues and honest men could, at least in the near term, serve some Native community’s interests.<sup>844</sup>

Franklin Pierce Olney, the son of Indian Wars volunteer Nathan Hale Olney and Twa-Wy/Annette Hallicola, became a voice for Yakama rights (and Native rights generally) in local newspapers by the 1880s and 1890s, as Michell M. Jacob and Wynona M. Peters have found.<sup>845</sup> It was in part through his status as “A Son of Nathan Olney... A Prominent Pioneer,” as he was termed, that Franklin P. Olney was able to convince

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<sup>844</sup> Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities around Puget Sound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 63; Sherry L. Smith, “Reconciliation and Restitution in the American West,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 41:1 (2010), pp. 4 – 25, esp. pp. 5 – 6; Phillips, *Staging Indigeneity*; Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005), esp. chaps. 6 and 7.

<sup>845</sup> Michelle M. Jacob and Wynona M. Peters, “‘The Proper Way to Advance the Indian’: Race and Gender Hierarchies in Early Yakima Newspapers,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 26:2 (2011), pp. 39 – 55.

newspaper editors to print his evocations of Yakama rights. First, he wrote in to defend the Whiteness and pioneer bona fides of his father, who after “buying” his mother, running a ferry, becoming an Indian Agent, and setting a up farm “fought the Indians, who then broke out” in the 1860s. Franklin P. Olney was of Native descent himself, but even he spoke of “Indians” generally when referencing the war—although he wrote more specifically and positively of the “tribe of the Yakimas” to which he belonged.<sup>846</sup> After proving his pioneer bona fides, “Young Olney” was able to get a more trenchant letter to the editor printed, in which he denounced attempts to “open” treaty lands generally to White settlement.<sup>847</sup>

In 1917, the Puyallup/Nisqually leader Henry Sicade presented “The Indian Side of the Story” of the 1850s violence on Puget Sound. This speech condemned the chicanery of Isaac Stevens and the horrors of the Maxon Massacre. But, as Lisa Blee has argued, this speech was a careful “mix of indictment and flattery,” attributing the wrongs done to Native people to dishonorable individuals while reaffirming and appealing to the legitimacy of the American citizenry and United States law. Sicade’s aim was to persuade his Euro-American audience that American ideals demanded support for Native American rights. He did not demand that that his pioneer listeners be held collectively

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<sup>846</sup> Franklin Pierce Olney to Editor, *Yakima Herald*, Oct 18, 1889, printed as “A Prominent Pioneer: A Son of Nathan Olney Denies Some Statements Made by the Correspondent of an Eastern Journal,” *Yakima Herald* Oct 24, 1889, p. 3. “Captain Nathan Olney, U.S. Indian Agent Oregon Territory” was eventually given a plaque at Fort Simcoe State Park. He was celebrated for helping to “Avenge [the] Ward Massacre” and as an “intrepid leader [in the] Cayuse and Yakima Wars.” “Captain Nathan Olney,” Memorial Plaque, Fort Simcoe Historical State Park, 1956; Ronald Todd, “Reader’s Scrapbook,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 47:3 (1956), pp. 95 – 96.

<sup>847</sup> Franklin Pierce Olney, “Young Olney’s Views,” *Yakima Herald*, Dec 19, 1889. Perhaps strategically, Olney differentiated between lands set aside by Native governments in treaties from lands set aside for Native people by the federal government. See also Jacob Peters, “The Proper Way to Advance the Indian.”

responsible for the wrongs that they were, in fact, collectively responsible for. Such a demand would have been unlikely serve his ends.<sup>848</sup>

Spokane people, including Nellie Garry, used the lawyer William S. Lewis's fascination with the pioneer past to nudge him into (limited) advocacy for Native nations. As a young Euro-American attorney in Spokane with an admiration for mythic pioneers, Lewis stumbled into Native history and eventually activism between the 1900s and the 1920s. His fascination for history led him to co-found the Spokane Historical Society (later the Eastern Washington Historical Society) in 1916. As a historian, he was most famous for his short book *The Case of Spokane Garry*, arguing with evidence and interviews that the scurrilous rumors about Garry in the later parts of the nineteenth century were incorrect, and that the leader had fought for Native land rights (and peace) throughout his life. Working with the Garry family, Lewis helped convince the local D.A.R. to co-fund a monumental gravestone honoring Spokane Garry in 1925. Although he never lost his hero-worship of pioneers, Lewis's Native interlocutors pushed him toward actions for Native rights. In the 1920s, he took on several cases for Indigenous nations in Washington, sometimes working without pay.<sup>849</sup>

Although Native actions spurred Lewis to support Native goals, he remained a proponent of historic pioneer history. Lewis was a major figure in multiple historical societies, responsible for a 1926 monument to the Battle of Spokane Plains. Although Lewis's attempt to rehabilitate Spokane Garry in the eyes of Euro-Americans is his most

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<sup>848</sup> Henry Sicade, "The Indian's Side of the Story," Address to the Research Club of Tacoma, April 10, 1917, in *Building a State, Washington: 1889 – 1939*, ed. Charles Miles and O. B. Sperlin (Olympia: Washington State Historical Society, 1940), pp. 490 – 502; Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi: Narrative and the Politics of Historical Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), pp. 46 – 49.

<sup>849</sup> William S. Lewis, *The Case of Spokane Garry* (Fairfield, Wash.: Ye Galleon Press, 1987, orig. 1917), chap. 5, chap. 4, frontispiece; John Fahey, "The Case of William Lewis," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 91:2 (2000), pp. 86 – 93. It is unclear what mix of altruism and a hope of a future pay day (that never came) guided Lewis's uncompensated legal work for Native communities.

famous publication, most of his works (as historian Stacey Nation-Knapper has pointed out) celebrated the pioneers and settlers who invaded Eastern Washington. In his short history of the “Spokane Invincibles,” a small group of local Euro-American volunteers, Lewis portrayed them as heroes fighting enemy “Indians.” Lewis was unusual in his willingness to fight for some measure of “justice and fair play” for Native people and nations in eastern Washington. But he was still in thrall to a celebratory vision of colonization. Lewis insisted the wrongs done to Native communities had been the work not of his neighbors, or of the volunteers he lionized, but rather of “principally transient miners passing through”—presumably transient miners *other* than those he honored in the pages of the *Washington Historical Quarterly*.<sup>850</sup>

Lewis tried to bring together his urge to celebrate pioneering and his yen to support Native personhood in an article he titled “Oldest Pioneer Laid to Rest,” published in 1926. In many ways it was typical of the form, eulogizing a Mrs. Mary Ann King, “a pioneer of the Colville Valley” who had died at 104 as “Washington’s oldest daughter.” Somewhat unusually, Lewis celebrated King’s Native heritage as well as her White—albeit in terms troubling to the modern ear. “She was an excellent example of the best of Indian character and Indian blood in this country,” Lewis wrote. “She was of mixed blood, far above the average, and very few like her inherited the good traits of both her ancestors.” Lewis celebrated her thrift, her devout Catholicism, and her ability to “tan a

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<sup>850</sup> Fahey, “The Case of William Lewis,” esp. p. 90; Stacy Nation-Knapper, “‘Like Putting Birds in a Cage’: Territory and the Troubled Life of a Spokane Oral History,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 106:3 (2015), pp. 120 – 138, esp. 129; William S. Lewis, “The First Militia Companies in Eastern Washington Territory,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 11:4 (1920), pp. 243 – 249; William S. Lewis and Joseph H. Boyd, “Reminiscence of Joseph H. Boyd: Argonaut of 1857,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 15:4 (1924), pp. 243 – 262. For the “justice and fair play” quotation, see Donald L. Cutler, *“Hang Them All”: George Wright and the Plateau Indian War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), p. xv. For that term as applied by Progressive-Era Euro-American advocates for American Indian rights, see Carpenter, “‘Justice and Fair Play for the American Indian.’”

deer hide, make moccasins, gloves and... fancy bead work.”<sup>851</sup> When Lewis described the wider circumstance of her life amidst colonial conquest, his tone revealed the contradictions of his predilections:

After the railroad was built into Colville Valley nearly all the Indian settlers were crowded out and lost their lands and were forced to go onto the reservations, but Mrs. King stayed. Her self pride tempted her to stay with the whites; and her native shrewdness was sufficient to protect her property from the covetous and scheming white men who would have possessed her lands....

