

Yakima Reservation. (Wilbur) Report of Indian Commissioner, 1872.

I was much pleased and surprised on visiting the Yakima reservation in August last to witness the splendid results of Agent Wilbur's labor with the people of his agency.

He has fully demonstrated the truth of that generally doubted and scouted problem among western peoples, the capability of Indians for permanent civilization and Christianization. I saw there finely cultivated farms, well-built houses, barns and other out-buildings fences, ditches etc. many hay and grain stacks, numerous wagons, plows, thrashing ~~mach~~ reaping and mowing machines and other agricultural implements all the property and mostly the work of Indians who owned, besides many cattle, horses, sheep and hogs.

They have also a large and well-attended school and two churches with full congregations of well-dressed orderly and devout worshipers; in short all the appliances and indications of a well established and healthy civilization.

This great progress is due almost wholly to the efforts of Agent Wilbur, who has been with the Indians of that reservation in the capacity of missionary, teacher or agent almost continuously over twelve years, and through his thorough knowledge of Indian character and his ~~use~~ unselfish untiring energy, firmness, kindness, zeal and devotion to their best interests, has won entire confidence. Having no children of his own he seems to have adopted the 3,000 Indians of his reservation and personally knows and calls them all by name and they respect and look up to him and to his excellent Christian wife as a father and mother.

Being a man of excellent judgment and thorough practical business habits, his people come to him for advice in everything. He does not sit in his office or ride around over his reservation, merely ordering and directing what is to be done but he takes hold with his



own hands and shows how work of various kinds should be done.

He goes with the Indians to the mountains, camps with them and with ax, saw and gad, assists and shows how to cut and haul saw logs; with his carpenter and assists in building houses and barns for the Indians; with the farmer, and instructs the Indians in cultivating, sowing, planting, harvesting and thrashing the crops. He leads and instructs in the churches and Sabbath-schools; he visits the sick and dying and comforts the afflicted. He hears, decides and settles disputed disputes and difficulties, tries and convicts wrongdoers, admonishes the erring and punishes the guilty.

On his reservation he is the kind governor, wise legislator, just judge, stern sheriff, busy worker and good instructor in all physical and moral and religious duties; everywhere and at all times an earnest practical working man, profitably employing every hour and civilizing and improving those around him, both by precept and example/ Considering Mr. Wilbur's mature age (being over 60)

his long experience among Indians has probity and integrity, his energy and business habits, his peculiar fitness for the position he holds, the Indian department cannot more certainly and effectually insure the rapid progress civilization and prosperity of the Indians of the Yakima reservation than by granting everything he asks in his annual report and letting him have his own way.

The great need of and immense benefit that would be derived from, the steam sawmill he asks permission to obtain is perceived at a glance.

There is an inexhaustible supply of the finest of pine timber for lumber in the mountains on the reservation. This lumber is greatly needed for the construction of buildings and fences. History and experience have demonstrated that every well-constructed



building of lumber, brick or stone and every fence built in the style of good husbandry by white man or Indian on his own land, is an advance step in permanent civilization.

Such a saw mill besides supplying all the lumber needed for the reservation would produce a fine income from the sale of lumber to settlements around and as Mr. Wilbur proposes to purchase and operate the saw mill without asking a cent from the government, I hope he will at once be permitted to obtain it.

It will be seen that Mr. Wilbur in his annual report for this year corroborates ~~me~~ my views as heretofore expressed, as to the evil of the mistaken policy of distributing annuities and presents to Indians in goods and money and asks that he be permitted to invest the remaining five annual payments of \$4,000 each as they fall due, under the terms of the Yakima treaty, in young cattle. I have not a doubt of the wisdom of this policy if carried out with the energy, honesty, good judgment and management characteristic of Mr. Wilbur. The data mentioned in his accompanying annual report, and upon which he bases the great increase and profit of such an investment, is founded upon many years of observation and experience and may be relied on with certainty if he is permitted to thus invest the remaining annuities and to procure the steam saw mill and the reservation is surveyed and divided in severalty as requested, the Indians of that reservation when the payments and employes provided for by treaty cease, will not only be able to sustain and care for themselves but be comparatively civilized and prosperous and be on the high road to alluence. I therefore cordially "second the motion" to permit Mr. Wilbur to invest annuities in cattle as he may deem best.

I unite with Mr. Wilbur in calling special attention to the Department to \$7,250 due his agency either ~~from~~ from the government

or from the estate and official bond of the late superintendent of Indian affairs of this territory, W.H. Waterman, deceased. The unpaid drafts of said deceased for the sum of \$7,238.73 on the assistant treasurer of San Francisco are in this office. The department is referred by Agent Wilbur for a full history and statement of this matter to his account current and statement ~~thereof~~ therewith for the month of July, 1867. Justice as well as the honor of the government requires the prompt settlement of the matter.



