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In the month of June, 1856, I went in company with a train of commissary supplies escorted by one or two companies of troops to the camp of Col. Wright, commanding an expedition to the Yakima Country.

His troops, after relieving the Cascades and building the block house on the hill back of Bradford's had been ordered to this valley, the expedition on to Walla Walla being for the present abandoned.

It was my first trip north of the Columbia and I remember that as we reached the top of the Klickitat Mountains and saw the valley spread out below us, the bunch grass, then knee high waving in the light breeze and the whole valley carpeted with flowers of every hue, I thought I had never beheld so beautiful a valley/

Our route did not follow the line of the present wagon road from the block house to Fort Simcoe but ascended a spur of the Simcoe range, crossing the summit to the right and descending to the valley of Topnish east of the Simcoe steam saw mill. The trail can easily be seen from Ft. Simcoe climbing a steep ridge zig-zag to avoid the exceedingly steep grade. We camped on the Topnish the fifth night after leaving The Dalles and next day struck out across the valley, making our camp on the Ahtanum, one or two miles above the old Mission. As Indians were known to be in the vicinity, we had seen them at a distance all day, no one had curiosity enough to visit the site. The building, I think, had been burned.

The next night we camped on the Cowychee and at about 10 a.m. of the eighth day entered the camp of Col. Wright at what was called the "basket fort" on the Natchez river. The river was too high to ford and the Indians from the opposite side kept up a constant and annoying fire on every soldier who ventured near the bank.

Orders had been issued that no reply was to be made but many officers and soldiers were unable to resist the temptation to accept the challenge of the Indians and the result was a constant interchange of shots. To provide a depot for his supplies in case the water fell sufficiently to cross, the Colonel had caused a breast-work about 50 feet square to be built, the top of which was surmounted by a row of gabions, or willow baskets filled with earth. This gave the place its name. The troops remained at the Natchez till the river fell somewhat when a detachment crossed and found the Indians gone, bag and baggage.

As a part of his duty was to select a site for a military post, to keep those Indians in subjection, the reservation was examined for a suitable location and a point on the Topnish near where it makes the bend eastward selected. One day, however, Sergeant Kohlhauf, now street commissioner at Spokane Falls, with a small party while hunting, visited the place where Fort Simcoe is now stationed. The pleasant shade of the oak trees and the presence of two immense springs satisfied them that it was a far more suitable location for the post than the site on the Topnish.

They returned to camp and reported their discovery and the result was the definite location of the intended post on the present site. The Indians called the place "mool mool" meaning I believe, "the place where water rises from the ground."

The site having been selected several companies under Major Robert Garnett, afterwards killed at Carrick's Ford in West Virginia, were left to put up the buildings. The first step was to prepare for the winter. A part of the command in tents and huts made of sticks and mud were put up for the balance. In the meantime a location for a sawmill was selected and a party was detailed to look out a route for a wagon road. The road was not completed that season, the great difficulty being to find a practicable point to descend the mountain to the Topnish.

It taxed the energies of the Quarter master at The Dalles, Cap. Thomas Jordan, to find transportation sufficient to get the winter supplies for the troops in before the route should be closed by the deep snow; fortunately the snow did not fall to a great depth till late in December. The last train of some 400 pack animals delivered their loads about the 20th and started on their return by way of the Sattas canyon. Near the head of the Sattas the snow became too deep for further travel and the whole party were compelled to stop and make snow shoes on which to make their way to The Dalles. I remember them as they came straggling in from two to ten in a party, nearly exhausted and starved. It was a wonder that some were not lost but my recollection is that all finally made their appearance, though several had a very narrow escape.

In the spring the wagon road was completed and the work of building the post commenced in earnest. In May with the first train of wagons that ever entered Simcoe Valley, I crossed the mountains. The road substantially followed the old trail but descended the mountain not far from where the road now comes in. With the same train also, Maj. Garnett brought to the post his newly made bride, a charming lady who afterwards died at Fort Simcoe.

During this year, 1857, and the next season Fort Simcoe was completed. In the spring of 1858 Maj. Garnett was ordered to Vancouver on a court martial. During his absence his wife and her three months old babe died within a few days of each other. The blow nearly crazed the major and I have no doubt influenced him in the step he took to join the rebels at the outbreak of the Civil War. He was a genial, kind-hearted man, brave as a lion, a native of Virginia and as before stated, was killed at Carrick's Ford—peace to HIS ASHES....

From this time til 1860 Fort Simcoe experienced the usual routine of a frontier post in the time of peace. Many of the officers were from the south and at the

out breaking of the rebellion united their fortunes with the Southern Confederacy. When the administration of Lincoln had fairly made up their line of policy, it was important that every trained soldier should be at the point where hostilities were likely to commence, consequently every frontier post that could safely be abandoned was stripped and the troops were ordered east.