[T]he present generation says only: “another old timer gone,” but to the old pioneers she is of deeper interest, as she recalls the days when everyone knew everyone else throughout the entire valley, and when all were, so to say, one great family. Very few people were permitted to see as much change take place in a country as she did, from the time when the aborigines held full sway over this entire domain, till this country developed and progressed to its present state.<sup>852</sup>

Blinkered by racism, Lewis never resolved or perhaps even noticed the contradictions in his historical work. He framed Indians as people who deserved their lands, the initial pioneers who seized their lands as heroes, and both as part of “one great family.” The “covetous and scheming white men,” like the “transient miners,” could be safely decried as outsiders, something other than pioneers. More prominent historians, like George Himes and Clarence Bagley, eventually lighted on a similar condemnation of outsiders, in

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<sup>851</sup> William S. Lewis, “Oldest Pioneer Laid to Rest,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 17:1 (1926), pp. 39 – 42; on Mary Ann King, see also Jean Barman and Bruce M. Watson, “Fort Colvile’s Fur Trade Families and the Dynamics of Race in the Pacific Northwest,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 90:3 (1999), pp. 140 – 153.

<sup>852</sup> William S. Lewis, “Oldest Pioneer Laid to Rest,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 17:1 (1926), pp. 39 – 42, quotation on p. 41.

their case bureaucrats—as Himes put it, “the difficulties of the settlers with the Indians of the Pacific Northwest have grown out [of] the fa[i]lure of our own government to keep its treaty promises.” Among the desperate fights for Indigenous survivance, rights, land, dignity, and nationhood in the Progressive Era (1890s ~ 1920s), narratives that praised pioneers but insisted on treaty rights might be viewed as enough.<sup>853</sup>

A full accounting of Native uses of White nostalgia and pioneer history for activist ends is well beyond this study. But any such accounting must consider the difficulties of striving for justice in an era when so many wanton murderers of Native people—some still living—captivated Euro-American public imagination. In the shadow of *The Pioneer*, and the celebration of murderous violence monuments like it represented, a tactical approach to when, how, and to whom one might tell terrible truths was warranted.<sup>854</sup>

In 1920, Indian Schools across the United States were “directed to observe in some suitable manner... the ‘Tercentenary of the Landing of the Pilgrims.’”<sup>855</sup> In address titled “A Prophecy Fulfilled” at the Tulalip Indian School that year, Meany spoke at

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<sup>853</sup> George Himes to Clarence Bagley, Dec 18, 1931, Folder 4, Box 10, Clarence B. Bagley Papers; Carpenter, “Justice and Fair Play for the American Indian”; Sherry L. Smith, “Reimagining the Indian: Charles Erskine Scott Wood and Frank Linderman,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 87:3 (1996), pp. 149 – 158; Gunlög Fur, “Indian and Immigrants: Entangled Histories,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 33:3 (2014), pp. 55 – 76, esp. 61; Nicole Tonkovich, “Parallax, Transit, Transmotion: Reading Race in the Allotment Photographs of E. Jane Gray,” *Melus* 39:2 (2014), pp. 66 – 92; Jennifer Bailey, “Voicing Oppositional Conformity: Sarah Winnemucca and the Politics of Rape, Colonialism, and ‘Citizenship’: 1870 – 1890,” Master’s thesis (Portland State University, 2012), esp. chap. 2; Elias William Nelson, “Making Native Science: Indigenous Epistemologies and Settler Sciences in the United States Empire,” PhD Dissertation (Harvard University, 2018), esp. pp. 58 – 63.

<sup>854</sup> Chelsea K. Vaughn, “The Road that Won an Empire’: Commemoration, Commercialization, and the Promise of Auto Tourism at the ‘Top o’ Blue Mountains,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 115:1 (2014), pp. 6 – 37; Cassandra Tate, *Unsettled Ground: The Whitman Massacre and Its Shifting Legacy in the American West* (Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 2020), pp. 195 – 196; Talea Anderson, “I Want My Agency Moved Back... My Dear White Sisters”: Discourses on Yakama Reservation Reform, 1920s – 1930s,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 104:4 (2013), pp. 178 – 187; Maxmillian C. Forte, “Seeing beyond the State and Thinking beyond the State of Sight,” in *Who Is an Indian?: Race, Place, and the Politics of Indigeneity in the Americas* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), pp. 234 – 241.

<sup>855</sup> W.J. Dickens to Prof. Ed[mond] S. Meany, Oct 25, 1920, Folder 27, Box 60, Edmond S. Meany Papers.

length of his vision of a Native and White future, beginning his speech with a long durée view of history:

Three hundred years ago today the Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth Rock. We are assembled to celebrate that event as an epoch in American history.

There is a peculiar significance in the fact that Indians should gather here on the shores of the Pacific Ocean in 1920 to celebrate the landing of white men among other Indians in 1620 on that distant Atlantic shore. A cycle has been completed; a continent has been spanned; and two races of men have learned the meaning of clasped hands as together they turn hopeful eyes toward the future.<sup>856</sup>

In keeping with the queasy norms of the day, Meany suggested that the Native students should “celebrate the landing of white men.” But he did propose a present and future of comity between Native and White people. Unlike more assimilationist Euro-Americans, he did not dismiss Native culture entirely. But he did consign it to memory:

In that old time which we are honoring your people knew the bays and shores of this beautiful arm of the sea. Those towering snow-crowned peaks they knew and the rivers running through the deep forests of fir and spruce and cedar. Their canoes were swift in war or chase and they sought omens and guidance from forest, sea and sky.

The white man came with iron and gold, with cloth and flour. The old wild life was quickly changed. The legends of bluejay and beaver gave place to the book and the school.

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<sup>856</sup> Edmond S. Meany, “A Prophecy Fulfilled,” Dec. 21, 1920, p. 1, Folder 26, Box 60, Edmond S. Meany Papers.



The book speaks of all time and all people. We still love the legends. They are like voices of the forest. But now we are Americans. We salute our flag and we would honor the Pilgrim Fathers on this anniversary day.

Oh my Indian friends, I would share your spirit and join this festival of remembrance with a feeling that mingles reverence and hope.<sup>857</sup>

This speech contained no mention of Indian wars or violence in the Pacific Northwest—although the Battle of Little Bighorn did make an appearance.<sup>858</sup> And Meany ended with a benediction to the Indigenous pupils compelled to attend his speech:

What shall we say to those who may assemble here on the next centennial anniversary? We have numerous records of Indians who attain ages greater than a hundred years. So it may be that some of you younger Indians may live that long and bear witness of this meeting to that one. Those who will assemble then are the future...

They will cherish faint echoes of the forests and your fathers' legends of eagle, of beaver and bluejay. They will know that we met here to remember the past and to greet the future.

We lift our voices to you of the future. We ask you to cherish good government, civil and religious freedom, improved education, equality of opportunities for all. We transmit to you all the best legacies of the past. We trust that your century's survey will reveal a progress far greater than our own. We beseech you to send

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<sup>857</sup> Edmond S. Meany, "A Prophecy Fulfilled," Dec. 21, 1920, p. 1..

