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EARLY ADMINISTRATION
of the
FLATHEAD INDIAN RESERVATION
1855 to 1893

By

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B. A. Ohio State University, 1961

Presented in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

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INTRODUCTION

Lewis and Clark were the first historically documented white contact with the Flatheads. On September 4, 1805, the expedition moved into the upper Bitterroot Valley of what is now western Montana. The explorers reported meeting a band of the "...Eoote-lash-Schute (Oat-la-shoot)..." This band they called Tushepan. In another entry the explorers recorded their name as "...flat heads...".¹ According to Flathead legend, Lewis and Clark were the first white men the tribe encountered.²

Father De Smet of the Society of Jesus arrived in Montana in 1840. De Smet met with the Flatheads and decided to build a mission in the Bitterroot Valley. He returned the following year and founded St. Mary's Mission on the 24th. of September, 1841.³

¹Reuben Gold Thwaites (ed.), Original Journals of Lewis and Clark Expedition 1804-1806 (Vol. 3, N. Y., 1905), 54-55.

²O. D. Wheeler, Wonderland, 1900 (St. Paul, 1900, 43-45. Note: An interesting item about the Lewis and Clark Expedition was reported by the Flathead Chief, Victor. "One of the white Chiefs (Captain Clark) had an Indian wife. She had a son now among us who we call _____ (not legible). He is a good man." U. S. Dept. of Interior, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, Montana Superintendency, 1864-1880. (Hereafter referred to as USDIA). Letter from Victor to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 3, 1869.

³Reuben Gold Thwaites (Ed.), Early Western Travels 1748-1846 (Vol. 27, Cleveland, 1906). De Smet's Letters and Sketches, 1841-1842, 281-297.

During the next twelve years, white contacts became more frequent. The mission flourished for a time and more traders passed through the valley. In 1850 the mission was sold to Major John Owen who established his famous fort on the site. Four years later, the Jesuits founded St. Ignatius Mission forty-two miles north of present Missoula, Montana. Six miles north of the new mission, the Hudson Bay Company's Fort Connah was in its ninth year of existence.

Isaac I. Stevens, the first Governor and Indian Superintendent for Washington Territory, arrived in Flathead country in 1853. From the autumn of 1853 through the spring of 1854, his survey party conducted an extensive exploration of the region. Their expeditions operated from base camp "Cantonment Stevens" in the Bitterroot Valley.

Some of the activity in the Flathead area resulted from national interests, political dissention, and the rapid growth of America. By 1855, America was in the midst of the political and cultural unrest that resulted in the Civil War. National interests were so involved elsewhere that most people were not interested in the far-western Indians. Few, except those directly involved, had the time or the inclination to become interested in the future of the wild tribes of the western plains and mountains. A logical solution seemed to be the confinement of the savages on reservations as quickly as possible.

Governor Stevens had been given three specific tasks. After surveying a possible railroad route to the Pacific and organizing his territorial government, he was to make treaties with all northwestern tribes. Stevens acted swiftly as Governor. By December 4, 1854, he had the Washington territorial legislature in its second session. Stevens made his Governor's Address to the law-makers and then embarked upon his treaty making assignment.

Within three months, Stevens held five major councils with western Washington tribes, made four treaties and established nine reservations. In the treaties he committed the United States to supplying the tribes with annuities, ended slavery and war among the coastal tribes, and proclaimed liquor to be illegal on the reservations.

On May 29, 1855, the first Walla Walla Conference opened. Despite much delay and arguing on the part of the Indians, Stevens was able to negotiate a treaty with the Nez Perce, Yakima, Cayuse, Walla Walla and Umatilla tribes. His next step was to hold council with the Flathead, Pend d'Oreille and Kootenai nations. Stevens met with the three tribes a short distance below the point where the Bitterroot River joined the Clark's Fork. Thomas Adams, Special Agent had conducted extensive preliminary councils with the tribes before Stevens arrived. In spite of Adams' efforts, the Council Grove meeting lasted eight days. Chief Victor represented the Flatheads; Alexander, the Upper Pend d'Oreilles

and Michel, the Kootenais. Many sub chiefs and prominent men of the tribes also attended. Big Canoe, a Pend d'Oreille Chief, played a very important part in the negotiations.

Considerable disagreement occurred over determination of the reservation site. Stevens offered the Indians a choice. He would accept either the upper Bitterroot Valley or the Jocko Valley and Horse Plains area as the site for the proposed reservation. Alexander and Michel favored the latter site as it was their home area. Victor refused to leave the Bitterroot.

Negotiations became deadlocked. Father Adrian Hoecken, of St. Ignatius Mission, was summoned to help solve the problem. On the eighth day, Victor indicated that he would sign but the Flatheads would remain in the Bitterroot Valley until the President could visit them and decide which area was best. Stevens accepted the proposal as did Alexander and Michel.

On July 16, 1855, representatives of the three tribes put their marks on the treaty. From that time on, they, and the fragments of other tribes living on the reservation, were officially known as the Confederated Flathead Tribes. The reserve was called The Flathead Reservation.

The Flathead Reservation, located north of Clark Fork River, was striking for its contrasts. High mountains, rolling grass-covered hills and large valleys were numerous as were majestic stands of timber, sparkling streams and beautiful

lakes. From 1855 to 1909, the reservation consisted of approximately 1,943 square miles.⁴ Its greatest length was about eighty miles and its maximum width was forty miles. Mountains formed natural boundaries on three sides. In the north, the boundary was established on approximately 47°54' north latitude. This line was determined by locating a point halfway up the west shore of Flathead Lake. The north boundary was the least rugged and offered several routes of travel toward Canada.

The two main exits from the reservation were in the south. A few miles above the southwestern corner, the Flathead River flowed out of the reservation, providing an important access to what is now Washington state. Along the southern boundary, a very narrow canyon penetrated the Squaw Range. At the time of the treaty, it was known as the Coriacan Defile. Later, residents of Montana named it O'Keefe or Evaro Canyon. It connected the reservation's Jocko Valley with the large Clark's Fork or Missoula Valley.⁵

⁴Many official documents set the official acreage at 1,243,969 acres. According to the map used at the reservation in 1967, the entire eastern boundary and approximately two-sevenths of the southern boundary were never surveyed. U. S. Document: Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs, Forestry and Grazing Division, Map of Former Flathead Indian Reservation, Montana, 1939.

⁵For a complete description of the reservation and the Bitterroot Valley see: Hugh J. Biggar, *The Development of the Lower Flathead Valley* (M. A. Thesis, U. of Mont., 1951) 1-17. Also see Appendix A.

Anthropologists believe that the Confederated tribes moved into the area during the 17th and 18th centuries and drove out or exterminated the more primitive people of the area.

The Pend d'Oreille, or Kalispel, comprised the largest proportion of Indian population on the reservation. Their former home seems to have been the Sand Point area of present Idaho.

Before 1800, the Kootenai were at war with the Salish tribes. The former's area of activity was small, consisting of a portion of southeastern British Columbia plus the northern Idaho and northwestern Montana region. Tobacco Plains on the Kootenai River became their main cultural center. About 1845, a small band settled along the southwestern shore of Flathead Lake.⁶

The Flathead Tribe spoke a Salish dialect. Some anthropologists believe that they broke away from their relatives of the Klamath region of present Oregon and migrated to Montana.⁷ Although their home was in the Bitterroot Valley, they hunted buffalo on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountain during several months of each year. Central Montana's Judith Basin was their favorite hunting ground.

⁶Carling Malouf, "Early Kuteñai History," The Montana Magazine of History, Vol. II, No. 1 (Jan. 1952), 5-7.

⁷Harry Holbert Turney-High, "The Flathead Indians of Montana", Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association, Vol. 39, No. 4, Part 2 (1937), 11-12.

Ross Cox reported in his book, Adventures on the Columbia River, that the Flatheads had fewer faults than any other tribe. He wrote that they were "...Brave in field, amenable to their chiefs, cleanly in habits, ...enemies to falsehood."⁸ Cox also reported that when the Flatheads took a prisoner they became as barbarous and fiendish as any northern tribe. This lust for warfare and torture prompted the Jesuits to stop accompanying the Flatheads on their hunts.

Their tribe was never very large in numbers. By the time the white settlers began entering the Bitterroot Valley, the Blackfeet and other Plains tribes had severely reduced the population of the Flathead nation.

By definition of the 1855 Treaty, the upper Bitterroot Valley began at the junction of Lolo Creek and the Bitterroot River, and extended up the valley to its southernmost point. This was a distance of about eighty miles. On the west the Bitterroot Range created a formidable barrier to easy westward travel. The lower, more hospitable Sapphire Range formed the eastern boundary of the valley and joined the Bitterroot Mountains in the south. From Lolo Creek northward, the lower Valley widened to join the valley of the Clark's Fork. At the extreme eastern end, the Clark's Fork entered this wide valley at Hell Gate, a narrow defile in the mountain. Hell

⁸L.B. Palladino, Indian and White in the Northwest, Lancaster, Pa. (1922), 4.

Gate was the route for hunting and war parties moving to and from the Great Plains. Later it became the main road between the early Montana settlements and the Columbia River posts.⁹

All of Stevens' treaties contained similar terms. Confinement to a relatively small area did not particularly disturb the West Coast tribes. Small pox and other diseases had reduced them to a small fraction of their previous population. Closer contact with whites had not only resulted in a great degree of degeneracy and loss of culture, but also gave the Indians years of experience in dealing with their conquerors. Coastal and western river tribes were naturally water oriented. Most food came from the sea and the fresh-water rivers. Travel was primarily by canoe and usually for short distances.

In contrast to the coastal culture, the interior tribes relied upon the horse for transportation. Large tracts of grazing land were needed. The cultures of the Indians of the mountains and plains were violence-oriented. Life required the hunting and killing of game under conditions that were often dangerous. Large areas were necessary to support small numbers of Indians. Contacts with other tribes, who were competing for the same food sources, resulted in a

⁹Palladino went into great detail about how Hell Gate obtained its name. He claimed it meant "waters of ill omen." See: L.B. Palladino, Indian and White in the Northwest, Lancaster, Pa., (1922) 357-359.

necessary social emphasis on the warrior. In contrast with most coast tribes, some of the inland peoples put a very great value on keeping verbal agreements, personal honor, integrity and respect for the individual.

These interior tribal characteristics, combined with the American political situation gave little chance of success for the newly signed treaties.

In the following paper, the writer will present an administrative history of the first thirty-seven years of the Flathead Reservation. The writer's thesis is based upon his conviction that local, territorial and national attitudes and conditions, plus natural environment, created a combination of obstacles that made it almost impossible for the Council Grove Treaty to succeed. In a sense, however, it was successful. Peace was maintained. One dominant factor made this possible. The stubborn determination of the chiefs to keep peace with whites saved the Council Grove Treaty from the bloody failure of Stevens' other inland treaties.

Some of the Missionaries, agents and white neighbors certainly deserve some credit. Agents Owen and Ronan made great contributions in helping the tribes. Owen was Agent too early in the reservation's history to preserve the peace permanently. Ronan arrived on the scene too late. The personalities and strong wills of the deceased Victor and the then-living Charlo, Arlee and Eneas controlled the destiny of the Confederated Tribes when Sitting Bull and Joseph urged

them to rise up and destroy their white oppressors. It was these leaders, not the agents, who kept the treaty intact and prevented the war that so many of their race desired.

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST AGENTS

1855 - 1865

Dr. R. H. Lansdale had assisted Stevens with various Indian problems in 1854. Stevens ordered him to choose between the Bitterroot and Flathead valleys for the most favorable site for a reservation. Lansdale selected the Flathead Valley. The presence of the Jesuit missionaries at St. Ignatius was so influential that Lansdale thought it was important to settle the Confederated Tribes near the hard-working priests. His report helped determine the treaty terms locating the reservation boundary.

During the first year after the treaty, Dr. Lansdale, as Flathead Agent, and his associates, constructed the first agency at the mouth of the Jocko River. Four houses were erected. They were made of logs with dirt and sod roofs. The total cost was \$368.¹

In April, 1856, Lansdale journeyed to the Mormon settlements at Salt Lake. On the return journey he stopped at Fort Hall. While at the fort, he met a young married couple

¹George F. Weisel, Men and Trade on the Northwest Frontier (Missoula, 1955), 111.

who were refugees from the Mormon settlements. The couple, Henry G. Miller and his wife, were hired to take care of the agency.²

Lansdale and his assistants arrived at Fort Owen in the Bitterroot Valley in June. The Millers went to the Jocko Agency alone. Lansdale left Ft. Owen a few days after his arrival and did not return until July 31, 1856. Before the winter snows began, Lansdale left Flathead country again. He spent the next year on the west coast.³ During the winter of 1856-1857, the Millers, who were merely caretakers, unofficially ran the agency.

All that was known of Major John Owen's past was that he had been born in Pennsylvania on June 27, 1818. Owen apparently traveled west with Lt. Col. Wm. W. Loring's expedition from Ft. Leavenworth to Oregon City. During the winter of 1849-1850, the military force camped near Ft. Hall. Owen apparently enjoyed the position of Camp Sutler. In the spring he disassociated himself from the army and began trading with the Indians and settlers. Major Owen and his brother arrived in the Flathead country in 1850. The title of Major probably referred to his civilian position as head

²Michael A. Leeson (Ed.), History of Montana 1739-1885 (Chicago, 1885), 842. Mrs. Miller was the first white woman to live in the Bitterroot-Flathead area.

³Weisel, 111.

of Ft. Owen. He purchased the original St. Mary's Mission from the Jesuits and constructed a crude fort with an upright log palisade. Over a period of years, the log structures were replaced by sturdy adobe buildings and walls.⁴

Owen became Special Agent to the Flathead Nation in 1856. He also administered to the Upper Pend d'Oreille, mountain Snakes and the northern Bannacks. Owen located the agency at his fort in the upper Bitterroot Valley.

The Major's early years in the valley had earned him the trust and respect of the Indians. As a result of war and hunting excursions, members of many tribes stopped to trade at the fort. Even small parties of Blackfeet, arch-enemies of the Flathead, camped near Fort Owen for trade purposes.

1856 was a difficult year for inhabitants of the northern Rocky Mountain region. Winter had been severe and long. Failure of spring rains to materialize resulted in a prolonged drought. On the night of July 14, a heavy frost destroyed most of Owen's vegetable crop. What transpired at the Jocky Agency during 1856 was not recorded.

Owen's entry in his journal for Monday, January 26, 1857, recorded his first reference to his position as agent. The entry contained unfavorable comments, some of which would be repeated many times during the remainder of the nineteenth century. Owen wrote:

⁴Weisel, XXI.

I find the Agency in a Miserable condition Merely thatched Cabins--I have been having another fixed to day [sic] for Mr. Miller & his Wife to live in for the Winter--It is to be hoped that our very liberal Govt. will Make a better display in these parts in the midst of her red children before long--I find here some poor destitute Kootenay's that belong to the Agency absolute objects of Charity....⁵

During his journey to the Jocko Agency, Owen had camped overnight along the Clark Fork River. His exposure to the winter weather resulted in a severe attack of rheumatism in his knees. On February 2, Owen dispatched as a single rider, the first Jocko Agency express. His destination was Fort Colville. By then, Owen's condition had worsened. The missionaries put him in their hospital at St. Ignatius, where he remained under their care for three weeks.

The express returned on the tenth. The Courier had lost his way in the confusing jumble of mountain valleys. Owen hired Abram Finlay to guide the express, and it set out again on the 12th of February.⁶

The express was very important to Owen. He was deeply concerned about the Presidential election of 1856. Owen

⁵Seymour Dunbar & Paul C. Phillips (ed.), The Journals and Letters of Major John Owen, Pioneer of the Northwest: 1850-1871 (N.Y., 1927), II, 154.

⁶There were many Finlays residing on the reservation site in 1967. They were the descendents of Jocko Finlay. Jocko had been one of the first trappers in the area. The agency, valley and river were named after him. See: J.F. McAlear, The Fabulous Flatheads, (Polson, Mont., 1962), 14-15.

feared that Fremont would be elected. His regard for Governor Stevens was very high and a victory by the Republican Party would result in Stevens being replaced by a representative of an unsympathetic administration. After weeks of anxiety over the safety of the overdue express, Owen was relieved when, on the sixth of April, the messengers arrived at his fort. Buchanan had won the election and Stevens remained Governor of the territory.

Again Owen's crops were struck by a severe frost, this time on the night of June 27. Each such setback was a serious one to the whites and the neighboring Indians. Owen's farm was a major source of food.

In July, he returned to the Jocko Agency. He found the Millers and their help in a miserable state. Mosquitoes were so bad that all were suffering severely. On July 14, they held a meeting. Owen reported the results in his journal:

After talking with Miller about the Agency & things in general I came to the Conclusion to remove the property to My fort as the Men say they will stay in No such hole any longer.⁷

On July 19, 1857, Dr. Lansdale arrived at Fort Owen. He and Owen left that evening for the Jocko Agency. Five days later, a public sale of government property took place and the

⁷Dunbar & Phillips, I, 172.

Jocko Agency ceased to exist. Lansdale returned to the west coast and terminated his services as Flathead Agent.⁸

During 1856, Owen had recorded his concern for the starving Mormons of the Lemhi Valley, two hundred miles to the south. By 1857, this concern had turned to apprehension. Relations between the United States and the Latter-Day Saints worsened. The winter of 1857-58 brought open hostility between the "Gentiles" and the Mormons. Settlers fled before the anticipated onslaught from Utah. Each succeeding day, the threat of raids seemed more imminent. In his journal entry for January 14, 1858, Major Owen noted that he had carefully invoiced his and the Government's property and had forwarded a copy to his superiors. He expected a raid in the immediate future.⁹

Mormon raids were not the only serious threat to Fort Owen. During the first three months of 1858, sickness threatened those at the Agency. An epidemic of small-pox killed several of the valley residents. Owen and his employees lessened the disease's effects by vaccinating as many as possible. Then, a severe form of influenza attained epidemic proportions and more fatalities resulted.

As agent, Major Owen's responsibilities gradually increased. Besides administering to the Confederated Tribes

⁸Weisel, 112.

⁹Dunbar & Phillips, I, 189.

and the Salmon River Indians, he acquired the responsibility of helping keep the peace west of the mountains. Maintenance of peace among the Confederated Tribes hinged upon the prevention of a full scale war in the west. 1858 was a year of great unrest among the Columbia Basin tribes. By May, Owen was in the Colville area of Washington.

Owen's part in the preliminary negotiations before Step-toe's defeat helped prevent a more serious disaster. He counceled with various chiefs and urged peace. Once hostiles stole his party's horses and they were forced to walk to safety. Conditions became so incendiary that Owen joined a Hudson's Bay peace delegation and thus traveled under the protection of the British flag.¹⁰

On November 17, 1858, Owen assumed the responsibilities of the Cayuse District of the Columbia Basin. As part of a program to better relations between the whites and the restless tribes, Agent Owen escorted a delegation of Chiefs to Oregon City. Here he encountered his first serious conflict with the Federal Government. During May and June of 1859, a verbal feud developed between Owen and General W.S. Harney. The General ordered Owen to stay away from the Chiefs. He refused on the basis that the safety of the delegation was his responsibility. Owen made the return journey with the Chief

¹⁰For an account of Washington's Indian wars see: Edgar I. Stewart, Washington Northwest Frontier (N.Y., 1957), II, 1-23.

John Owen faithfully kept a daily record of his activities until rigors of travel or a major crisis occurred. During such times, he often neglected making entries. Later, he would begin once more without a comment about what had transpired between entries. As agent and trader, he traveled extensively and large blocks of time were not accounted for.

By October, 1859, Major Owen was once again among the Flatheads. He reported great unrest among his Indians. White settlers were moving into the Bitterroot Valley. Treaty promises had not been kept. He observed that the Government had to honor its treaties or the Indians would very likely make war.¹¹

Owen had employed H. M. Chase as a Special Agent to go to the Jocko Valley and pacify the Confederated Tribes. Rumors of dissatisfaction on the reservation continued to arrive at the fort. By the 12th of October, Owen felt justified in taking action. He sent a polite but authoritative letter to Father Monatry, Superior of St. Ignatius Mission. The main point of the message cautioned the Reverend Father not to council the Indians about U.S.-Tribal relations.¹² On the same day, Owen wrote a letter to Agent Chase, ordering

¹¹Dunbar & Phillips, II. Letter from Agent Owen to H. M. Chase, Oct. 10, 1859, 195-6.

¹²Ibid. 196.

him to go to St. Ignatius and investigate the charges made against Father Monatry.

Among those indicating dissatisfaction of the priest's actions, was an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company. Agent Michael Ogden charged that Father Monatry had interfered with his rights as an employee of the British firm. Although Owen had granted the agent permission, Father Monatry prevented Ogden from wintering in the Jocko Valley. Ogden further complained that a cabin belonging to a Lewis Brown had been destroyed by Chief Alexander. It was claimed that the priest had prejudiced the Chief against Brown. Other reports suggested that Father Monatry had told the Indians untruths about the treaty terms.