Yakima agency, commissioner of Indian affairs, 1873

I found the new saw mill in operation and every indication of the continuation of the prosperity and progress in civilization mentioned in my last annual report. For particulars as to the prosperous condition of this agency under the efficient direction of Agent Wilbur I refer to his annual report, inclosed together with the annual reports of the physician, superintendent of instruction and farmer of that reservation. It will be seen that by the census of 1870 the Indians of the Yakima reservation numbered 3,500 now probably increased to 4,000. This large number of people are dependant upon one physician for medication.

One of the consequences resulting from their increase in civilization is the loss of their superstitious belief in sorcery and timanamus in the cure of diseases and the increase of their faith in the efficiency of our physician. This is shown by the accompanying excellent report of Dr. Kuykendall, the well qualified physician at the Yakima reservation.

This report shows that his medical prescriptions to the Indians for the year averaged over nine per day in the year, besides his lectures and instructions to them on hygienic duties etc.

And yet the government ~~add~~ only allows this efficient physician for his valuable services to her 3,500 or perhaps 4,000 wards the paltry sum of ~~\$\$\$~~ \$1,400 out of which sum he is required to furnish and pay for all of the medicines and surgical instruments needed and used and to furnish his own wood, lights, transportation etc. and do without hospital accommodations for his sick, while, as hereinbefore shown, she furnishes a physician for 40 stout able bodied soldiers at Fort Colville and pays him for medical attention to those 40 men a salary of \$2,100, furnishes him in the most ample style all the medicines and surgical instruments he can possibly

need besides a commodious and well-furnished hospital--hospital steward, nurse and cook, with all needed fuel, lights and transportation both for himself and hospital.

I ask that the salary of the physician at the Yakima reservation be increased to \$2,000 and that the government furnish the necessary medicines and surgical instruments, hospitals, hospital supplies, etc. as in the army.

It will be seen by reference to the report of the efficient superintendent of instruction at the Yakima reservation that they "labor under many embarrassments for want of means in the school department." This should not be. Failure to provide means for proper educational facilities is far more culpable, far reaching and disastrous in its consequence than failure to provide proper medical treatment. Failure in the latter respect occasions more suffering and death while failure in the former perpetuates barbarism and degradation and defeats the hope of civilization.

I therefore ask an appropriation of \$5,000 for school buildings on the Yakima reservation. For many efficient reasons that will suggest themselves to the honorable commissioner, I respectfully ask that the salary of the agent of this important reservation be increased to \$2,000; and I again unite with Agent Wilbur as in my last annual report, in calling the attention of the government to the \$7,250 due the agency. The justice of this demand is not questioned and this matter has been so pressed upon the attention of the department by reports and letters during the last six years that I should think it would be attended to for the same reason that induced the king to grant the widow's petition, if nothing more.

Here is an appendix to Agent Wilbur's report calling the attention of the Department to a matter of the greatest interest to the

peace and welfare of the Indians over whom he is appointed to  
preside. I feel sure that the honorable secretary of the  
interior did not fully consider the matter referred to, else he would  
would not have granted permission for the erection and maintenance of Roman  
Roman Catholic missions upon the Yakima and Nez Perce reservations  
in violation of a clause of the second articles of each of these  
treaties.

No teacher or other white man should come to be placed on an  
Indian reservation without the invitation or hearty consent of the agent;  
else inharmony and discord must follow. And it was to guard against  
and prevent the inharmony and discord that would be certain to follow  
the admission of any white man on a reservation without the consent of  
the agent that that wise provision contained in a clause of the second  
article of every treaty on this coast made by Governor Stevens was inserted  
as follows: "Nor shall any white man excepting those in the employment  
of the Indian Department be permitted to reside upon the said reservation  
without ~~permitted~~ permission of the tribe and the superintendent and  
agent. Therefore no authority, not even that of the President of the  
United States, can legally put "any white man excepting those in  
the employment of the Indian department" upon either the Nez Perce  
or Yakima reservation without the consent of the Indian tribes  
belonging to these reservations, the superintendent and the agent of each  
all three first had and obtained. The order of the honorable Secretary  
being in plain violation of this provision of these treaties is of course  
illegal and void. I therefore most heartily unite with Agent Wilbur  
in respectfully protesting against the order of which he complains,  
and respectfully ask its reconsideration and I would as heartily unite  
with either of the Catholic agents in this superintendency in protesting  
against a like order placing a Protestant teacher on to either  
of their reservations without their hearty consent first had.

R.H. Milroy, superintendent Indian affairs, Washington territory.  
to Hon E.P. Smith, commissioner of Indian affairs.



Yakima agency

Commissioner of Indian affairs, 1877

Yakima agency:

Yakima, Palouse, Pisquose, Wenatchepum, Klikitat, Kliquit, Kowassayee, Siaywas, Pkinpah, Wisham, Shyik, Ochecholes, Kamiltopah and Seapcat.

Males 1,450, females 2,200, total 3,650; number of mixed bloods  
15 9

03; employes 06; other white people 99 28; number of Indians who wear citizens clothing 2,700; number of houses occupied by

Indians 200 240; number of ~~hous~~ Indian houses built during past year  
5.