

The Fight at White Bird Canyon

BEGINNING OF THE NEZ PERCES WAR. THE LAST INDIAN HOSTILITIES IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

CHIEF OF THE VILLAGE
NEZ PERCES



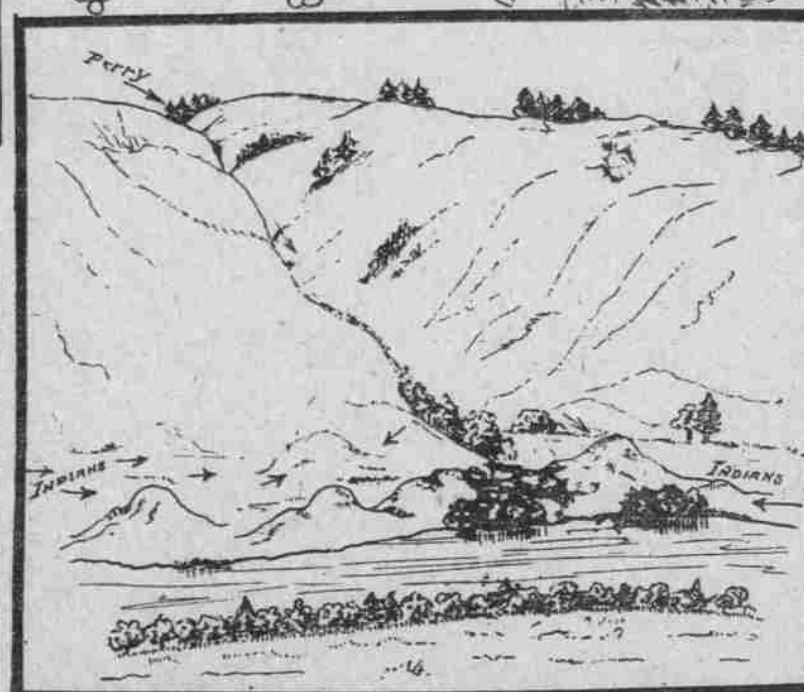
TA-MA-SON, OR TIMOTHY
NEZ PERCE
WARRIOR



DAVID PERRY, BRIGADIER
GENERAL U.S. ARMY (retired)



JOSEPH (IN-MÉ-TURGA-LATK, ECHOING
THUNDER) CHIEF OF THE NEZ PERCES.



PERRY'S ENGAGEMENT ON WHITE BIRD CREEK, JUNE 17, 1877.



WASTAWANA, BANNOCK INDIAN
WHO IS ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN AN
ACTIVE ADHERENT OF THE
NEZ PERCES.

BY FRED A. HUNT

THE smoldering embers of discontent among the Indians that sporadically become today and glowing are but reminiscent of the fervent times of years ago, when such disquietude fomented to an outbreak and deluged Pacific Northwest settlements with blood, and made a sore path of rapine and desolation and sudden death in its wake. Such a scene occurred, 30 years ago, when the Nez Perces (pierce noses) under that most martial and competent chief and warrior, broke away from their reservation in Idaho, and very nearly attained the city of refuge and immunity in Canada. White Bird and Joseph were undoubtedly the leaders in the migration, but one of the potent causes of attempted reprisal for wrongs (many real and a few imaginary) was Smohalla, an Indian of great shrewdness and of potential influence, and who was technically termed a "dreamer," one who in a semi-conscious, or conscious, or unconscious state saw visions that prefigured coming events to his people.

In an effort to allay the virulence of their discontent a council was held by Governmental representatives on May 3, 1877, when the Indian representatives desired a postponement of the powwow until the arrival of White Bird, which occurred the ensuing day. White Bird and his people were introduced by Joseph to the plenipotentiaries, when, says General Howard, "White Bird sat demurely in front of me, kept his hat on and steadily covered his face with a large eagle's wing. Continued councils were unproductive of any palliative for the unrest among the Indians, which culminated in their taking the warpath.

On June 15, 1877, at 2 A. M. L. P. Brown dispatched from Mt. Idaho: "Last night we started a messenger to you (Captain David Perry, First U. S. Cavalry, commanding officer at Fort Lapwai) who reached Cottonwood House, where he was wounded and driven back by the Indians. The people of Cottonwood undertook to come here during the night, were interrupted, all wounded or killed. Parties this morning found some of them on the prairie. The wounded will be here shortly, when we will get full particulars; the whites are engaged in getting the wounded. One thing is certain; we are in the midst of an Indian war. Every family is here, and we will have taken every precaution we can, but are poorly armed. We want arms and ammunition and help at once. Don't delay a moment. We have a report that seven whites were killed yesterday on the Salmon River. No later word from them; fear that the people are all killed, as a party of Indians were seen coming that way last night.