Owen urged Agent Chase to use caution in his investigation. He suggested that since the priest came from Switzerland, he possibly did not clearly understand the situation. Owen concluded his letter with a clear statement of his authority:

You will Say to the Revd Father that it is My Wish & intention to remove from the reservation when once permanently fixed all persons obnoxious to the Indians as well as those who in my Estimation Exercise a deleterious influence by Example or otherwise.¹³

No further comments concerning the problem were recorded.

¹³Dunbar & Phillips, II. Owen to Chase, Oct. 12, 1859, 197.

Early in 1860, one of Owen's former employees and personal friend, Sam Martin, felt the authority of the Flathead Agent. Martin had developed a small, irregular business of selling whiskey to white settlers. He sold a large quantity of spirits to a disreputable individual and, according to Owen, with the realization that some of it would fall into the hands of Indians. Owen formally reminded his friend by letter that according to the Non-Intercourse Laws of the United States, any person helping Indians to obtain alcoholic beverages would be subject to forfeiture of all his property. One half of the property would go to the informer and the other half to the Federal Government. The Agent reminded his friend of his power to expel anyone from the reservation and stated he would carry out such action if any additional whiskey sales were made.¹⁴

1860 became another year of unrest among the tribes. During the spring, all tribes were engaged in a flurry of horse stealing. Even the usually friendly Pend d'Oreille, Nez Perce, and Flathead braves were stealing from white settlers. Owen lost one of his horses. Although he assumed a Snake Indian had stolen it, he had no proof to substantiate his belief.

In an attempt to calm the Confederated Tribes, Owen scouted the reservation for a new agency site. By March

¹⁴Dunbar & Phillips, II, 201. Owen to Martin, Feb. 28, 1860.

of 1860, he had decided to locate the agency in the upper Jocko Valley. The new location was more pleasant than Lansdale's old agency. Although far from the majority of the reservation Indians, it was closer to Evaro Pass and the white settlers to the south. The Millers returned that autumn and once again took up official residence in the Jocko Valley.

Owen's immediate superior also realized the seriousness of the Montana situation. Although handicapped by lack of funds, Superintendent Geary requested that Owen immediately purchase supplies for the Confederated Tribes. If some indication could be made to the Chiefs that the United States planned to honor the Council Grove Treaty, they would very likely prevent their young men from making further depredations against their white neighbors. Owen spent approximately \$1000. of his own funds to carry out Geary's request.¹⁵

On June 30, Owen sent a written protest to Superintendent Geary. Annuities had finally arrived at Fort Owen. In his "Annual Report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs," the agent had informed his superiors that the shawls received as

¹⁵ Dunbar & Phillips, II, 212-213. Owen to E.R. Geary, June 14, 1860. Although the reservation was then a part of the Washington Territory, Geary, for a short time, remained responsible for the Indians in western Montana. The reservation and Bitterroot Valley were originally located in what was called the Oregon country. In 1853, Washington Territory was created and the Confederated Tribes remained under this political division until 1863. See: Oscar Osburn Winther, The Great Northwest (N.Y., 1952), 242-3.

annuity goods were useless. The Confederated Tribes did not use them. Even the blankets were a bad color and disliked by the Indians. He also commented on the "...Tons of Rice Hard bread...."¹⁶ The tribes had their own preferences for food and refused to try the hard loaves. Owen further stated that it would have been far more practical to have sent needed livestock.

The Flathead agent's report was not put into the Annual Report for 1860. When Owen received his official bound copy, he sent a letter reminding the Commissioner of the omission.¹⁷

During the early years of the Flathead Reservation, the main freight and transportation route had been by Missouri steamboat from St. Louis to Fort Benton. From Fort Benton, supplies were often hauled by contract freighters to the reservation. In 1860, a large shipment of annuity goods destined for the Confederated Tribes arrived at Fort Benton. The official in charge of Indian Affairs at the terminal point was Agent Alfred J. Vaughn.

Owen sent wagons and pack animals from the reservation to haul the supplies to the agency. Vaughn heard of Owen's act and sent word that he would not release the goods unless directed to do so by his superiors. Owen sent a letter to

¹⁶Dunbar & Phillips, II, 214. Owen to Supt. Geary, June 30, 1866.

¹⁷Dunbar & Phillips, II, 214. Owen to Supt. Geary, June 30, 1866.

Vaughn explaining that the annuity goods were for his agency. Again the supply wagons were turned back by the Fort Benton agent.

Owen became furious. He clearly indicated his state of mind in letters to Vaughn and his superiors. Finally, Owen requested that the goods not be sent at all. He argued that it would soon be too late in the season for freight hauls over the mountains. The annuities were useless items and since the Indians would soon leave on their winter hunt, it would be too late in the season for a distribution of annuities. For some unexplained reason, Vaughn released the supplies and they arrived at the Agency on November 7.

Owen informed his superiors of his displeasure. He had written letters to Vaughn and the Indian Commissioner indicating that he had favored the purchase of cattle to make up the balance of the first \$36,000 annuity payment. Cattle prices were low. Such a purchase would provide an incentive for the Indians to remain on the reserves and become ranchers. The Commissioner denied that the letters had been received. Instead of cattle, the unwanted goods had been sent.

After twice rejecting Owen's attempts to collect the supplies, Vaughn contracted Messrs. P. Choteau, Jr. and Company to haul the freight to the agency. The charge was ten cents a pound. Owen reminded his superiors that Vaughn's actions had cost the Flathead Reservation \$10,000. He did not have funds to pay for the unnecessary expense.

The blankets received were very inferior, "Shawls & flannels are Miserably flimsy things No Earthly use...." Cotton handkerchiefs had cost the Confederated Tribes \$1.50 a dozen. Owen reported that he could have purchased a better quality product in Portland for fifty cents less on the dozen. Most of the coffee had suffered water damage. The invoice indicated a shortage of 175 yards of cloth. He ended his complaint by stating, "...I could have purchased the Same bill in Portland for one third less money."¹⁸

Most of the annuity goods were distributed in the Bitter-root and on the reservation. Before the Kootenai could be reached, they had left for buffalo country. Owen reported to Superintendent Geary that he had sold some of the Kootenai's share of supplies. He needed the money to pay agency employees He added that it was hoped that better items would replace what he had sold.¹⁹

In 1860, the annual Fall migration to the buffalo country resulted in increased tribal warfare. Owen's concern grew as reports came into his fort. Chief Alexander's band had been attacked by a war party of Assinaboins on the eastern slopes of the Rockies. Seventeen Pend d'Oreille had been killed. Owen suggested to his superiors that a council with

¹⁸Dunbar & Phillips, II, 218-231.

¹⁹Ibid: 232. Owen to Supt. Geary, Dec. 1, 1860.

the tribes could possibly avert a major war. A reply to his letter was not found in Owen's papers.²⁰ Such a council did not occur.

Agent Owen recorded very little of what transpired in 1861. White activity increased. The famous Mullan Road had been completed in August of 1860. Mullan and his workers remained in the field for two years, making necessary repairs and improvements. The road, passing through Clark Fork Valley, provided settlers and government parties with a direct route between Fort Benton on the Missouri River and Walla Walla in Washington.

On March 2, 1861, Indian Commissioner Greenwood appointed Major Owen as an Agent of the Washington Territory. That same spring, Henry Miller and his wife quit the Jocko Agency for the last time.

Father Monatry again gave Owen cause for complaint. According to the agent, the Reverend Father charged exorbitant prices for supplies and services. Owen ordered a cessation of trade relations with St. Ignatius Mission.

Although at times his journal entries indicated cynicism relative to the Indian character, Owen did not tolerate injustices. One of the Jocko Agency employees took an Indian woman for his companion. When the agent became aware of the situation, he ordered the employee either to leave the reservation or return the woman to her family.

²⁰Dunbar & Phillips, II, 232-4.

Such acts earned him the trust and respect of his Indian associates. Although Owen held the position of an official of the United States Government, the responsibility did not take precedence over his loyalty to those who deserved his friendship. His contemporaries knew him as a man who would keep his word.

In 1861, the annual annuities failed to arrive. Owen assured the Chiefs that the supplies would be sent in 1862. Failure to send the promised annuities resulted in considerable suffering among the Confederated Tribes. The winter of 1861-1862 was one of the worst in history. Temperatures were low. Heavy snows made travel difficult. In the Jocko Valley, snow lay twenty-eight inches deep on level land. Livestock weakened and died of hunger.

In February, a party of Snake and Bannack attacked a small camp of Flatheads in the narrows of Hell Gate Canyon. Horses were stolen, lodges destroyed and two Flatheads were killed. Reports from the plains country verified rumors that the Idaho tribes were conducting large scale raids.

A small band of Snakes were in winter camp just a short distance from Fort Owen. The agent warned the head man that the Flatheads would very likely retaliate. He urged the chief to leave the Bitterroot Valley. On February 20, the Flatheads struck and two of the Snakes were killed.

During the winter, Major Owen's brother returned from the east with new employees. Work began on agency improvements in the Jocko Valley.

Heavy snows prevented the usual March return of the Flat-head Tribe from buffalo country. When they finally crossed the mountains in May, they reported severe losses in horses and some warriors were dead.

The Confederated Tribes were angered at the treachery of their former allies, the Bannack. A war party of twelve Kootenai warriors raided into Bannack country. Disgruntled with the few scalps taken, they stole and killed a horse belonging to a miner on the Salmon River. Moving swiftly, the whites overtook and captured the entire party. Eleven were kept as hostages. One was sent to the reservation to obtain payment for the horse. If the Indian did not return with the money or goods equal to the value of the horse, the miners would hang the prisoners.

At first Owen planned to go to the Salmon River to settle the dispute but problems with the Buchanan Administration caused him to send a Mr. Chatfield and an Indian guide. Before they arrived, the crisis had ceased to exist. Two captives had escaped and the miners, tiring of guarding the remaining Kootenais, turned them loose.

On July 17, 1862, Agent Owen sent a letter to Superintendent B. F. Kendall informing his superior of his intention to resign as soon as possible. Owen cited his reason as personal embarrassment resulting from the failure of the United States Government to send overdue salaries and annuities.²¹

²¹Dunbar & Phillips, II, 276-7.

Nine days later, Owen received orders from Superintendent C. H. Hale of the Office of Indian Affairs, Olympia, Washington. He was instructed immediately to turn over all Government property to the new agent, Charles Hutchins.²²

Owen left on July 23 for the west coast. He made the trip to Portland by the 16th of August. The government owed him for fourteen months back-pay, plus travel expenses. Once again Owen neglected to record what transpired.

Q. A. Brooks returned with Owen to his fort on October 3 for the purpose of closing the former agent's accounts and to turn the agency over to Hutchins. Owen's resignation had been official by the 17th of September. Although no longer agent, he sent a letter to the Jocko Agency ordering M. W. Tipton, then in charge, to retain his position even if Hutchins should arrive. Only Owen was to relieve him.

Hutchins did not arrive at the Jocko Agency until November 21. The next day, he arrived at Fort Owen. After two days of conferences, he returned to the Jocko Agency. From that time on, he ran the reservation. Officially his duties began on the first day of December.²³

²²Kendall had been removed from office. Hale was a prominent politician put into office by the Lincoln administration. See: H.H. Bancroft, The Works of Herbert Howe Bancroft, (San Francisco, 1890), XXXI, 53, 73, 215.

²³Sunday, December 14, 1862, Owen made an entry in his journal concerning the former companions of his government service days. Isaac I. Stevens and Phil Kearney had been killed in the Civil War. See: Dunbar & Phillips, I, 262.

On March 3, 1863, President Lincoln signed an Organic Act reducing Washington Territory to the size of the present state. One result of the territorial boundary manipulations was the creation of Idaho Territory. In 1863, this encompassed the present states of Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana.

Government records of correspondence from the Jocko Agency began in 1864. The new agent's activities were not preserved. Some time between December, 1862 and early 1864, Charles Hutchins journeyed to Washington, D.C. He left New York on the 13th of April, 1864 on the return trip. A letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs indicated that he had returned to the reservation by October 13, 1864.

Some financial confusion existed. Agent Hutchins reminded the Commissioner that the late Governor W. H. Wallace of Idaho Territory had given Hutchins a check amounting to \$10,500 for the benefit of the Flathead Nation. The agent had delivered the check to the Commissioner. Hutchins reported that there were no outstanding liabilities against the reservation except salaries due the head chiefs of the Confederated Tribes.

There had been a shortage of cattle for both work and food supply. Since a physician had not been employed, the agent had purchased cattle with funds designated for a doctor's salary. He hastened to add that if his action met with disfavor, the cattle would be sold in the spring at a profit.

Hutchins also requested funds for the half-year ending December 31, 1864. He asked that it be issued through

Governor Sidney C. Edgerton on the agent's credit in New York. Hutchins further suggested that the Chiefs and interpreters be paid in coin. He was due \$1500 in pay for calendar year 1864. Because of depreciation in U.S. currency in the west, Hutchins requested a 33% increase in employees pay.²⁴

Since the Sioux were disrupting mail services to the east, Hutchins sent his express to Lewiston, Idaho Territory. He noted that within a few weeks, snow would close that route.

Hutchins found himself agent of an unimproved agency. His first official acts necessitated his obtaining permission and funds to develop the agency. The sawmill was inadequate. Mill equipment continually broke down because of heavy use. Such a circular saw system required a skilled sawyer. None could be employed for the low wages which the government authorized. It took three men a whole day to dispose of 1500 feet of logs. Hutchins recommended purchase of a new "sash" mill that did the same work in ten hours with just one man. He also asked for the purchase of a grist mill.²⁵

By May, 1865, his mill plans were proceeding with some difficulty. It was scheduled for completion by early August.

²⁴U. S. Dept. of Interior, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, Montana Superintendency, 1864-1880. Letter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs from Agent Hutchins, Oct. 13, 1864. (Hereafter Identified as USDIA).

²⁵USDIA, Hutchins to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Oct. 22, 1864.

Hutchins' idea of a new sawmill met with criticism from the Commissioner. The agency sawyer left the reservation for nearby gold strikes. Despite the setbacks, both mills were operating by the last of September. The little grist mill received its power from the water wheel of the sawmill. Maximum production resulted in the grinding of ten bushels of wheat each hour.

Annuities continued to be a major cause for worry. In October, 1864, Hutchins requested that the 1865 annuities be sent at once. He offered the use of agency teams to transport the supplies from Fort Benton. It was suggested that farm machinery be included as no practical way existed to harvest the grain crops. Hutchins' request resulted from the late arrival of the 1864 supplies. Although due in August, they did not arrive until the 28th of October.

From May until November, the Flathead Agent received no message from Washington, D.C. When the mail finally arrived, it brought a reprimand from his superior. On November 18, Agent Hutchins sent a polite, yet indignant answer. Hutchins demanded that Commissioner W. P. Dole immediately explain the phrase "...reasons for this extraordinary proceeding on your part...."²⁶ He reminded Dole that permission to make necessary

²⁶USDIA, Hutchins to Commissioner W. P. Dole, Nov. 18, 1864. Hutchins was quoting from a letter he had received from Commissioner Dole.

purchases such as medicine, material and tools had been granted by the Commissioner at his residence in Washington, D.C. Governor Wallace had been present and could verify Hutchins' statements. The agent concluded the letter by reminding Dole that he had always obeyed Government rules and policies. Hutchins hoped the change in heart had been due to clerical "enthusiasm."²⁷

Agency supplies and annuities were in such great need that Sidney Edgerton, First Governor of the newly organized Montana Territory and Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the territory, sent a letter to the Commissioner asking that one half of the Flathead appropriation for 1865 be sent immediately to the Jocko Agency.

Hutchins became the second of many Flathead agents to fall into political or departmental disfavor. On September 22, President Johnson signed his approval to the appointment of Augustus H. Chapman as agent to the Flathead Reservation. Charles Hutchins had been removed from office.²⁸

²⁷USDIA, Hutchins to Dole, Nov. 18, 1864.

²⁸Ibid: George O. Whiting, Acting Chief Clerk, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Sept. 23, 1865.

CHAPTER II

THE JOHNSON YEARS

1865-1869

As the 1860's progressed, responsibilities of the territorial governors, who were also Superintendents of Indian Affairs, increased. A territorial governor also became the overseer of reservations and agents. Financial actions and correspondence between agents and the Superintendent of Indian Affairs were channeled through the governor's office. He was expected to inspect reservations, negotiate treaties and file periodic reports to the Commissioner. Since additional help became necessary, the position of Special Agent assumed the responsibilities of an aide to the governor. Some special agents became roving investigators who evaluated the activities of reservation agents.

On July 12, 1864, President Lincoln appointed O. D. Barrett as Special Agent to the Montana Territory.¹ The history of Barrett's brief career as a government official became an excellent example of the complications and confusion such a position sometimes created. How much power a special

¹U.S. Dept. of Interior, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, Montana Superintendency, 1864-1880 (Hereafter referred to as USDIA), O.D. Barrett to Commissioner W. P. Dole, July 13, 1864.

had, and to whom he was responsible, were at first not clearly defined. Vast distances and poor communications made the situation more unsatisfactory. Often, as in Barrett's case, the reservation agent and, more important, the Indians suffered.

On December 24, 1864, Sidney Edgerton, Governor and Indian Superintendent for Montana Territory wrote a letter to Commissioner W. P. Dole, in which he referred to a recent letter from Dole. Dole's letter had questioned the behavior of Montana agents Hutchins and Barrett, and had reprimanded Edgerton for not promptly posting bond as Indian Superintendent.

Edgerton's reply was not friendly. He informed Dole that his bond had been delayed because the Commissioner's Office had neglected to send the proper form. The Governor stated that he could not answer the Commissioner's questions about Hutchins' behavior and honesty as he had been unable to investigate. There was no mail to the Jocko Agency and he, Edgerton, did not have the time to make the trip to the reservation. Special Agent Barrett had been hired for such cases but he had not arrived as expected. Edgerton concluded that since the Commissioner had already questioned Barrett's behavior and character, it seemed strange that the Special Agent had been hired.²

Agent Barrett's journey from the United States took an

²USDIA, Gov. Edgerton to Comm. Dole, Dec. 24, 1864.

unusually long time. His activities during the autumn, winter and spring were unknown to Indian Department officials. Barrett finally arrived in Salt Lake City on May 6, 1865. He contacted O. H. Irish, Superintendent of the Utah Territory. Following orders he had received by telegram, Irish gave Barrett \$250 for expenses. On May 17, Barrett borrowed an additional \$50 from the Superintendent. Indian supplies for western Montana were being held up, due to unpaid freight charges. Barrett paid the bill and took charge of the Montana supplies.

Governor Edgerton's assistant arrived in Virginia City, Montana's capital, on June 1. Barrett reported to Edgerton and turned over "...one broken down Mule and two blankets...."³ Edgerton criticized Barrett for having so little equipment. He ordered Barrett to get settled and report back. By July 9, the Governor sent Barrett a note ordering him to report immediately. Barrett did not obey. On the seventh of August, Edgerton fired the Special Agent and requested a final report of his expenses. Three days later, Barrett replied to his dismissal. He refused to accept Edgerton's right to fire him. In Edgerton's report to Commissioner Dole, he quoted the laws authorizing a Territorial Superintendent to take such action. Edgerton reported that he did not pay Barrett because funds were not available for that purpose.⁴

³USDIA, Edgerton to Dole, Aug. 16, 1865.

⁴USDIA, Edgerton to Dole, Aug. 16, 1865.

Barrett's refusal to accept any authority less than Commissioner Dole's resulted in an illegal sale of government property. Around October 1, Barrett sold between forty and fifty pairs of blankets. Then he left for the east via the Yellowstone River. More property remained unaccounted for. An investigation inconclusively determined that the missing items were in Salt Lake City.⁵

Commissioner Dole's and Governor Edgerton's concern for conditions on the Flathead Reservation resulted from conflicting reports and rumors. Barrett's failure to assume his responsibilities resulted in the delay of an official investigation.

Agustus Chapman's first weeks in office indicated that he would be a good agent to the Confederated Tribes. He arrived at the Jocko Agency on March 1, 1866. His first letter urged that former Agent Hutchins' requests for supplies and equipment be filled. Chapman reminded the Commissioner of the high prices in Montana and of the ten per-cent discount on the value of greenbacks.

Additional support for the removed Agent Hutchins' recommendations came from William McCall, Clerk to the Secretary

⁵ USDIA, D.H. Hopkins, Private Secy to Acting Gov. Meagher M.T., to R. B. Van Valkenburgh, Acting Comm. I.A., 1865. Barrett returned to the United States and went to Washington, D.C. When an investigation of his activities began, he managed to delay the inquiry by leaving the capital for a month. On January 27, 1866, he finally submitted a financial statement on his western trip. His claims were not accepted.

of Idaho.⁶ McCall forwarded Chapman's letter to the newly appointed commissioner, Cooley, with his own comment that he had been expecting such reports and recommended immediate action as Chapman requested.

Chapman had compiled a seemingly thorough financial report of conditions on the reservation. Back pay for employees, money due the chiefs, the cost of necessary building repairs, and travel expenses totaled \$13,634.40.⁷ The agent needed the money to pay authorized expenses and keep the agency in working condition.

