

Warm Springs.. Snakes. Commissioner of Indian affairs, 1867

J?W? Perit Huntington, superintendent of Indian affairs in Oregon.

..The Warm Spring reservation so named from some large springs which throw out large quantities of water impregnated with sulphur and various salts at a temperature of about 210 degrees contains about 1,024,000 acres of which only ,3000 to 4,000 are susceptible to cultivation..The remainder is either rocky, barrens or heavy timber.

The tribes located here are the Wascos, Des Chutes, Thgy and John Day numbering 1,126.

A large number of the able bodied men about 100 in all enlisted in the military service of the United States in the summer of 1866 and are still in service. They have been employed against the hostile Snakes and have proved very efficient warriors

The Indians made a beginning in agriculture, etc. but two years of campaigning in savage warfare stimulated by plunder and blood and the blood of women and infants as well as that of men has effectually undone all and more than than all, the good that had been attained.

..afterwards in my absence from the state the Indians to the number of nearly 100 were enlisted in the military service under pay as privates of cavalry and in addition promised all the property they could capture and urged to make the war one of extermination.

A copy of the order of General Steele is hereto appendee and I am informed that Lieutenant William Borrows in a speech to the Indians at the time of enlistment enjoined them upon them that they should take no prisoners regardless of age or sex Under these orders the scouts under command of Lieutenants McKay and Barragh surprised a camp of Snakes in a ~~very~~ narrow canon on a small fork of Crooked river, killed all the men, seven in number and took fourteen women and children prisoners. Their officers directed

them to carry out their orders. They remonstrated, but finally, reluctantly 1010 killed and 800 scalped all the women and children, they offering no resistance. I shudder when I recall the fact that this is the first instance on record in which soldiers in the service and wearing the uniform of the

United States, have by express orders butchered in cold blood unresisting women and children. There have been several other instances more recently in which women and children have been killed but I am not advised as to the particulars. It may be said that these Indians were savages, waging relentless war upon the white race and that this was only a retaliation in kind; but even this is not true as their habit has been to make prisoners and slaves of women and children captured. These they often maltreated and 000 abused horribly but rarely or never killed. It will require a long time if such education is applied to our friendly Indians to make farmers, scholars and Christians of them.

This agency 0000 has from its first establishment been subject to the predatory attacks of the Snakes. Their depredations have been continued from year to year and in some instances the amount of plunder taken was very large.

In 1859 they besieged the white employes and such of the Indians as did not escape in the agency buildings; kept them there until their water and provisions were exhausted when they managed to steal out in the night unobserved and reach the white settlements.

The Snakes killed several Indians, took some prisoners and drove off a large amount of cattle and horses. These raids have been repeated every year although never so extensive as the one described above and the agency is in constant dread of them. Military protection has sometimes been afforded and at other times been withheld.



J. W. Perit Huntington, superintendent of Indian affairs in Oregon, 1867.

The hostile Snakes or Shoshones. These are a numerous race divided into various sub-tribes or bands and extending over a very large extent of country, but their general characteristics are the same.

Their language differs in its dialects but its groundwork is the same.

They are a nomadic people ranging from Nevada and Utah to Oregon Idaho, Washington and Montana, often under different names.

When in Utah they often find it convenient to call themselves Pi-Utes. In other parts of Idaho they are Bannocks. They treat with Governor Nye in Nevada or they fight with General Crook in Oregon and Idaho. They are determinedly and persistently hostile treating for peace sometimes but never abiding by their agreements.

They were formerly friendly. The early emigrants to this coast travelled through their country with friendly intercourse but of late years their hand is against every man.

They were on friendly terms with the Wasco and Des Chutes or Terrino Indians until 1856. It was their custom to meet those tribes at the Tygh valley, forty miles north of Warm Springs reservation every summer and spend several weeks at a festival of horse racing and gambling, returning each to their own country in the autumn. In 1855 two of the Terrino tribe with their families returned with the Snakes to the territory of the latter and were murdered for their plunder, their wives and their children being sold to tribes further south as slaves. Retaliation of course occurred and since that time the conflicts between the Warm Springs Indians and the Snakes have been as frequent as their friendly gatherings formerly were.

In my annual report of 1865 I submitted a compilation of the depredations committed by the Snake Indians from 1862 to 1865. Accompanying this report is a paper marked B which is a similar compilation extending from the close of the last one to the date of this report. I believe very few errors will be found in it. It is a fearful record of loss of life and destruction of property.

These Indians are now beyond the reach of the Indian bureau and probably will never come under its control. The long continued hostility existing between them and the whites has bitterly exasperated both and there is no likelihood that they can ever live in peace.

The military operations against them under Major Marshall and General Crook in the field Major General Steele commanding the district, have been prosecuted for the last year with great vigor and with much more efficient force than heretofore and their numbers much reduced. They have been so harassed for a year past that they can have laid up very little supply of food and doubtless many of them will perish the ensuing winter from starvation.

