

Abstract

Oregon Suptcy. of Indian Affairs 1848-73. Roll 7, Microcopy 2

(Scanning, not included on typescript)

p. 9. Supt. Joel Palmer, report as supt. 1854, covering Rogue River treaty needs and other Indians.

p. 10-Report sub agent Port Orford, July 12, 1853

p. 29-34 Tansy Point report of agent at Port Orford with census of Indians of Port Orford district.

p. 39-Agent Thompson, re: Snake massacre.

p. 4-54-Annual report of Supt. for the year ending June 30, 1854, including good description of the Klamath country and Klamaths, estimated at 400 pop.; before they were stronger.

p. 70-Vouchers etc. includes (p. 108) estimates of funds for Ind. Service for Wash. and Ore. Tys.

p. 190 Schedule of spoliation claims. (5 claims attributed to Rogue R. Ind.)

pp. 205-208-Estimates to comply with treaty stipulations with Indians in Oregon and Wash for 1858.

pp. 308-9 -Letter of Supt. giving views to sub agent on interpretation of 1st settlement and military orders. [Views to dept. contained in lengthy typescript]

p. 318- Petition for military post at or near Klamath Lake in S. Ore. Nesmith to Harney, Dec. 27, 1858.

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p. 330-Agent Simmons Puget Sound and other Indians West of the Cascades in Washington Ty.

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pp. 344-45- Assignment to Klamath district of Sub-Agent Abbott by

Microcopy of Records of the Oregon
Superintendency of Indian Affairs
1848-1873
Roll 7

Records of the Oregon Superintendency of Indian Affairs: Letter Books
1848-1872. 9 vols. Vol F July 1853-August 1855.
September 1857-September 1859. 399 p.

Contents: Various clippings, copies of the annual reports of the
Superintendent Joel Palmer for 1853 and 1854 and of reports of his
subordinates, 1853-55; copies of letters sent by Superintendents
James W. Nesmith through May 31, 1859 and Edward R. Geary thereafter.
A list of the above-mentioned reports have been microcopied immediately
ahead of the volume itself.

Microcopied by the National Archives 1940

The following is suggested as an appropriate method of citing
a letter appearing in this volume: Oregon Superintendency of Indian
Affairs, Letter Books F; 10; or Oregon SIA, Letter Books F: 10.

p. 40

Annual report of Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the year ending June 30, 1854...

p. 48

...The report of Agent R.R. Thompson including that of the Catholic Mission at the Dalles of the Columbia is so minute and full as to render additional remarks necessary.

A map prepared by Major Haller, U.S.A. shows the location and extent of country occupied by the Indian tribes of this district.

I fully concur in the suggestions of Mr. Thompson in regard to the importance of ... the present military force in middle Oregon by a body of Dragoons so stationed as to move with security upon any point thereabout with hostilities. To this end I would respectfully recommend that a military post be established as far east as Boise River. The security it would afford travellers passing through that region, its proximity to the numerous bands inhabiting the country along Lewis Fork of Snake river and its tributaries, its being near the forks of the road diverging into northern and middle Oregon and the probability of a third road on the north side of Snake river passing through the ~~cold country~~ valley of Salmon river into the Nez Perces country and Washington territory, renders this in a military point of view an important position.

Extensive meadows in Boise river would afford abundant supplies of grass and hay for whatever amount of stock might be brought into requisition and it is believed the soil besides producing the usual varieties of cereal grain is well adapted to the growth of vegetables usual in the northern states...

p. 54 Respectfully submitted Joel Palmer, superintendent

Hon. Geo. W. Manypenny

Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington City, D.C.

p. 57

Report of Agent N. Olney Expedition to the Snake Country

Camas Prairie July 30, 1855

Gen. Joel Palmer, Supt. Ind. Affairs

Dear Sir:

I have the honor of transmitting to you a report of my proceedings, the facts that come under my observation and such information as I have been able to procure since my arrival in my district.