<sup>858</sup> *Ibid*, p. 7.

the time-honored American ideals forward to the unnumbered years of our beloved Republic.<sup>859</sup>

This became one of Meany's more famous speeches, sent to dignitaries, libraries, and the other movers and shakers of Northwest and even American history.<sup>860</sup> To the extent that Meany has a reputation as a "friend of the Indians," it was in large part from speeches like this one. Whatever the many, many faults of the future for Native people he envisioned, he did at least presume continuing Native presence. His call to "remember the past and greet the future" has worn far better than any of the specifics he articulated. For some descendants of pioneers, a preferred way to remember the past was with fewer wars and more friendship. And that was a narrative Native people could work with, as they took on the battles of the twentieth century, recruiting even organizations like the Daughters of the American Revolution to select battles for Native rights through strategic uses of history and culture.<sup>861</sup>

Monuments, as the Oregon Trail Association once put it, are a matter of "sympathy... soul and sentiment."<sup>862</sup> They represent history more through powerful

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<sup>859</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>860</sup> Geo[rge] H. Himes to Edmond S. Meany, Feb 19, 1921, Folder 27, Box 60, Edmond S. Meany Papers.

<sup>861</sup> Katrine Barber, *In Defense of Wyam: Native-White Alliances and the Struggle for Celilo Village* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018); Andrew H. Fisher, "Speaking for the First Americans: Nipo Strongheart and the Campaign for Indian Citizenship," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 114:4 (2013), pp. 441 – 452. The Daughters of the American Revolution made citizenship for Native people—at the time a major goal for many Indigenous Native rights organizations—the signature theme of their 1921 national meeting, in part through the urging of Cherokee-Creek singer Tsianina Redfeather. Wendt, *The Daughters of the American Revolution and Patriotic Memory*, chap. 3. On Tsianina Redfeather [Blackstone], see Pasani, *Imagining Native America in Music*, chap. 8; John W. Troutman, *Indian Blues: American Indians and the Politics of Music, 1834 – 1934* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), pp. 233 – 244; K. Tsianina Lomawaima, "A Principle of Relativity through Indigenous Biography," *Biography* 39:3 (2016), pp. 248 – 269.

<sup>862</sup> Quotation from William Jasper Gilstrap, in "Typescripts of addresses to the Pioneer Association, relative to markers on the Oregon Trail," p. 19, Volume 2, Box 21, Clarence B. Bagley Papers. See also William Jasper Gilstrap, *The Memoirs of William Jasper Gilstrap* (copyright 1985; self-published by

feelings than complicated facts. In the Progressive-Era Pacific Northwest as they had before, Euro-Americans agreed on the general heroism of colonization, but not on the specifics of the stories or Native people's place(s) within them. Although there were still celebrations of violence aplenty, the kinds of violence that they found acceptable—and therefore worthy of repetition and remembrance—shrank. Heightened Euro-American nostalgia for Native life and practice met with these changing boundaries of acceptability to shape a history the pioneer Pacific Northwest stressed moments of friendship (real and imagined), and steered away from the bloody details. In pursuit of survivance, some Native people were willing to partially assent to a kinder, gentler, half-true history of the pioneer period—at least publicly—if it served their community's needs. Those fighting for Indigenous peoples' futures had to be mindful of which truths might be too much for White audiences. As the successful Okanagan writer and activist Christine Quintasket ("Mourning Dove") put it in 1928, one had to make sure not to "roast" the White people "too strong to get their sympathy."<sup>863</sup>

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family 2010), pp. 11 – 12. On monuments as expressions of sentiment, see among many others Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

<sup>863</sup> Christine Quintasket ("Mourning Dove") to Lucullus Virgil McWhorter ("Big Foot"), June 8, 1928, transcribed in Robert Strong, "The Uncooperative Primary Source: Literary Recovery versus Historical Fact in the Strange Production of *Cogewea*," in *Building New Bridges/Bâtir de Nouveaux Ponts: Sources, Methods and Interdisciplinarity/Sources, Méthodes et Interdisciplinarité* ed. Jeff Keshen and Sylvie Perrier (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2005), pp. 63 – 72, quotation on p. 65. See also Susan K. Bernadin, "Mixed Messages: Authority and Authorship in Mourning Dove's *Cogewea*, *The Half-Blood: A Depiction of the Great Montana Cattle Range*," *American Literature* 67:3 (1995), pp. 487 – 509; Dolores E. Janiewski, "'Confusion of Mind': Colonial and Post-Colonial Discourses about Frontier Encounters," *Journal of American Studies* 32:1 (1998), pp. 81 – 103; and esp. Laurie Arnold, "More than Mourning Dove: Christine Quintasket—Activist, Leader, Public Intellectual," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 67:1 (2017), pp. 27 – 45.

## CHAPTER XII: CONCLUSION AND POSTSCRIPT

The erasure of pioneer violence and Indian wars in the Pacific Northwest was slow, scattered, and incomplete. The biggest changes seem to be generational. As the pioneers themselves died, the settlers who followed them—including their own children—sometimes pruned away their acts of racist violence, and overwrote the crimes against humanity they had committed.

Harriet Nesmith [McArthur], James W. Nesmith's daughter, shaped how history would be told as a co-founder of the Oregon Historical Society. And she came to prefer a sympathetic take on Oregon's Native peoples.<sup>864</sup> When she published her own pioneer memoir, in 1929, she disappeared the wars in the Pacific Northwest. Harriet Nesmith brought up her father's role as Indian Agent, his part in treaty negotiations in 1853, and his army acquaintances. But she nowhere breathed a word about any of the regional wars he had participated in, or central part those wars of conquest had played in his political successes. The passage that came closest to mentioning the wars instead reframed the Oregon Trails of Tears into a story of comity and bonhomie:

In 1856 a great many Indians were placed on the reservations of Grand Ronde and Siletz, with an army post at each reservation. There were many Rogue River and Klickitat Indians, both quite superior people. The men were allowed out on passes issued by the agent, and they did good work in the harvest fields, binding grain by hand. The women gathered berries and hazelnuts, and we children were allowed

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<sup>864</sup> Omar C. Spencer, "Lewis Ankeny MacArthur, 1883 – 1951," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 56:1 (1955), pp. 4 – 11; Erin McCullugh Peneva, "Oregon Voices: The Importance of Memory and Place: A Narrative of Oregon Geographic Names with Lewis L. McArthur," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 109:3 (2008), pp. 446 – 460. For Indigenous influences on the early days of the Oregon Historical Society, see Sarah Keyes, "From Stories to Salt Cairns: Uncovering Indigenous Influence in the Formative Years of the Oregon Historical Society, 1898 – 1905," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 121:2 (Summer 2020), pp. 186 – 211.

to visit the women, and in their limited “Boston talk” and in our limited Chinook, we heard the stories of their tribal homes.<sup>865</sup>

The carceral system that pioneers had attempted to make the reservations hovered just in the margins of Harriet Nesmith’s account. The murderous assaults that had led to the “placement” on reservations was wholly absent. And even the war service her father had been proud of was gone. But neither did she celebrate the killings of Native people, or repeat the more vile epithets that frothed in the writings of her father.