The Yakimas nation had in good faith accepted the situation and this post was abandoned and turned over to the Indian bureau. This was done however before the breaking out of the war 1860. Dr. Lousdale, now I believe at Puget Sound, was the first agent here. In the winter of 1860 and 1861 he was removed and the agency was administered by sub agents till the inauguration of Lincoln when a Mr. Bancroft of California was appointed agent. He held the position until some time in 1862 when at the earnest request of Senator Nesmith, Rev. James H. Wilbur who was then in Washington having been called on to express his views in the Indian service, consented to accept the position. He had previously occupied the position of superintendent of school and many of the best men of the reservation are the product of his training. His long and successful administration is too well known to need relation—suffice it to say that what the Yakima Indians possess of thrift, industry, capacity, civil action and Christianity they owe to his unselfish labors.

—The Washington Farmer, Christmas Day, 1884
Ft. Simcoe, W.T., Dec. 17, 1884, by J.H.F., Editor, Farmer

We are informed that at Fort Simcoe, twenty-seven miles distant, the season is nearly three weeks earlier than at this place. Peach and plumb (copy) trees have been in bloom for two weeks past and the blossoms are now rapidly falling and the oak trees are in full bud.

At this season of the year Fort Simcoe is one of the most picturesque spots in all this part of the country; situated as it is in a small oak grove it seems to be surrounded by a vast flower garden, the wild flowers being so abundant and presenting so many tints and various colors.

The Reservation Indian Court for Yakima Reservation has been in session all last week and adjourned Monday last.

There are three judges who sit in council, the court having original and appellate jurisdiction, appeals being taken from the five justice of the peace courts. There were a great many cases tried at this term of court, being mostly civil cases and but few criminal cases of a heinous character.

The judges of the court receive five dollars per day and the clerk three dollars per day while court is in session.

The prosecuting attorney for the reservation receives two dollars for each case prosecuted on behalf of the reservation. The police while in service of the court receive two dollars per day. All these salaries and fees are paid from fines and a poll tax levied by the board of reservation commissioners.

The Indians are obedient to and respect all decisions of the court and take great interest in the manner of self government.

—THE WASHINGTON FARMER
April 4, 1885

Fert Simcoe-

Historical

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MILROY REPEATS STORIES OF FATHER WILBUR'S DAY

Young Visitor to Fort Astonished by Methodist Preacher's Agility; Tells of Firmness in Administration

Among the men who were prominent in the early development on the Yakima Indian reservation, James H. Wilbur, Indian agent at Fort Simcoe, was outstanding said R. B. Milroy, Yakima county court commissioner, who related interesting anecdotes of Father Wilbur, as he was popularly known.

Father Wilbur came to Fort Simcoe in 1860 to take charge of the schools on the reservation. Being a Methodist preacher, he established several Methodist churches, one of them at White Swan. Four years after coming to the reservation, he was made Indian agent and continued in that position for 20 years until relieved by Gen. R. H. Milroy, Milroy's father.

"Father Wilbur was a large man, even larger than my father, who was six feet two inches," said Milroy. "He was active physically, and at one time I was astonished at his agility. I had accompanied my father on a trip to Walla Walla, Fort Colville and Fort Simcoe, and we were met at Simcoe by my mother and my younger brother.

"My father and Father Wilbur were standing at the picket fence inclosing the square at the fort while my brother and I were playing tag. As we came close to them, Father Wilbur said, 'See if you can catch me.' Being only a few feet from him, I made a lunge for him, but he made a quick jump and cleared the fence with the greatest ease.

"Father Wilbur dealt with the Indians fairly but with firmness and dispatch. There was an Indian who was rebellious and left the reservation occasionally with his band. Father Wilbur sent word to him to report at the fort, but the Indian refused.

"He fancied that he possessed supernatural powers, so when Father Wilbur threatened to come and get him he told his followers that all he had to do was to stretch out his hand and Father Wilbur would sink down and die. The Indian agent set out for the camp of the renegade Indian accompanied by several Indian police.

"The band was camped on the east side of the Yakima river not far from Toppenish. Father Wilbur crossed the stream in a skiff. Noting the approach of the Indian agent, the Indian told his followers to gather close around as he then would have greater strength in working his magic.

"Father Wilbur walked up and demanded of the Indian that he come out and when he refused to do so, he pushed the braves aside and grabbed the culprit, took him with him to Fort Simcoe and put him in jail. He talked to the Indian and prayed with him till he converted him.