Chapman blamed the situation on the neglect of the Indians by former agents. He stated that the chiefs were very dissatisfied. The tribes seemed to be good prospects for becoming farmers. He suggested that the Superintendent visit the reservation to verify his evaluation.

Chapman's reports on the physical condition of the reservation indicated that the new agent was very efficient. Within two months, he claimed he had prepared fencing for 100 acres of fields and pastures, planted 15 acres of wheat and twenty acres of oats, and had prepared ditches for irrigation. Early potatoes and other vegetables were growing in the garden. Lumber had been cut to complete the barn started by Owen in 1862.

⁶USDIA, Edgerton to Supt. I.A. Cooley, Jan. 24, 1866. Jurisdiction over the Flathead Reservation was, for a brief time (1865-1866), transferred from Montana Supt. to the Idaho Supt. The exact dates were not recorded in the documents.

⁷USDIA, Chapman to Comm. of I.A., Apr. 20, 1866.

There were some problems that remained unresolved. Chapman failed to secure a physician. All doctors in the territory were family men and refused the agency position unless subsistence was provided. The new agent reminded the Commissioner that although the mill-dam had cost the government a great deal of money, sand instead of gravel had been used in the foundation and the dam kept washing out.⁸

In November, Chapman obtained written support for his proposed plans from Montana Territory's newly appointed Governor and Indian Superintendent, Green Clay Smith.⁹ Governor Smith reported great dissatisfaction among the Confederated Tribes. He reminded Commissioner Cooley that eight years had passed since the treaty had been ratified and none of the promised Indian houses and farms had been developed. Smith also opposed the issuance of any arms and ammunition to Montana tribes. He urged the Commissioner to send farm implements to speed up the transition from warrior to farmer.

Chapman's reports seemed sincere and indicative of a job well done. Yet, by the end of October, the Flathead Agent's actions were more than just suspect. Each lengthy financial report, although seemingly accurate, resulted in the Agent acquiring more funds and equipment. Earlier that year, he

⁸USDIA, Chapman to Comm. I.A., May 1, 1866.

⁹Gov. Edgerton returned to the east in ~~the~~ summer of 1864. Thomas F. Meagher, Territorial Secy., assumed the duties of Governor until Green Clay Smith arrived in October, 1866. George W. Fuller, A History of the Pacific Northwest, (N.Y., 1931), 296-297.

had asked for six months' appropriations at a time. He rationalized that it took a month to travel to the Superintendent's office. If issued in the usual quarterly manner, Chapman would spend four months of each year away from the reservation.¹⁰

Although equipment had been sent to the agency on October 5, Chapman reported the reservation had but one plow and at least three more were needed. The agent indicated that the agency also needed a new saw, new water wheel, a stock pen and major repairs on the sawmill. He added that the agency lost ten cents on the greenbacks in Montana and about thirty cents on the dollar in San Francisco, so more money would be necessary to make essential purchases. Citizens in Montana were reluctant to accept bank drafts on the U.S. Treasury in San Francisco. He requested that he be issued a check book with an account in St. Louis or New York.¹¹

Chapman sent another letter on October 28. He reported that when he first arrived at the Jocko Agency, all records and receipts had been removed. Except for Major Owen's records at Fort Owen, none were available.¹²

The seeming sincerity of Chapman, early support for the agent from his immediate superiors, and lack of information

¹⁰USDIA, Chapman to Comm. I.A., April 20, 1866.

¹¹USDIA, Chapman to Comm. Cooley, Oct. 5, 1866.

¹²USDIA, Chapman to Comm. I.A., Oct. 28, 1866.

on former financial transactions combined to offer the agent an opportunity to swindle the Federal Government. One final condition assured him of success. There remained considerable doubt about former Agent Hutchins' integrity.

Chapman had reported that it had been fortunate that he arrived at the Jocko Agency when he did. Hutchins had discharged the agency employees just before his arrival and had agreed to pay them in government property. Chapman charged that Hutchins attempted to sell the agency stock and property with the intention of leaving the reservation in charge of the new surgeon. According to Chapman, further investigation supposedly proved that Hutchins had sold much of the flour ground at the agency. Chapman accused him of feeding agency oats to his own livestock and neglecting the government animals. Equipment, such as saddles, were reportedly not to be found on the reservation.¹³

On November 9, 1866, President Johnson appointed John W. Wells to succeed Chapman as Flathead Agent.

During the winter of 1866-1867, Governor Smith was in Washington, D.C. In his absence, General Meagher once again became Acting-Governor. Meagher's private secretary was A. H. Barrett. On March 2, Meagher appointed his secretary as Special Agent and ordered him to take over the Jocko Agency. Deputy United States Marshall Neil Howie accompanied Barrett

¹³USDIA, Chapman to Comm., Apr. 20, 1866.

on the difficult winter journey to the reservation.

Meagher's drastic decision to take over the reservation and place Agent Chapman under Federal arrest resulted from the action of A.J.E. Luning. In January, Luning, the agency wagon and plowmaker, sent a letter to Acting-Governor Meagher. Luning reported that upon hearing plans for his removal, Chapman had acted poorly. Chapman sold as much government property as possible and threatened to keep government money for his back-pay. Luning asked that Meagher send a special agent to take over the reservation.¹⁴ Dr. James Dunlevy and Joseph E. Davidson, Agency Carpenter, wrote to Meagher early in February. They had heard of the anticipated arrival of law officers and testified that conditions on the reservation were very bad. They urged immediate action, since Chapman was planning a major theft of government property.¹⁵

Dunlevy sent a letter to Agent Wells, delayed en route from Oregon, asking him to proceed to the reservation, as conditions were critical. Most employees were starving and the Indians

...embittered...You will find him (and I shall use no gentle term) to be an unprincipled scoundrel without regard for his word or honor and which opinion you will find confirmed by every body [sic] you inquire of.¹⁶

¹⁴USDIA, A.J.E. Luning to Meagher, Jan. 27, 1867.

¹⁵USDIA, Dunlevy to Meagher, Feb. 4, 1867.

¹⁶USDIA, Dunlevy to Wells, March 25, 1867.

Chapman had been arrested on the 14th of April and the trial began in Missoula on the following day. Wells arrived at the agency on April 15.

The Federal Government presented twenty-one witnesses. The testimony against Chapman charged him with varied irregularities. Most indicated that the replaced agent had sold government property to various individuals. Among items sold were horses, food, lumber, iron from the blacksmith shop, and chinaware.

Baptiste Eneas, the Kootenai Chief, testified that Chapman tried to charge him for reservation oats. Eneas had traded a saddle to Chapman for a horse. The horse had been obtained by Chapman in a previous trade involving a government horse. Once Chapman had offered to pay Eneas if he would prospect for gold for the agent. Just two days before his arrest, Chapman had ordered the Kootenai Chief off the reservation.

Clerks from various stores reported that when Chapman made purchases, he had the clerks sign a blank voucher so that he, Chapman, could fill in the amount later.

Mr. Dunlevy offered some of the most incriminating evidence. In the fall of 1866, annuity goods arrived.

Chapman one night about 12 o'clock, remove [sic] some thirty Pairs of Blankets from the pile of annuity goods and secrets them in drawers and other places, Leaving the Chiefs of the Pen D'Oreille tribe to go without their quota...17

¹⁷ USDIA, Affidavit of James Dunlevy, April, 1867.

Dunlevy reported that large quantities of sugar, coffee and tobacco were also stolen, and that Chapman sold the tobacco to agency employees and Indians. Once he traded agency blankets for a horse and, another time, he offered carbines for Indian horses. Indians were often turned away without obtaining reservation food. Chapman made them pay for food with animal skins.

The doctor's testimony continued with a description of Chapman's actions when he heard of his pending dismissal. He told Dunlevy, "Let us steal all we can."¹⁸ At 2 A.M., Chapman filled a large chest with silverware, brass locks and other valuables. When the work-day began, he ordered all hands, except his brother-in-law, out to work in the woods. The two men loaded the agency wagon with the chest and government provisions. The brother-in-law drove the government property to Hell Gate for shipment to Fort Benton. In Missoula, he heard of the imminent investigation, so he returned the government property to the agency.

Doctor Dunlevy reported on Chapman's reaction to a chief's illness:

On my arrival at the Agency - Alexander, the head Chief of the Pen D'Oreilles was sick with the Pleurisy, while compounding some medicines for him, Col. Chapman approached me and suggested that I should give him something

¹⁸Ibid.

that would kill him, saying that he was a damned Meddlesome Indian.¹⁹

A. H. Emanuel carried mail from Missoula to Walla Walla. Since the Jocko Agency was a station, Emanuel often stayed in the valley. Horses were kept at the agency. Mail carriers were to get their meals furnished and their horses fed. Emanuel agreed with Chapman to pay seven cents a pound for oats and seventy-five cents a meal. Later, Chapman wouldn't keep his word. Emanuel was billed for 1299½ pounds of oats at ten cents a pound. The price of a meal remained at seventy-five cents. Emanuel testified that one traveler was charged \$4.50 for two meals, a night's lodging and oats for his horse.²⁰

Other witnesses swore that Chapman kept a bar at the agency and sold drinks to visitors. A clerk for the firm of Bonner and Welch testified that items such as personal clothing and whiskey were included in government purchases. Other testimony further emphasized how dishonest Chapman had become.

During December of 1866, the weather became so bad that all travel ceased. One pack train, consisting of more than sixty horses stopped on the reservation. Chapman found out about the horses and charged the owner \$2.50 a head for

¹⁹USDIA, Affidavit of James Dunlevy, April, 1867.

²⁰USDIA, Affidavit of A. H. Emanuel, April, 1867.

grazing rights. The agent paid a herder a dollar a head to keep the horses in the area and kept the remaining sum.

George Craft was fifty-two years of age. Because he was crippled, Craft was unable to hold an ordinary job. In 1864, he established a ferry on the Flathead River. A year later, Agent Hutchins advised him to move closer to the main east-west trail. Craft claimed that he carried Indians across the river free; white traffic was sufficient enough to provide the ferryman with a comfortable income. When Chapman became agent, he notified Craft that he would have to leave the reservation within two weeks. Craft accused Chapman of planning to have two friends operate the ferry for the agent. The ferry was fifty miles from the agency and the physically handicapped Craft did not have a horse. In desperation, he promised to give John B. Switzler two-thirds interest in the business if he would go to the Agency and negotiate with Chapman. Before Switzler returned, Chapman sent a second letter stating that Craft's time was up. Craft sold the remaining third to Samuel Dusey for \$275. Craft appeared in court with the two letters as evidence.²¹

Despite overwhelming evidence against Chapman, he was released, pending action by the Federal Government. By July 5, the former agent was at his home in Charleston, Illinois.

²¹ USDIA, Affidavit of George Craft, April, 1867.

Chapman saw an opportunity to strike back at General Meagher. He sent a letter filled with accusations to the new Indian Commissioner, A.G. Taylor.²² Chapman wrote that he had traveled through Indian country from the Flathead Agency to Fort Benton. He claimed he had been in camps of ten different tribes. In the entire journey overland and then by boat to St. Louis, he had not encountered a single hostile Indian. Chapman reported that no one seemed concerned about an Indian threat. He continued:

Yet Governor Meaghers Indian War in Montana is the biggest humbug of the age got up to advance his political interest and to enable a lot of Businessmen...to make a big raid on the U S Treasury.... Genl. Meagher told those under his command in Genl Order that they shall have all the property they captured [underlining is Chapman's]...²³

Chapman's defensive letters were impressive. There were enough truthful statements in them to remind the Indian Commissioner of Meagher's opposition to the Johnson administration. Chapman's request for a re-investigation of his papers may have resulted in a different decision in a Republican atmosphere. A retrial did not occur, and an investigation was delayed for several years. That summer, his main foe, General Meagher, fell off a steamboat near Fort Benton and drowned.

²²USDIA, Chapman to Comm., July 5, 1867.

²³USDIA, Chapman to Comm. Taylor, 3 letters, all dated July 5, 1867.

The only later references to Chapman's trial were two letters; one written by A. H. Barrett and a supporting letter by Governor Smith. Barrett had not been paid for his services. Barrett's letter to Commissioner Taylor reminded the Commissioner that he had been refused payment because vouchers had not been attached to the claim. Barrett stated that Governor Smith had lost them. He explained that a letter from the deceased General Meagher was on file in the Commissioner's office. It would prove that Barrett had been authorized to carry out the assignment.

Barrett's trip to the Jocko Valley, the trial, and the return trip had taken two months. The journey from Montana's new capital, Helena, to the reservation had been extremely difficult. Snow had fallen to a depth of two to four feet. Much of the time, the temperature hovered between -20° to -40° . During the journey, Barrett had purchased two horses and one had to be abandoned. The Special Agent became badly frozen and sustained permanent damage to his extremities. He wrote the Commissioner that he would never make such a journey again.

Governor Smith recommended that Barrett and Deputy Marshall Biedler go to Washington and collect their pay. Smith told them it was common practice to add the expense of such a trip to their fees. At the suggestion of Smith, each man claimed \$1000 for their services. Smith's letter to Commissioner Taylor verified Barrett's statement and vouched

for his good character.²⁴

John W. Wells, the Flathead Reservations' new agent, possessed a completely different personality than any of his predecessors. He attempted to be thorough in all official acts. Three days after his appointment, the new agent sent a letter reminding the Commissioner that certain items that were included in the 1855 Treaty had not been paid to the Confederated Tribes during the years 1860, 1861 and 1862.²⁵

By January, 1867, Wells had plunged into the affairs of the Indian Bureau with considerable enthusiasm. While in Portland, he checked agency records of the period when the reservation was still under the direct control of west coast officials. Wells wrote to the Commissioner that \$19,000 had been omitted from the Flathead annuities and expenses for fiscal year 1861. He requested that the sum be sent in 1867 and that it be used for the purchase of sheep and cattle.

Wells also reported that while traveling by ship from San Francisco, he had heard reports of unreceived annuities to the Idaho tribes and of unpaid vouchers claimed against the Flathead Reservation. He asked that Portland's U.S. Treasury Office be his base for funds and that they be paid

²⁴USDIA, Barrett to Comm. Taylor, March 6, 1868. Gov. Smith to Taylor, March 30, 1868. Most vouchers and action on claims were sent to the Auditor's Office. The final action on many claims such as Barrett's were not among the Commissioner's papers.

²⁵USDIA, Wells to Comm. I.A., Nov. 12, 1866.

six months at a time. The new agent also nominated a friend for the position of Special Agent.

Wells' journey from Ft. Walla Walla to the agency took fifty-five days. Nine days out of Walla Walla, the first winter storm of the journey struck. Wells reported that the temperature fell from 50^o to -20^o in one night. During the last day of the trip, Wells and his guide dug their way through drifts and arrived at the Agency quite exhausted. Wells wrote:

Tired, nearly starved and frozen, and expecting welcome at the Agency this evening, as stated, to find a state of things which after 55 days of suffering nearly froze me over with horror.²⁶

Only three employees were left at the agency. They had no tea, coffee, bacon, lard or butter. Many items at the agency were worthless. Wells wrote that forty pounds of sugar was "...Dirty and Black."²⁷ Wells sent an employee to Missoula for food. He and the new doctor examined the medical facilities at the agency. Many of the drugs were worthless or diluted beyond any medical value. All instruments were unusable except for a set of damaged amputation instruments. Wells wrote for new medicines, equipment and funds to construct a doctor's office, a storeroom and a hospital room. He stated that a doctor was useless without

²⁶USDIA, Wells to Comm. I.A., Apr. 15, 1867.

²⁷USDIA, Wells to Comm. I.A., Apr. 22, 1867.

such necessities. Many of the Indians were in need of medical help.

One of Wells' major problems was to calm the anxieties of the reservation employees. In September, 1866, Chapman had approximately \$3900 on hand. He did not pay the agency help. Wells estimated that back pay due employees and former employees amounted to \$4,252.29.²⁸ The new agent reminded the Commissioner that he, Wells, had received no correspondence from the Indian Bureau since his appointment in November. The last paragraph reminded the Commissioner that Secretary of the Interior Browning and other prominent Washington politicians were personal friends of Wells.

By the time Wells had the Jocko Agency in fairly good working condition, white encroachment on Flathead lands in the upper Bitterroot had become a major problem. Complaints of horse-stealing and other deprivations were reported to the agent.

Early in May, Wells journeyed to Fort Owen and announced that he desired a business council. Chief Victor had a large tent erected. Approximately one hundred individuals crowded into the large shelter. For two days a harmonious council took place. The Flathead chiefs brought up the topics of removal to the Jocko Valley and white claims of deprivations. Although no solutions were attained, Wells considered the

²⁸Ibid: Apr. 20, 1867.

council to be very successful.²⁹

A minor crisis interrupted Wells' work at the agency. On their return from their winter hunt east of the mountains, the Spokanes traveled through the Flathead Reservation. Severe winter weather had resulted in the loss of many horses. Some of the Indians were very poor. During the hunt, the Spokanes stole several horses belonging to the powerful Blackfeet. In retaliation, the Blackfeet killed two Spokanes, including a chief, and made off with 160 horses. The shortage of horses resulted in thefts as the Spokanes traveled through white settlements.

When they arrived at Missoula, Chief Gary was arrested. C. P. Higgins managed his release and sent him to the reservation. A large number of whites followed Gary and demanded the return of fifty horses and two mules. Wells was unable to locate them. He thought they were hidden in a canyon on the reservation.³⁰

Wells severely criticized the Indian practice of hunting in buffalo country. He claimed that Indian abuses on their way to and from the hunt spread terror among the white settlements. He suggested that he and other officials go to Washington Territory and stop the migrations. The Lower Pend d'Oreilles, Colville, Spokane and other tribes should have been

²⁹USDIA, Wells to Comm. I. A., June 14, 1867.

³⁰USDIA, Wells to Comm. I.A., May 3, 1867.

put on a reservation containing suitable farm land. If the government had given each family a cow, and each band a satisfactory number of sheep and hogs, Wells was convinced the tribes would have settled down.

Spokane Gary's sojourn through the reservation unnerved Agent Wells. In the same letter that he wrote of Gary's arrest, he asked for protection. His list of desired firearms included Henry rifles and a howitzer. The guns were to be used to protect the agency and settlers. His letter indicated that Wells anticipated serious trouble when the autumn migration to buffalo country began.³¹

A few days later, Wells requested permission to withhold ammunition from the Confederated Tribes. He reasoned that some guns issued to his Indians would invariably fall into the hands of marauding hostiles. The agent did not trust the young braves on the reservation. It was reported that Indian deprivations were occurring all over the area. The Gallatin Valley, in southwestern Montana seemed in immediate danger and Blackfeet were threatening the Flathead Reservation. The requested firearms were needed at once.³²

During the early summer of 1867, crickets and grasshoppers entirely destroyed the crops of the Bitterroot farmers. In his usual flamboyant eloquence, Wells dramatized the situation. His 1867 Annual Report read more like

³¹USDIA, Wells to Comm. I.A., May 3, 1867.

³²USDIA, Wells to Comm. I.A., May 12, 1867.

an adventure story than an official paper.

The Flatheads were truly faced with famine. They had promised to quit the hunt, but threat of starvation forced them to resort to former ways. Father Joseph Giorda, at St. Mary's Mission, reported that the situation was critical.³³

Wells requested permission to purchase 1,500 bushels of wheat for the Flatheads. The agency farm had twenty-five acres of wheat, twenty-five of oats and almost all types of vegetables

...the entire fruits of which, I will devote to the benefit of the interesting people under my charge,...³⁴

A later report of a prairie fire that nearly destroyed the agency was filled with suspense and excitement.

Although apprehensive of an Indian attack, Wells was a stern disciplinarian. Whiskey sales to Indians had long been a major problem for Flathead agents. Wells decided to resolve the situation. By summer, he had established a detective system which resulted in the arrest of two offenders. One man, a half-breed, was put in irons. A full-blood Indian received a flogging. Wells reported to Governor Smith:

I will keep your Excellency advised of the progress of this case; as it is only a thread

³³St. Mary's Mission had been re-established in 1866. See: Seymour Dunbar & Paul C. Phillips (ed.), The Journals and Letters of Major John Owen, Pioneer of the Northwest 1850-1871 (N.Y., 1927), II, 35.

³⁴USDIA, Wells to Commissioner, June 27, 1867.

of the mysterious network of forbidden traffic which has lain, in a hidden coil, around the Flathead Reservation for many years, but which until recently had not assumed such alarming proportions!³⁵

Political opposition had been building up against Agent Wells. In August, Judge Rand of Missoula had been attacked by two drunken Flatheads. The unfortunate incident contributed to the removal of Wells.

Wells' troubles became a public issue shortly after his business council in the Bitterroot Valley. The June 15 editor of the Rocky Mountain Gazette of Helena questioned the agent's motives.³⁶ On July 8, Wells mailed the July 2, 1867 edition of the Tri-Weekly Post to the Commissioner. The newspaper, circulated in Virginia City and Helena, ridiculed the Bitterroot Conference. It claimed that Wells was incapable of performing his duties and was unable to get along with agency help. It further charged that Wells drank excessively and acted insanely from time to time. The agent reported that Judge Pomeroy of Missoula had wanted to fill the vacancy caused by Chapman's removal and was responsible for the article.³⁷ Wells testified that Pomeroy caused trouble between whites and Indians who had lived peacefully together in the Bitterroot. Territorial newspapers were also poisoning

³⁵USDIA, Wells to Smith, Aug. 29, 1867.