Send word to Lewiston, and hasten up. You cannot imagine people in a worse condition than they are here. Mr. West has volunteered to go to Lapwai; rely on his statements."

On the same date at 8 A. M. the following was sent by Mr. Brown: "I have just sent a dispatch by Mr. West, half-breed. Since that was written the wounded have come in. Mr. Day mortally; Mrs. Norton with both legs broken; Moore, shot through the hips; Norton, killed and left on the road six miles from here. Teams attacked on the road and abandoned. The Indians have possession of the prairie and threaten Mount Idaho; all the people are here and we will do the best we can. We have no time in getting the wounded. I fear the people on Salmon River have all been killed, as a party was seen going that way last night. We had a report last night that seven whites had been killed on Salmon River; the people of Lewiston. Hurry up; rely on this Indian's statements. I have known him for a long time; he is with us."

In these dispatches there is no quail of fear for his own safety, only apprehension for others. In these worthy descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers irregularity was dominant, and by their valor, blood and sacrifice they con-

quered the Western country for civilization, homes and abounding prosperity. The tautology in his dispatches was simply consternation for the safety and well-being of others and apprehension for the integrity of the women and children who were in presumptive dire straits.

Captain Perry immediately started for the scene of hostilities with his own troop (C) and troop H, of the First Cavalry, commanded by Captain Joel G. Trimble, but without an adequate idea of the numbers or capabilities of the hostile force with which he might be called upon to compete; in fact, General Howard's ideas, possibly predicated upon erroneous reports and incomplete investigation, were of far less moment than the actualities warranted. But Captain Perry's duty, which he cheerfully and capably performed, was to attack the hostiles and in his march to the encounter he marched 80 miles, averaging 2 1/2 miles per hour, including all rests and halts.

On June 17, 1877, his force reached White Bird Canyon and was confronted by hostiles outnumbering him eight to one. The Indians attacked the soldiers on sight and gleefully yelled their war whoops and shot at them unintermittently. The troops made a determined

stand but were rapidly driven back and shortly in full retreat. A sergeant and six men were in a strong position and it was determined to rally the soldiers and endeavor to hold that position. This was done but the weight of numbers of the Indians was too great and in a hand-to-hand fight the soldiers were again overwhelmed, the sergeant being left behind. He concealed himself in a clump of bushes and near him was a dead comrade whom the squaws shortly approached to rob and mutilate. On their approach they discovered First Sergeant Michael McCarthy's big cavalry boots protruding from his hiding place and came toward him to loot and maim. He slipped his feet out of the boots and moved gingerly away from the spot, subsequently being able to join his comrades.

Time and again the little force of cavalrymen charged the wave of relentless Indians, First Lieutenant William R. Powell being particularly effective in forming his cavalrymen and leading their onslaught, but no valor and no discipline could avail against the preponderant savages, who were by no means lacking in strategic ability or personal valor. Hence, the cavalry were steadily driven back, fighting hard but still driven back, and thus the first engagement of the celebrated Nez Perce campaign, that of White

Bird Canyon, resulted in the discomfiture of the little force engaged and victory for one of the most capable military commands among any tribe of Indians or time of Indian warfare—Joseph. During the engagement, First Lieutenant Edward R. Thetter, 31st Infantry, was killed while serving with Captain Perry's company, he being a staff officer for Brigadier-General Ord. He remained with his men in the rear during the retreat, giving them courage and confidence by his words and example and, although he was repeatedly wounded, he continued to exercise command until the fatal shot struck him just as his command reached the crown of the bluff where a stand could have been made. He served during the Civil War in the Second California Volunteers. Colonel Peter S. Bonus, Ninth Cavalry, was at that time First Lieutenant and Major William R. Powell (retired) and resident of the Soldiers' Home, Elizabeth City, Cal., was also First Lieutenant of the First Cavalry. Captain Trimble is now retired a major and a resident of the Soldiers' Home, Elizabeth City, Cal. First Cavalry, is now an Inspector-General with the rank of major and Lieutenant Thomas T. Knox is retired as colonel and resident at the Soldiers' Home, Elizabeth City, Va. These participants are particularly because of the noteworthy

character of the unsuccessful engagement which was as desperate and hazardous as could be imagined or described; in fact as a survivor expressed it, "Hell was a poppin' from start to finish." Quite a number of soldiers were killed and wounded during this continuance of Tophet.