I started from the Dalles for my district July 8. I overtook the troops between Grand Round and Powder River. I have travelled and cooperated with them since. We arrived at Fort Boise on the 14th. We found encamped at that place awaiting our arrival 17 lodges of Bannacks¹-Diggers and one lodge of Winesslas (?) in all 18.

These lodges contained 62 men, 44 women, 40 boys, 44 girls, in all 210 persons. On the 14th Major Haller who is in command of these troops invited these Indians to his camp for the purpose of talking with them. Major Haller explained the object of his visit among them and expressed a hope that they would not only be his friends but assist him in apprehending the murderers. They expressed the warmest feelings of friendship but did not in the least appear inclined to give information of the whereabouts of the murderers or assist in capturing them. I then explained who I was and the relation I bore toward them, gave them to understand the course they must pursue towards American citizens residing in or passing through their country and the advantages that would result from following the course marked out and the result of their following an opposite course. Just as I closed talking Tobaboo my interpreter informed me that he had discovered four of the murderers' band sitting among the Indians and that two of them he recognized as murderers. I communicated the fact to Major Haller who had them immediately taken into custody. For particulars as to proceedings and the final disposition

made of these four men I beg leave to refer you to the inclosed copy of proceedings had in the case.

The country occupied by the tribe of Indians usually called Snakes reaches from Grand Ronde to the warm springs on the DesChutes, to Humboldt River on the south, thence to ^{Green} ~~Goan~~ River on the east and the headwaters of the Missouri (?) on the north. It is supposed that these tribes combined can muster three thousand warriors. The most formidable of these tribes are the Shoshones or Mountain Snakes. They number about 250 lodges containing about 3,000 souls. They can muster between seven and eight hundred warriors. This tribe is again divided into three bands. The principal band resides on ^{Green} ~~Goan~~ River and hence they are called the Green River Snakes. They number 1,500 souls. The second band reside about Fort Hall, Camas Prairie, Salmon River and Bear River and are called upper Snakes or Fort Hall Snakes. They number about 1,300 souls 200 of whom are Banacks who have married and live among them. The third and last band live on Salmon river. They number 300 souls. This band are stationery, never going to buffalo but subsisting on salmon, elk, deer, antelope and mountain sheep. Too kos ... or sheep eating p 58

The Sho-sho-nee or Mountain Snakes are ~~ax~~ a brave, active and intelligent tribe and compare favorably with the Cayuses and Nez Perces. They own a large number of horses, are well armed and subsist by hunting the buffalo on the plains and the elk, deer antelope and mountain sheep on the mountains. They do not like their brethren further west and south steal the property and stain their hands with the blood of immigrants passing through their country but on the contrary have invariably shown a disposition to live on terms of friendship with the whites.

The Winisstas (sic) another tribe of the Snakes reside in the country lying between Camas Prairie on the east, Snake river on the south and Salmon River on the north. They number about 400 souls.

They speak a language between Bannack and Snake. Some suppose they have a ~~distinct~~ distinct language of their own, but I think they are ~~mixture~~ a mixture of Snakes and Bannacks and speak a language between the two. They are much poorer than the Shoshones or Bannacks and are thought but little of by either of these tribes on account of their great propensity for stealing. It was some of the ~~old~~ members of this tribe who murdered the company of immigrants on Boise River last season. They subsist on salmon, roots, berries and ~~sand~~ game of which they find on the mountains of Salmon River.

The Bannacks are another tribe of the Snakes. They however speak an entirely different language from the Shoshones. They claim the Camas prairie and the country between there and Salmon River. They number about 200 souls. They reside mostly with the upper Snakes and go to buffalo along with them, and what I have already said of the Mountain Snakes or Shoshones will apply strictly to them.