³⁶USDIA, Wells to Comm. I.A., June 27, 1867.

³⁷Ibid.

the relationship.

Wells was convinced that Victor and Adolphe would move to the Jocko Valley if the President would request it. For two years, the Flatheads had killed cattle belonging to whites. Wells felt they were frightened of being punished. He requested that chiefs and headmen of the Confederated Tribes be permitted to visit the President and Secretary of the Interior.³⁸

On August 10, the Montana Post printed the following article:

Matters at the Agency are in a most beautiful state of confusion. The General Superintendent and physician have left; having had enough of it. The place is represented to be a perfect Babel; that the buildings are fast going to destruction; that the principal crops will be almost entirely lost for want of proper attention; and the Indians are very much dissatisfied.

Union

Missoula July 25, 1867.³⁹

Wells reported that Pomeroy used the pen-name, "Union," to avoid detection.

The Wells-Pomeroy feud reached a climax with a letter to the Indian Commissioner from Senator Cole of California. Cole charged that Wells was unfit to hold office. The Senator testified that Wells drank excessively and did not

³⁸USDIA, Wells to Comm. I.A., Aug. 4, 1867.

³⁹The Montana Post, Virginia City Mont.: Page 4, Column 4, Vol. 3, No. 50, Whole No. 155, Aug. 10, 1867.

understand the Indians' nature. He demanded the instant removal of Wells from office.⁴⁰

On September 8, fourteen agency employees signed a statement supporting Wells as a good agent and successful farmer. Wells decided to visit the Montana Territorial Governor and then go to Washington, D.C. to clear himself of the charges.

Governor Smith had temporarily replaced Wells during the latter part of August. His excuse was that Wells had to post bond before he could resume his duties. J. M. McCormick immediately replaced Wells by using the excuse that some murders had to be investigated.⁴¹

McCormick found the agency in good shape. The story of liquor sales by Wells were found to be false. Smith and McCormick reported that men after the agency position started the false rumors.⁴² Their testimony was too late to help Wells for he was on a steamboat bound for St. Louis. By December, Wells was in the capital and financially broke. His pay had been sent to San Francisco. He requested money to cover his current expenses. On December 23, Wells reported that intelligence reports from Montana indicated that the Confederated Tribes had gone on the warpath. Wells urged

⁴⁰ USDIA, C. Cole to Comm. I.A. (no date).

⁴¹ Ibid: Smith to Comm., Sept. 9, 1867. Two members of the Finlay family had been killed at Flathead Lake by a marauding band of Blackfeet.

⁴² Ibid: Sept. 17, 1867.

patience and wise council rather than hasty acts. He asked to have his bond renewed so that he could return to the Flathead Agency. Wells did not see his Indians again. He died that winter.

Although he had served but four months, John W. Wells had greatly improved the Flathead Reservation. Except for his political enemies, he seemed to have been well liked. What little evidence exists indicates that he was a gentleman, honest, thrifty, and industrious. His major faults seem to have been an over-active imagination, inexperience on the frontier, and a tendency to believe supposed facts that were based on rumors. His brief tour of duty testified that he probably would have been one of the better agents of his time.

J. M. McCormick held the position of Special Agent for Montana Territory from April, 1867 until January 4, 1869. While Governor Smith remained in office, McCormick administered to the Flathead Reservation without interference. His arrival at the Jocko Agency in August, 1867 placed him in the midst of the confusion created by wild rumors of impending Indian wars. Correspondence from the new agent during his term was light.

McCormick's Flathead assignment left the position of roving Special Agent vacant. In March, 1868, Secretary of the Interior, O. H. Browning, ordered Commissioner Taylor to send orders to W. J. Cullen, making him the new Special

Agent.⁴³

Acting-Governor James Tufts and Cullen visited the Flat-head Reservation the 10th to the 14th of August, 1868. Cullen's report to Commissioner Taylor revealed the existence of appalling conditions at the Jocko Agency. Cullen stated that no Indians were settled near the agency. He reported that the main house was tiny, inconvenient and in a state of disrepair. The log building that served as the mess hall had a roof that was partially caved in and offered little protection from the elements. The barn roof consisted of a few boards. Although the blacksmith and carpenter shops were in fine condition, iron and nails were non-existent on the reservation. The report also charged that the mills were not running because the dam had been swept away during the summer of 1867.

Cullen stated that over one hundred acres had been planted in grain crops and vegetables. His inventory of farm livestock equipment revealed that there were two yoke of oxen and "...two old worn out horses, worth about \$10. each...."⁴⁴ McCormick had borrowed two milk cows from St. Ignatius Mission. The agency also had forty-five hogs and pigs. Cullen wrote that equipment consisted of:

⁴³USDIA, Browning to Taylor, Mar. 26, 1868.

⁴⁴Ibid: Cullen to Comm. Taylor, Aug. 22, 1868.

...3 old wagons torn apart - 4 old broken plows - together with a few antiquated hoes, picks, shovels, etc....⁴⁵

No improvements had been made for the Indians. Employees were unpaid and there were no records, letters or reports at the agency. Cullen's estimate placed the agency debt at \$30,000. McCormick claimed that no money had been issued him since he took over the reservation.

The most incriminating complaint against McCormick charged the agent with the construction of his new house in Missoula. Cullen reported that most material and all labor was obtained from the reservation.

McCormick asked to be relieved of his duties due to the unfavorable living conditions on the reservation. Governor Tufts granted him his wish and put the Agency Farmer, L. L. Blake, in charge.

Cullen continued his report with the information that an investigation of newly arrived annuity blankets revealed that five bales had been deliverately broken into before arrival at the reservation. 113 pairs of blankets were missing.

The Special Agent praised the Mission. He found the Indians devout and orderly. The school met with his approval. Cullen sent each orphan girl a new dress and since the school rooms were unfinished, he donated five kegs of nails so the

⁴⁵USDIA, Cullen to Comm. Taylor, Aug. 22, 1868.

construction could be completed.⁴⁶

Governor Tufts' report supported Cullen's statements. He added that McCormick did not obey his order to submit a financial report. On January 4, 1869, Secretary of the Interior Browning ordered the immediate suspension of McCormick and called for a settlement of his accounts.⁴⁷

McCormick replied to charges against him in a letter to Commissioner Taylor.⁴⁸ He accused Cullen of writing Tufts' report. According to McCormick, no testimony under oath had been obtained by the inspector. All buildings except the abandoned barn were in excellent condition. During the winter of 1867-1868, from fifty to 150 Indians stayed near the agency, were fed, clothed and thus saved from death.

Cullen's statements on livestock and supplies were claimed to be inaccurate. There were four yoke of oxen, "...4 plows, not 'broken' and 9 employees..."⁴⁹ The agency, according to McCormick, had three good wagons. It was true that the employees had not been paid. No money had been sent to the agent. He had submitted a complete account of his finances to Cullen and Tufts.

In regard to Cullen's reports of no iron or nails, McCormick stated:

⁴⁶USDIA, Cullen to Comm. Taylor, Aug. 22, 1868.

⁴⁷Ibid: Browning to Taylor, Jan. 4, 1869.

⁴⁸Ibid: McCormick to Taylor, Feb. 20, 1869.

⁴⁹USDIA, McCormick to Taylor, Feb. 20, 1869.

I would ask Agent Cullen from what source the Iron was procured, that was used by the Government Blacksmith, in setting the four tires and making other repairs to his ambulance... and notwithstanding the fact that there was not a "pound of nails at the agency" and no funds in the hands of the Agent to purchase these "indispensible articles" Agent Cullen had 9 kegs of these "indispensible articles" to donate to the Sisters of Charity....50

McCormick argued that he had all construction on his house done by agency help that was temporarily laid off due to insufficient funds. He stated that all labor and materials were paid for out of his own private funds. Agency help had been used because they were in need of funds to live during the winter.

According to the ex-agent, Cullen and Tufts had enjoyed their four day visit to the agency.

It was taken up chiefly in riotous living, horseracing, fishing, etc. etc.51

He denied being aware of pending charges, although he had accompanied the two inspectors from the reservation to the Bitterroot Valley and Helena. McCormick reminded the Commissioner that Cullen had applied for the position of Superintendent of Indian Affairs in Montana as well as Idaho. The request

...was pending before the U. S. Senate or had just been returned to the President...52

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²USDIA, McCormick to Taylor, Feb. 20, 1869.

without action. He concluded the letter by suggesting that a report on the Flathead Reservation such as Cullen had filed, would help him get the desired position.

M. M. McCauley assumed the responsibilities of Flathead Agent late in the summer of 1868. One of his first major decisions was to help the long neglected Kootenai. The poor Indians were in their usual conditions of living on the verge of disaster. McCauley purchased and distributed one hundred pairs of double blankets among the needy. Understanding the rules of the Indian Bureau, he strengthened his position by advertising in Missoula for whites to watch the distribution. The whole transaction was vouched for by three white witnesses, the interpreter, and the Kootenai leaders Eneas, Long Back and Jake. When the unauthorized blankets were issued, McCauley wrote for a special appropriation of \$1500 to pay for the blankets.⁵³

Agent McCauley was a personal friend of James M. Cavanaugh, Montana Territory's Representative in Congress. His letter to Representative Cavanaugh best described the condition of the reservation Kootenais. The agent wrote that they lived in pole lodges covered with straw and wore a few rags for clothing.

...in addition some are disabled, some cripples and many entirely Blind, there are

⁵³USDIA, M. M. McCauley to Comm. Taylor, Dec. 20, 1868.

three Families 10 in all who are entirely Blind, there are many partially so - and I trust for the sake of our Common Humanity that there are few who could witness this unmoved.⁵⁴

McCauley had little opportunity to help the Confederated Tribes. Ulysses S. Grant became President in March of 1869. Grant replaced Johnson's Republican appointees with his own choices. Commissioner Taylor was replaced by E. S. Parker. McCauley was relieved as agent and a military administration took over.

Except for a few blankets and supplies, very little had been accomplished for the Confederated Tribes. America was no longer involved in its Civil War. In spite of Congressional opposition, Johnson had begun a sane program for Southern reconstruction. More Americans were becoming interested in the west. The opportunity to help the Indians adjust to an agricultural life was at hand.

⁵⁴Ibid: McCauley to Cavanaugh, Dec. 14, 1868.

CHAPTER III

THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES

UNDER GRANT'S ADMINISTRATION

1869-1877

During the late 1860's, increased white activity in the Bitterroot Valley created a major problem for Montana officials. Claims of white encroachment and Indian depredation became more frequent. Facts pertaining to the number of whites and Indians in the valley were confused by conflicting reports from interested parties. By the year 1868, definite action had been taken by white citizens that necessitated some form of governmental action.

On March 7, 1868, settlers of the Bitterroot Valley met at Stevensville, near St. Mary's Mission and Fort Owen. A petition had been drawn up and signed by approximately 170 settlers, including former agent, John Owen. The document indicated that there were about 700 whites in the area. In contrast, the settlers claimed the Flathead Tribe consisted of but fifty lodges. According to the settlers, only twenty Flathead families were farmers. They requested that the farmers be allowed to remain but all other Indians be removed to the Flathead Reservation.

Stevensville consisted of twenty houses and was growing rapidly. A major white population increase was expected, partly due to mineral resources.

...about 50 ledges of gold and silver bearing veins discovered within the confines of this valley.¹

During the August, 1868 council, the Flathead Headman Ambrose had presented the Indian viewpoint on removal. He spoke of the planned road improvements through the Jocko Valley. Ambrose considered the Bitterroot to be more isolated and suggested that all Confederated Tribes remove to the upper part of the valley.

Adolphe, another Headman, commented that Governor Stevens had promised the Flathead Nation that it could remain, unmolested, in the Bitterroot Valley.²

During the spring of 1869, the great Flathead Chief, Victor, visited Fort Owen. The Major wrote a letter for Victor to Commissioner Parker. Victor reminded the Commissioner that fourteen years had elapsed since the Stevens

¹U.S. Dept. of Interior, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, Montana Superintendency, 1864-1880 (Hereafter referred to as USDIA), Cavanaugh to Secy. Int. Browning, June 11, 1868.

²USDIA, Minutes of Ft. Owen Council, Aug. 1868. In this report, Adolphe disproved a myth that the Flathead had never taken the life of a white man. He was recorded as saying, "We never killed but one white man and he was a thief and a murderer. We had to kill him or get killed ourselves."

Treaty. Six agents had represented the Federal Government since Owens had resigned. Decisions by the government had to be made soon. Whites were giving liquor to Flathead men and trouble often resulted. Victor wanted it stopped. The old chief stated that eleven years before, he had promised not to war against the whites and he intended to keep his word. Owen and the Jesuits were considered to be real friends of the Tribe.³ Although Victor's letter was rambling, his motive was evident. The Flatheads were demanding justice.

On March 22, 1869, Montana's Congressional Delegate Cavanaugh forwarded a petition from the Bitterroot settlers to J.D. Cox, Secretary of the Interior. He requested that the Indians be moved to the Jocko Valley. In that report, white population was 400 and Flathead population had been estimated at 350. The petition argued that it would cost less to remove the Indians than to move the whites out of the area.

In September, a series of meetings were held in the Upper Bitterroot Valley. They were the result of rumors of Federal plans to remove the whites. Their report presented an impressive number of facts strengthening the argument for white settlement of the valley. According to the document, the valley had two grist mills, a sawmill, graded roads and bridges. More mills were under construction. Stevensville had two stores, a hotel, saloons, one butcher shop, blacksmith

³USDIA, Owen to Comm. Ely S. Parker, May 3, 1869.

and carpenter shops. A school for whites was in operation and a poor fund had been established. In contrast, the Indians were reportedly few in number. The white leaders requested that the Flathead be removed from the valley.⁴

The rumors circulating among the whites referring to their anticipated removal were not completely unfounded. Brigadier General Alfred Sully had been detailed by the War Department to settle Indian problems in Montana. He became Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Montana Territory on May 7, 1869.⁵

General Sully correctly appraised the western Montana situation. Many thefts and disputes arose from tribes migrating to and from the buffalo country. Crop failures and the government's reneging on treaty terms resulted in serious food shortages. Sully urged the establishment of a military post near Missoula to keep Washington Indians out of the area and to stop the illegal sales of whiskey to Indians. He reminded his superiors that the nearest military establishments were 250 miles to the east and 400 miles to the west.⁶

Early in October, General Sully negotiated with the Flathead Nation for a new treaty. Sully favored removal to the

⁴USDIA, Cavanaugh to Pres. Grant, Oct. 28, 1869.

⁵Seymour Dunbar & Paul C. Phillips (ed.), The Journals and Letters of Major John Owen, Pioneer of the Northwest 1850-1871 (N.Y., 1927), II, 143.

⁶USDIA, Sully to Comm. I.A., Oct. 6, 1869.

reservation. In spite of his friendly and sincere interest in helping the tribe, the Flathead Indians remained determined to live in the Bitterroot Valley.

A new treaty was concluded by the 7th of October. Sully did not like the treaty, as it permitted both Indians and whites to remain in the valley. Sully thought that the continued close relationship would result in further difficulties. The General's goal had been to remove the tribe to the Flathead Lake area and he had offered generous terms if they would comply with his wishes. His proposition for a new and smaller Flathead Reservation for the Confederated Tribes had been rejected.

A Bitterroot reservation was agreeable to the Flatheads and some of their white neighbors. Other settlers objected to permitting the Indians to remain. Influential Montana citizens complained, stating that each Indian family should get a farm and all other land be turned over to white settlers. A limited amount of support for the treaty came from unmarried white men living with Indian women.

Article I of the treaty identified the proposed reservation boundaries. The Flathead were to give up all land in the valley except for a point two miles north of Willow Creek to where Lolo Creek joined the Bitterroot River. This made the size of the reserve about thirty-two miles long by thirty miles at its widest point. The crests of the Bitterroot and Sapphire Mountains were to comprise the western and eastern

boundaries respectively.

Article II of the proposed treaty prevented further white settlement within the reservation unless they obtained permission from the Flathead chiefs and the agent. Settlers already established in the area would be permitted to remain, but would not be able to acquire more land without permission from the chiefs and the agent. Any racial problems would be mediated by the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Montana and the agent.

Article III clarified additional rights to multiple land use. White settlers were guaranteed a right-of-way through the reservation. All unfenced land was to be used in common as grazing land. The Indians maintained their inherent right to hunt, fish, and gather food in any reservation area not fenced.

Article IV provided any dissatisfied reservation white with a monetary solution. Any settler would be given a fair price for his land and improvements if he desired to leave before the first year after treaty ratification ended.

Article V promised each Indian family a wooden house valued at not more than \$400. The Federal Government would also fence in two acres for each family and give a good plow with a yoke of oxen to every family. A farm wagon would be provided for every two families.

Article VI promised the erection of a grist mill valued at not over \$6000 plus necessary repairs for twelve years.

A miller, physician, engineer, blacksmith and a suitable agent would be employed for twelve years. Buildings for employees would be constructed.

Article VII referred to the original 1855 Treaty. The Flathead Tribe would give up all rights under the original treaty, except for annuities guaranteed by Stevens.

Article VIII protected the rights of two special interests. Major John Owen's land section, obtained under the Donation Act of 1850, would remain under his ownership. Jesuit Father Giorda, of St. Mary's Mission, would be provided with 640 acres for the benefit of the mission. Both exceptions were made at the request of the chiefs.

The treaty was signed by Chief Victor, War Chief Arlee, and a leading headman named Joseph.⁷

General Sully's treaty was generally a good one. No white farmer would be hurt by the agreement and a large area would be open for settlement and exploitation. Most of the proposed reservation whites got along well with the Indians. The Flathead ability to adjust to an agriculturally oriented life indicated that the treaty could succeed.

But Sully's apprehensions were well founded. Territorial attitude toward Indians, no matter how remotely located, objected to any land being held by the red man. On October 27, 1869, the newspaper, the Helena Daily Herald editorialized

⁷USDIA, Sully to Comm., Oct. 20, 1869.

against the proposed treaty. One article described Victor's people as

...vagabond relics of various tribes of Montana known as Flatheads.⁸

Meetings were held in the Bitterroot Valley and in other parts of the territory. White citizens wrote to the United States Senate and the War Department condemning General Sully's treaty. Other territorial newspapers such as the New Northwest also condemned the Flathead. The result was that the treaty was never ratified and the Bitterroot problem remained a dangerous threat to peace.

President Grant's agents to the Flathead Reservation inherited another problem that grew with each year of the Civil War General's administration. Agency vouchers for supplies and equipment remained unpaid. Local merchants became reluctant to extend credit to the Indian agency.

Late in 1868, Worden and Company of Missoula turned their bill over to Robert Campbell and Company, a collection agency in St. Louis. The Flathead Agency owed the company nearly \$17,000.⁹ In the spring of 1869, Father Ravalli and the firm of Bonner and Welch employed eastern agencies to collect money long over-due.¹⁰ Former agents and special agents

⁸USDIA, Helena Daily Herald, Oct. 27, 1869.

⁹USDIA, Campbell & Co. to Comm. I.A., Dec. 1868.

¹⁰USDIA, Clark Bro. & Co., Bankers, to Comm. I.A., Apr. 5, 1869 and Jay Cooke & Co., Bankers, to Comm. I.A., May 28, 1869.

suffered through long periods of non-payment of salaries and expenses incurred while on official business.¹¹

Such financial problems were not resolved by the military agents of 1869 and 1870. The first army agent assigned to the Flathead Reservation was Major A. Galbraith. According to General Sully, when Galbraith took over the Jocko Agency in 1869, it was in such a deplorable condition that the General claimed it was the worst he had ever seen. Its poor condition had resulted primarily from lack of funds, rather than poor management. The General called for an immediate issuance of funds to Galbraith.

In November, 1869, Major Galbraith sent a message to General Sully.¹² He reported that the Pend d'Oreille and Kootenai were very destitute. Michelle and his band had returned from the hunt in a condition of poverty. Many were begging in order to survive. Claims of deprivations were being reported by white settlers. Galbraith asked what he should do. That year the Major had supplied ammunition to the Flathead and no deprivations had occurred. The Pend d'Oreille had been denied such supplies and horse-stealing had resulted. He indicated that the wise course would be to help the Confederated Tribes have successful hunts.

Major Galbraith's term of agent lasted at least until

¹¹USDIA, Charles E. Mix & Co., Gen'l Claim Agents to Ely S. Parker, Comm. I.A., July 13, 1869.

¹²USDIA, A. Galbraith to Sully, Nov. 26, 1869.

April, 1870.¹³ He was unexplainably replaced by Lieutenant George E. Ford. Lt. Ford had been transferred from New Mexico to Helena. There he received orders to manage the Flathead Reservation.