"An Irishman opened a saloon on the north bank of Ahtanum creek and sold liquor to the Indians. Father Wilbur sent him word to get away from there, but the Irishman stayed. Thereupon the Indian agent went to the place accompanied by a few Indian police. They entered the saloon and walked up to the bar.

"The Irishman grabbed for his revolver, but Father Wilbur was too quick for him and got hold of it first. Vaulting over the bar, he grabbed the Irishman and threw him out of the place, and the Indian police laid hold of him. He was taken to Simcoe and thrown in jail, although his place of business was not on the reservation.

"Under the influence of Father Wilbur, the Irishman mended his ways and became a close friend of the Indian agent. At the time of our visit to Simcoe, this man ran the ferry on the Columbia river where we crossed in returning to Olympia. Father Wilbur told my father that the ferryman would not charge him anything, and we later learned that he did not charge any person anything who was a friend of Father Wilbur."

The Indian Agency saw mill at Fort Simcoe was burned April 7 at 11 p.m. there being destroyed some 60,000 feet of seasoned lumber about 15,000 feet of which belonged to the Indians and the remainder was the property of the government. There was also destroyed a quantity of logs. About 20,000 feet of sawed lumber was all that was saved.

This information is obtained from Peter Holt who was the fireman of the engine that supplied the power for the mill. He says the fire burned during the remainder of the night, that the employes and Indians fought the flames industriously and when they say that more property could not be saved, the Indians were much distressed.

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Ft. Simcoe

Fire at Fort Simcoe-On Friday night of last week the large building used as the girls' dormitory and boarding house at Fort Simcoe caught fire from causes unknown and quickly burned to the ground. The building was formerly used as the barracks of the fort but for some years it has been the quarters of the Indian maidens attending school. So quickly did the building burn that nothing was saved except some wearing apparel. The original cost of the structure was \$8,000-
Yakima Herald, North Yakima, Washington Territor, April 25, 1889.

Fort Simcoe

H.K. Kilgour and his wife have resigned their positions in the schools at Fort Simcoe and Mrs. Kilgour will leave next week for a visit to relatives in Kansas, Ohio and Virginia--
Yakima Herald, April 3, 1890.

Fort Simcoe

A meeting was held at Fort Simcoe by the Indians and employes of the reservation on the 8th inst. to make preparations for the celebration of the Fourth of July.

Rev. George Waters occupied the chair and George Meachum officiated as secretary. A committee composed of Calvin Hale, Homer James, Homer Huffer, Yesmowit, John Skow-Kurn and Ka-par-ty, was appointed who agreed that the celebration should be held at Stwireville and arranged for the preparing of the grounds, the building of seats and tables and the necessary details for holding a grand barbecue.

Captain Klickitat Peter was made marshal of the day and Charles Miller selected as his lieutenants.

The program provides for the opening of the celebration with a sermon at 10 o'clock a.m.. At 12 o'clock the barbecued meats and other edibles will be served after which there will be speeches by W.S. Foutz, Dr. Wilgus, Allen Stephen, Thomas Simpson and Charles Wannassay, interspersed with singing by the school children and employes.

The miscellaneous exercises will begin at 2 o'clock.

The committee has agreed to three days of gambling ~~and~~ of all kinds and six days of horse racing beginning on the sixth and ending on the 11th of July.

A cordial invitation is extended to all to be present, but no intoxicating liquors will be allowed on the grounds--Yakima Herald, June 3, 1891.

Fort Simcoe

Miss Grace E. Cooley, assistant professor of botany at Wellesley college, Wellesly, Mass., is spending the week with Mrs. Miller at Fort Simcoe. She is making a botanical collection for Harvard and Columbia colleges and the Smithsonian cooode Institute at Washington--Yakima Herald, July 2, 1891.

Mrs. Dr. E.C. Miller, a wealthy Bostonian, has taken up her residence upon the Yakima reservation for the purpose of devoting herself to the care of aged and införm Indians .

Eventually she hopes through the aid of influential friends to secure an appropriation from the government for the building and maintaining of a suitable home for them at Fort Simcoe, where they may be cared for during the remainder of their days--Yakima Herald, July 2, 1891.

Indians

Fort Simcoe

Miss Alice H. Luce of t e Girls' Latin High School, Boston, Mass., was the guest of Agent and Mrs. Lynch at Fort Simcoe last week.

She left for Tacoma and Seattle Saturday, returning to Boston via San Francisco and Denver--Yakima Herald, August 20, 1891.

Miss Jessie Lundon, lately of London, England, after a visit of five weeks with Mrs. Jay Lynch at Fort Simcoe returned to her home in Dayton Wash., on Monday.

Miss Lundon is correspondent for "The People" a London paper and the Dayton , Wash. papers. She has written a very pleasant article on the Yakima reservation. @-Yakima Herald, August 20, 1891.