One of the greatest advances ever made in the postal service, says the National Magazine, was the origination of the traveling postoffice. This was started in 1827, and has developed and grown into the modern railway mail service. Instead of transporting the mails in bulk and assembling them in large distributing postoffices for separation and dispatch they are sent directly to the railway postoffice to be distributed on their way to destination.

Foreigners living in Switzerland must pay a tax.

SHEARING SHEEP WITH MACHINES

Experts Travel From State to State and Clean Up \$500 to \$800 a Season.

New York Sun.

THE great sheep camp of the United States is now in the Northwest. The shearing of the twenty or more million sheep that produce wool, like the garnering of wheat and other big crops, requires the employment for a more or less short period of a large number of men. The local labor supply is entirely insufficient and were it not for the existence of a partly organized body of nomads, who start in at the south and work their way north as the season broadens, great difficulty would be met with.

Many of these shearers are Easterners. New York furnishes quite a number before reaching Montana or Wyoming they have relieved many thousands of sheep of their fleeces. They begin down in Texas or perhaps Arizona and work north taking in Kansas, Nebraska, Utah, Wyoming and the Dakotas before they land in Montana.

Many of them also come from the West. This gang starts in in California and after shearing its way through Oregon, Washington and Idaho reaches Montana to aid in garnering on common the greatest crop of wool in any section.

These men are well paid and most of them end the season with from \$500 to \$600 in their pockets. All are experts. Most of them still use the wrist knot and hand shears, but in the last few years shearing by machinery has come in vogue and is rapidly superseding all other methods.

"The better hand shears average 100 sheep a day and there are a few who have a record of 200 in 12 hours. It is hard work. A man must stand with legs stiff for hours, he must lean over until he can almost reach his toes and he must all the time be holding down a struggling, frightened animal.

These hand workers are paid at the

rate of 7 or 8 cents for each fleece dropped, and for each three or four shearers there is a man who gathers up the wool at a quarter of a cent for each fleece tied up and delivered to the packer. The grading is done in advance of the shearing, so that subsequent trouble is avoided.

After the shearing has been accomplished the wool is sacked in long burlap forms and turned over to the freighters. Montana is not girded with railroads and it is a long drive from many of the ranches to the railway depot or wool market. Two and sometimes three heavily laden wagons are coupled together and with eight or ten horses attached the outfit starts across the hills. It is hard, slow going and if the rain comes and the roads get gummy the freighters often have to go into camp and wait for the sun to pave a way. Sometimes wool has to be hauled in this fashion for 125 miles.

In the last four or five years the shearing machine has pushed to the front. An ingenious mechanic has devised a shear which can be worked either by hand or mechanical power, and which has proven a tremendous economy. The machine is declared by sheep men to be as far ahead of the old hand shear as the self-blinder is in advance of the old-fashioned cradle. R. M. Marquis, a Montana young man, holds the world's record both for freighters and hand shears. At Bowler Brothers' ranch near Martinsdale, Mont., he sheared 300 seven-pound (to the fleece) wethers in 14 hours 46 minutes, taking off 250 pounds of wool with a machine. This record will likely stand for a long time.

Marquis has been at the business for about eight years and has often shorn 200 sheep a day and over by hand, and on the machine has several times gone above 300. His average work in Montana last season ran from 175 to 215 sheep a day, in nine and ten-hour

days. In one shearing season, not including the Fall work, he sheared 17,013 sheep.

The man's work is almost as mechanical as that of the machine he uses. He starts in by grabbing the animal by the right hind leg with his left hand, turning it easily over on its back. He then pulls it into an upright position, with its hindquarters on the ground and the body resting between his legs. He begins by parting the wool at the forward end of the brisket and starts the clippers going. Bent over at an angle of 70 or 80 degrees, he keeps firm hold of the sheep with his knees, turning the animal as though it were in a vise and keeping the skin stretched tight. When half way through he has attained the position of having partly stepped back, while the sheep is flat on its side. It is no trick for him to finish the animal in two minutes, and he has turned out as many as 25 in an hour.

Besides the advantage in time and labor cost the machine does not hack or cut the sheep, and it is possible to get from half a pound and a half more wool off each animal. The staple is longer and this means a better price. Usually it is not desirable to send hand sheared sheep to the market until a week after the clip, as it takes that long to feed them into presentable shape. This is avoided by the use of the mechanical contrivance, which leaves the animal evenly clipped and free from cuts.