By September, the Lieutenant had encountered the usual financial difficulties. When he had requested travel pay from the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Montana, he had been informed that no funds had been forwarded to reimburse the officer. When Ford sent his request to the Commissioner in Washington, D.C., he received the reply that the money

...is to be withheld [sic] until the
'final settlement' of my accounts.¹⁴

In a letter to the Secretary of Interior, Ford complained that such policy was "...galling..."¹⁵ and disrespectful to a gentleman in uniform. He requested that the money be forwarded immediately. Two months later, the Lieutenant was in Philadelphia and submitted his claim for payment of services as Flathead Agent.¹⁶

Charles S. Jones was appointed Flathead Agent on September 9, 1870.¹⁷ On September 21, he requested five hundred

¹³USDIA, Sully to Comm., Apr. 11, 1870.

¹⁴USDIA, Ford to Secy. Interior J.D. Cox, Sept. 28, 1870.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶USDIA, Ford to Comm. Parker, Nov. 12, 1870.

¹⁷Michael A. Leeson (Ed.) History of Montana 1739-1885 (Chicago, 1885), 97.

dollars to cover his travel expenses to the Jocko Agency.¹⁸ Jones arrived at the agency in October and replaced Lt. Ford on the 17th of the same month.¹⁹

One of Jones' first acts was to appeal for more and better annuity goods. He found a Philadelphia invoice indicating that eight hundred annuity blankets were enroute. Jones noted that there were seventeen hundred Indians. No other annuities were designated for the reservation.

Jones reported that he repaired the agency fences and erected a new log structure that became the kitchen and mess-room. Jones raised his estimate of Indian population to nineteen hundred. He considered the Kootenai to be "...idle, thriftless, improvident, and dishonest."²⁰

The Flathead Agent's immediate superior was newly appointed Colonel A. J. Viall, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Montana. All correspondence to and from the agency passed through his office. Viall and Jones almost immediately disagreed on what authority Viall had to control correspondence.

On November 3, 1870, Jones bypassed Viall's office and sent a direct message to Commissioner Parker listing four

¹⁸USDIA, Jones to Acting Comm. I.A., W.F. Cody, Sept. 21, 1870.

¹⁹U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1871, 424.

²⁰Ibid.

major points of contention.²¹ Jones demanded the right to uninterrupted communication to the Commissioner, through Viall's office. Jones agreed that Viall had the right to comment but not to hold up correspondence. The agent also demanded the rights to submit his own estimates of anticipated expenses and to disburse all specific funds provided for the agency by Congress. \$11,800 had been appropriated for the construction of a sawmill and grist mill.²² Viall controlled the funds. Jones reminded Commissioner Parker that his bond covered his acts as Flathead Agent, not Superintendent Viall. The fourth point in Jones' message asked for a change in Viall's policy. Jones declared that the situation implied that he had done something wrong.

Apparently the direct letter to the Commissioner resulted in a rectification of the situation, for three weeks later, Viall permitted Jones' letters to go unchanged to the Commissioner.

A new feud developed over the filling of the position of Agency Doctor. Jones recommended to the Commissioner, Dr. P. T. Tiernan, a graduate of a California medical college. According to the agent, Tiernan was familiar with the diseases of the area and was highly respected. Tiernan was hired and moved to the reservation. A few days after Jones' letter of

²¹USDIA, Jones to Parker, Nov. 3, 1870.

²²On Aug. 31, 1869 both mills had been destroyed by fire. U.S. Rept. Comm. I.A., 1872, 664.

recommendation and the notification of employment passed through the Superintendent's office, Viall sent the agent a message. In the letter the Superintendent opposed Dr. Tiernan because he was a Democrat. Viall wanted all positions filled by Republicans. Jones promptly replied that he had not questioned the Doctor's political opinions as he, Jones, had only the welfare of his seventeen hundred Indians in mind. He added that in other appointments Republicans should be hired, but for the position of Doctor, only the best should be employed. In December, Viall notified Commissioner Parker that Dr. Tiernan was a radical Democrat who had been highly critical of Grant's administration. This action resulted in the removal of Dr. Tiernan.

U.S. Delegate James Cavanaugh protested the firing of Jones' doctor. Cavanaugh reported that he had never heard of Viall's choice, Dr. J. H. McKee. The Montana representative declared that Viall's character was not good. He claimed that the Montana Superintendent,

...whose character for integrity in the administration of his official duties, does not stand unimpeached on the files of your Department.²³

In January, 1871, the Indian Commissioner instituted an economy program designed to prevent unnecessary spending.

²³USDIA, Cavanaugh to Comm. Parker, April 7, 1871.

Superintendent Viall received instructions to meet with Jones to determine if some agency employees could be taken off the reservation payroll. Without consulting the agent, Viall ordered the removal of several employees. He also refused to honor certified vouchers from Worden and Company of Missoula.

Once again Jones complained to Commissioner Parker about Viall's behavior. Jones stated that his superior had refused to honor legitimate transactions that had occurred before the Commissioner's economy plan began. The agent's protest was successful. Viall changed his decision and Jones' expenses were approved.²⁴

Removal of the Flathead Tribe to the Jocko Valley continued to be the primary problem pertaining to the Confederated Tribes. The unreasonable nature of the removal proposal in 1871 became evident in Agent Jones' report to Commissioner Parker in January. The agency house was described as a

...small one-story log house, with two rooms; and having about forty acres of land attached thereto for cultivation.²⁵

It was the original building, constructed when John Owen had been agent. Jones reported that it had to be replaced. There

²⁴ USDIA, Jones to Parker, Jan. 31, 1871, Viall to Parker, May 15, 1871.

²⁵ USDIA, Jones to Parker, Jan. 17, 1871.

were no suitable structures for missionaries, agency teachers or schools. The agent agreed with the missionaries that only a boarding school would work. He estimated that such a school for sixty children would cost \$24,500. According to Jones, the Jocko Valley was not the place for the school, for there was not enough good land to support such an establishment and a main public road in the vicinity would result in undesirable white contacts.

During November and December of 1870, a series of conferences had been held in the Bitterroot Valley. Charlo, Arlee and Joseph, the principal Flathead chiefs attended.²⁶ Arlee was the principal orator and argued over Article II of the 1855 Treaty and the proposed removal to the reservation. Joseph, also called Nine Pipes, claimed that dishonest agents had caused the delay in settling the Bitterroot problem. He reported that agents were changed too often and that the local chief of the Hudson Bay Company had more influence with the tribes than any American.²⁷

Arlee and Joseph arrived at the Jocko Agency on January 8, 1871. They told Jones of many injustices and asked to

²⁶ Joseph replaced his father, Victor, who had served as Head Chief from 1854 until his death in the summer of 1870. Peter Ronan, Historical Sketch of the Flathead Indian Nation from the Year 1813 to 1890 (Helena, 1890), 44. L.B. Palladino, Indian and White in the Northwest, (Lancaster, Pa., 1922), 81.

²⁷ Another argument against Flathead removal to the Jocko Valley was not discussed. As early as 1870, there was political pressure on the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to open the reservation for white settlement. USDIA, Rep. Cavanaugh to Comm. Parker, Apr. 13, 1870.

see Commissioner Parker. In a report to his superior, Jones urged the Commissioner to obtain approval for the Washington visit. If the Grant administration refused to permit the visit, Jones reported that he could settle the problem, but it would be costly. There were forty-four good Indian farms in the Bitterroot Valley that would require compensation to their owners if they were removed.

On March 3, 1871, Congress passed legislation changing the political classification of Indian tribes. No tribe within United States' jurisdiction would, in the future, be treated as a sovereign nation.²⁸ The Act gave the United States Government complete responsibility for the care and rehabilitation of all Indians within the country's borders.

Seven Flathead Chiefs met with Father Jerome D'Aste in May. They dictated a letter for President Grant to the priest. They informed Grant that although eleven years had passed, there had been no survey of the Bitterroot Valley. Not only were there white settlers in the valley, but whole white villages existed. Liquor was sold to the young braves and the women were tempted into immorality. The letter reminded Grant that other tribes not as peaceful as the Flathead had been allowed to visit the President. The Flathead chiefs desired such a meeting because of vital business.²⁹

²⁸Merrill G. Burlingame, The Montana Frontier (Helena, 1942), 179.

²⁹USDIA, Flathead Chiefs to Pres. Grant, May 7, 1871.

In October, Superintendent Viall reported that he favored Indian removal from the Bitterroot. Instead of Jones' estimate of forty-four good farms, Viall indicated there were but three Flathead farms of value in the Bitterroot Valley. He explained that the Flatheads fully understood that President Grant could have them removed to the Jocko under Article II of Steven's Treaty.

Viall, Delegate-Elect Wm. H. Clagett and Governor Potts had inspected the Jocko Valley during the summer. Clagett and Potts also urged removal to the Flathead Reservation, indicating that it was the most "...humane course...."³⁰

A census by Jones had recorded 446 Indians living in the Bitterroot Valley and only 217 were full-blood Flatheads. John E. Blaine, Surveyor General for Montana Territory verified Viall's claim that only three good Indian farms existed.³¹

Such overwhelming testimony that a few Indians were holding up the development of a fertile valley prompted the administration to act. On November 14, 1871, President Grant ordered the removal of the Flathead Tribe from the Bitterroot Valley. Appraisals of Indian property and other preliminary acts were to begin at once.³² On June 15, 1872,

³⁰USDIA, Potts to Comm. I.A., Sept. 8, 1871.

³¹USDIA, Blaine to Comm. Drummond, Gen'l Land Office, Oct. 24, 1871.

³²USDIA, Secy Interior Delano to Comm. Francis A. Walker, Nov. 27, 1871.

Congress approved "An Act to Provide for the Removal of the Flathead and other Indians from the Bitter Root Valley in the Territory of Montana."³³ Viall issued the month's notice for removal to the Flatheads on June 28. \$50,000 had been appropriated to pay the tribal farmers for their land improvements.

Charlo's people refused to comply with the Presidential order. Rumors and apprehensions of an Indian outbreak grew daily. It seemed apparent that the Flatheads would go to the reservation only if military force was used. The Secretary of the Interior appointed General James A. Garfield to the position of Special Commissioner. Garfield was to obtain a peaceful solution to the Flathead crisis.³⁴

Garfield and D. G. Swain, Judge Advocate of the U. S. Army arrived in Virginia City early in August. They consulted with Superintendent Viall and Governor Potts on the Flathead problem. The Governor's briefing did not indicate much hope of averting an armed conflict between the Indians and whites.

According to the Governor, the Flathead were almost unanimously opposed to leaving the Bitterroot Valley. Fifty or sixty lodges of Nez Perce and Spokanes had moved into the valley to support the Flatheads. White settlers anticipated

³³USDIA, Congressional Act, June 5, 1872.

³⁴Ronan, 57.

attacks at any moment. The settlements of Missoula, Aetna, and Corvallis had each raised a one hundred man militia. In response to a plea from leading citizens of the troubled area, Governor Potts sent three hundred muskets and thirty thousand rounds of ammunition. A request had been made for Army intervention. Missoula residents also requested that a force of U.S. Marshalls be sent to halt the illegal whiskey sales to Indians. Garfield feared that the issuance of arms to whites would result in violence.³⁵

The Garfield party was joined by W. H. Clagett, Territorial Delegate at Deer Lodge and continued to Missoula, arriving there on August 20.

Garfield observed that the local residents were more interested in the monetary benefits that a military post would bring to the community than they were apprehensive of an Indian uprising. He did not think any attack was forthcoming, as warfare against whites was alien to the Flathead character.

The white officials arrived at the Flathead encampment, near Ft. Owen on the 21st. On the following day, Garfield began his consultations with the chiefs. He reported them as Charlot, first Chief, Arlee, second Chief and Adolf, third Chief.

Garfield reviewed Article II of the 1855 Treaty and

³⁵USDIA, Garfield to Secy Int. Delano, Aug. 17, 1872. Garfield to Comm. Walker, Nov. 15, 1872.

presented a detailed explanation of the Presidential Order of November 14, 1871, calling for the Flathead removal, and the supporting Congressional Act of June 5, 1872.

In reply, the Flathead leaders told Garfield that their understanding was that they had never given up their inherent right to the Bitterroot Valley. They opposed any plan for removal to the Jocko. They insisted that they had signed the treaty with Stevens with the understanding that they could remain in their valley.

Garfield believed the chiefs. In the 1855 Treaty, the tribe had given up a vast area between the 42nd and 49th parallels, which would today be from the southern boundary of Idaho to Canada. The area originally claimed by the Flathead Nation had a width approximately two degrees of longitude. At the time of the 1855 Treaty, Victor had insisted on keeping only the upper Bitterroot for his people.

The chiefs did not refuse to negotiate. They recognized the Presidential power indicated in Article Eleven for removal to the Flathead Reservation, but demanded that all of the Article be honored. It called for a careful examination of the Bitterroot Valley and a survey to determine the real value of the area as a reservation.

Seventeen years had expired without any such evaluation. The Flatheads considered the long governmental silence to be an act of recognition of Flathead rights to the disputed area. They further complained that promised teachers, black-

smiths, carpenters and farmers had never arrived to help the tribe. No hostile actions were intended. The Flatheads would obey the government, but they would not go to the reservation.

Garfield concluded the meeting with a short statement. He asked the chiefs if they would intentionally disobey the President and Congress. They were to consult their people and answer Garfield's question the following morning. The General also asked them to go with him to look over the Jocko Valley area.

That evening, the Indians sent for the Jesuit priest at St. Mary's Mission and a conference ensued. The following morning, the chiefs wished Grant their good will and promised to visit the Jocko "...on the condition that their going should not imply any promise to leave Bitter Root Valley."³⁶

The government party and the chiefs arrived at the Jocko Agency on August 24. For the next two days, they examined the agency buildings, fields, and the Jocko Valley. The inspection ended with another conference.

The chiefs agreed that \$50,000 was an inadequate sum for the Bitterroot Valley. They were divided on removing to the Jocko. Charlot would not agree to the move. All distrusted the government and feared a move to the Jocko Valley would result in the Federal Government not paying for the move. Some Flatheads had indicated a desire to take advantage of

³⁶USDIA, Garfield to Comm. Walker, Nov. 15, 1872.

Section 3 of the 1872 Congressional Act, which provided 160 acres for each head of family over twenty-one years of age who chose to homestead in the Bitterroot Valley. Garfield interpreted their stated desire to homestead as a plan to keep the home valley under tribal control.

Garfield presented a contract to the chiefs and urged that they sign the agreement. The government agreed to construct as many as sixty cabins to accommodate the Flathead Tribe removing to the Jocko. Land would be tilled and grain furnished for one year as evidence of the government's good intention.

Arlee and Adolf agreed, but Charlot refused to leave the Bitterroot. Those who agreed, selected sites for their future homes.

The Garfield Agreement of August 27, 1872, was signed by Arlee and Adolf. Charlot's name appeared, but he did not make his mark. General Garfield signed for the United States.

Charlot's refusal to sign was considered a temporary problem by white officials. Garfield was convinced that the First Chief had promised some of his people that he would not agree without consulting them. The General believed that Charlot would sign once he saw that the United States planned to honor the agreement. A few months later, Garfield commented

But I was satisfied as were the gentlemen accompanying me, that Charlot would ultimately

come into the agreement and aid in carrying out its terms.³⁷

The General clearly saw the dangers of delay. He urged prompt action for the fulfillment of the agreement's terms and recommended a compensation above the \$50,000 amount set by Congress. Whites in the area were agitating for military action and, if a delay ensued, the agreement would fail.

One of the greatest critics of Garfield's Agreement was Father Palladino. The Jesuit priest wrote a lengthy letter to Garfield presenting three major objections to the agreement. His first point reminded Garfield that the Jocko Valley did not have enough good soil to support the Flathead Tribe. Palladino opposed the Jocko site because he was certain that the Northern Pacific Railroad would be routed through the valley. His third objection reminded Garfield that the Catholic priests were a great influence on the Flathead. Jocko Valley contained no mission and the Indians would be without much needed religious services.³⁸

Garfield replied to the Jesuit's arguments. He reminded Palladino that he, Garfield, had clearly indicated to the Flatheads that they could choose their home-site anywhere on the reservation. Garfield wrote:

³⁷USDIA, Garfield to Walker, Nov. 15, 1872.

³⁸USDIA, Palladino to Garfield, Sept. 3, 1872.

One of Charlot's strongest objections to the removal from the Bitter Root Valley, was, that he did not wish his people mixed up with the Pend d'Oreilles and Kootenais.³⁹

The General expressed his opinion that the Northern Pacific would most likely be routed through Lolo Pass rather than the Jocko Valley route.

His greatest criticisms of Palladino's letter were related to the religious issue. Garfield pointed out that since the Jocko Valley was closer to St. Ignatius, it would be far more economical to maintain a small mission closer to St. Ignatius and on the direct route between the Catholic settlement and its supply source, Missoula. He also maintained that when he asked Arlee and Adolf if they preferred to be near the mission or the agency, they both favored locating near the government mill and agency.

The General concluded by remarking that he had been disappointed that Palladino had not attended the Jocko conferences, for he had hoped that the priest would help settle the serious Flathead problem.⁴⁰

In Garfield's reports, there were many indications of his sincere desire to help the Flathead. He did not support Governor Potts or Superintendent Viall's opinions of possible hostilities, and he severely criticized Agent Jones and the

³⁹USDIA, Garfield to Palladino, Nov. 12, 1872.

⁴⁰USDIA, Garfield to Palladino, Nov. 12, 1872.

condition of the agency. Much of his complaint was directed at governmental lethargy and irresponsibility. His attitude toward Charlot was one of respect and the reports hint of a mutual understanding and friendliness between the Head Chief and the General. Garfield blamed the deceased Victor for the Bitterroot problem. Victor had not only permitted, but had generously helped whites locate homesteads among his people.

For an easterner unfamiliar with the situation, Garfield's written agreement presented a good solution to the problem. If the Federal Government had immediately responded with rapid fulfillment of the agreed upon terms, Charlot and all of his people would have very likely moved to the reservation within a relatively short time.

Garfield did not emphasize the importance of the Flatheads locating on rich farm land as strongly as he should have. It is likely that he did not know much about the fertility of western soil, especially when much of it was covered with high prairie grasses. He certainly did not deserve the severe criticism to which the Indians and whites subjected his 1872 actions in the years that followed.

While the Bitterroot dispute attracted the attention of Indian and white, a survey of the northern boundary of the Flathead Reservation occurred. Agent Jones reported on the survey's findings:

...I have learned, unofficially, from the party engaged under the surveyor-general of the Territory in surveying the north boundary line of the reservation, that they have so far progressed with it as to indicate very clearly the

fact that Dacon [Dayton] Creek is found to be within, instead of without the limits of the reservation as supposed by many. On this creek there is a limited amount of rich land which has been occupied by three or four white settlers, who thus become trespassers, adding to the difficulties already existing from that too numerous class.⁴¹

The Dayton Creek area west of Flathead Lake, was inhabited by the Upper Kootenais.

Garfield's report on the conditions of the Jocko Agency indicated that in spite of thousands of dollars invested, there remained very little evidence of industry. The General found the garden to consist of three-fourths of an acre. One acre had been planted in potatoes. Less than five acres of oats and eighteen acres of wheat made up the total grain crop. Tools for the shops were inadequate. The General added that some employees "...were mere boys, whose chief function seemed to be to sign the pay roll and draw their pay."⁴² Garfield did not blame the condition of the agency on Jones alone. He considered the agency to be a disgrace to the Federal Government because of the governments failure to care for the Confederated Tribes.

By 1872, Jones was in serious trouble. In his Annual Report to the Commissioner, he indicated that the Indians loved and trusted him. In desperation, Jones ended his report:

⁴¹U.S. Rept. Comm. I.A., 1872, 664.

⁴²USDIA, Garfield to Comm. Walker, Nov. 15, 1872.

With fruits like these, I can afford to forget and forgive the calumnious assaults made upon me by heated partisans who failing to force me into the political arena have left untried no means, fair or unfair, to crush and destroy me.⁴³

During the latter part of June, 1872, Charles S. Jones stood trial in Missoula on charges of fraud against the United States Government.

John Richards, whose name had appeared on the agency payroll during Jones' administration, was non-existent. Charles H. Haydon testified that he had never been employed by Agent Jones. He was carried on the agency payroll from October, 1870 to June 29, 1872.

Businessmen William Stevens, T.R. Dana and Wm. G. Edwards testified that Jones' vouchers for the purchase of 5000 feet of lumber, 4500 bricks, shingles and nails were incorrect.

Former Agency Blacksmith Ransom Lise testified that he had purchased government flour, sugar, coffee, beef and tobacco from Agent Jones. Blankets had been sold to employees. Indians were charged for services rendered at the agency shops and mills.⁴⁴

Territorial Superintendent Viall investigated the questionable transactions and determined that only Jones

⁴³U.S. Rept. Comm. I.A., 1872, 666.

⁴⁴USDIA, Dispositions of Thomas, M. Pomeroy, U.S. Comm., in and for the County of Missoula, M.T., June, 1872.

seemed implicated. Jones had blamed the fraudulent vouchers on former employee, G.D.C. Hibbs, who, Jones claimed, had managed the agency accounts. Despite the incriminating evidence, Jones remained in charge of the Flathead Reservation.⁴⁵

In September, Viall ordered Jones to discharge all agency employees except one. They were replaced by eight craftsmen recommended by Viall. Of the four employees fired, two had been named Jones. For the remainder of the year, the suspect agent was very careful to substantiate that all necessary purchases had been made as the vouchers indicated.

