

Yakima, Ft. Simcoe, Wash.,^{er} May 22d 1880

Hon R.E. Trowbridge, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Wash.D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to enclose a copy of a letter just received from Hon George B. Curry of Carregon (Oregon City) near the Malheur Reservation and also a copy of a communication from Gen. Howard commanding dept. of the Columbia. The writer of the first bears the reputation of a candid, truthful man who has creditably filled several important positions both under the state and national governments and so far as I know can have no personal interest in the matter. In this connection I may remark that there is a widespread belief that when in Washington last winter, Sarah Winnemucca secured from the Department a promise that the Piutes should be allowed their own option to return to Malheur reservation or remain 475 where at present located. This has been published in all the papers on the coast, and repeated to the Piutes, substantially according to the memorandum given Sarah by the Department. I need not say that this has very much embarrassed me in all my plans for them, as in the absence of all official information on the subject I could neither confirm nor deny the rumor. Certain, it is, that the Piutes have been looking for some intelligence from the Department that shall materially effect their condition. While in this restless, uncertain state of expectation, it could hardly be expected they would manifest much interest in my plans for their future. It will be remembered that when in Washington near the close of the Bannock war, I expressed my decided opinion that it would be impossible for the Piutes to return with safety to the Malheur Reservation, knowing something of the feeling of those who had lost relatives or property by them, I remonstrated against their location at this agency as being too near the scene of their

depredations for safety. Subsequent observation has fully confirmed the 476 views ~~of~~ I then expressed, though by ~~confining~~ ^{confining} those at this agency closely within the limits of the reservation they have escaped the hostility I feared.

It would be a great mistake to suppose that time has in any material degree softened the feelings of the people of Eastern Oregon, ~~hoped~~ towards these Indians. There were too many ruined homes, too many wives and children murdered, for the survivors to forgo their vengeance if opportunity offers. Again, many "cattle men" have located near, and are herding their stock on the Reservation, whose removal would be necessary should ~~the~~ the Indians return, thus adding another motive for hatred, and the result would be that no Indian could leave the immediate presence of the military without the risk of being shot down by an unseen foe. Of course this would provoke reprisals and the old story of border warfare with its murdered families and its nameless atrocities would be repeated. From all my years of experience among Indians and my knowledge of frontier character, I protest against any measures looking to ~~to~~ the return of the Piutes to Malheur.

If it is the policy of the department to 477 to concentrate the Indians and to reduce the expense of the service it is difficult to imagine why the Malheur Agency should be reorganized. For over two years it has been practically abandoned and its people assigned to different agencies, with, so far as I know, no expression of dissatisfaction. Those of them located here, would I believe prefer remaining, but the uncertainty as to what are the intentions of the government prevent their taking that interest in carrying out my plans in their behalf that they would were it definitely known that this must be their future home.

My plan would be to permanently locate them on the reservation where they now are, making such transfers that relatives or members

of the same band could not be separated, to allot them a portion of the reservation, to appoint a chief and if necessary a sub agent whose duty would be to look, ~~part~~ particularly after their interest to establish schools, assist them in opening farms for themselves and abandon the Malheur Reservation altogether, distributing the money appropriated for that agency among those where the Indians ~~478 000~~ were located in proportion to numbers.

If as I have been informed, supplies have been ~~recom~~ accumulating at Malheur for the past two years, such as would bear transportation, such as blankets, clothing etc. should be transferred to the agencies where the Indians are and other articles sold in the vicinity. As far as the Piutes located at this agency are concerned, I am convinced their removal would be a great misfortune to them, leaving the feelings of the people of Eastern Oregon entirely out of the question.

All of them who desire to work find constant employment and prompt payment at good wages among our Yakima Indians. Many are thus at all times employed, who have at all time before them examples of what may be accomplished in a few years in the way of good farms, comfortable homes and plenty at all times by members of their own race who a few years ago were as poor as they, and it is impossible to overestimate the importance of these examples to encourage the Piutes to pursue the same course.

It is but simple justice to the Yakimas to say that they manifest every interest in the welfare of their Piute guests 479 and spare no pains to encourage and instruct them. Were it definitely known that the stay of the Piutes was to be permanent my course would be clear and I should immediately proceed to carry out the plan sketched above, allotting to each one as much land as he would be able to cultivate, assisting him to fence, break and seed his land and as soon as possible erect for him a comfortable house.