Some of Joseph Lane’s descendants, who fought for Native rights, upstreamed their beliefs to the family patriarch. The politician and doctor Harry Lane and his daughter, the writer and historian Nina Lane [Faubion], invented a long family history of Native rights activism and even claimed a lineage of attenuated indigeneity for themselves.<sup>866</sup> As Nina Lane put it in 1941:

Our branch of the family have always been proud of the fact, whether rightfully or not, that we had Indian blood in our veins. We have been told that General Lane’s mother, Elizabeth Street, was the daughter of Col. [James] Street who married a full blood Cherokee Indian.<sup>867</sup>

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<sup>865</sup> Harriet Nesmith McArthur, “Recollections of Rickreall,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 30:4 (1929), pp. 362 – 383, quotation on p. 377.

<sup>866</sup> Harry Lane to Nina Lane, April 20, 1904, Folder: Harry Lane Correspondence, Box 1, Nina Lane Faubion Papers, Ax 185, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR. Harry Lane, who got his political start running (and reforming) the Oregon State Asylum, seems to have ministered to Jesse Applegate when the old pioneer was institutionalized for mental illness; see Jesse Applegate to Harry Lane, April 15, 1888, *ibid.*

<sup>867</sup> Nina Lane [Faubion] to J.E. Swain, April 29, 1941, Folder 1, Box 3, Joseph Lane Papers Ax 183, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR; for the lack of evidence for or against, see J.E. Swain to Nina Lane Faubion, May 5, 1941, *ibid.* Claims of long-lost Native heritage must be treated with caution, but it is noteworthy that genealogical records about Col. James Street tend to note that he was married, but leave out to whom he was married—which might well indicate some reticence about racial identity. Nina Lane was able to find no positive evidence of Cherokee heritage. With her faculties fading in old age, Nina Lane even came to believe that her father was a target rather than a perpetrator of vigilante violence, planning to write about “Night-Riders [who came] to Lynch Great-Grandfather.” Nina Lane,

Any such pride her family had felt was kept strictly out of the record in the 1800s. Besides attempting to claim Native heritage, Nina Lane expanded even further on her family's generations-long effort rehabilitate Joseph Lane as a "friend of the Indians," setting him against the "bad whites that lied cheated and stole from the Indians."<sup>868</sup> Before launching into the unfortunate racial stereotypes about Black people, assertions of the innate nobility of the Lane bloodline, and wild historical imaginings that defined her late historical work, Nina Lane opened her celebratory biography of her great-grandfather mournfully:

To the everlasting shame of both Indiana and Oregon, is the spoliation of the Indians of their homelands. Through force and deceit this great northwest was wrested from them, sluiced in [the] blood of the venturesome to the pay-dirt that has been minted by the Yankee speculators. The settlers acted as hosts to the parasites that we have so constantly had with us since.<sup>869</sup>

Joseph Lane, an eager user of "force" (violence, rape, and murder) in pursuit of land conquest, a man who had blamed most violence on the "treachery, which all Indians are full of," would have been gobsmacked by this gloss from his filial great-granddaughter—who spent her last days trying to fight against the seizure of Indigenous lands in Alaska,

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Notes on Joseph Lane Autobiography, Chapter headings, Folder 2, Box 3, Joseph Lane Papers Ax 183, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene, OR.

<sup>868</sup> Nina Lane, "Biography of Joseph Lane" [incomplete draft], quotation on p. 88, Folder 4, Box 2, Joseph Lane Papers Ax 183, University of Oregon Special Collections; Harriet Lane, "General Joseph Lane and His Relation to the History of Oregon between the Years 1849 and 1853," Bachelor's thesis (University of Oregon, 1909).

<sup>869</sup> Nina Lane, "Biography of Joseph Lane" [incomplete draft], p. 1, Folder 3, Box 2, Joseph Lane Papers Ax 183, University of Oregon Special Collections. Although her biography of Lane contained appalling stereotypes of Black people, Nina Lane had followed and supported anti-lynching movements in the 1910s, when she was active in communist circles. See Nina Lane, "This Is What We Do to the Sons and Daughters of Men," attached to a clipping reporting on the killing of Lation Scott, *The Crisis* Feb. 1918, p. 182(?), Folder 10, Box 1, Harry Lane Papers, Mss 536, Oregon Historical Society Special Collections, Portland, OR. On Lation Scott, see James R. Grossman, "Blowing the Trumpet: The 'Chicago Defender' and Black Migration during World War I," *Illinois Historical Journal* 78:2 (Summer 1985), pp. 82 – 96.

in his name. Historians might recognize yet another formulation of rogues and honest men, bad “Yankee speculators” now contraposed against good “settlers” and “the Indians.”<sup>870</sup>

In 1938, Leslie M. Scott, a newspaperman, politician, and son of Indian War Veteran Harvey W. Scott, gave the keynote address at the unveiling of the new Oregon State Capitol in Salem. The old building had burned down in 1935, and the new complex—topped with the monumental *Oregon Pioneer*, a 22-ft gold-leafed bronze statue by Ulric Ellerhusen—was meant among other things to portray and celebrate Oregon’s “ancient past, its discovery and conquest, and the epic of its pioneer history.” But there was hardly a hint of violence in the art selected for the new capitol. The “epic” of Oregon’s pioneer history was deformed into one of peaceful White supremacy, with camp meetings, covered wagons, and lots and lots of Lewis and Clark. Everything between 1843 and 1859 was omitted—including all of the wars.<sup>871</sup>

Leslie M. Scott praised Oregon as “a monument to American expansion,” a place where American “racial and national energies” reached a fever pitch. But where his father had fought to make Indian veterans central to the history of the state, Leslie M. Scott described Oregon as “the one part of the United States obtained by discovery, diplomacy, and peaceful settlement.” The only Native person left in the frame was “Sacajawea.” The gold-leafed bronze pioneer in Salem was no less a symbol of White supremacy than the

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<sup>870</sup> Joseph Lane to Col. W. M. Cockrum, June 21, 1878, Folder 4, Box 2, Joseph Lane Papers Ax 183, University of Oregon Special Collections.

<sup>871</sup> “Oregon State Capitol,” June 13, 1988, National Register of Historic Places #10240018, National Park Service, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset/8e641710-c5bd-4d9e-b66f-192046307e45>, quotation on p. 12; Barry Faulkner, “Three Murals in the Capitol,” in “Creative Historical Research in Fiction, Drama, Art: A Symposium,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 41:2 (1940), pp. 125 – 136. See also Ricardo Leon Castro, “The New Oregon State Capitol Building: Events, Sources, and Controversies about Its Design,” Master’s thesis (University of Oregon 1976).

half-as-high bronze pioneer unveiled back in 1919. But the violence of pioneering was ever more obscured.<sup>872</sup>

And the erasure hasn't ended.

The term “pioneer” is slapped on to all sorts of businesses, spaces, and awards across the Northwest, now less a signifier of a settler-soldier than a generic gesture towards durability, innovation, and/or democratic merit. It seems likely that most non-Native people who gather in the Pioneer Squares of Portland or Seattle are ignorant of the violent origins of the word.<sup>873</sup> The pioneer awards at universities like Washington State University, University of Oregon, Portland State University, and Oregon State University blend the dual meanings of the word, in some cases lauding innovation (one meaning) while using historical pioneer iconography (the other meaning).<sup>874</sup> The golden pioneer statue standing astride the Oregon state capitol is one of the most looming and

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<sup>872</sup> Leslie M. Scott, “Great Events in Oregon History,” in “Addresses Delivered at the Dedication of the State Capitol, October 1, 1938,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 39:4 (1938), pp. 341 – 351, quotations on pp. 341 – 342; Frank H. Schwarz, “Three Murals in the Capitol,” in “Creative Historical Research in Fiction, Drama, Art: A Symposium,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 41:2 (1940), pp. 125 – 136. Schwarz used the same title as his fellow muralist Barry Faulkner for his portion of this article, but the content of each was different.

