

PAGEANT

THE FATHER WILBUR STORY

Choir: "Shall We Gather at the River."

Speaker:

The Civil War was flaming across the United States and its far flung Territories when President Lincoln saw fit to place the fate of the Yakima Indian Nation in the hands of a Methodist Missionary named James Wilbur. A New York Circuit Rider, who had come around the Horn the year of the Whitman massacre, Wilbur built many churches and schools in Oregon-including famous Willamette University- before coming to Fort Simcoe as a missionary-teacher. Ousted by the superintendent in charge, Wilbur went in person to Abraham Lincoln and won for himself the appointment of Indian Agent to the Yakimas.

Pantomime:

Wilbur comes on stage with vigor and sits down at desk.
He has papers and pen and writes.

"I promised that I would make this a great self-supporting reservation," Wilbur wrote to the heads of the Indian Department. "Here were fine buildings for the Agency headquarters, for boarding schools and shops. (GESTURES) Game and timber were plentiful in the hills, fish abundant in the rivers and creeks. All about was some of the best pasture and farm land between the Cascades and the Rocky Mountains."

"President Lincoln asked me how I would do this," wrote Wilbur. "The Bible and the Plow must go hand in hand," I told him. (POINTS AT BIBLE AND PLOW) "There will be churches and schools and shops, farms and mills. I will hold Meeting on Sunday and prayer

whenever the Spirit calls. The Indians will have good homes and household goods and rejoice in the fruits of their own labors. Criminals and offenders will be justly punished whether white or Indian. I will have no man among us without principle." The tribal leaders were summoned to the Agency that Wilbur might explain his tremendous plan. Chief Moses, powerful chieftain and ruler of many bands, came from his home across the Columbia in the land of the big Coulee.

CHIEF MOSES COMES ON STAGE. STOPS AND SURVEYS WILBUR AND SURROUNDINGS WITH SLOW DRAMATIC SILENCE. WILBUR RISES FROM CHAIR AND STANDS

A mutual admiration sprang up at once between the two strong men, alike as they were in physical attributes and magnetic leadership.

"I will make you a great power, head of my police force, with all rights and annuities of a head chieftain, if you will bring your people upon the reserve and help me to guide them in the ways of farming and peaceful living," Wilbur told Moses.

WILBUR GOES THROUGH CONSIDERABLE PANTOMIME HERE INDICATING THE HONOR AND GIFTS HE WILL GIVE THE CHIEF-PERHAPS MONEY

"If I do not get my own reservation in the land of the Great Coulee, I will come here with my people," Moses answered him.

"General Howard promised me a reservation there in my homeland where my people wish to remain. You are good man. Always I have friendship with you. I give my word."

MOSES GOES THROUGH SLOW STRONG PANTOMIME INDICATING HIS WISHES.

SHAKES HANDS WITH WILBUR AND MOVES TO FAR SIDE OF STAGE. CHIEF WHITE SWAN COMES IN.

Chief White Swan came in friendship and promised to live near to Fort Simcoe and aid Wilbur in the direction of his people. By the popular vote of his tribesmen he was chosen Head Chieftain of the Yakima Nation.

WILBUR AND WHITE SWAN SHAKE HANDS AFTER A SLOW DRAMATIC APPRAISAL AND THE CHIEF SITS AT WILBUR'S RIGHT HAND

The missionary-agent chose a police force of strong dependable Indians to keep the peace upon the reserve, putting his utmost trust in them and he was not disappointed. It was their duty to apprehend offenders, to hold trials and pass judgment.

INDIAN POLICE COME IN HERE AND TAKE POSITION BEHIND DESK-ONE ON EACH SIDE.

White settlers were coming in to claim the lush grass and virgin farm lands of the Yakima Valley and it was necessary to guard all well the rights and properties of the Indians as well as to keep out traders of ill-repute.

Fort Simcoe became the scene of prodigious activity under the direction of the dynamic missionary. Indian boys and girls learned to read, write and do number work. They studied history, geography and the Bible. The boys learned to mill and farm, to do carpenter work and

make harness. The girls learned to spin, bake and sew.

INDIAN CHILDREN COME ON STAGE WITH THEIR TEACHER AND CARRY THEIR THINGS TO WILBUR WHO PATS THEM ON THEIR HEADS. SLATE, GLOBE, BOOKS, ETC. OTHERS HOLD UP HAND WORK TOOLS, ETC. INDIAN GIRLS IN COSTUME CARRY PRODUCTS. THEY ASSUME PICTURESQUE POSITION ABOUT STAGE.

Mills hummed. Axes rang out in the forests. Houses were built. Plows turned the good rich earth. More and more clamored for admittance to the schools until Wilbur cried out in grief that any need be turned away for lack of space. "We must make teachers to teach others," he said. "We must build more schools."