The Diggers are the poorer class of the Shoshones and Bannacks. The Bannack Diggers reside about Fort Boise, the mouth of Payette River and Boise River on the east and on Owyhee Malheur and Burnt rivers on the west side of Snake river. That band or tribes of the Bannack Diggers residing on Burnt River are called the Wal la lack alie from a certain kind of grass seed which they gather for food. They number about 200 souls. They are great thieves and have on several occasions not only stolen large numbers of horses from Immigrants and traders but have killed white persons who have fallen into their power.

The Sheshone or Snake Diggers reside in the country lying south of Snake and Owyhee Rivers to the Humboldt Rivers and west to the Deschutes; Those that live about Lake Sefoia (?) are called War atte raws from the same grass seed as from which the Bannack Diggers take their name.

Those that live on the south side of Snake River and thence to

Humboldt river are called the Tos sha wee hee or White Knives from the fact that originally they made their knives from a white flint stone. Nothing is known definitely as to the number of the War at te kaw and Too she wa kees. They are however considered very numerous. Their country as yet is mostly unexplored and some of them have probably never saw a white man. The Too shaw wee hees are the Indians who commit depredations upon the p 59 California immigrants.

The Sho-Sho-Nee Diggers subsist chiefly upon roots, berries and a large black cricket which they gather in large ~~quantities~~ quantities and after being... or dried in an oven made by digging a hole in the ground they are pounded fine and put away in sacks for use. Of late years they have got a few horses and mules which they have stolen from the immigrants, but generally they are too indolent to supply themselves with a sufficiency of food for the winter and are compelled to eat their animals to save themselves from starvation. In fact they are often compelled to eat their own children for the same reason. Some few of them are armed with guns, but as a general thing they use only the bow and arrow.

I understand from Mr. McArthur that the Too She Wa Hee or "White Knives have this season a company of forty persons on the California immigrant ~~trail~~ road and succeeded in killing one or more persons. A company of them have been about Fort Hall this summer and have stolen several horses from persons residing there. He also informed me that they are the Indians who have for the last three or four years killed and robbed the Oregon immigrants along Snake River and at Salmon falls. They are the friends of the Wenisstas and some of them were in the Wenisstas camp on Boise River at the time of the massacre last season and not only instigated the ~~men~~ Wenisstas to of barbarity but ... them and received their share of plunder

We have also been told by some of the ~~B~~annacks who are camped at this place that a large number of these people are collected and are still collecting on ~~Salmon River~~ Falls and have expressed a determination to give the troops a fight. When Mr. McArthur left Fort Hall for our camp some ten days ago a ... company of immigrants was expected to arrive at that place in a few days, on their way to Oregon. They have had time to arrive at our camp but as nothing is heard from them it is conjecture that they have taken the road by the Salmon Falls and Major Haller I believes intends sending a com and of troops to that place, to hunt for and protect them and to give battle to the To-Sha We Hees if necessary.

The country inhabited by the Snake tribe of Indians as a general thing is broken and mountainous entirely destitute of timber except on the loftiest mountains and along some of the rivers. The level and less broken portions are generally covered with a dense growth of *Artimesia*, interspersed with bunches or tufts of grass. The bottoms ~~are~~ along Payette and Boysie Rivers where they are not covered with *Artimesia* are very fertile and covered with a luxuriant growth of grass and could no doubt be cultivated with success.

These bottoms are from a quarter to a half a mile in breadth on either side of the streams and extend from their junction with Snake river to a distance of 40 or 50 miles up these streams. These streams take their rise in the mountains between Salmon and Snake rivers and run parallel with each other in a westerly direction. They are 20 miles apart and are divided from each other by a low range of hills. Salmon are are (sic) taken in large quantities in these streams by the Indians during the summer and fall months.