In January, 1873, James Wright took over the duties of Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Jasper Viall had been removed from office because of questionable financial transactions. The Treasury Department determined that nearly \$16,000 in questionable vouchers indicated that Viall had manipulated Indian Department funds.⁴⁶ In March, William H. Clagett was appointed to the newly created position of Special Assistant to the United States Attorney for the Territory of Montana. His duties were described as

...detecting and punishing violations of the intercourse acts of Congress and frauds committed in the Indian service.⁴⁷

⁴⁵USDIA, Viall to Comm., Aug. 5, 1872.

⁴⁶USDIA, Treasury Dept. to Comm. I.A., June 9, 1873.

⁴⁷USDIA, Gen. Geo. Williams to Secy Interior C. Delano, March 27, 1873.

Daniel Shanahan had been appointed Flathead Agent on November 15, 1872. He replaced the suspected Jones at the Rocko Agency on January 1. The new agent's annual report for fiscal year 1873 indicated that the agency was still in very poor condition.

The condition in which I found the agency was as poor as could be described; the work-cattle were worthless, three of them having since died, and the balance of the band are not expected to survive the coming winter. There was only 1 serviceable wagon, no serviceable plow, and the harrow consisted of a few pieces of iron driven through some bars of rotten wood. The only property which could at all be utilized (except the mills) was a span of horses and the wagon, neither of which were 1st class.⁴⁸

As did his predecessors, Shanahan reported an amazing amount of progress due to his management. When he arrived, there had been an acute shortage of forage for the agency livestock. By the end of June, sixty tons of hay had been cut.

He had found the agency buildings to be in a state of decay. Not one of the twenty houses ordered constructed for the Flatheads was completed, nor had timber been cut for their construction. By the 30th of June, Shanahan reported all twenty houses had been put up and fencing completed. A house was constructed for the agency physician. In addition, Shanahan had been responsible for the erection of 1,480 rods of

⁴⁸U.S. Rept. Comm. I.A., 1873, 249.

fencing, the breaking and seeding of 140 acres of farmland, and had dug six miles of irrigation and other ditches.

Shanahan took the usual supporting stand for the Mission School. The annual cost of operating the boarding school was over \$4000. The Federal Government provided only \$1800 for its operation. The agent recommended an increase to \$3000 a year. In 1873, twenty-seven pupils attended the boarding school and fifty were enrolled at the day school. Subjects taught were spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history and grammar. Girls were taught sewing and housework; boys learned farming and crafts.

The Confederated Tribes had 190 farms in operation, for a total acreage of 1,215.

In conclusion, Shanahan urged the construction of an agency hospital.⁴⁹

Flathead removal to the Jocko Valley continued to be the primary interest of white settlers and Indian officials. Agent Shanahan and Superintendent Wright assured the Commissioner that Charlot would soon remove to the agency. Wright directed Shanahan to speed up work on the Flathead houses in the Jocko Valley. As soon as possible, the agent would remove all Flatheads not living in houses in the Bitterroot Valley. The superintendent was apprehensive. In April, Wright wrote to the new Indian Commissioner, E.P. Smith. He

⁴⁹U.S. Rept. Comm. I.A., 1873, 249.

requested permission to offer Charlot's people additional gifts in the form of shops and tools so that the chief would cooperate.

Shanahan and Wright decided to go to the Bitterroot Valley and speed up the moving. The agent agreed to start April 17 and Wright would join him a week later. Shanahan's negotiations were unsuccessful. Charlot refused to leave. Wright called for a council at Stevensville and discussed Charlot's moving. Arlee and Adolph favored leaving the Bitterroot but they did not want to split the tribe.

On May 7, Arlee, Adolph and Delaware Jim, who spoke English, met with the government officials. They and Father D'Aste were convinced that a visit to Washington to see President Grant would satisfy Charlot and he would comply with the government's wishes. Encouraged by the advice, Wright sent a message to Commissioner Smith asking that he grant permission for the journey. The request was denied.

Wright explained to the Commissioner that the Indians were very suspicious and continually checked on the progress of the construction of the houses. They complained that after eighteen years, the Flatheads still did not have a school. Wright expressed his regret over the Interior Department's decision to refuse the Washington visit. He reminded Smith that the Sioux were bad but they had been permitted to visit Washington, D.C.⁵⁰

⁵⁰USDIA, Correspondence between Wright and Smith, May-June. 1873.

The disapproval of the Washington, D.C. trip made the Montana agent's task more difficult. If they could show the Flatheads, by deeds, that the United States planned to honor the 1855 Treaty and Garfield's Agreement, Charlot and his people would possibly give up the Bitterroot Valley.

In May, Commissioner Smith permitted the purchase of \$2000 in farm equipment for the Flathead Reservation.⁵¹ Wright replied with a report that there was a critical need for farm machinery. Since the \$2000 worth of equipment would replace the usual annuity goods, Wright reminded the Commissioner that the transportation costs should not be deducted from the allotted sum. The reservation Indians had fields of grain but no practical way to thresh it. He asked for an immediate decision on the purchase of necessary machinery. A short time later, Wright submitted plans for the schoolhouse that had been promised in the 1855 Treaty.

On August 1, 1873, Agent Shanahan answered a medical circular requesting information on the reservation's medical situation. He reported that the average number of Indians on the reservation varied from one thousand in summer to seven hundred during the winter hunting season. The annual cost of medicines was \$300. Major diseases were pulmonary conditions, scrofula (a tubercular condition of the neck lymphatic glands) and venereal diseases. Since such diseases

⁵¹USDIA, Smith to Wright, June 30, 1873.

were contagious, Shanahan recommended:

The establishment of a Hospital under the supervision of the sisters of charity, who have been, and are at present in connection with missionary Fathers rendering most of the medical aid required.⁵²

Shanahan estimated that a fifteen bed hospital would cost \$3,250 with an estimated annual maintenance expense of \$2100.

In spite of the Bitterroot problem and the need to fulfill the 1855 Treaty promises, the government did not respond to Shanahan and Wright's requests. The first quarter of fiscal year 1874 passed without the issuance of any funds to run the reservation.

Shanahan and Superintendent Wright became involved in a dispute over finances. Wright had made purchases and ordered other purchases for the Flathead Reservation, but had not provided the agent with the means to pay the bills. Shanahan argued that some expenses had been excessive. He refused to sign Wright's vouchers.⁵³

The main dispute evolved from Wright's plan to survey the Bitterroot Valley and assign land to the Flatheads who desired to remain there. Shanahan severely criticized his superior and reported that the plan was detrimental to the settlement of the Bitterroot problem. Shanahan refused to

⁵²USDIA, Shanahan to Smith, Aug. 1, 1873.

⁵³USDIA, Shanahan to Smith, July 18, 1873.

act on the matter as he declared that although the land had been surveyed he had not been provided with a list of eligible Indians or of any claims. The agent stated that under the circumstances, he would not take action, for the Indians would undoubtedly be cheated.

On September 16, Shanahan reported that Arlee was removing to the reservation. Funds to help his removal were non-existent. Arlee and ten other families arrived at the Jocko Agency on October 11. A total of sixteen Flathead families had thus far left the Bitterroot.⁵⁴

During a sixty-day leave of absence, Shanahan visited Washington, D.C. There he reported that the Bitterroot Indians refused to accept assigned Bitterroot plots of land. They claimed that all the land was theirs. They would not become citizens, honor any survey or pay taxes. Shanahan claimed that those who had already moved to the Jocko Valley were threatening to leave because of non-payment as provided in the Garfield Agreement.⁵⁵

Whiskey sales to the Confederated Tribes increased as the number of whites grew. The government officials were hard pressed to control the illegal traffic. By the autumn of 1873, the problem had become almost uncontrollable. Shanahan and William F. Wheeler, United States Marshall, requested permission from the Commissioner to appoint a reservation

⁵⁴USDIA, Shanahan to Comm., Sept. 16 and Oct. 11, 1873.

⁵⁵USDIA, Shanahan to Smith, Nov. 28, 1873.

employee to the additional position of detective. This technique was used intermittently during the 1870's and resulted in a reduction in the number of illegal whiskey sales to the tribes.

Before Shanahan left on his leave of absence, he experienced a rather dangerous incident. On October 5, a mixed band of Modocs, Paiutes, Yakimas and Spokanes visited the reservation. For four days, they caused unrest among the Confederated Tribes and, according to Shanahan, their actions were openly hostile and impudent. Michelle and other Pend d'Oreille chiefs became concerned with the disturbance created by the visitors. They ordered the foreigners off the reservation.⁵⁶

Indian unrest became more serious as increased friction between tribes roused the young braves to perform bolder deeds of valor. Depredations against whites could be partially controlled, but intra-tribal conflicts became almost impossible to resolve.

During the autumn of 1873, the position of Superintendent for the Montana Territory was dissolved. Wright was transferred east of the mountains and became agent to the very difficult Crow Nation. In November, he sent a message to Shanahan claiming that the Confederated Tribes had stolen

⁵⁶USDIA, Shanahan to Smith, Oct. 11, 1873. Shanahan reported that a party of Pend d'Oreille left for the winter buffalo hunt under the leadership of Chief Andrea, "...who carries an American flag."

over two hundred horses belonging to the Crows. Charles Schafft was in charge of the Jocko Agency during Shanahan's absence. He consulted Michelle about the matter. Michelle replied that since the Crow continually made war on the Confederated Tribes, the tribes would keep any horses taken from their enemy. The matter remained unresolved.⁵⁷

The \$50,000 appropriation for payment to Flathead farmers removing to the Jocko Valley was at first rejected by Congress. Shanahan, who was still in Washington, informed Commissioner Smith that the twenty families removed to the reservation would in all likelihood return to the Bitterroot Valley. He argued that \$5000 would be needed by April 5 if the removal plan was to be salvaged. Shanahan also complained that the claimed inability of established white settlers to pay the Flathead for their Bitterroot land was a poor excuse, for the Flatheads needed financial aid.⁵⁸

When Shanahan returned, he became involved in a dispute with former Montana Superintendent Wright. Wright had employed W.G. Hall, Missoula County Surveyor, to survey the Bitterroot Valley. Hall not only surveyed the boundaries of the Flathead land, but, according to Shanahan, conducted an unauthorized survey of Indian ranches. The agent claimed the

⁵⁷USDIA, Shanahan to Smith, Jan. 21, 1874. Shanahan had left J.W. Daniels in charge of the reservation, but by October 27 Schafft was running the agency.

⁵⁸USDIA, Shanahan to Smith, Jan. 29, 1874.

survey had angered the Flatheads and had helped delay the final removal to the Jocko. Shanahan reported that fifty-four ranches had been surveyed, including Arlee's. Many other ranches had been abandoned for Jocko acres. The agent testified that Hall and Wright refused to provide him with any information pertaining to the Bitterroot land claims. Shanahan refused to pay the surveyor for the ranch surveys.⁵⁹

Shanahan's thwarted attempts to manage the Bitterroot removal in his own way resulted in his decision to resign. On March 2, 1874, he requested that he be removed from office. By the end of the month, the agent had become aware of charges brought against him by the Jesuits, Surveyor Hall and other interested whites. He asked Commissioner Smith to suspend action on his resignation. Shanahan wanted to remain as agent until he could clear himself of the charges. He was too late. Secretary of the Interior Delano approved Shanahan's resignation on April 15. He was to remain at the Flathead Reservation until a replacement could be sent.

Shanahan's personality was another mystery in the history of the reservation. The missionaries objected to some of his decisions. Others claimed he was dishonest. His ideas pertaining to the Flathead removal seemed far more realistic than did Wright's. One interesting but prejudiced character study was recorded by a Montana rancher, C.C. O'Keefe. The rancher

⁵⁹Ibid: May 26, 1874.

had been involved in the sale of farm machinery to the reservation. In a letter to a friend in Congress, O'Keefe wrote:

Shanahan is back and I cant [sic] get a cent of my money he is a strange kind of a fish. A dam [sic] fine irish repub he thinks he is going to revolutionize all the irish of Montana.⁶⁰

The agent's last official days seem to have been used to improve the reservation. He requested that agency employees be provided with a substantial raise in salary. If such a program would be approved, Shanahan advocated the termination of the agency boarding system.

Shanahan also submitted a list of annuity goods desired by Charlot, Michelle and Eneas for the previous year's annuities. According to the agent, the chiefs wanted ten wagons, forty plows, forty double sets of harness and four thousand yards of heavy striped ticking for clothing. Shanahan requested that four additional wagons be sent to replace those lost in an 1873 fire in Helena.⁶¹

On May 30, 1874, Peter Whaley accepted his appointment as Flathead Agent. He was located in Helena and consequently took over the agent's duties in a relatively short time. His appointment was a major mistake since he did not cooperate with the tribes. Governor Potts protested the appointment of

⁶⁰USDIA, O'Keefe to J.M. Cavanaugh, Apr. 21, 1874.

⁶¹USDIA, Ltrs. Shanahan to Smith, June 1, 1874.

Whaley.⁶²

In his first letter as agent, Whaley reported that he took charge of the Flathead Reservation on July 14. He complained that the nearest telegraph was at Deer Lodge, 120 miles to the southeast. According to Whaley, no farming had been practiced at the agency and the need for vegetables was great. He lamented the poor condition of the agency with the comment that only a barn had been completely constructed.⁶³

Whaley's early letters were somewhat contrary to his annual report submitted on September 12. The report indicated that agency buildings were in fair condition; the mill was operating; more buildings were under construction. Agency stock was in good condition. Whaley requested that more farm equipment be sent as annuity goods. By the time of his report, the new agent had investigated the Kootenai problem at the northern boundary of the reservation. He blamed their acute poverty on governmental inaction and lack of interest. Twenty-five lodges were located on Dayton Creek, where dispute over the location of the northern boundary continued. A large tract of meadowland lying within the contested area was a major source of hay. During 1874, the Indians and whites put aside their differences and cooperated to cut and put up a large quantity of hay for winter use. Whaley also requested

⁶²USDIA, Notation on envelope, letter missing.

⁶³USDIA, Ltrs. Whaley to Smith, July 14 and 2 on July 25, 1874.

more funds to help St. Ignatius.⁶⁴

Whaley's investigation of the boarding school at St. Ignatius revealed that Shanahan had removed the teachers from the agency payroll on March 31, 1873. The Sisters of Charity had continued to teach and clothe their pupils. Whaley asked for a special appropriation of \$525 to rectify the unjust act.⁶⁵

The new agent also objected to certain reputed demands of the chiefs. Arlee and Michelle insisted that hay and grain crops be cut by agency employees. Shanahan had reportedly promised Eneas five plows and a wagon. Instead, the former agent had given the items to other parties. Whaley confiscated as much of the property as he could.

By early 1875, Whaley found himself in trouble with Commissioner Smith. His reports on reservation conditions were not conducive to improving the government's image in the Bitterroot dispute. Whaley considered three-fourths of the reservation to be unsuitable for farming. 1446 acres were under cultivation. 146 of those were farmed by whites married to Indian women and 200 more acres were worked by the mission. He indicated that most of the mission crops not used by the school children and missionaries were issued to poor, aged and orphaned Indians.⁶⁶

⁶⁴U.S. Rept. Comm. I.A., 1874, 263.

⁶⁵USDIA, Whaley to Smith, Aug. 12, 1874.

⁶⁶USDIA, Whaley to Smith, Jan. 10, 1875.

In March, he once again reminded Smith of government injustices. Six hundred bushels of wheat had been guaranteed to the Flathead families removed to the Jocko. The wheat issuance agreed to by Garfield had not been supplied and no funds were available so Whaley could make the purchase.⁶⁷

Peter Whaley's suspension was ordered by Secretary Delano on May 3 and he was replaced on July 1. The primary reason for the removal of the agent was a large number of questionable financial transactions. The confused payroll became more muddled under Whaley's administration. His quarterly financial reports indicated that highly questionable cash manipulations had occurred. One particularly lengthy dispute arose over the purchase of a bottle of turpentine. Finally, in expressed disgust, Whaley sent \$1.50 to the Commissioner in order to settle the account.

Charles Medary of New York replaced Whaley as Flathead Agent. His first official act was to apply for \$500 to cover moving expenses to the reservation. Within three weeks of his arrival at the agency, Medary put in requests for \$3800 to operate the reservation, \$1200 for repairs on two roads and \$500 for provisions to feed the many Indians that visited the agency.⁶⁸

Medary's report on the condition of the agency and reservation presented the first believable report for many years.

⁶⁷USDIA, Whaley to Smith, March 17, 1875.

⁶⁸USDIA, Medary to Smith, Aug. 7, 1875.

It was important because it presented the Commissioner with a concise record of what progress had been made by the former controversial agents.

The physical plant consisted of a combined steam-powered saw and flour mill, a small blacksmith shop, an employees quarters, one office building, a physician's house and dispensary, the agent's quarters and one empty house. Sheds and a root cellar had also been constructed. Although most structures were but two years old, neglect necessitated the making of repairs on all buildings. The houses were not finished on the interior, nor had the weatherboarding been placed. Medary recommended that an addition be placed on the sawmill. The kitchen also needed enlarging and a medical storeroom was planned for the doctor's house. The agent's house needed refurnishing. Provisions were nearly depleted.

Medary's description of livestock and agency equipment also indicated some progress had been made, but much more was needed.⁶⁹

Contrary to previous reports, Medary reported that the \$50,000 annual payment to the Flatheads was on schedule. The government had decided to pay the tribe \$5000 annually for ten years.⁷⁰

The Indian Department policy for unused funds at the

⁶⁹ USDIA, Medary to Comm. July 19, 1875.

⁷⁰ U.S. Rept. Comm. I.A., 1875, 305.

end of each fiscal quarter created a serious problem for the agents. All unused money had to be returned to the nearest bank handling a Treasury Department account. Once the agent returned the money, it became nearly impossible to get it back, even though the funds had been appropriated by Congress. On July 20, 1875, nearly \$3000 was deposited by the Flathead agent. The money, designated for a specific use by the Commissioner had not been needed for that purpose. Reservation debts were staggering and employees were unpaid, but Medary could not use the money to pay off any of the expenses.

Reservation supplies had been shipped from New York in August, 1874. A year later they still had not arrived. Medary complained that freighting contracts were not being honored.

The long-feared Indian uprising began to materialize. Members of the Confederated Tribes unavoidably became involved. On August 6, 1875, Governor Potts sent a letter of complaint against the Flathead Tribe. The governor reported that Flathead parties were roving throughout the Montana Territory in violation of Indian Department orders. They reportedly started prairie fires on the upper reaches of the Big Hole River and in Deer Lodge and Beaverhead counties. Residents of Meagher county feared further depredations. Potts urged that the Flatheads be controlled because hostiles were in the same areas.

Medary's reply reminded Potts that Article III of the 1855

Treaty permitted the Flatheads to leave the reservation. Crop failures had resulted in a mass exodus to the buffalo country. No military escort had been available. The agent concluded that since most reservation Flatheads were home, only the Bitterroot members were unaccounted for. According to Medary's interpretation of the Garfield Agreement, they were citizens and had every right to leave the valley.⁷¹

1876 became one of the most trying in Montana's history. Indian unrest reached a new peak of activity, resulting in open warfare, disruption of transportation and confusion among white officials. Not only did Agent Medary feel the pressure of the Indian threat, he also experienced problems related only to the Flathead Reservation. Medical supplies disappeared enroute to the reservation from the east. Badly needed farm machinery was held up at Council Bluffs until railroad charges were paid.

Local civil officials also created a serious problem for Agent Medary. Missoula County Commissioners decided that residents of the reservation that were whites or half-breeds were subject to pay county taxes. Medary refused to permit the collection of taxes on the reservation. The whole dispute became entangled with politics. Agent Medary presented his side of the argument to Representative Martin Maginnis and Commissioner Smith.

⁷¹USDIA, Medary to Smith, Aug. 16, 1875.

Medary interviewed all whites living on the reservation. He concluded that all whites had resided on the reservation for at least five years. Since they had made many improvements on their property, Medary considered them to be good examples for the Indians and favored their staying on the reserve.

Medary's major problem was to get a decision from the Indian Commissioner on the status of the whites. They had been allowed to vote, yet Medary argued that if the Indians had been able to vote they still would not have paid taxes.

The amount of taxes from the reservation would have been quite small. Medary claimed that the whole issue had evolved from a confrontation between Alex Morrisseau, a reservation half-breed and Jack Demers, Chairman of Missoula County Commissioners. Before 1876, Morrisseau had traded at Demers' store at Frenchtown (about seven miles west of Evaro Canyon). Due to high prices and the complaint that he had been charged for goods he had not purchased, Morrisseau began trading elsewhere. Demers asked him why he no longer traded at his store and an argument ensued. The following day, Morrisseau was in Missoula. The Commissioners had his wagon and horse confiscated as a partial payment of taxes.