Sept. 14, 79

Hon. E.A. Hayt, commissioner

Sir:

I have the honor to inform you that notwithstanding the Piute Indians raised more than nine hundred bushels of wheat, it will be necessary for the Department for school, seed and the rations to the Piutes above what they have raised, for us to purchase at least one thousand bushels. The wheat may be obtained here of the Indians, costing sixty two and one-half cents per bushel. Please instruct me to purchase said amount at said price.

Yours very truly, etc. U.S. Indian
James H. Wilbur, /Agent.

Sept. 5, 1879

General O.O. Howard

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Sir:

I have written the commissioner of Indian affairs objecting to the turning over of the prisoners now confined at your place. I voiced the feelings of the Indians of this treaty in relation to these, now here, who are being fed with beef and flour provided by this agency. The Indians of this agency would not be satisfied to have the prisoners brought here. To bring them here is giving a premium for their fighting last summer. Please keep them until I hear from the Department. I am etc, sir,
Your obedient servant, James H. Wilbur, /Indian Agent.
U.S.
Sept. 5th 1879 298

E.A. Hayt

Commissioner:

General Howard informs me he has an order from the War Department to turn over the prisoners now held by him at Ft. Vancouver to this agency! I object in toto. Have written you my objection. Advise me by telegram what is to be done.

(telegram)

James H. Wilbur. agent

Office Yakima Indian Agency, Ft. Simcoe W.T. June 30th, 1879

Hon E.A. Hayt, commissioner:

Sir: I have the honor to submit my report for the month of June. The work of the agency in mills, shops, farms and schools has been quite as prosperous as in the past. An addition has been made to the grist mill. A new run of stones and Smutthe has been purchased and are now at the mill and will soon be adjusted. The Indians have manifested unusual zeal and industry in cutting and hauling saw logs to the steam saw mill.

The Piute Indians added to this agency last winter are working well. We are now in the very busy time of haying and harvesting. Our hay crop indeed our grain was never better nor at p. 235 abundant at this season(sic) The fore part of the month I was very sick for a week but when able to ride started for the Dalles and Portland, Oregon to make purchases for the agency.

I am pleased to say that the Indians of the agency are well disposed toward each other and toward the whites. The rumors of Indian wars have been lost sight of in the prospect of having rail roads through the country.

I am sir, your obedient servant

James H. Wilbur,

U.S. Indian Agent.

Miscellaneous--unfiled

Civ.

Department of the Interior
Office of Indian Affairs
Washington, Nov. 18, 1881

James H. Wilbur,
U.S. Agent,
Yakima Agency, W.T.

Sir:

In answer to your letter of the 27th ultimo, in regard to the mission of Interpreter Chapman, to conduct the Piutes to their old home, you are informed, as indicated in Office telegram of the 31st ultimo, that the action taken in the matter by the military authorities is without the knowledge or consent of this Department, and on reference of the case to the War Department, it appears that the only reason given for the order issued to Chapman was the obsolete permit which Secretary Schurz gave in 1879, to Sarah Winnemucca. It is not the purpose of the Department to have any of these Indians removed to their old home. Malheur has been abandoned as a reservation and they have no such home to go to, and you will give all the Piutes without exception, distinctly to understand that they are to remain permanently at Yakima. Leggins and his followers are included in this, and he must make up his mind to comply with the wishes of the Department and make your reservation his permanent home

Very Respectfully

H. Price

Commissioner

Piute Dave

Miscellaneous --unfiled

United States Indian Service

Yakima Indian Agency, Fort Simcoe, Aug 4th, 1882

Stick Joe interpreter for the Department makes the following statement in relation to Piute Dave now in jail at The Dalles.

Joe says he saw Dave at Rockland about the last of June. That Dave told him he had been to Winnamucca and left 3 weeks before--that he Dave brought a letter from the agent at McDermat to Capt. John Smith Agent at Warm Springs, that he Dave gave the letter to Captain Smith. Smith told Dave to stay two months and he would write to the President and see if he will let your mother & brothers go back with you. Dave was a prisoner at Vancouver with Oits and others; Paddy Oits & Legues say Dave has not been to Winnamucca since he was brought out three years ago last February. Paddy & John say Dave told them he was going to Vancouver to find Chapman and have him, Chapman come up and take the Piutes as he Chapman had agreed--Dave, they say, went to Vancouver and was gone a week and before he returned from Vancouver the Piutes crossed the River and when Dave came back from Vancouver the Police took him and put him into jail at the Dalles.

This is the statement of Stick Joe Paddy & John

James H. Wilbur

U.S. Indian Agent.