<sup>873</sup> Drew Vattiat, “The History of Pioneer Courthouse Square in Photos,” *Oregonian* Jan 10, 2019, orig. Oct 4, 2013; Alliance for [Seattle’s] Pioneer Square, “Pioneer Square History,” <https://www.pioneersquare.org/about/history>, accessed May 24, 2021 [“The Native Americans who helped settlers build their city continued to exist among the white settlers, but slowly moved out as the city became more and more urban”]; Tyrone Beason, “Fixing Pioneer Square: Seattle’s Original Neighborhood Is Starting Over,” *Seattle Times* Nov 22, 2016, orig. Feb 18, 2015.

<sup>874</sup> The conflation of the two meaning of pioneer is especially apparent in the University of Oregon Pioneer Awards. See especially Cheri O’Neal, “Modern Pioneers,” Speech Given at the 2014 University of Oregon Pioneer Awards, <https://giving.uoregon.edu/s/1540/17>. In 2019, under pressure from student activists, the University of Oregon began surreptitious efforts to distance the Pioneer Awards from the racist statuary to which they had often been connected—but refused to consider changing the name. [Student activist] Momo Wilms-Crowe to Author, Personal Communication, Oct 10 2019. For awards at other institutions, see “Diamond Pioneer Award,” <https://agsci.oregonstate.edu/main/diamond-pioneer-award>; Portland State University College of Urban and Public Affairs, “Urban Pioneer Award Honors Visionaries” (Portland: Portland State University, 2003); Karen Hunt, “The Office of Research Celebrates Staff and Faculty Achievements,” *WSU Insider* Oct 29, 2019.



inescapable symbolic reminders to Native people of continuing colonial oppression and violence.<sup>875</sup> But often-oblivious celebrations of the murderers who killed Native people and took their lands are everywhere.

Most historians of the Pacific Northwest acknowledge that there were decades of violence perpetrated against Native people in the Pacific Northwest. But there is a still a tendency among many to once again narrate a story of rogues and honest men, limned by tragedy and “decline.”<sup>876</sup> The perpetrators of anti-Indian violence are too often localized and anonymized, isolated to unnamed vigilantes or a few especially perfidious persons. Too often, any pioneer who evinced a hint of sympathy for Native people is taken for a friend and ally—even, in some cases, those pioneers who belied their vague sympathetic statements with acts of rape and murder.<sup>877</sup> Clashes over colonial policies are narrated with heroism in at least one side. One purpose of this dissertation has been to show the ubiquity of support for colonial violence as a tool for expropriation. There is no question that those pressing for genocide were more noxious than those hoping to seize all Native land without it. But the important differences between those thieves who saw violence as the first response and those who preferred it as a last resort should not obscure the shared goals and perfidy of both.

The tendency to put pioneer violence against Native people in a separable and ignorable category is by no means restricted to the Pacific Northwest. In the subdiscipline of (American) Western History, debates over violence and its extent have often

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<sup>875</sup> Among many other things I am thankful to the scholar and Grand Ronde Nation tribal member David G. Lewis for, I am grateful for his insights on the geographical reach and symbolic ubiquity of the golden *Oregon Pioneer*.

<sup>876</sup> William G. Robbins, *Oregon: This Storied Land* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 2005), esp. chap. 3.

<sup>877</sup> Nathan Douthit, *Uncertain Encounters: Indians and Whites at Peace and War in Southern Oregon, 1820s – 1860s* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2002).

deliberately excluded the kinds of violence I have detailed here—most strikingly in the words of historian Robert Dykstra, denying the prevalence of violence in the West:

The whole thing boils down to whether the incidence of interpersonal killing (a definition that excludes Indian wars and related violence, a conceptually separate topic) was - or was not - as commonplace and large in volume as widely thought.<sup>878</sup>

The troubling conceptual exclusion of (some?) Native people from “interpersonal killing” is telling, and continues. Dykstra argues that there were actually very few shooting deaths inflicted even by famous Western gunfighters. He makes this case by “excluding firefights with Indians” from his totals. For Dykstra, apparently, most Native deaths don’t count as homicides—presumably because they could always be attributed to one or another “Indian war” or “related violence.” They are a “conceptually separate topic” for Dykstra (and for others), with no bearing on the question of “frontier violence” in the West.<sup>879</sup>

Most nineteenth-century killings of Native people in the West are not present in homicide statistics, because most Euro-American Westerners did not consider them true homicides—that is, unjust killings of persons. Rather, they saw the killings as just, the Indians as less than people, or both. And too often, killings in wars are seen as somehow wholly different from other killings—an assumption always worth questioning, and especially so amidst the decades of war and quasi-war against Native polities and people

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<sup>878</sup> Robert R. Dykstra, “Quantifying the Wild West: The Problematic Statistics of Frontier Violence,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 40:3 (2009), pp. 321 – 347, quotation on p. 321. Other historians engaged in the debates of historical Western homicide statistics have framed the issue less risibly, but nonetheless do their counting in ways that exclude much—perhaps most—settler violence against Native people. Randolph Roth, Michael D. Maltz and Douglas L. Eckberg, “Homicide Rates in the Old West,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 42:2 (2011), pp. 173 – 195; Thomas J. DiLorenzo, “The Culture of Violence in the American West: Myth versus Reality,” *The Independent Review* 15:2 (2010), pp. 227 – 239.

<sup>879</sup> Dykstra, “Quantifying the Wild West,” quotation on p. 346.

in the American West, and decades of wanton violence inflicted by soldiers, citizens, and those of an unclear status in between.<sup>880</sup>

Part of why I have referred to volunteers like Loren L. Williams and John E. Ross as serial killers and mass murderers is to demystify and desanctify the killings they committed. It is worthwhile to label acts of colonialism or genocide using scholarly language, to clarify motivations, draw lines of continuity between different events, and make clear commonalities of structural oppression(s). It is also worthwhile to use everyday language describe mass murders and other crimes against humanity. “Indian fighters” weren’t always just fighters or thieves—some among them, like other serial killers and mass murderers, found gratification in the killings they committed. The society in which they lived was typically willing to overlook or undercut the horrors their actions. Overreliance on a specialized argot for describing historical violence risks doing the same. Loren L. Williams pursued necropolitical settler colonial transfers, and embraced genocidal folk imperialism.<sup>881</sup> He was also a serial killer, who would rather be killing Indians “than be in any other position [he] [c]ould name.”<sup>882</sup> Both kinds of descriptors are important.

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<sup>880</sup> A 1999 Western Historical Association roundtable on Western violence—held in Portland—was a particularly surreal instance of this trend, with a majority of participants noting that violence against Native people was real, then arguing that the West was not particularly violent because (as they did not put it) famous instances of intraracial White violence had been blown out of proportion—thus first noting violence against Native people, then (with the possible exception of Paula Mitchell Marks) dismissing it as irrelevant of violence generally. Stewart L. Udall *et al*, “How the West Got Wild: American Media and Frontier Violence a Roundtable” [sic], *Western Historical Quarterly* 31:3 (2000), pp. 277 – 295.

<sup>881</sup> Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 35 (“necropolitical transfers”); Gray H. Whaley, “American Folk Imperialism and Native Genocide in Southwest Oregon, 1851 – 1859,” in *Colonial Genocide in Indigenous North America*, ed. Andrew Woolford, Jeff Benvenuto, and Alexander Laban Hinton (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2014), pp. 131 – 148 (“folk imperialism”).

<sup>882</sup> Loren L. Williams to Nephew, July 22, 1876, Loren L. Williams Journal, Volume 4, attached to frontispiece, Graff 4683, Newberry Library Special Collections, Chicago, IL (quotation from Williams).