According to Agent Medary, Jack Demers was a fairly well-to-do businessman who controlled the Frenchtown citizens by keeping them in his debt. He said Demers was also a Democrat and unethical. His father-in-law was a half-breed

living in the Jocko Valley where he cared for several hundred head of Demers' cattle. Medary indicated he planned to turn the case over to the United States Marshall, charging Demer with violation of the Indian Intercourse Law.⁷²

The Flathead Agent's plan to prosecute Demers involved all whites and half-breeds on the reservation. If Demers had been found guilty of violation of the Intercourse Act, then the Missoula County Commissioners could have demanded that others be tried. Medary's actions resulted in his becoming involved in Flathead tribal politics and this led to his eventual removal.

Medary reported that Arlee was in favor of driving all whites from the reservation. The agent observed that the Flathead chief took this position because none of his relatives were involved. Then Medary charged that Arlee committed fraud against the government and the Flathead people. The chief reportedly gave the agent the names of his people who sought work, with the understanding that they were indebted to Arlee for being put on the roster. Medary claimed that the chief did not have the support of the Flathead people. Shanahan had bribed him into removing to the reservation with the promise that he, Arlee, would be the Head Flathead Chief on the reservation. If this had not occurred, Medary thought Charlot's band would have also removed to the Jocko.

⁷²USDIA, Medary to Smith, Feb. 11, 1876.

According to Medary, the Pend d'Oreille chief, Michelle, favored allowing the whites to remain on the reservation. He had white relatives. The Kootenai Chief, Eneas, seemed indifferent. Those residents involved in the dispute were nine whites married to full-blood and half-breed wives. Of these, two claimed to live just north of the disputed northern boundary line.

Medary forwarded four questions to Commissioner Smith for decisions.

There is a pure Negro, who married a Pend d'Oreilles [sic] squaw, and he was afterwards adopted by that tribe. - Does she become a negress?

Have half breeds the same rights as pure Indians?

Have white men married to half breed or pure Indians, the same rights as half breeds?

Does a Flathead Squaw, removed from Bitter Root who afterward marries a white man, shall [sic] retain the right to draw pay as a Flat-head, and are her children born in such wedlock entitled to pay, also the same as though she had married an Indian?⁷³

Smith's reply to the questions was not among the government documents. It must have been inadequate, for such matters remained in question for several years.

Medary pressed his campaign to correct what he considered to be government injustices. He strongly supported Charlot. He considered the chief to be very intelligent and

⁷³USDIA, Medary to Smith, Jan. 28, 1876.

shrewd. Charlot visited Medary in February. He complained that Arlee had no right to be Head Flathead Chief as he was actually a Nez Perce.

Charlot also spoke of unjust taxation, the stoppage of annuity goods and other unfulfilled treaty terms. Medary said he would pay any taxes if Charlot would agree to live on the reservation. He would also make Charlot chief over Arlee.

According to the agent, the Confederated Tribes, and the Kootenai in particular, had a great desire to be self-sufficient. He reported that nearly one hundred Indians desired to become farmers, but could not because they lacked the equipment. Medary opposed the issuance of cash. He favored help in the form of horses, shops and farm equipment. He reminded Commissioner Smith that Articles IV and V of the 1855 Treaty had not been honored.⁷⁴ Medary once again asked for the construction of a hospital at the Jocko Agency and complained that the \$300 appropriation for medical services was very inadequate.

Whites continued to encroach upon Indian rights. Settlers grazed large herds of horses within the reservation's southern boundary, resulting in a depletion of hay for Indian farmers. Medary requested an immediate survey so that the southern reservation boundary could be established.

⁷⁴USDIA, Medary to Smith, Feb. 19, 1876.

Indian morals also disturbed Medary. Adultery among the Pend d'Oreille was quite common. Kootenai women were prostituting in nearby white communities. Social diseases had become a major medical problem. Medary reported that only the Flathead people remained free of crime.

While the Flathead Agent defended his people from political and social injustices, the Missoula County Commissioners continued their tax collecting campaign. They turned their attention to the foreign-born residing on the reservation. French Canadians had married into Indian families and large numbers of offspring resulted. Medary reported the resulting situation in his 1876 Annual Report.

...They have lived here unmolested [sic] for years; but the citizens of Missoula County desire them removed in order to collect taxes on their property. However, so long as they exhibit good behavior and habits of industry, I regard their presence beneficial to the Indians and deem it unwise to compel them and their offspring to remove to a community where they would be looked upon and treated like Indians in every respect except paying taxes.⁷⁵

On June 25, 1876, George C. Custer and his command were massacred by the Sioux and Cheyenne in south-central Montana. Throughout the territory, white settlements prepared for a general Indian uprising. Medary appealed for military protection. In an analysis of the situation, the Flathead

⁷⁵U.S. Rept. Comm. I.A., 1876, 493.

agent reported that if the Sioux had further successes, the general outbreak would occur. Blackfeet representatives were counseling for an alliance with the Nez Perce and Flathead Tribes. A great danger existed that the Cour d'Alene and Colville tribes would attack western Montana settlements. The Flathead Reservation was centrally located. If a major war ensued, the area would become a natural rallying point.

Medary requested that two hundred troops be stationed at either the agency or Missoula. He reported that since Custer's defeat the Confederated Tribes had become insolent. They believed that the Sioux would destroy the United States Army. His anxiety was evident in the concluding paragraph of his telegram for help.

I earnestly hope that the Dept will not delay in so important a matter and thus preclude the possibility of a wholesale slaughter of the people of Montana...⁷⁶

The plea for help was refused. The Army could not risk exposing such a small force to a major Indian onslaught. In fact, such a force was not even available.⁷⁷

As the summer and autumn passed, the Indian threat continued. In December, Medary wrote to General John Gibbon, Commander of the District of Montana. He explained that his family was also on the reservation and were in danger. The

⁷⁶USDIA, Medary to Smith, July 28, 1876.

⁷⁷USDIA, War Dept. to Secy Int., Aug. 5, 1876.

agent offered to furnish quarters for troops if they would come.⁷⁸

On the following day, he sent a special report on the situation at the reservation. The letter indicated how Medary considered the territorial Indian uprising, Arlee, and the agent's political enemies as major threats to the security of the reservation.

Medary claimed that Arlee had threatened him because he would not give Arlee funds for distribution to other Flatheads. When he saw that the threat wouldn't work, Arlee offered to share the money with Medary. When Medary refused to cooperate, Arlee became furious. He, Michelle, and Duncan McDonald, trader at the agency, and several other Indians held a meeting at Frenchtown with T.J. Demers. They determined to put Medary and his employees off the reservation. They did not rule out the use of violence.

Medary's commentary continued with an incrimination of Demers, accusing the merchant of running cattle on the reservation and selling whiskey to Indians. The agent had caused the United States District Attorney to bring suit against Demers for the illegal grazing of cattle. Medary added that he was now going to consult a lawyer to see if he could indict Demers for conspiracy.

According to Medary, other whites, including former agency

⁷⁸USDIA, Medary to Gibbon, Dec. 7, 1876.

employees and squaw-men, were attempting to incite the tribe to violence with the promise that such acts would result in a more favorable treaty and plentiful gifts of clothing, rations and tobacco, just as had been given the Sioux.

And as these Indians are fully aware of the general truth of such statements they are apparently redy [sic] to act whenever the occasion may arise.⁷⁹

Medary's report returned to his original topic, Arlee. He explained that Arlee was part Snake and part Nez Perce. He had been adopted by the Flatheads. Consequently, Arlee had considerable influence with his paternal and maternal tribes.

...He is a miser, a chronic grumbler, and a lazy and unpopular chief.⁸⁰

According to Medary, Arlee was disliked by the Flatheads who wanted him removed from his ruling position. Arlee hated religion and acted contemptuously toward Chief Eneas' generosity and good wishes.

The Pend d'Oreille Chief, Michelle, was a cripple who lived in the Jocko Valley, sixteen miles from his tribe. The tribe was ruled by Antille, Second Chief. Medary requested that chief's pay be no longer given to Arlee and

⁷⁹USDIA, Medary to Smith, Dec. 8, 1876.

⁸⁰USDIA, Ibid.

Michelle. Instead, Antille and a Flathead should be paid. The agent also considered the half-breed, Duncan McDonald, to be treacherous and a threat.

The lengthy special report may have been accurate, but it also indicated that Medary had lost control of the reservation at a critical time. The further offending of Arlee or a confrontation with McDonald or one of the other half-breeds could have easily resulted in an outbreak of hostilities.

Medary's suit against Demers resulted in a counter-suit claiming that the Flathead agent also grazed private stock on the reservation. The agent was called to Deer Lodge to defend himself. It was decided that the case would be tried on the first Monday of April, 1877. The prosecution would attempt to recover damages incurred to reservation grazing lands by Medary's stock. Medary admitted to the Commissioner that he grazed twenty or thirty head of stock near the agency, but that no harm had been done.⁸¹ By then, Medary was convinced that the District Attorney had joined the McDonald, Demers, Arlee conspiracy to remove him from office.⁸²

The agent did receive some support, for the War Department decided to send an officer with twenty troopers from Ft. Ellis to protect the agency. Reassured for his safety,

⁸¹USDIA, Medary to Smith, March 2, 1877.

⁸²Ibid: Feb. 28, 1877.

Medary instituted a campaign to remove the half-breeds from the reservation. He complained that some were related to the troublesome Nez Perce and Colville tribes. It became quite obvious that Medary planned to have Duncan McDonald removed from the Flathead Reservation.⁸³

Corruption, incompetence, bickering and government hesitation had made the Grant years a period of financial frustration. Claims from mistrusted merchants, missionaries and government employees went unheeded for years.

The Jesuit, Father Palladino, waited years for payment for flour he had furnished the agency when it was under Jones' administration. Jones and Superintendent Viall both claimed the flour had not been delivered. Palladino employed a collection agency to obtain the \$1000. Not only did the government ignore him, but they refused to return his copy of the disputed transaction. The Secretary of the Interior finally obeyed the Treasury Department ruling and paid him.

Thousands of dollars in legitimate transactions were not paid to Montana merchants until they refused to accept agency vouchers.

Grant's administration had inherited the corruption and poor organization of the 1850's and 1860's. The President's selection of aids did not help, for they were often poor choices. Grant decided to place the Indian problem in the

⁸³USDIA, Medary to Smith, Feb. 19, 1877.

hands of missionaries. If, as in the case of the Flathead Reservation, a reservation had Catholic establishments within its boundaries, itⁿ was policy to attempt to supply an agent who was not only Republican, but who would cooperate with the priests. Churches often nominated individuals who made very poor agents. Furthermore, many missionaries were so involved with Christianizing the savages that they spent little time attempting to understand and help their congregations.

All of Grant's policies did not fail. He appointed a Board of Indian Commissioners to inspect reservations, contractual agreements, and investigate minor violations. The members did not receive pay for their services and were appointed because of their desire to help the Indians. This program met with some success. In 1870, Grant established his policy of supporting missionary operated boarding schools. The program was much more successful than government day schools, for the children remained under supervision at all times.⁸⁴

Another act of Grant's administration was to eliminate the position of Territorial Superintendent in Montana. Instead of keeping the agents under the close supervision of a competent administrator, the Superintendent's office became another position sometimes filled by a dishonest official.

⁸⁴Ruth M. Underhill, Red Man's America (Chicago, 1953), 320-341.

Worse, it created jealous competition between agent and superintendent to gain favors from the Indian Commissioner.

After the first years of his administration, Grant's appointees conducted extensive, but somewhat futile inquiries of financial transactions related to Montana Indian appropriations. Wright, Shanahan, Viall, Jones and Chapman were investigated; the latter three were found guilty of irregular financial manipulations of government funds. Although few convictions resulted, the attempt had been made.

Grant's eight year administration had been a sincere but lethargic effort to solve almost insurmountable problems during a period of corruption and weak political support for its Indian program.

CHAPTER IV

THE RONAN YEARS

1877-1893

Carl Schurz, Secretary of the Interior, ordered Commissioner Smith to suspend Charles S. Medary and appoint Major Peter Ronan to the position of Flathead Agent. The Secretary's orders were issued on April 13, 1877. Ronan accepted the appointment on the 26th.¹ Mrs. Ronan commented on the appointment:

Out of a clear sky, without any solicitation on his part or on the part of any of his friends, came an appointment...to fill out the unexpired term of Major Charles S. Medary, who had been suspended and summoned to Washington, D. C. 2

Mrs. Ronan's beautiful description of the reservation indicated that someone had accomplished a great many improvements on the reservation. She told of the wild horses, grass and flowers that were knee-high and of the presence of

¹U. S. Dept. of Interior, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, Montana Superintendency, 1864-1880 (Hereafter referred to as USDIA), Chief Clerk Lockwood to Comm. Smith, Apr. 13, 1877 & Ronan to Comm. Smith, Apr. 26, 1877.

²Margaret Ronan, Memoirs of a Frontier's Woman (Hereafter referred to as Ronan Thesis) (Missoula, 1932), 239.

"...smoke stained teepes [sic].³ The agency houses were white and built into a hollow square like a military establishment. The building complex covered about an acre and consisted of nearly a dozen houses and shops. All the residences were weatherboarded and a picket fence surrounded the entire agency. Flowers and trees had been planted on the grounds. Just outside the fence, there were cattle sheds, more employees houses and a pasture.

Mrs. Ronan also recorded the condition of the Jocko Valley Indians.

I bear witness to the fact that at that time many of them did have snug log houses, well fenced farms, waving fields of grain, and grazing herds of horses and cattle; and there was evidence of husbandry and thrift and of the advance of the Indians in ways of civilization.⁴

• Medary had been replaced due to a Grand Jury hearing held the previous December. Arlee and Michelle had testified that Medary violated many government regulations. He supposedly charged the Indians for flour ground at the mill. Lumber cost twenty dollars per thousand feet and shingles were seven dollars a thousand. He reportedly charged five cents per bushel of wheat for use of the threshing machine.⁵

³Ronan Thesis, 253-258.

⁴Ibid: 245.

⁵USDIA, Rept. of U.S. Grand Jury, M. T., filed Dec. 15, 1876.

From 1877 to 1881, Rutherford B. Hayes was President. Hayes alienated Republicans sympathetic to Grant by placing liberal Republicans in high positions. Carl Schurz, Hayes' Secretary of the Interior, had been leader of the liberals. Immediately Schurz placed stringent controls on financial transactions in the Interior Department and strictly enforced some rules already in effect.

One regulation instituted by the Secretary forbade any purchases, however small, without approval from the Secretary's office. Another rule required all approved local purchases to be made under contract. Although such action did prevent corruption and favoritism, it created a clerical burden for the Indian agents. The Indians suffered from the resulting delays.

Peter Ronan took over the Jocko Agency on June 1, 1877. His first official report included an estimate of expenses for the second quarter of fiscal year 1877. Ronan insisted that good help could be obtained only if subsistence would be provided.⁶

Two days after assuming the responsibilities of Flat-head Agent, Ronan wrote the Secretary for permission to make purchases in the open market as the need arose. He argued that often advertising for contracts took too long, as emergencies often arose so that immediate purchases were necessary. In

⁶USDIA, Ronan to Smith, June 1, 1877.

his very methodical and precise way, Ronan listed his reasons why he should be granted the special privilege. Ronan indicated that agents isolated and restricted as they were, could not accurately predict exactly what their needs would be several months in advance. He reminded the Commissioner that the \$750 appropriation for every three months was to be used only for the immediate needs of the Indians. Ronan also complained that he could not predict breakdowns in mill machinery or shop needs.⁷

The agent's appeal did not result in the special privileges he desired. A series of letters concerning estimated miscellaneous purchases, for a total of over \$1500, resulted in permission to advertise in the Helena Independent for bids.

The fact that officials in Washington, D. C. did not recognize that prices in Montana were considerably higher than in the states, caused considerable difficulty for western agents.⁸ A good example of this problem was the result of a series of messages between Ronan, Smith and Schurz. The agent had requested permission to purchase badly needed beef and flour. Schurz finally approved the transaction with the stipulation that the beef could be bought for not more than four cents a pound.⁹ Such restrictive measures resulted in

⁷Ibid: June 3, 1877.

⁸USDIA, Smith to Ronan, Aug. 30, 1877.

⁹Ibid: Secy. Int. to Comm., Dec. 27, 1878.

undue hardships on agency employees and the poorer Indians.

Soon Ronan began making unauthorized purchases on the open market and then requesting approval from his superiors. This technique became policy with the agent. Although many of his transactions were questioned, few were rejected.

Each time the agency needed items that had but one price, the same procedure was followed. In a request for postage stamps, Ronan had to list how many stamps of each denomination were on hand. Once again, the request went through channels to the Secretary's office where it was approved.¹⁰ The smallest request recorded was for a \$5.05 purchase.¹¹

Ronan also disputed the wisdom of refusing to supply employees with food. A month after taking over the agency, Ronan informed Commissioner Smith that he had been able to hire employees only by promising them subsistence. Ronan suggested that two positions be eliminated and the pay for the two released employees be used to purchase food.

Major Ronan succeeded in getting his way in many financial matters because he wore down any opposition with reason and insistence. Contrary to some former agents, he remained diplomatic in his correspondence to all parties. Much of his logic could not be disputed. Although seemingly insignificant to the reservation's history, the agent's

¹⁰USDIA, Ronan to Smith, Oct. 12, 1877.

¹¹Ibid: Schurz to Smith, Aug. 30, 1878.

ability to cope with the Interior Department's short-sightedness resulted in unprecedented success.

During the late 1870's, Agent Ronan experienced several accidents. All resulted from worn-out equipment. One unauthorized bill for thirty dollars for repairs on a wagon became necessary when a defective brake gave way on a downhill grade. Another time a kingbolt on the agency buggy gave way and Ronan was thrown out. The harnesses on the horses were ruined. Ronan appealed for reimbursement on the repair bills and the Secretary denied him the expenses, which included a new set of harness.

By the time the repair bill had been rejected, a year had transpired. Ronan issued an additional letter explaining for the second time how the accidents had occurred. In his second account, Ronan added that the Delegate from Montana, Martin Maginnis, had been involved in one of the accidents and could verify that repairs were necessary. Ronan informed Commissioner Smith that the agent had no way of anticipating needs arising from accidents. The disputed vouchers were honored.¹²

Travel expenses were major items in the agency's cash account. The agent or employees traveled to and from Missoula for supplies, mail and to investigate complaints against Indians. Such trips resulted in over-night stays in Missoula.

¹²USDIA, Ronan to Comm., Dec. 29, 1879.

Stabling and feeding of agency horses by Plummer and Andrews of Missoula cost one dollar a feeding. Usually the employees ate and stayed at William Kennedy's hotel. Meals were seventy-five cents and lodging was the same.¹³ A business trip to Helena in 1878 cost \$78.75.¹⁴ Even trips to St. Ignatius by the agent or the reservation doctor were costly, though somewhat cheaper than to Missoula.¹⁵ Ferries, improved roads and bridges often were toll. It was policy for agency employees to pay for overnight lodging even among the reservation Indians.

On February 21, 1878, the Commissioner issued orders forbidding any extra expenses. Later, Ronan received instructions to conduct a census of the reservation. Such a survey of reservation population would have required weeks of travel throughout the reservation and the expense would have been considerable. Ronan refused to carry out the orders until the money was appropriated to cover his expenses.¹⁶

Peter Ronan's early financial problems were overshadowed by the threat of Indian war. Fortunately for white residents and the Confederated Tribes, a military post was finally

¹³U. S. Dept. of the Interior, Cash Book, Oct. 22, 1877.

¹⁴Ibid: Oct. 22, 1878.

¹⁵Ibid: July 10, 1877.

¹⁶USDIA, Ronan to Comm., July 15, 1878.

established in the Missoula area.¹⁷ Martin Maginnis used his political influence to convince the Federal Government that a military post in the Missoula area was necessary. In January, 1876, General Wesley Merritt arrived in Missoula to investigate how practical such an establishment would be. The General was entertained so royally by local residents that he agreed that the post should be built and favored all three sites suggested by the Missoula citizens.

Merritt's visit was followed by a more businesslike force under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Gilbert of the 7th. Infantry. Gilbert marched his troops through Missoula, across the river and set up camp on the east bank of the Bitterroot River. His men surveyed Section 31, township 13 N., range 20W and claimed the area as a government reserve.

Medary's difficulties with Arlee hastened the fort's construction. On June 4, 1877, Captains C.C. Rawn and William Logan, with forty-four enlisted men, took possession of the plot. The fort was officially established on June 25, 1877. At first, it was called Post at Missoula. On November 8, it received the title of Fort Missoula.¹⁸

Construction on the fort suffered a temporary delay by the decision of Joseph's band of Nez Perce to attempt an

¹⁷ Missoulian Sentinel, Centennial Edition, Section A, page 20, July 27, 1960, Missoula. The information about the founding of Ft. Missoula was obtained from Will Cave by the "Missoulian."

¹⁸ Robert W. Frazer, Forts of the West (Norman, Okla., 1965), 83.

escape to Canada.