Piutes-David Piute

Miscellaneous-unfiled

United States Indian Service

Yakima Indian Agency

Fort Simcoe, W.T. Aug 7th, 1882

Thomas Simpson

Says he was at the Dalles the latter part of June, and saw David Piute, that David came to him and said what is your name? I told him my name is Thomas Simpson. David said are you the man that is looking after the Piutes? Thomas said I am. David said, you have no business in looking after the Piutes, they are not cattle, sheep or hogs they can go where they are a mind to. Then he said he had a letter from Chief Winnemucca. Then Thomas and David went to an office where there was a white man and David gave the white man the letter and the white man read the letter to Thomas Simpson. The letter said I am Winnamucca, I have been to Washington and the Commissioner told me Winnamucca your people may go back. They are to do as they have a mind to do. David said I brought this letter from Winnemucca. I saw Legius/ Said David and told him what Winnemucca wrote--David said now, Legius knows what the mind of the Washington chief is and he can get his people across the river. David said Mr. Wilbur has no business to keep the Piutes on the reservation and you Thomas Simpson have no business to watch them --if they want to go to their country it is not your business nor Mr. Wilbur's to stop them.

This is what David Piute said to me, Thomas Simpson at the Dalles.

Thomas Simpson his

X mark

I certify on honor that this is a true statement of Thomas Simpson

James H. Wilbur

U.S. Indian agent.

8347 Civ

Paiutes

1882

Department of the Interior

Office of Indian Affairs,

Washington, July 1st, 1882

J.H. Wilbur, Esq. U.S. Ind. Agent, Yakima Agency W.T.

Sir:

I enclose herewith extracts from a letter of 25th April last from Governor John B. Neil of Idaho; a copy of the letter therein referred to from Milton Presby, postmaster at Castle Creek, Idaho, and extracts from a report dated August 4, 1881 by this office to the Hon Secty of the Interior, all relating to Piute Indians who are in Bruneau Valley and Owyhee County, Idaho. These will apprise you of the condition of these Indians and of previous action taken to secure their return to the Western Shoshone reservation, or their peaceable settlement over their public lands, both of which efforts have been unsuccessful. I now desire that the effort be made to induce them to locate permanently with the other Piutes on your reservation and to this end I suggest whether it is not practicable for you to send one or two of your most trustworthy Piutes to find these Indians and endeavor to induce them to settle on your reservation, promising them the same benefits accorded to the Piutes who are with you. If practicable you will act upon the suggestion at once, and report your action with such suggestions as you may deem proper.

The agent at Western Shoshone (Duck Valley) agency has been directed to communicate with these Indians and to use every effort to induce them to join your Piutes and has also been advised of this letter to you.

Very respectfully

H. Price

Commissioner

(Stoek)

School has however been opened for the Piute children about 25 of whom have been gathered, and comfortably clad and are now in school. They learn very rapidly and promise to, at least equal the Yakimas in the readiness with which they acquire the rudiments of an English education.

The shops have been employed to their full capacity in repairing wagons, plows and in such other work as was required and the grist mill has been thoroughly overhauled and put in proper condition to do effective work. I am glad to say that the Piutes seem to have recovered their spirits and cheerfulness. Nearly all the able bodied men and many of their women have been steadily at work either for the Department or for such of the Yakimas as may require their services, and I have been enabled to (p 587) very materially reduce the amount of free issues of subsistence to them.

Many controversies and disputes having arisen lately among the Indians living on the Sattas respecting the boundaries of their farms, and the stakes and other evidences of the former survey having disappeared, I purchased for \$50 a surveyor's compass and chain and devoted 12 days to running lines and locating and allotting lands. I had not before realized how strong was the desire of these Indians to have their locations definitely settled and their lines conform to the Govt. survey. After considerable trouble I succeeded in locating the lines of the official survey and from that proceeded to survey and assign to the several Indians tracts of land of different sizes according to the location, capacity of the Indian to cultivate number in family etc. No claim was allotted for more than 200 acres and none for less than 80. No measure that I have adopted of late years has given so (p588) much satisfaction as this and it is my intention to continue the survey and allotments till all who desire have received lands. If this action of the agent could be supplemented by the issue of patents by the govt. the Satisfaction of the Indians

Fort Simcoe, W.T. Sept. 30, 1880

Hon R.E. Trowbridge, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Wash.D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit the following report of operations at this agency for September. The month has been characterized by great activity, especially in farming and building operations, more having been actually accomplished than during any other one month since I have been here. We have put in over 200 acres of wheat and have a force of Piutes cutting wood for winter use, while another party are cutting and hauling saw logs to the steam mill in readiness for the work of another spring.