Pioneers in the Pacific Northwest were generally complicit in murder and theft. Specific evidence can condemn specific persons—and many of the men and women I discuss here have somehow previously escaped historical censure. Movements to reframe history, topple monuments, or dename colonial namesakes can make potent ammunition out of such specific evidence. But too often, historians have equivocated about the collective guilt of pioneers. At a symposium on monuments at the Oregon Center for Holocaust Education, a scholar I respect declared “the pioneers weren’t evil, they were human.” One can certainly argue that calling pioneers evil isn’t helpful—that “evil” is not a useful term for analysis, or that condemning them as evil might still, as Christine Quintasket put it, “roast” White people “too strong to get their sympathy.”<sup>883</sup> But there is a vast difference between arguing the term “evil” in an unsuitable descriptor for historical figures, and arguing that the pioneers *weren’t* evil. The average Pacific Northwest pioneer in the 1850s supported atrocious acts against Native people and communities. Not every person killed, in the pioneer Pacific Northwest or in most other sites of broad-based racial violence. Some few resisted norms of White supremacy and genocide, including (in all likelihood) people for whom no record of that resistance persists. But the collective guilt of pioneers should be difficult to contest—at least once the hangover from the lies of previous generations of historians has cleared.

Pioneers were, of course, human. But that does not signify an absence of evil. Scholars, like other people, are vulnerable to a tendency for humanization to turn into exoneration, and for empathy to turn into sympathy. Empathy is a key tool for historians,

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<sup>883</sup> Christine Quintasket (“Mourning Dove”) to Lucullus Virgil McWhorter (“Big Foot”), June 8, 1928, transcribed in Robert Strong, “The Uncooperative Primary Source: Literary Recovery versus Historical Fact in the Strange Production of *Cogewea*,” in *Building New Bridges/Bâtir de Nouveaux Ponts: Sources, Methods and Interdisciplinarity/Sources, Méthodes et Interdisciplinarité* ed. Jeff Keshen and Sylvie Perrier (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2005), pp. 63 – 72, quotation on p. 65.

and I have tried to employ it throughout this dissertation. And sympathy often follows: I felt it keenly, for example, when reading through Loren L. Williams's journal entries on his years of suffering from an infected arrow wound. But just because his very human struggle with pain touched me, this sympathy should in no way dim the monstrousness of his acts as a serial killer of Native people. There were funny and heartwarming stories of Billie Kilcup's deeply human love for his cats in the archive. He was also a racist murderer, who lynched multiple people in Washington State. Too many biographers, especially, are lulled by sympathetic familiarity into unduly absolving the sins of their subjects. Indeed, one of the barriers to truer history is the assumption that evil is not just inhumane, but inhuman. Evidence that this or that pioneer was human should not lead one to discount the violence they condoned or committed. If anything, the fact that all perpetrators are complex human beings should heighten the horror of their actions.

There is a longstanding tradition among historians of the American colonialism to assert reassuring complexity. "Of course not all whites considered Indians 'uncivilized' people, nor were all whites aggressive, landhungry thieves," as one text put it in 1986.<sup>884</sup> Such assertions are invariably true; no large body of people is uniformly anything. Pointing out exceptions to pioneer norms can be a worthy pursuit, both to find those courageous enough to stand against the horrific norms of their present and to make more difficult the assertions that people within the context of their time couldn't have known any better. And it is vital to find and underline instances and actions of Indigenous power, when Native people bent or broke the colonial scripts they rejected. But an

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<sup>884</sup> Clifford E. Trafzer and Richard D. Scheuerman, *Renegade Tribe: The Palouse Indians and the Invasion of the Inland Pacific Northwest* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1986), p. x. This text remains a keystone work on the history of Palouse people and their struggle against invasion (and I have used it throughout this dissertation). The impulse to defend the average pioneer is especially striking in this otherwise critical piece of scholarship.

overfocus on exceptional moments or people can warp people's perceptions of the horrible norms.

Calls for complexity must not become cause for complicity. Nearly all White pioneers in the mid-1800s *were* “aggressive, landhungry thieves,” whether they admitted it to themselves or not. The Euro-Americans who committed, condoned, or at least tolerated mass murder for land *were* people of their time and place. Exceptions were few and far between, and often overstated by latter-day apologists. The story of colonial conquest is fiendishly complicated, and will never be finished—in the Pacific Northwest, or elsewhere. But it is also, in key ways, simple. Pioneers came to take Native land, they were willing to kill to get it, and they had (or correctly expected to have) the numbers to force the issue. There are many great histories written, and many more to tell, about the complexity of colonialism in the Pacific Northwest: stories of successful Native resistance and horrific loss, of accommodation and incarceration, of cultural preservation and forced assimilation, of Indigenous political continuities and American microtechniques of dispossession. But hovering over it all is what one might call a macrotechnique of dispossession: the oft-realized threat of overwhelming violence from the hordes of White invaders bent on making Native land their own. The worthy work of unpacking nuance should not obscure this overarching element.<sup>885</sup>

Euro-American attitudes towards Native people in the Pacific Northwest have shifted in important ways since the 1850s. The structures of settler colonialism are

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<sup>885</sup> In her excellent book *Framing Chief Leschi*, which I have relied on for the chapters reckoning with the Puget Sound region, Lisa Blee lists mapping, scientific data, and re-narration as the “three key technologies to convert Puget Sound into American space,” and effectively unpacks how each technology was a tool for insidious colonial theft *and* could be turned into a tool for the fight against colonialism. This dissertation adds a fourth, unspoken technology that allowed for the other three: horrendous military force (and the threat of it). Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi: Narrative and the Politics of Historical Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), chap. 1.

ongoing, but not unchanging. The actions of generations of Native people and their allies have altered White norms, attitudes, and even legal customs since. The number of Euro-Americans consciously comfortable with new thefts and murders has declined precipitously, and more and more are willing to reconsider the justice of the crimes perpetrated by their settler forebears. Changes should not be overstated. Native people, communities, and lands still face horrific violence under settler regimes. Law enforcement officers today kill Native people at a rate rivalled only by the rate at which they kill Black people.<sup>886</sup> Colonial sexual violence continues—as activist/scholar Sarah Deer bluntly puts it, “white men are still raping Native women with impunity.” A third or more of Indigenous women experience sexual violence in their lifetimes, and few perpetrators face justice.<sup>887</sup> Colonial customs continue to harm and kill. That nineteenth-century violence was even more sweeping and annihilatory than the horrors of the present is cold comfort to those still brutalized by settlers and/or their systems.

But essential continuities of settler violence do not render moot the changes that have been wrought by Native people and their allies. Settler colonial structures are

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<sup>886</sup> Sarah DeGue, Katherine A. Fowler, and Cynthia Calkins, “Deaths Due to Use of Lethal Force by Law Enforcement: Findings from the National Violent Death Reporting System, 17 U.S. States, 2009 – 2012,” *American Journal of Preventative Medicine* 51:5 Suppl 3 (November 2016), pp. S173 – S187; Jon Swaine *et al*, “The Counted: People Killed By Police in the US [2015 – 2016],” *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2015/jun/01/the-counted-police-killings-us-database>; Elise Hansen, “The Forgotten Minority in Police Shootings,” *CNN* Nov 13, 2017. The high rate of police killings of Native people is sometimes cloaked by the low number of Native people as a percentage of the United States population overall—itsself a legacy of colonialism. The police killings database kept by the *Washington Post*, for example, completely misses the frequency with which Native people are killed by law enforcement, because it groups them in an “other races” category. Julia Tate *et al*, “Fatal Force,” *Washington Post*, database accessed May 17, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/investigations/police-shootings-database/>. See also Sherene H. Razack, *Dying from Improvement: Inquests and Inquiries into Indigenous Deaths in Custody* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015).