Churches, schools, houses, barns and granaries sprang up over the reservation and a great prosperity came to the Yakima Nation. Wilbur trained bright young students for the ministry. Happily the Indians sang in their churches. "Shall we Gather at the River" was their favorite hymn, for the mighty Columbia River played a strong part in the traditions and livelihood of the Yakimas.

CHOIR SINGS "SHALL WE GATHER AT THE RIVER" AS WILBUR GOES THROUGH CEREMONY OF INITIATING YOUNG PREACHER

(Children go off state)

PART 11

The state of deep content and industry experienced by the Yakimas was not true of other agencies in the Northwest. Terror and unrest were

rampant as treaties were broken or ignored by the whites. News came to Fort Simcoe of the Custer massacre and the last great uprising of the Sioux.

SCOUT BRINGS NEWS OF CUSTER MASSACRE. SOME CONCERN IS SHOWN BY TALKING AND SHAKING OF HEADS. SCOUT LEAVES AND RETURNS SOON WITH NEWS OF THE NEZ PERCE WAR. THIS TIME MORE AGITATION IS SHOWN

This was followed by word of the Nez Perce war. Gallant Chief Joseph, stripped of his treaty rights and driven from his beautiful Wallawa homeland, led the army north in a running battle of holocaust and bloodshed that ended on the Canadian border. The Bannocks and Paiutes were aroused in sympathy and in resentment at their own mistreatment. War spread across Eastern Oregon. In the Yakima Valley Indians and whites lived side by side in peace and often their blood intermingled in marriage.

Though war flames reached close and their sympathies were strong for their wronged cousins, the Yakimas remained at peace and Wilbur had great faith in their loyalty. His sermons were full of the sins of bloodshed and he filled the days with industry and activity, giving gifts and praise freely to the worthy.

Then came the terrifying news that a cattleman and his young wife, returning from White Bluffs to their home in Yakima City, had been murdered by Indians who had escaped from the gunboats of the soldiers and succeeded in crossing the Columbia River.

SCOUT COMES IN GREAT AGITATION CARRYING SUNBONNET AND HAT OF THE VICTIMS. (WHITES COME) All on stage are conspicuously aroused. WHITES POINT FINGER AT CHIEF MOSES.

White citizens, filled with fear and resentment forget the years of friendship and looked with suspicion toward Chief Moses because he had remained independent of the Reservation. They accused him of harboring and abetting the criminals. Wilbur sent at once for the chieftain who came, stoutly declaring his friendship and innocence.

MOSES COMES ACROSS TO WILBUR WITH OUTSTRETCHED HAND.

"Have I not given you my word? Do you not know that I am friend? Always I hold my people in peace while others fight." Moses told Wilbur patiently. "I do not harbor criminals. They hide in hills. I will help you find them."

"I trust you, my friend," Wilbur answered. "But these settlers are frightened. They say you have many canoes, many strange tribesmen among you, that you prepare for war."

THERE IS CONSIDERABLE PANTOMIME BETWEEN THE TWO DURING THIS CONVERSATION.

"Many come to urge me to make war," Moses explained. "I hold them there in peace until trouble ends. I am friend to you always."

And Wilbur believed the Chieftain and urged the whites to have faith and patience, but the settlers were fearful and hungry for revenge. They siezed the proud chieftain and prepared to hang him on their stout new scaffold. Little did they heed the smallness of their numbers against the overwhelming forces of the Indians. There were no military forces near.

WILBUR INTERVENES. CONSIDERABLE ACTION IN ABOVE PANTOMIME

"Seek you the murderers of your friends," Wilbur told the whites. "but stain not your hands with the blood of an innocent chieftain. Many years will your people live side by side in peace and friendship. Already you are one in the mingling of blood. Cloud not the pages of history with your mis-deeds."

"He is own cousin to Chief Joseph, they cried, "let us hang him now and end this miserable fear and treachery."

"You will not end the trouble," Wilbur pleaded in a powerful voice. "You will bring bloodshed upon you and your children by such un-Christian deed. Here is a mighty chieftain of many tribesmen, coming to us in peace. Murder him and you will have hundreds of avenging Indians coming from the Coulees. Let not the evil thirst of your revenge crowd out Christian charity and the powers of reason."

WILBUR STANDS AND DELIVERS DRAMATIC SERMON. WHITES FINALLY YIELD AND MOVE OFF STATE. INDIAN POLICE WHO STAND BEHIND WILBUR REMOVE ROPES FROM MOSES.

Father Wilbur won at last. Moses was freed from his bonds and taken to the Fort under the protection of his friend.

"You shall go to Washington," Wilbur told Moses. "You will go to the Great White Father in person and declare your innocence and ask for the reservation promised to you. Tell your men to join my trusted Police who will aid the settlers in tracking down the merderers."

THE ABOVE IS ACTED OUT IN PANTOMIME. WILBUR AND MOSES SHAKE HANDS AND MOSES LEAVES FOLLOWED BY THE POLICE.