I have built one good comfortable dwelling house at the agency for employes to replace one of those destroyed by fire in P 585

July while the carpenter with a large force of Indian mechanics has been engaged in building Indian houses of which no less than three besides one large farm house with barn and stable for the farmer in charge of the cattle ranch have been built this month.

There are by no means cheap temporary structures but good, well finished houses that for the purposes intended would be considered first class anywhere. Many of our Indians availing themselves of the privilege secured them by treaty have been away this month to the camas grounds and the mountains gathering roots and berries for winter use. Many however have declined to avail themselves of this right and have remained at home steadily at work fencing in and breaking new ground and generally improving their farms. I have issued over 100 cows and calves to a number of those who are best prepared to care for them and it is my intention some time this fall to make a further issue of from one to two hundred p 586 head. In consequence of the absence of many of the Yakimas the boarding school has not been opened this month.

Malheur Reserve

(Piutes) Camp Harney

House Executive Documents, 1st Session 61st Congress, 1889-90
Vol. 12. Report of the Secretary of the Interior, Vol. 2-1889.
p. 479.

Oregon. Malheur Reserve.

Executive Mansion, March 2, 1889

It is hereby ordered that so much of the Malheur Indian Reservation in the State of Oregon (originally reserved by executive order of September 12, 1872) as has not heretofore been restored to the public domain, the same being situate in fractional sections 7, 8, 17, 18 and 19, township 22, south, range 332, east, Willamette meridian, Oregon, area 317.65 acres and comprising the north half of what is locally known as the old Camp Harney military reservation (announced by executive order of December 5, 1872, which executive order was subsequently canceled by executive order of July 23, 1889 be , and the same is hereby restored to the public domain.

Grover Cleveland

Yakima, Ft. Simcoe, Oct. 30, 1880

Hon R.E. Trowbridge

Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Wash. D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit the following report of operations at this agency for the month of October.

Although there has not been so great activity as characterized last month, the force at the agency has by no means been idle. We have gathered our fall crops including some 1900 bushels of potatoes and kept a large force of Piutes at work making roads, cutting wood etc besides hauling by the Yakimas of some 30 tons Department freight. The number of days work done by the Piutes and paid from annuity funds has been more than 300. This has enabled the greater number to procure comfortable clothing for the winter and they

p. 618

are now in far better condition than ~~ever~~ ever before since they came here.

The school opened with fair prospects of success. Most of the Yakimas are yet engaged in gathering their fall crops, providing wood for the winter and require the services of their older children for the present, so that only the younger have yet been sent to the school. The number now present is about 40, including 15 Piutes, which we expect will be increased to 60 in one or two weeks. This will be as many as can be accommodated at present. The Piutes are greatly interested in the school and anxious to send their children, but believing that the Yakimas are primarily entitled to the school we have not yet felt justified in admitting more than fifteen at present.

The sanitary condition has on the whole been satisfactory. There is at some ~~places~~ anxiety at present regarding the diptheria which has made

its appearance at Oldendale, The Dalles and other places in the vicinity, but as yet no cases have been reported.

p. 618

~~This disposes of the reports of wholesale mortality and (copy)~~
~~bad treatment of~~
 reported on the reservation.

I have taken a census of the Piutes preparatory to the issue of ration tickets for the winter and found the number as follows

At the present count, men	96	96
Women 151, children 157		308
Children then in school		12
Persons known and to be employed by Yakimas		
and not present	22	
Family reported absent fishing	7	
Left the reservation without liberty		
and now at Warm Springs	29	

	474	

While there is believed to be employed by Yakimas at Sattas, Antanum and other places at least 35

35

making a total of 509

The whereabouts of all except the last 35 is definitely and certainly known. Last year when the census was taken Oct. 19th there was present 439. Some 30 were known to be at work at the Steam Mill and from 30 to 45 believed to be employed at different places by the Yakimas so that the actual count is about the same now as then.

619

This disposes of the reports of wholesale mortality and bad treatment of these Indians since they have been on the Yakima reservation.

I am gratified to add that they are cheerful and contented, anxious to be at work and earning something, and ready at all times to perform any service that may be required of them.

(no signature)

Very respectfully. ..U.S. Ind. Agent

A number of the larger boys are working in the various shops as apprentices and the girls are being taught needle work, housekeeping, cooking in the boarding ~~school~~ p. 718 house.

Regular weekly rations of flour, beef and potatoes have been issued to the Piutes and a number of the poorer Yakimas.