The hand power machine is in almost universal use among the smaller flock masters who cannot afford a power plant or are unable to get the services of experienced shearing experts, who keep date and route book much like the average theatrical company manager. The usual model consists of a large wheel, fastened to an upright beam in the barn. On the face of this wheel teeth are generated on an automatic machine that insures abso-

CARRYING UNITED STATES MAILS

Gigantic Work That Costs the Government \$84,000,000 a Year.

THE modern postal transportation system has developed into gigantic proportions since the establishment of the first post route, in 1672, between New York and Boston, with a monthly schedule.

Service is now authorized over 211,220 miles of railroad. The department utilizes for mail purposes the regular train service and arranges for special fast exclusive mail trains between important points.

Congress fixes the maximum rates at which this service may be paid for, based upon the average daily weight of mails carried. The country is divided into four contract sections and the mails on each route are weighed once in every four years and the pay fixed thereon. All routes in a section are weighed at the same time and the sections are weighed in rotation. The cost of mail transportation on railroads is about \$45,000,000 a year.

One of the greatest advances ever made in the postal service, says the National Magazine, was the origination of the traveling postoffice. This was started in 1827, and has developed and grown into the modern railway mail service. Instead of transporting the mails in bulk and assembling them in large distributing postoffices for separation and dispatch they are sent directly to the railway postoffice to be distributed on their way to destination.

This postoffice is a car or cars operated in trains between important terminals, fitted up and furnished with distributing cases and sack racks in which railway postal clerks distribute and handle the mails carried. Here the mails are made up for local delivery en route and for dispatch to connecting lines.

This railway mail service directs the dispatch of all mails, determines the routes over which they shall be carried and distributes them en route, so they

are ready for delivery to offices along the line and in some cases makes separations for city delivery upon arrival at large terminals.

To conduct this service there are 15,225 officers and clerks employed at a cost of over \$15,000,000 a year. The railway postoffice lines cover 208,484 miles of steam, electric and steamboat routes.

The training of the railway postal clerk is acquired by constant study of the names and locations of postoffices and the schemes of distribution and by the performance of his duties. His vocation is a hazardous one. Last year six clerks were killed, 104 seriously and 535 slightly injured in 465 railroad accidents.

Where the distribution space needed exceeds 30 feet of a car, the office authorizes the company to furnish a specially built railway postoffice car and allows additional pay for it. The cost of this car service is over \$1,600,000 a year. Mails are also carried on 674 miles of trolley roads, mainly between postoffices and between post stations in cities.

The contract screen wagon service (between post stations not covered by electric car service) costs \$1,520,000 a year.

Sometimes the railway companies carry the mails between trains and other postoffices. In other cases the Postoffice Department provides a messenger service. There are 364 of these Government messengers.

In Boston, Brooklyn, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and St. Louis there is a contract pneumatic tube service. There are under contract 63 miles of double lines of eight-inch tubes, 45 of which have been installed and are in operation. The department pays \$17,500 a mile a year for this service.

In some cases mails are transported by carriers using wagons, horses, sled and dog teams as in Alaska, or by men traveling on snowshoes in the mountains. This, too, is contract service, let to the

lowest bidder. Not only are the mails carried to and from the postoffice by these routes, but if any one living along the way will put up a box he may have his mail delivered therein or collected therefrom. There are 14,000 routes of an aggregate length of 122,86 miles, costing \$4,967,000 a year.

This is the original type of transportation service. The foot carrier, the post chaise, the stage coach, the pony express, the famous overland mail, have all been a part of its historic development. It is popularly called "star route" service, and derived its name from the early custom of placing three asterisks on the register to indicate the three conditions prescribed by the law—that is, that the mails shall be carried with "celerity, certainty and security."

Whenever an office may be reached advantageously by steamboat the mails are conveyed thereby. There are 25 steam routes, covering 25,870 miles, costing yearly \$763,000. The plan of a universal postal union originated with our own department. Its development into the splendid foreign mail service of today has brought the whole civilized world into touch.

Under the ocean mail service act we have a contract service by United States vessels convertible into cruisers. Sea transportation in all other cases is paid for on weight basis. Parcels may be exchanged between this and 30 other countries and colonies by the international parcels post service. We have a sea post service on the trans-Atlantic steamers carrying the bulk of the mails in which sea clerks distribute mails. The cost of the foreign mail service in 1908 was \$2,875,000. The total cost of the transportation of the mails is over \$84,000,000 a year.

Ruskin's dislike of tobacco is believed to have arisen from the fact that it is comparatively modern discovery. There was no tobacco in the middle ages. He connected the "noxious weed" with the decline of England as an art-producing country.