The Camas prairie is a level plain surrounded by mountains. It lies about mid ways between ~~Booseden~~ Fort Boise and Fort Hall and about p. 60

40 miles to the north of Snake River. The prairie runs from east to

west its greatest length being about 60 (or 40) miles its breadth from north to south being about 20 ~~miles~~ miles. There are numerous small streams coming down from the mountains on the north and running through the prairie ... in the earth on the south side. The Malade (2) a stream of considerable size enters the prairie near the eastern side and passesthrough, leaves it near the middle of the south side and enters into Snake River about ten miles below Salmon Falls. The prairie is very elevated. The nights are cold and frosts frequent during the summer months and the snows fall to a good depth during the winter. The soil however has the appearance of being fertile. It provides grass in abundance and the camas dug here by the Indians is the largest I have ever seen.

On the first of the month I start for Fort Hall in company with Mr. McArthur for the purpose of visiting the Indians in that vicinity, expect to go as far east as Salt River. Major Haller sends with me a detachment of six soldiers as an escort. I fear that it will be impossible for me to get an escort to return with me by way of Owyhee river, Lake Syloia and Klamath lake as the soldiers rations are getting short which will compel them to return to the Dalles much sooner than the commanding officer anticipated. I appraise you however that I shall make every effort to return ~~addndd~~ by that route.

Very respectfully

etc. Nathan Olney, Indian Agent

Genl. Joel Palmer, Supt. Ind. Affairs, Dayton, Oregon. Bep6

Office Superintendent Indian Affairs

Salem Oregon, Sept. ~~22~~ 23rd, 1857

Sir: The special agency at the Dalles will be dispensed with at the close of the present quarter. Special agent A.H. Robie has been directed to turn over to you the public property in his charge. You will also assume the charge of the Indians recently embraced within the special agency of Special Agent Robie, in thus increasing your duties I am aware of the necessity which will exist for clerical assistance and in the event that you deem it necessary to employ a clerk for limited periods I will use every exertion to have the account allowed at the Treasury Department.

Very respectfully

Your Obedient Servant

Ami P. Dennison , esq.

J.W. Nesmith, Supt. Ind. Affairs O and W T

Salem Oregon, November 13, 1857

Sir:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of September 17th, 1857 enclosing invoices of ~~dry~~ dry goods and hardware shipped per Willy Tay. & Co (?) for the Indian service in Oregon and Washington territories. The goods have not yet arrived. I am informed however by the agent of W F Co. that they will arrive on the next steamer.

The goods will be extremely acceptable and will go far to relieve the most abject wants and ^{destitution} ~~distribution~~ to which the Indians here are reduced.

They have long looked for the arrival and frequently remarked that the Great Father had forgotten that winter was approaching.

On arrival no time will be lost in making a distribution of them among the different Ind. tribes. The forwarding of substantial and of the character has a good effect in convincing the Indians that the government exercises a protective care for their wants and that their Great Father has not as they have often been told, concluded to steal their country from them and leave them to perish from cold and hunger.

Doubtless the files of your office go to show that the Indians have heretofore been victims ..from a similar character; I desire to disabuse your mind of such an erroneous misconfussion. While I believe that the late Supt. Palmer, Stevens and Hedges acted honestly and gave the Indians what was justly their due so far as government had supplied the means I am sorry that I cannot say as much for a Mr. Anson Dart who was ~~de~~ superintendent for the Indians in the years 1851, 52 and 53 during which time a large p 103 shipment of Indian goods was made from the states and of which the Indians had never any transferable evidence in the way

possession.

Indian goods such as blankets, clothing, ~~hardware~~ ^{and} ~~etc.~~ at the time allotted to them. In consequence of the discovery of the gold mines in great demand on this coast and it is a well known fact susceptible of direct and positive proof that the said Dart sold in this territory ~~large~~ very large invoices of such goods at from one to two hundred per cent profit on New York prices. It is said that on the settlement of accounts a large balance was due to the government which he paid over in cash which he might well afford to do after realizing from one to two hundred per cent profits on what should have been distributed to "Lo the Poor Indian!" and his family. How far the statement relates to his being in arrears ^R or having paid over the balance due the government may be correct I have no means of knowing as he has effectually covered up his tracks by taking all his accounts from the files of the office. In relation to the fact of his selling the Indians goods I have myself .. to submit the proof. I submit this statement for the purpose of illustrating the fact that the Indians have not received all that the government ~~mean~~ intended they should.