This number must now be largely increased. The extraordinary severity of the winter has prevented the usual hunting and those of the Yakimas who had sufficient food provided to supply themselves till spring, have been compelled to divide with others who depended in a large degree upon hunting and with others who have supplies of salmon at the fisheries which they had intended to bring to the agency during the winter so that now nearly the whole population are destitute of subsistence.

The Yakimas claim that they are certainly as much entitled to subsistence now that they are destitute as the Piutes, who, for two years have been subsisted at their expense, and it is difficult to find any answer to the claim other than affirmative.

Very respectfully

Your Obedient Servant

(no signature)

Yakima March 30 (copy) 1881

Hon Thomas McMichol (or al)

Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Wash . D.C.

Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of communication from your office dated March 10th, marked in upper left margin CIV enclosing copy of telegrams from Gen. Wheaton, U.S. A. in reference to the disposition of Piute prisoners now at Vancouver.

In reply I have the honor to say that I am in possession of now information whatever concerning said prisoners. I have no personal preference in the matter but as I understood when IN Washington that all the Piutes now at Warm Springs would be transferred to this agency, would suggest it might be well to bring those at Vancouver also.

James H. Wilbur etc.

Unfiled material Yakima agency

Enumerator's sheet 8

People of the Piute tribe belonging to the Yakima Reservation
enumerated by me on the 19th day of October, 1880, JHF

Commonly known by

Jake Springer

Matilta

No name

Sally

Howlack

Mrs. Hatch

Kelly

Lee Winnemucca

Sam Parish

In Boarding School

14

29 Indians belonging here were absent at the time of the Census.

Also 3 families, 14 in all that could not be seen, making besides some
14 or 15 supposed to be hunting who are not counted as no definite
information could be got.

Total of 96 on this sheet.

Unfiled Material, Yakima Agency

Enumerator's sheet No. 5 10th census of the United States. District No. Piute. People of the Piute tribe belonging to the Yakima Reservation enumerated by me on the 19th day of October 1880, J.H. Fairchild.

Mrs. Johnson	1 woman	2 children	3
Charlie	1 man	1 woman	2
Widow Haley	1 woman	2 children	3
Jerry Beads	2 men	2 women 2xc	5
Daddy	3 men	2 women 2 children	7
Sam Kinney	2 men	2 women 2 children	6
Pzanche	1 man	3 women 3 children	3
Dick	1 man	3 women 3 children	7
Zee Zec	4 men	2 women 1 child	7
Capt. Scott	1 man	2 children	3
Mrs. Pono	2 men	1 woman 2 children	5
Blind Jimmy	3 men	2 women 4 children	9
Jim's Mother	3 women		3
John Wesley	1 man	1 woman 3 children	5
Joe Badger	2 men	3 women 2 children	77

total 77

of the inspector : the spring to make a general distribution of the government herd among them which they declare he positively promised.

Another most unfortunate impression made on them was, that the inspector disapproved of the manner in which the annuity goods have heretofore been distributed as compensation for labor actually performed and during all the past years while they had been performing service under the direction of the agent, the Department intended and supposed that the goods were being gratuitously given to the Indians and that the agent had been paying them cash for their labor.

Consequently I found on my return that where I had left smiles, cheerfulness and good feeling, I was met with averted looks, sullen discontent and a spirit of suspicion that was terribly discouraging. As soon as practicable after I had ascertained the extent of the expectations created among them, I called a council of all the Indians, and explained the course ~~be~~^{been} heretofore pursued which I intended to adhere to p 771

with the reason for the same and pointed out to them the good effects produced in the past. I am glad to say that all with the exception of one or two chronic grumblers, appreciated the reasons for my course heretofore and cheerfully acquiesced in my plans and methods for the future. Still the impression is not wholly eradicated and will doubtless be a source trouble and ~~dis~~content for years.

The work of the agency during the month in addition to the regular shop has been plowing and seeding ~~the~~ ground, repairing fences, etc. We have sown a large amount of wheat, barley and oats and propose to plant an unusually large amount of potatoes, all of which will probably be needed to subsist the Piutes.

The school is in a most flourishing condition, the children happy and contented, notwithstanding their crowded quarters, and making rapid progress.

I have not yet had time to perfect my plan relative to the Piutes. I had a conference with them a few days since and informed them of the decision of the Dept. that they make this Reservation their future home. They appeared to acquiesce readily and as soon as possible I shall personally select lands and locate them permanently.

In conclusion I desire to express my grateful sense of Divine Providence that has returned me in safety to my field of labor, and with profound gratitude for the past and unfaltering trust in the future lean with confidence on the same sustaining and guiding hand

Very respectfully

James H. Wilbur etc.