<sup>887</sup> Sarah Deer, *Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), quotation on p. 7; Sherene H. Razack, “Gendered Racial Violence and Spatialized Justice: The Murder of Pamela George,” in *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society*, ed. Sherene H. Razack (Toronto: Between the Lines Press, 2002), pp. 121 – 156.

ongoing, but are neither unassailable nor monolithic. Despite the mutable pervasiveness of settler colonial logics, as historian Jean M. O’Brien notes, “Indigenous resistance to colonial power structured through racial imaginaries continues to override the logic of elimination.”<sup>888</sup> Many settlers who struggled over policy, law, and memory had shared goals of subjugation and elimination. Native people and their allies nonetheless found purchase in the cleavages of conflicting colonial strategies, and have changed and challenged them since. As historian J. Kēhaulani Kauanui points out, Indigenous peoples “exist, resist, and persist” within settler colonial structures—and those structures adapt and evolve new ways to maintain oppressive power relationships.<sup>889</sup> To frame settler colonialism as an *unchanging* set of structures would be to overwrite generations of Indigenous actions *and* to underestimate the challenge of dismantling dynamic systems of injustice.

One overarching goal for this work has been to denature settler colonial structures and stories in the Pacific Northwest. I have attempted to supplant the myth of pioneer virtue with the reality of pioneer rapacity, drawing often on the kinds of evidence those still dedicated to the myth might struggle to disbelieve. And I have also tried to show some of the ways these myths—and the structures of oppression they justified and hid—were created and recreated regionally. Unraveling these myths makes it harder to discount the horrors of colonial conquest. Revealing the evils embraced in pursuit of a White Northwest can, I hope, play some small role in convincing Americans of the need

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<sup>888</sup> Jean M. O’Brien, “Tracing Settler Colonialism’s Eliminary Logic in *Traces of History*,” *American Quarterly* 69:2 (2017), pp. 249 – 255, quotation on p. 254. See also Kevin Bruyneel, *The Third Space of Sovereignty: The Postcolonial Politics of U.S.-Indigenous Relations* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), esp. p. xviii.

<sup>889</sup> J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, “‘A Structure, Not an Event’: Settler Colonialism and Enduring Indigeneity,” *Lateral* 5:1 (Spring 2016), <https://csalateral.org/issue/5-1/forum-alt-humanities-settler-colonialism-enduring-indigeneity-kauanui/>.



to repudiate and fight the continuities of deceit, injustice, and violence which have continued to the present.

In February 2019, on the same day I finished my principal research into Alexander Phimister Proctor's *Pioneer* statue, I went to the annual banquet of one of the last surviving heritage organizations from the era of pioneer memorialization. The Sons and Daughters of Oregon Pioneers, founded in 1901 as a successor to the Oregon Pioneer Association, allows full membership only to those who can prove their "ancestors c[a]me to the Oregon country before Oregon statehood." Through my father's descent from the pioneer farmer and translator James Gibson, we were able to get tickets.<sup>890</sup> At the banquet I attended, pageantry and playacting were a major focus, from the middle-aged men dressed as nineteenth-century soldiers and "mountain men" to the young woman crowned "Miss Pioneer Oregon 2019" and given a college scholarship. The history presentations were mostly genial genealogy, listing family trees and displaying family photographs and artifacts. The old tradition of pioneer meetings as a time for "mutual congratulations" was still, in this hotel conference room at the edge of Portland, going strong.

Native people were largely absent from the stories but all over the merchandise in the room. Hazy portraits of Native women were painted in a Lisa Frank-esque style on drums and dreamcatchers up for auction. Crude Indian figures with oars were sculpted in plastic on canoes, next to the miniature Conestoga wagon centerpieces on many tables. As I wandered among groups in between events, I heard one man speak of his pride in a pioneer forebear who had "fought the Indians." The tension at his table was palpable, and

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<sup>890</sup> In his pioneer reminiscence, James Gibson remembered himself as a "friend to the Indians," particularly to the Kalapuya at Siletz. Many of his anecdotes involved his own mastery of Chinook Jargon being used to quiet disputes between Native people and White settlers, and used to get land for bargain prices. He turned down a well-paying job as an interpreter in 1852, he claimed, because "to stand between the Indians and the Government is more than I care to undertake." Every pioneer was a hero of their own story (except maybe Jesse Applegate). James Gibson, "From Missouri to Oregon in 1847," transcribed by Minnie Richards, July 23, 1914 (in author's possession); William A. Carpenter, *The Ransom Family Plot: Four Generations in One Cemetery Plot at Forest Grove, Oregon* (Portland: Ransom Family Press, 2017), esp. pp. 19 – 24.

after a few excruciating seconds the conversation picked up as if he hadn't spoken. The only other mention of Native people at the dinner was in the benediction, asking that all members give thanks to their brave ancestors who had forged a trail across the continent, and to the "people who had been waiting here to greet them." Stories of violence are no longer explicitly a part of what even this group is trying to celebrate.<sup>891</sup>

The violence is still here. A few months after the banquet, I gave my first public talk on Proctor's *Pioneer*, connecting the sculptor's love of Indian killers with the broader history of colonial violence in the Northwest. I shared stories from people of color in Eugene, who had reflected on how the statue continued to do them harm. Direct, non-metaphorical violence persists too. After my talk, a Native woman came up, shook my hand, and shared a story of how her bones were broken by a pack of racist skinheads when she was young, and how she only just survived. Today as in the pioneer era, there are still people who assault and kill in pursuit of a White Northwest.

I ended up talking about the *Pioneer* statue more than I had expected in the years that followed. In part this was because of the surprising richness of the archives I dug through. The *Pioneer* project was a particularly vivid example of violence and cover-up, showing a latter-day instance of how history could be carefully manipulated and erased, and how that erasure could be furthered by innocent actors working off of malformed stories. And talking about the *Pioneer* was a way into talking about the broader violence of the seizure of the Pacific Northwest. Many of the predominantly White audiences I

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<sup>891</sup> *Sons and Daughters of Oregon Pioneers News* 48:4B (March 2019), <https://oregonsdop.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/SDOP48-4b.pdf>. I did not consent to the faintly eugenic caption which appears beneath a picture that includes me in this newsletter. The organization appears to now welcome those claiming Native heritage as pioneers—one of the new members at this meeting traced his descent to "Lisette Walla Walla," a daughter of Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox. Other pioneer heritage organizations with similar genealogy requirements are likewise opening membership to people of Native descent from the region; see Clay Eals, "In Their 125<sup>th</sup> Year, These Pioneer Ancestors Are a Study of History in Repose," *Seattle Times* Nov 19, 2020.

talked to were shocked. They had not heard much about the violence, they had not heard about the cover-ups, and many had not considered the effects veneration of pioneers continued to have on Native people. In some ways, the cover-ups worked too well—many, perhaps most, White people in the Northwest are no longer consciously in on the lies. When racist murderers are celebrated today, the killings they committed tend to be ignored rather than highlighted by the celebrants.