In this connection it would perhaps be proper to inform you that Supt. Dart built on the Willamette river opposite the village of ~~Willam~~ Milwaukie an office at an expense of about seven or eight thousand dollars. This office which is an excellent one has now been turned over to me and I learn that the person upon whose "claim" it was erected now asserts his title to it.

Inasmuch as the house was built at government expense it might be proper to institute steps to ascertain who is the legitimate owner of the property. Very respectfully etc. J.W. Nesmith, Supt. Ind. Affairs, O and W. Territory. Hon Charles E. Mix, act com. Ind. Affairs, Washington, D.C.

p 116

Sir:

Office Supt. Indian Affairs

Salem Oregon, November 19, 1857

Sir: Agent R.H. Lansdale is placed in charge of that portion of Washington Territory east of the Cascade Mountains and north of the Columbia river.

You are directed to furnish him every assistance and facility ⁱⁿ ~~at~~ your power and to turn over to him any property now in your hands which you received from him or from late Local Agent Robie.

In reply to your two letters of November 10th in relation to a supply of Indian goods I have to say that they have not yet arrived. On their arrival your proportion will be forwarded to you.

I have to request that you will return Craig's vouchers for the money placed in your hands as soon as you can get them signed, and, as I have mislaid or lost the retained copies of those vouchers, if they are still in your hands I have to request that you will send me copies of them at your earliest convenience as I desire them for reference in the office.

very respectfully etc.

(Signed) J.W. Nesmith

Supt. Ind. Affairs

Oregon & Wash Territories

A.X. Dennison, esq.

Indian Agent, Dalles

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Office Supt. Ind. Affairs

Salem Oregon Ter.

Sir:

December 10th, 1857

Referring to your letter of Nov. 28th in which you desire to be more fully informed in relation to the change in your district in consequence of Agent Lansdale being assigned to the Yakima district I have to say

that his district is composed of that district of country east of the Cascade Mountains and north of the Columbia and Snake rivers. I have not deemed it necessary in this division to follow out the Oregon and Washington boundaries but have accepted the more natural one of the rivers.

In relation to the property to be turned over by you to Agent Lansdale it was presumed at the time the instructions were given (though not expressed) that you should only turn over to Agent Lansdale such property as he might require for service in his district. It is presumed that you can furnish him with the few horses he will require without exhausting your supply so as to make fresh purchases necessary. Whatever you have received in the shape of clothing or subsistence from either messrs Lansdale or Robie and not exhausted by issue had better be turned over to Agent Lansdale.

Any other instructions you may require will be promptly given upon calling my attention to the particular subject. I have again to request that you return Craig's vouchers (signed) as soon as possible.

I am etc.

J.W. Nesmith

Supt. Ind. Affairs

A.P. Dennison, esq.

Indian Agent, Dalles, O.T.

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Office Supt. Indian Affairs

Salem, Oregon, April 1st, 1858

Sir:

I enclose to you a letter from Agent Dennison at the Dalles requesting that a company of soldiers be stationed at the Warm Springs Reservation.

The Indians who have heretofore lived in the vicinity of the Dalles will all be removed to the Warm Springs Reservation this spring and I fully concur in Agent Dennison's representations of the necessity for a few troops being stationed at that point. Hoping that the matter will commend itself to Gen. Clark's (sic) favorable consideration,

I am respectfully

J.W. Nesmith

Supt. Indian Affairs

To

Major W.W. Mackall

Asst. Adgt. General U.S.A.

San Francisco, Cal.