In time the renegades were apprehended and hanged at Yakima City. Chief Moses was absolved of all complicity by the heads at Washington, D.C. The soldiers were victorious and peace reigned again over the great valley.

CHOIR.

PART 111

MESSENGER COMES ON STAGE FOLLOWED BY BEDRAGGLED PAIUTE

Then came the Paiute prisoners, sick, starving and cold--over five hundred in number, driven by the soldiers from Fort Harney, Up the hills into Canyon City, down the John Day, across the Columbia and the Simcoe Mountains they had traveled. A blizzard beat down from the Cascades as the weary band arrived. Many had died along the way. Through some gross mis-management of affairs, Agent Wilbur was given no notice of their coming. The Yakimas rose in protest at this invasion of their homelands, a violation of treaty rights.

CHIEF WHITE SWAN PROTESTS ON BEHALF OF HIS PEOPLE. ALL SHOW
DISAPPROVAL

But again their powerful leader rose to meet the new challenge.

"We will help them," he said. "As Christians we will help our suffering brothers. We will feed them and give them medicine. We will furnish them lumber for shelter. When they are strong again they can work and pay us back the loans."

IN ABOVE SCENE WILBUR PLEADS AND POINTS AT THE VARIOUS PRODUCTS ON
STAGE. THE CHILDREN RISE AT LENGTH AND HOLD OUT GIFTS TO PAIUTES
WHO TAKES THEM AND LEAVES STAGE.

Speaker: Wilbur built homes, schools and church for the Paiutes and laid out and fenced fertile farmland. Continuous rumors that they would be returned to their former homes kept the newcomers in a state of unrest. Some ran away but many stayed to raise good crops and to profit by the magnanimity of the missionary-agent.

PART IV

WILBUR AT DESK SHOWING GREAT WEARINESS BUT ATTEMPTING TO WRITE.

The time came when "Father" Wilbur grew old and weary. In the year of 1882, with almost feeble hand he penned his last report to Washington, D.C. The need for rest was an overpowering thing in him and he asked for others to carry on the work he had so well begun.

"Should a stranger visit our Reservation," wrote Wilbur, "he would see many neat and comfortable farm houses, handsomely painted; well filled

barns and granaries, sheds with good wagons, handsome carriages, reapers and mowers, and improved farm machinery. He would see well-tilled fields, substantial fences, and all the evidence of comfortable competence.

"He would see the sewing machine, the clock on the mantle, the newspaper, the magazines and the Bible on the center table. He would find the Indian women fair cooks and competent housekeepers. This country is awakening to a new life. The whistle of locomotives is penetrating the valleys, the pick and shovel of the grader is leveling the hill and the ravine.

"The Bible and the plow must go hand in hand. Let education and the knowledge to labor be built on a foundation of religious principle and the Indian boy grows up not only capable of caring for himself but of benefitting and blessing his people. I have always believed in the manhood and capacity of the Indians. I have seen the satisfaction with which they gathered the fruits of their labors. For almost twenty years I have resided upon this Reservation. I have seen the little boys grow up into men. I have married them and baptized their children. I have rejoiced as I saw them grow up useful and respected, firmly fixed in moral and religious truth, the hope and support of their people.

"But now my work here is done and other hands must take the burden. If the foundations I have fixed and labor shall remain, if the seed which I have sown, shall continue to grow and spread and bear fruit, I shall feel that my labor has not been in vain."

Wilbur finishes letter WEARILY, BLOTS, FOLDS AND PUTS IN ENVELOPE.
RISES AND HOLDS HANDS OVER GROUP IN SILENT PRAYER AND WALKS SLOWLY OFF STAGE.
ALL WEEP.

Speaker reads POEM

"FATHER" WILBUR
by Thelma Kimmel

Close on the blood of wars he came
Giant among men
Carrying no weapon but The Book,
The plow, and Sargeant's reader.
He came among them, the beaten and the hungry,
Yet the proud
And gave them back the strength they's lost
In greater force, with meaning strong
And understanding stretching beyond the plain-
The forest.

He showed them way to live-
To blend the old with new-To till the field-
To reap the harvest-No longer servant
To all Nature's whims.
He gave them God
In song from out their souls-
In harmony that drumbeat had not known.

"Be proud-Be men," he told them.
"The whistle of the iron monster shrieks.
"Be not afraid-You walk with God-
"And now you walk with men of other breed."

He gave them patience when intruders bold
Rubbed the flint to set new wars aflame.
He met in friendship proud Chief Moses' hand
And showed the whites they'd lost the Leader's Way.

He gave them keys for opening many doors,
Then left-old body craving cot of rest-
The wear of early circuit years took toll.
They cried-"Gone." He will not come again."

A voice came softly-yet well heard
"Be not afraid-with you I left the keys.
"Walk tall with pride in things of soul and earth
"and well you'll hold your place with God and man."

THOSE ON STAGE LIFT HEADS IN HOPE AND RISE-GOING OFF AS CHOIR
SINGS "Shall We Gather at the River."

end.