I said of them in 1866:

What disposition can ultimately be made of them I do not undertake to say. Now nothing is to be done but fight and exterminate them. Yet I am painfully conscious that extermination will cost the lives of ten whites for every Indian and besides cost millions of money. To attempt to treat with them now is simple folly; they cannot be even brought to a council much less to a treaty. Their ultimate disposition is a matter that must be left to time to determine."

And what I said then is more true now. It is utterly impossible to treat with them and it is fearfully expensive, saying nothing of the loss of life, to fight them. The government would probably have saved many dollars if it could have fifteen years ago taken every Snake

Indian to a first-class hotel and boarded them for life.

The Woll-pah-pe tribe of Snakes with whom I made a treaty in 1865 remained for a few months upon the Klamath reservation and then rejoined the hostile tribes. It is reported, on rather doubtful authority, that Pau-li-ne, the most celebrated war chief of the Snakes was killed in one of the conflicts of last year. If this is true, they have lost their most efficient leader.



## Warm Springs

Report of Indian commissioner, 1871. Felix R. Brunot.

..At Portland I met Hon. A.B. Meacham, superintendent of Indian affairs and learned from him that ~~that~~ the Umatilla council has been postponed until the 7th day of August. Deciding to occupy the interval in visiting the Nez Perces, the Warm Spring and the Yakima reservations, I set out for the former. Owing to the sinking of the steamer on Snake River and the consequent delay I was obliged to abandon the proposed visit to the Nez Perces; and returning to the Dalles of the Columbia went to the Warm Spring reservation, seventy-five miles south of that place in Eastern Oregon where I arrived on Saturday, July 22.

Warm Springs reservation is about forty miles square and is a miserable country as can be found in Oregon. Mountainous, rocky or sandy. It is covered with sage brush and much of it produces no grass. The tillable portion occupied by the Indians consists of 500 acres stretched along two small streams which unite where the agency buildings have been erected for a length of four or five miles on each. The roads are bad, but little more than pony trails in some places and hardly passable for wagons. The crops seem to fail from drought or to be destroyed by grasshoppers three years out of five.

A party of U.S. surveyors in running lines on the reservation have called attention to another spot called the "Sinnemarsh" about 15 miles from the agency which is supposed to be fit for cultivation. It is perhaps large enough to make small farms for about fifty families.

I visited and examined this land and have some doubt as to its availability except for grazing. It appears to be 1,000 or 1,500 feet higher than the land now cultivated and is probably subjected to deep snows and late and early frosts; nevertheless the experiment should be tried. The frequent failure of crops has compelled

the Indians to resort to all their old methods of sub-

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subsistence by fishing, hunting and gathering roots and berries and greatly retards their advancement in civilization. Their chief fishery is at the Dalles of the Columbia, seventy-five miles distant where they are subjected to many demoralizing influences from the whites and live for several months in their mat houses in the utmost filth and seeming degeneration.

The reservation was established by the treaty of June 25, 1865 when the tribes, parties to the treaty, were confederated. According to the census reported in 1870 they numbered as follows:

Wascos 117 males, 127 females.

Teninos 45 males, 50 females.

Warm Spring 112 males, 117 females.

Deschutes 28 males, 29 females

Other tribes 16 males, 14 females. Total 654.

A census taken in 1862 showed stated the number to be 1,066. The difference is partly attributable to absenteeism. A considerable number who belong to the treaty have never been settled upon the reservation and others who have been on it have been induced to leave by evil advice from white men. There are about sixty Indian houses built with lumber and labor furnished by themselves, the employees superintending their erection.

...a much smaller of white men would find it difficult to sustain themselves by cultivating the soil of the Warm Spring reservation and certainly the Indians never can subsist themselves without resorting to fishing, hunting and gathering roots and berries...

...The boundaries of the reservation about which there is much controversy should be defined. As the Indians will be unable to subsist themselves without it their right to fish at the Dalles should be restored to them. It is guaranteed to them in the treaty but they were induced to relinquish, by a former superintendent for the sum of \$2,500.

The only access to the fishery is over a piece of ground or rock now claimed by a white man who charged \$60 for the right of passage for the present season. This should be purchased. Other details will probably be suggested by the agent in his annual report.



Customs

Commissioner of Indian affairs, 1877

Warm Springs Agency, Oregon, September 1, 1877.

Religious interests...

There has been a decided progress in the field of Christian labor here. During the winter an interesting revival took place in which over one hundred professed conversion. As we have had no minister here to hold communion services, none of them have been received into church fellowship. Our society has made provision for the support of a minister and his wife, who are to labor here as missionaries and we hope to have them here in a short time.

The Sabbath services so far have been mainly conducted by myself requiring two natives to interpret into the two languages spoken by these Indians. The attendance is always good, sometimes crowding our building to its utmost capacity.

..costume ..

There is a constant falling off in the way of game and peltries and the Indians are more and more being compelled to resort to civilized modes of procuring subsistence and to secure the means to purchase supplies of food, clothing etc. The traditional Indian with his war paint and feathers is fast becoming a thing of the past, and it is quite rare to see one dressed in primitive Indian style. In all their modes of life there is a slow but radical change being brought about.....

John Smith, U.S. Indian agent.