The *Pioneer* statue, along with its counterpart the *Pioneer Mother*, was dragged from its pedestal by parties unknown on June 13, 2020—part of a wave of iconoclasm striking at symbols of racial injustice across the United States and the world. My work seems to have played a small role in making sure they didn't go back up again, demonstrating with archival evidence what generations of Native and Black activists had already known and shown: that both statues were, and were meant to be, monuments celebrating violent White supremacy. At the time of writing, the University of Oregon administration has stuck to its promise that the two statues will not return to their pedestals.<sup>892</sup>

This was not the only iconoclastic act amidst the broader protests against police violence and White supremacy. In October 2020, a little-known monumental statue of Harvey W. Scott in Portland was toppled and vandalized.<sup>893</sup> The original sculptor, John Gutzon de la Mothe Borglum, was a White supremacist most famous for gouging Mount

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<sup>892</sup> K. Rambo, "Pioneer Statues Toppled Amid Protests at the University of Oregon," *Oregonian* June 14, 2020; K. Rambo, "University of Oregon Ignored Calls for Removal of Racist Statue, Student Group Says," *Oregonian* June 23, 2020; Brian Klopotek *et al*, "Why They Had to Go: Statement on the Fall of the Pioneer Statues," *Eugene Weekly* June 25, 2020; Marc James Carpenter, "'Two Sides of the Same Story': Colonial Violence and Erasure in the University of Oregon's (Fallen) Pioneer Statues," *Center for the Study of Women and Society Annual Review* 11 (2020), 30 – 33.

<sup>893</sup> Jim Ryan, "Statue of Harvey Scott, Former Editor of the *Oregonian*, Torn Down in Mount Tabor," *Oregonian* Oct 20, 2020; Laurel Reed Pavic, "Another One Bites the Dust," *Oregon Artswatch* Oct 26, 2020.

Rushmore into the Black Hills, and a panoramic paean to the Confederacy into Stone Mountain, Georgia.<sup>894</sup> His *Harvey W. Scott* monumental sculpture was unveiled by Leslie M. Scott in July 1933. The sculpture captured the elder Scott's famous scowl and taste for fine clothing, although the pedestal and dedication were silent as to his part in the Indians Wars, and his vociferous attacks on women's suffrage. He was simply a "pioneer, editor, publisher, and molder of opinion in Oregon and the nation."<sup>895</sup> On February 20, 2021, persons unknown put up in Scott's stead a bust of York, the enslaved Black man who had been a key member of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Among the few statues depicting the long history of Black people in the Pacific Northwest, this (likely temporary) statue, like others dedicated to York, marks his part in the early stages of colonial conquest.<sup>896</sup> It makes one long for a monument instead to someone like Hattie Redmond, not least because as a Black woman and Oregon women's suffragist she represents almost the polar opposite of Harvey W. Scott.<sup>897</sup>

Some changes are coming with official imprimatur. On April 14, 2021, Washington State Gov. Jay Inslee signed a bipartisan bill to replace the Marcus Whitman statue that has represented the state in the National Statuary Hall since 1953. Barring

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<sup>894</sup> On Gutzon Borglum's approach to art, see Gilbert C. Fite, "Gutzon Borglum: Mercurial Master of Colossal Art," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 25:2 (1975), pp. 2 – 19; Scott L. Montgomery, "Monumental Kitsch: Borglum's Mt. Rushmore," *Georgia Review* 42:2 (1988), pp. 252 – 261; Albert Boime, "Patriarchy Fixed in Stone: Gutzon Borglum's 'Mount Rushmore,'" *American Art* 5:1/2 (1991), pp. 142 - 167. On Borglum as a White supremacist, see John Taliaferro, *Great White Fathers: The Story of the Obsessive Quest to Create Mount Rushmore* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2002), esp. chap. 8. On Borglum's hatred of Native people specifically, see Malinda Maynor Lowery, "The Original Southerners: American Indians, the Civil War, and Confederate Memory," *Southern Cultures* 25:4 (2019), pp. 16 – 35, esp. p. 29.

<sup>895</sup> "News and Comment," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 33:1 (1932), pp. 90 – 95, esp. p. 91; "News and Comment," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 34:3 (1933), pp. 280 – 286, esp. 281 – 282.

<sup>896</sup> Matthew Singer, "Someone Replaced the Toppled Harvey Scott Statue at Mount Tabor With a Monument to York," *Willamette Week* Feb 20, 2021.

<sup>897</sup> Kimberley Jensen, "'Neither Head nor Tail to the Campaign': Esther Pohl Lovejoy and the Oregon Woman Suffrage Victory of 1912," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 108:3 (2007), pp. 350 – 383; Elizabeth McLagan, *A Peculiar Paradise: A History of Blacks in Oregon, 1788 – 1940* (Portland: Georgian Press, 1980), p. 120; "Front Matter," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 113:3 (2012); Quinn Spencer, "Hattie Redmond: Suffragist and Founder of Portland's Black Community," *Portland Metro News* Feb. 17, 2021.

disaster, the state will instead be represented by a new statue, of Nisqually fishing rights activist Billy Frank Jr.<sup>898</sup> On June 7, 2021, the Oregon legislature voted to replace the racist language in the official Oregon state song. Lyrics celebrating a land “blest by the blood of martyrs” and “conquered and held by free men/fairest and the best” seem increasingly out of step with present-day Oregon tastes. Responding to the wishes of their constituents, Oregon legislators no longer want the state celebrated as the “Land of the Empire Builders,” as the first verse of the song used to go. The new lyrics extol the land’s mountains, forests, and rivers—among the few things Northwesterners can agree are worth celebrating.<sup>899</sup>

Jettisoning racist statues, names, songs, and even histories is at best a beginning. I have heard from Native friends that the experience of walking through Eugene, Oregon is different without the *Pioneer* looming over them with his whip and gun. I have no doubt that a statue of Billy Frank Jr. will change the experience of visiting the National Statuary Hall, especially for Native people. But changing the monuments, or changing the names, or changing the history books, does not return land or make reparations. What these small

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<sup>898</sup> Tom Banse, “It’s Official: Whitman Statue Being Replaced by One of Tribal-Rights Activist Billy Frank Jr.,” *Oregon Public Broadcasting* Apr 14, 2021, <https://www.opb.org/article/2021/04/15/billy-frank-jr-in-marcus-whitman-out-as-part-of-us-capitol-statue-swap/>. This comes as a part of a broader push to reexamine the namesakes and monuments to racists in the Pacific Northwest. See Euan Hague and Edward H. Sebesta, “The Jefferson Davis Highway: Contesting the Confederacy in the Pacific Northwest,” *Journal of American Studies* 45:2 (2011), pp. 281 – 301; Matthew Dennis and Samuel Reis-Dennis, “‘What’s in a name?’ The University of Oregon, De-Naming Controversies, and the Ethics of Public Memory,” *Oregon Historical Society* 120:2 (2019), pp. 176 – 205.

<sup>899</sup> The librettist of the state song, judge and founder of the Clatsop County Historical Society John Andrew Buchanan, was even clearer in his praise for those pioneers fighting “savage foes” with their “demon’s red face[s]” to “found an Empire in the West” in his other published work. See John A. Buchanan, *Indian Legends and Other Poems: Souvenir Edition of the Lewis and Clark Fair* (San Francisco: Whitaker & Ray Company, 1905), “Dedication” and p. 59. The composer Henry Murtagh’s previous biggest success had been a WWI-themed minstrel Christmas song [!]. Henry B. Murtagh, “Dreamin’ ‘Bout Dat Great Big Christmas Tree” (New York: J.H. Remick, “1819” [1918]), Spencer W253 .216, Frances G. Spencer Collection of American Popular Sheet Music, Baylor University Digital Collections, Waco, Tex. Samantha Swindler, “Oregon State Song Gets New Lyrics without Racist Language,” *Oregonian* June 9, 2021; Johnny Diaz, “Oregon Removes Lyrics about ‘Empire Builders’ from State Song,” *New York Times* June 9, 2021.

changes can do, hopefully, is be a part of the much more ephemeral—but necessary – work of changing hearts and minds. And that, perhaps, can lead to more substantive changes in actions, laws, and policies—from the long overdue to the yet unimagined.

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