Joseph's tribe's actions created another serious threat of a major Indian uprising. Some officials thought that if Joseph's former allies, the Flathead, would join the movement, all tribes would follow. Governor Benjamin F. Potts sent a message to Ronan requesting that a conference be held with all Confederated chiefs and the Jesuits. The agent was to lead a discussion on the Nez Perce problem and report to the governor on the attitude of the tribes.¹⁹

On the same day as Pott's letter arrived at the agency, Captain Rawn arrived. He desired information on the reservation Indian's attitude toward Joseph. Ronan, Rawn, John Sheehan, a local merchant, and an interpreter started for St. Ignatius to call the chiefs to council. Pend d'Oreille Head-Chief Michelle met them on the road. He agreed to council with them later at the agency.

On the 6th. of July, Second Chief of the Pend d'Oreille, André called the Confederated Tribes into council. Fathers Leopold Van Gorp and Joseph Bendini also attended. The Confederated Tribes reaffirmed their loyalty to the whites and assured the officials they would go to war against any tribes making war on Montana whites. Captain Rawn then requested that scouts be sent out to guard the passes. The chiefs replied that they would do this if the scouts would

¹⁹USDIA, Potts to Ronan, June 29, 1877.

be paid for their services. Since neither the War Department or the Interior Department had authorized such an expense, the proposal failed. The Indians agreed to relay any news to the Captain and Ronan.

Arlee met the officials at the agency. He and Michelle insisted that the reservation tribes would remain loyal.²⁰

As Ronan's party hurried up the Bitterroot Valley for conferences with the Flatheads, they met the Nez Perce Chief Eagle-of-the-Light. He was driving a band of horses toward Lolo Pass. Three weeks before the crisis, a party of Nez Perce had left Missoula for Idaho. A runner had informed them of Joseph's uprising and they went into camp to await advice. Eagle-of-the-Light was taking fresh horses to the group so they could return to Missoula. He planned to encamp with his people near the fort.

On Saturday, July 14, Eagle-of-the-Light appeared at the agency along with the Pend d'Oreille Chief, Michelle. The Nez Perce chief reported that the band of eleven lodges he had rescued from Lolo Canyon were encamped near Fort Owen in the Bitterroot. Michelle stated that the reservation chiefs had agreed to shelter the refugee Nez Perce on the reservation if Ronan agreed. Ronan told them that it was bad policy to have Nez Perce among them, as it would cause

²⁰USDIA, Ronan to Potts, June 29, 1877. Ronan's report is confusing. Apparently the conference attended by the Jesuits was held at St. Ignatius.

the whites to become suspicious of the Confederated Tribes. Ronan again suggested to Eagle-of-the-Light that he and his people move to Fort Missoula.²¹

Although Ronan's suggestion was verbally accepted by the chiefs, Eagle-of-the-Light remained near the agency. Within a few days, his people entered the Jocko Valley and encamped near Arlee's house, where they remained until the crisis was over.²²

Ronan, Rawn and the interpreter, Baptiste Marengo, arrived at the St. Mary's Mission on Sunday, July 8. Father D'Aste arranged for a meeting with Charlot. Most of the Bitterroot Flatheads were returning from fishing and digging for camas roots in various prairies. Twenty lodges were encamped near Missoula.

Ronan asked Charlot what his position would be in a confrontation between whites and Nez Perce. Charlot replied:

My father's name was Victor - he was the Head Chief of this Nation; he made the treaty with Governor Stephens [sic] eighteen years

²¹USDIA, Ronan to Potts, July 17, 1877.

²²Ronan Thesis, 264. Agent Ronan's anxiety over Eagle-of-the-Light's presence was not unfounded. At a council in August, 1861, the Nez Perce chief had favored war and an alliance with the warlike Shoshone. At another council at Lapwai, in 1863, Eagle-of-the-Light sided with Joseph in opposition to signing a new treaty. In June of the same year Eagle-of-the-Light threatened to unite his Nez Perce with the Blackfeet & Crow to kill all whites in Idaho and Montana. See: H. H. Bancroft, Bancroft's Works (San Francisco, 1890), Vol. XXXI, 482, 483, 491.

ago; It was my fathers boast that the blood of a Whiteman never reddened the hands of a single Indian of the Flathead tribe. My father died with that boast on his lips - I am my father's son and will leave that same boast to my children.²³

Ronan then asked Charlot if he would help the whites in a war against the Nez Perce. The Flathead chief said:

If danger threatens I will send runners to inform the settlers and the Captain of the soldiers and you, the Agent, I will do all in my power to defend the Whites and their homes, but I cannot send my young men out to make war on the Nez Perces. When my old enemy, the Blackfeet, came here to redden the Valley with my peoples blood, the Nez Perces assisted us and helped to drive them away. No, I cannot send my young men out to fight them, but I will help to protect the Whiteman's home.²⁴

Charlot informed the officials that the Nez Perce Chief, Red Owl, and fifteen lodges of his people had been killed by whites on the Clearwater River. The chief had been peaceful and had not anticipated trouble. A member of Joseph's band, who had been a prisoner, had led the whites to Red Owl's camp. The whites thought they were attacking Joseph's camp.

Ronan's isolation in the Jocko Valley served him well as a listening post for activities of other tribes. During the July crisis, the Mountain Chief of the Blackfoot Nation

²³USDIA, Ronan to Smith, July 11, 1877.

²⁴Ibid.

visited among the Confederated Tribes. Although the chief's visit was considered to be a pleasure trip, Arlee reported that during the previous winter peace negotiations had been agreed upon between the Confederated Tribes and the Blackfeet. The Blackfeet were very disgruntled, for although they were at peace, the whites would not sell them guns and ammunition to pursue the buffalo.

Arlee told Ronan:

...if one outbreak occurred [sic] among the Blackfeet, this Agency would, in all likelihood be taken in by them, as the Blackfeet would make war on his people if they would not join them, a proposition which he holds the Indians here will never accede [sic] to.²⁵

At the same time as Joseph's threat, a council was held between the Spokanes and the Nez Perce. Antoine Piont had been ordered to report the results to the Flathead Tribes as soon as possible.

Ronan appraised the real danger to be from Columbia and Snake River tribes. He thought that if they entered Montana, the Confederated Chiefs would lose control of their young men. The agent also feared white violence for he was convinced the whites "...would be only too glad for an opportunity sic for plunder and rapine."²⁶

²⁵USDIA, Ronan to Potts, July 17, 1877.

²⁶USDIA, Ronan to Smith, July 11, 1877.

Agent Ronan fully realized the precarious position that he and his family were in. He wrote to Governor Potts:

Although I have not apprehension of any Indian trouble here, it is always well to be prepared for the worst, and I am, therefore disappointed that you cannot furnish me the arms and ammunition I requested, to be kept at the Agency to defend our lives and Government property in case of an attack. I am entirely without means of defense as there is not a single fire-arm at the Agency.²⁷

Major Ronan was away from the agency when the first news arrived that Joseph's band was headed over Lolo Pass. On July 20, inaccurate reports placed the hostiles in the Bitterroot, just forty miles from the reservation. On July 23, actual contact was made with Joseph in the Lolo Valley. From the 20th. to the 25th., the Flathead agent rode back-and-forth between the agency and Missoula in an attempt to keep track of his Indians. Each day, attack from the Nez Perce became more likely.

At the peak of the crisis, the agent's baby son became seriously ill. No doctor was at the agency nor was there anyone to send for help. Ronan hitched his fastest team to his wagon and hurried to Missoula. While he was gone, a runner arrived at the agency with the news that the Nez Perce were moving through Missoula and heading for the

²⁷USDIA, Ronan to Potts, July 17, 1877. This probably was an exaggeration for Ronan not only had hunting weapons but he carried a gun when he made the trips from Missoula to the agency with the payroll.

reservation. He reported that they were planning on taking the Kootenai Trail to Canada. All women and children were in the County Courthouse and the Nez Perce were attacking Missoula.

The following noon, Ronan returned with the good news that Missoula remained untouched but the Nez Perce were still expected. On July 25, the Missoulian had carried the headlines, "Help! "Help! White Bird Defiant. Come Running!"²⁸

Arlee's small band of Flatheads and the Ronan family were just a short distance from the path of any hostile force moving through Evaro Canyon. Michelle and a party of his best warriors moved into the Jocko Valley and camped just outside of the agency grounds.²⁹

The Bitterroot crisis actually began on July 18 when scouting parties in Lolo Canyon met a half-breed who had escaped from Joseph. He verified the fact that the Nez Perce were moving down the pass toward the Bitterroot.

Five officers and thirty enlisted men, with the support of a large force of volunteers constructed a blockade in Lolo Canyon at a point where Rawn thought the Nez Perce could not pass. Joseph stopped his forces and camped. Not wishing to endure an open skirmish with the shites, Joseph's

²⁸Ronan Thesis, 264-266. For an account of how unfounded rumors had spread throughout the U. S. see Ignatius Burns, "The Jesuits, the Northern Indians, and the Nez Perce War of 1877" (Pacific NW Quarterly, Vol. 42,1951), 40-76.

²⁹Ibid:

band crossed over a low range of hills on the south side of the canyon, thus bypassing Rawn's positions and entered the Bitterroot Valley.

Charlot had busied himself collecting his small tribe into a fighting group. When he heard that Joseph was actually moving toward the Bitterroot, the Flathead chief personally conducted white settlers to Ft. Owen and other places of relative safety.

When Joseph appeared in the Lolo Canyon, Charlot met him. According to the chief, he refused to take Joseph's hand, saying that it was stained with the white man's blood. Charlot told him:

...if you steal a calf, or a little chicken from Charlot's friends, Charlot and his soldiers will strike you as his fathers knifed the Blackfeet, on all sides, and spare nobody....³⁰

Amos Buck, a resident of Stevensville in later years reminisced:

...but for Charlot's heroic [sic] intervention, and against superior number [sic] all the families of the valley would have been massacred.³¹

Joseph's band moved unmolested up the Bitterroot Valley. No whites were abused. In fact, as soon as they realized

³⁰Henry B. Carrington, "The Exodus of the Flathead Indians" (Manuscript), Chapt. VII, folio 7.

³¹Carrington Manuscript, Chapt. VII, folio 8.

that the danger was over, the white citizens began selling supplies to the needy Nez Perce. Within a few days, the hostiles crossed the mountains at the southern end of the valley and stopped to rest in the Big Hole.

Captain Rawn, abandoned by the civilian volunteers, had a force much too small to pursue Joseph. Leaving his blockade, later called Ft. Fizzle, Rawn marched his men back to Missoula. On the 29th., Company G of the 7th. Infantry arrived. By August 4, the Missoula troops, reinforced by six newly arrived companies, marched up the Bitterroot for their encounter with Joseph in the Battle of the Big Hole.

Apprehension over possible Indian raids continued throughout 1877. After the Big Hole, Joseph's band disappeared, only to reappear in Yellowstone National Park. Then the news reported that Joseph was headed north again. Montana again faced the threat of a major conflict. In October, Joseph was captured in the Bear Paw Mountains of north-central Montana.

For the people of the Bitterroot Valley and Missoula, the crisis was over. Charlot's Flatheads had saved the settlers. Soon the whites created a situation that threatened the Confederated Tribes with death.

Father L. B. Palladino had visited the site of the Big Hole conflict. In his travels, he observed the mental attitude of the whites. By the middle of August, the Jesuit priest was in Deer Lodge. He sent a message to Ronan, reporting the

danger of white attacks on any Indians east of the Rockies. He suggested that the agent keep the tribes on the reservation and in the Bitterroot, supplying them with provisions so that a fall hunt would not be necessary.³²

A few days later, Palladino changed his mind. Word had reached him that a violent hail storm had destroyed the Flat-head crops. A hunt, even if dangerous, was preferable to starvation.³³

The possibility of a successful hunt had been shattered by the Indian Commissioner's Office on August 3. An order had been sent to Agent Ronan prohibiting the sale of arms and ammunition to any Indians.

Ronan attempted to have the order rescinded. The Kootenai tribe had but six families practicing farming. All others depended entirely upon hunting for food. Ronan believed that white refusal to sell them ammunition would result in their being "...reduced to hunger and desperation [sic,] and I fear for the consequences."³⁴ The Pend d'Oreille were hardly better prepared to face the restriction than the Kootenai. Although some farmed, most still depended on the chase for food. Due to the Nez Perce threat, most had remained on the reservation during the summer. By autumn, a big hunt had been prepared. Ronan predicted that they would

³²USDIA, Palladino to Ronan, Aug. 15, 1877.

³³Ibid: Aug. 18, 1877.

³⁴USDIA, Ronan to Comm., Aug. 20, 1877.

obtain ammunition even if force became necessary. The reservation Flathead were better off, due to money obtained from the Garfield Agreement. If the Kootenai and Pend d'Oreille decided to get food or go to war, the Flathead would follow.

The Confederated Tribes had good reason to resort to violence. From the time the first trading post had been established, they had been able to purchase arms and ammunition. Ronan wrote to the Commissioner for permission to sell ammunition.

...and now during the bloody war which is raging in our Territory these Indians stand foremost [sic,] with arms in their hands, in defense of the Whites, and to their address intrepidity do the people of the county of missoula owe and are not ashamed to own it their lives and property; and for this service, instead of promise and encouragement, they are to be prohibited from supporting their families, and will be compelled either to fight or famish unless my request is granted.³⁵

Father D'Aste also realized the seriousness of the government action. He appealed to Ronan for help. Charlot and his head-men were complaining that Governor Potts and Captain Rawm had been insincere in their talks after Charlot saved the settlers.³⁶

Ronan replied that he had supplies available for distribution but could not provide Charlot's band with any until

³⁵USDIA, Ronan to Comm., Aug. 20, 1877.

³⁶Ibid: D'Aste to Ronan, Sept. 20, 1877.

he obtained permission from the Commissioner.

Ronan informed D'Aste:

In regard to ammunition, orders are imperative against the sale to any Indians and however deplorable must be obeyed.³⁷

Word of protests from Ronan and the Jesuits reached the military. General Phil Sheridan, not wishing to make such a decision, authorized Colonel John Gibbon to rescind the order if he deemed it necessary.³⁸

Charlot had been unfair in his criticism of Potts for the Montana Governor appealed to Secretary Schurz for a decision favorable to the Flatheads. He forwarded a letter from D'Aste, restating the Flathead loyalty and that due to hail storms and military activity during harvest time, they had lost their crops. New rifles had been purchased at high prices just before the curb on the sale of ammunition had gone into effect.³⁹

Inquiries from the Interior Department placed the decision once more upon Sheridan. He finally agreed to allow the Flathead Tribes to

...purchase...powder lead and caps for muzzle loaders, - good enough for hunting - but not metallic ammunition, used only in war.⁴⁰

³⁷USDIA, Ronan to D'Aste, Sept. 21, 1877.

³⁸Ibid: Sheridan Report, Sept. 27, 1877.

³⁹Ibid: Potts to Schurz, Oct. 1, 1877. Note: This letter appears in the 1880 file.

⁴⁰USDIA. War Dept. to Comm.. Oct. 31. 1877.

Such ammunition was worthless because very few muzzle loaders existed among the Confederated Tribes. Sheridan had lied since metallic ammunition was used in the pursuit of game. The buffalo, lethargic before the white man arrived, were, by 1877, quite wild and more difficult to approach. Long-range weapons were necessary to make kills and also to protect the tribes from the Blackfeet and Crow who had modern weapons.

Just four months after the Bitterroot whites were saved by Charlot's band, Watson and Blair, sheep-ranchers in Meagher County, complained to the military that the Flathead's dogs had attacked their flocks. Ronan investigated the claim and discovered that seven sheep had been killed and others injured. The Flathead had also pulled down fences blocking their route to the Judith Basin. The band had been led by Adolphe, Second Chief, and Little Big Man, Fifth Chief of the Bitterroot Indians.

Ronan used his report on the incident to remind the Commissioner of the grave injustices the tribe had been subjected to. It was imperative that they go to the Hunt if they wanted to survive. Although Governor Potts had requested that they be allowed to purchase ammunition, the appeal had been denied. Ronan had not been granted permission to issue supplies to Charlot's people on the basis that funds were not available.⁴¹

⁴¹USDIA, Ronan to Comm., Jan. 10, 1878.

By December, many of the reservation Indians had returned from an unsuccessful hunt. At one time, a thousand were encamped in the immediate vicinity of the Jocky Agency. Ronan promised them that the helpless members would receive aid. He put the young men to work splitting rails, hauling logs, and doing other necessary manual tasks with the promise that they would be paid with supplies that had been contracted for. John D. Sheean & Co. of Missoula had the goods on hand but permission to have them delivered to the agency had been delayed.

During the July crisis, Ronan had used personal funds to purchase various goods and had distributed them to the Indians as an inducement to keep them on the reservation. Because of the hesitation of the Commissioner to grant permission to obtain the contracted supplies, Ronan again spent his own money to pacify the Indians. He distributed the goods during Christmas week. Among the supplies were two hundred bushels of wheat. Ronan had the wheat ground into flour and issued it to help prevent starvation.⁴² The contracted supplies from Missoula were not delivered until the following summer.

In the autumn of 1877, the Commissioner informed Ronan of a potential trouble area approximately ninety miles west of the Flathead Reservation. In anticipation of the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad, a few white

⁴²USDIA, Ronan to Comm., Jan. 15, 1878.

settlers had moved into a fertile valley called Horse Plains. By 1877, the whites had become disillusioned, for they were still without a market for their crops and incidents had occurred between the whites and the Pend d'Oreille. Most of the Lower Pend d'Oreille lived near the Columbia River, but some preferred Horse Plains because of its excellent hunting and fishing.

Ronan and two companions left the agency on December 3rd. On the way to the disputed valley they met Simon, Second Chief of the Lower Pend d'Oreille. A council was arranged and Ronan's party returned to the troubled reservation.

On the 26th. of December, Ronan met with Simon, Charles A. Lynch, the complaintant, and other interested parties at St. Ignatius. Ronan discovered that injustices had been committed by both races. He demanded that both sides remain peaceful and told all parties that members of either race would be treated severely if offenses occurred. Simon declared that some of his people were unmanageable but that he would try to control them. The chief told of a council held the previous summer. Six tribes had met with a representative of the United States Government. Simon had not been sure of what the man said but thought the official wanted to put the tribes in corrals rather than on reservations. In his report on the St. Ignatius council, Ronan suggested to the Commissioner that Horse Plains be made into an Indian reservation.⁴³

⁴³USDIA, Ronan to Comm., Dec. 10, 1877 & Jan. 2, 1878.

His advise was not taken and disputes continued for several years.

In spite of continued unrest, Mrs. Ronan reminisced that from the end of 1877 to July, 1878, only minor troubles such as Indian police discipline and white trespassers interrupted the general business of the agency.⁴⁴ In July, the Nez Perce threat returned to the reservation.

About the 8th. of July, an Indian runner arrived at the Jocko Agency. He reported that a small party of Nez Perce belonging to White Bird's band had left the British territories with the intent to return to Idaho. The runner reported that they would possibly use the Jocko Trail route. Ronan dispatched a scout to obtain more accurate information. He returned on the 11th., reporting that about eighteen Nez Perce had taken a trail for Missoula. A short time later, a messenger arrived from Missoula with the news that two men had been murdered on Deep Creek, which put the raiders a day's journey closer to and east of the reservation. Missoula authorities had assumed the killings had been made by reservation Indians. Ronan sent his information to Fort Missoula. Before troops could be dispatched, the hostiles passed the Missoula area to the east and moved into the Rock Creek area on the east side of the Sapphire Range. Here they killed three more white men and proceeded in the direction

⁴⁴Ronan Thesis, 279.

of Ross Hole at the south end of the Bitterroot Valley.

Ronan hurried to Michelle's home for a conference. The agent recorded part of the conversation. They discussed the threat created by the killers and by other marauding bands reportedly heading for the area.

Michelle: ...sent out small murdering parties to come through Montana to the Lapwai reserve in Idaho, to murder as they go through this Territory, and commit all sorts of crimes in Idaho and incite the reservation Nez Perces to war, with a promise that Sitting Bull and his warriors will come and help them. This is only my opinion. Perhaps this band of marauders act without his consent.⁴⁵

Agent: Do you think it best, in order to be prepared, to send scouts on the two trails leading to the north through this reservation?

Michelle: It is the only way to protect the country. Indians can scout on the trails north of here, and can give you and me information in time to head them off.

Agent: Will you send out scouts?

Michelle: Yes, if they can have arms, ammunition and provisions, and some hope of reward.

Agent: Providing I can get you these things will you be willing to have white men go with them?

Michelle: Yes, provided you choose the white men and half-breeds, and that the scouts be under yours and my control and report to you, when you can easily report to the soldiers when signs are seen.⁴⁶

⁴⁵The first part of the discussion was not recorded. It is supposed that Michelle spoke of White Bird's activities. USDIA, Ronan to Comm., July 27, 1878.

⁴⁶USDIA, Ronan to Comm., July 27, 1878.

While Ronan and Michelle arranged for the defense of the reservation, rumors began arriving that Chief Moses was leading the Columbia River tribes on a warpath directed at Missoula. White settlers in the path of the reported invasion were abandoning their homes and fleeing to the towns.

In 1878, a mail route to Washington still did not exist. