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Aerial maps of the property, which is to be turned over to the state on a permanent easement basis, were especially helpful, Supt. Skarra said, in arriving at the decision on the acreage to be set aside for the Ft. Simcoe restoration program.

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--YAKIMA REPUBLIC p32 Thurs., Dec. 11, 1952

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## Garnett

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## Earthquakes--Yakima

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Fort Simcoe, June 29 — Picnickers from the Yakima valley who wander around old Ft. Cimsoe and its picturesque blockhouse must depend upon historical novels and imagination for stories of the early hardship and excitement centered around the old log structure. But to older Indians in the reservation region books cannot command the color and beauty of actual memories and legends handed down by word of mouth.

Among the oldest and clearest memories is that of George Olney, who came to the valley in 1865 when he was three years old.

His father, Nathan Olney, brought one of the first three families over the Satus hills from Oregon, settling here with the Bowser and O'Shay families. Olney, Bowser and O'Shay had taken Indian girls for their wives. Olney coming from the Dalles, Bowser from Vancouver and O'Shay from the Puget Sound area.

History was begun pounded out in huge batches in those pioneer days. Young George Olney didn't start remembering many details for a few years but his youthful ears kept a careful account of those early events.

His recollection of old Chief Spencer's talk with Olney's brother-in-law, Abe Lincoln, provides many a legend of early Ft. Simcoe. One concerns the disappearance around 1856 of a man named Bolin<sup>o</sup> who was sent from Oregon to relieve Capt. Spencer as commander of the fort and superintendent of the agency.

"The story came later," Olney recalls, "but what actually happened was a conference of three Indian boys who decided they did not want another white man arranging their affairs.

"So they decided to do away with Bolin<sup>o</sup>, which they did. They caught him at his campfire and one held him while another cut his throat. A search was made for Bolin and the three Indians were caught and hanged on a big oak limb close to the old blockhouse at Ft. Simcoe. I could show it to you now."

Olney tells also of one of the informal but accepted surveys made for the

boundaries of the reservation which had no particular historical significance other than to establish the discomfort of white men from Washington D. C. while riding with a pair of rugged Indians through the sagebrush and pines in the wild Yakima valley territory.

"That was in 1857 when two white men came to ride horses with Indian Chief Spencer and another Indian. They went from the fort to Pum-up, meaning Prosser. Then to Ahtanum, Tieton, Klickitat and down to Mabton and go saddle sore and tired while the Indians put up stacks of "poosh," or cedar and piles of rocks for boundary marks."

George Olney's 84 years have ripened his sense of humor into a remarkable feature giving him an Indian's wisdom with the white man's vocabulary.

"I fell with my horse three years ago," Olney explains. "That cracked and bent my ribs and broke my collar bone. If it hadn't been for that I'd been aiming at a 156, but I don't expect to make it now."

He has been a rancher of no small consideration, once owning some 1,200 acres around "Potkwaluke—the Three Sisters Slide lake south of White Swan. One experience fresh in his memory is the time his wife bought a few pigs which ended up costing him up in the thousands.

He went fishing at Celilo Falls one season during which time the pigs and their multiple families overran the neighborly lands and caused untold damage which Olney had to make good on his return home. So he fenced the lake at a cost of \$11,040.50.

"I wanted some fishing in my lake for years, so one time I got some trout from a game warden and planted them by the hundred. I caught no fish so planted them again. There were still no fish," he complained. "But I figured it out when two things happened. A man in a boat sounded the lake bottom and lost his tackle



completely, nearly pulling the boat over with it and a few months later another rancher dug a well and found a big trout in the new water. They couldn't stand the undercurrent running out of the lake bottom."

—undated clipping

by Tom Thomas, Herald Staff writer in YAKIMA MORNING HERALD

with two column pix of Ft. Simcoe and 1 col cut of George Olney, 84 year old White Swan resident (Estimated age about 1945 or 46 since that is when Thomas went to work for Herald.)

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