Office Supt. Indian Affairs

Salem, Oregon, April 1st, 1858

Sir:

Referring to your letter to this office of March 13th in regard to a conversation with Lieut. Allen of the Army respecting the surrender of the Yakima murderers I have at present no instructions to give in relation to the matter further than to direct that if the Indians desire to make a voluntary surrender of the murderers they can do so either to the military or the agents of the Indian Department.

The question of the demand for ~~the~~ the surrender of those murderers is now under the consideration of the heads of the Indian and p. 192

military departments at Washington and I am awaiting for orders in relation thereto.

Your request for a company of soldiers to be stationed at the Warm Spring (sic) reservation has been transmitted to Brig. Gen. Clark (sic) with a recommendation that it be complied with.

I am very respectfully

Your obt. servant etc.

J.W. Nesmith, Supt. Indian Affairs

to A.P. Dennison,
Indian Agent,
Dalles, O.T.

Office Supt. Indian Affairs

Salem, Oregon, June 1, 1858

Sir:

Your letter of May 20th in which you ask to be appointed special Indian Agent at or in the vicinity of Fort Simcoe reached this office yesterday. I had previously received a letter from Major Garnett U.S.A. recommending you for the place.

In reply I have to say that while it would afford me pleasure to confer the appointment on you yet the instructions from the Department ordering a retrenchment of the expenses of the service together with the exhausted state of the appropriation for the present fiscal year utterly preclude my making any such appointment for the present.

I have recommendations now before Congress for an m???? of agent and correspondending estimate for funds. In the event of my recommendations being adopted the agent will be appointed by the President.

I am sir respectfully etc.

J.W. Nesmith, supt. Ind. Affairs O and W T

to A.H. Morse esq.

Fort Simcoe, W.T.

Office Supt. Indian Affairs

Salem, Oregon, Sept. 6, 1858

Sir:

Referring to your letter of August 4th from its tenor I am led to conclude that my report of Col. Steptoe's disaster has failed to reach you. The information however will be forwarded at length in my annual report which left here by the last steamer.

Since forwarding my annual report nothing definite has been heard from the movement of the troops except the affair between Maj. Garnett and the Yakima Indians on the 15th of August, an account of which taken from the Columns of the Oregon Times ?? Newspaper I herewith enclose.

Nothing has recently occurred to change the temper or disposition of the Indians on the reservations and so far as hostiles are concerned they are confined to the Indians east of the Cascade Mountains in Washington Territory. Reports are continually reaching this office of the number of persons on their way to Fraser River mines by the route east of the Cascades in Washington Territory.

A rumor reached here today that Joel Palmer est. late supt. Ind. Affairs, for Oregon together with his party of one hundred and twenty five men are on their way to the mines had been massacred by the Indians north of Snake River in Washington Territory, if true it must have occurred near the place where Col. Steptoe ~~was~~ was defeated.

I am not inclined to place much confidence in the rumor. Owing to the great distance of the hostile Indians from the settlements, together with the difficulties of communicating with the troops in the field it necessarily requires some considerable time to learn of what is actually transpiring.

I do not p 263

apprehend that there is any concert between the hostile Indians east

of the Cascades mountains and the Indians on the reservations west of those mountains nor do I apprehend that the Indians on those reservations will resort to arms unless compelled to by reason of having their supplies of subsistence discontinued a contingency which is bound to occur as soon as the appropriations for the present fiscal year are exhausted which will be early in the coming winter. The instructions contained in your letter prohibiting my exceeding (??) the appropriations for the present fiscal year will be complied with by myself and I shall cease to give the Indians guarded upon the reservations rations after the the habitation becomes equal to the amount appropriated.

As to the results likely to flow from instructions contained in your letter of the 4th August I beg leave to refer you to my communication on the subject under date of May 15th and to which up to this date I have received no reply.

Very respectfully etc.

J.W. Nesmith

Supt. Ind. Aff.

Hon Charles E. Mix
Commissioner Ind. Affrs.
Washington, D.C.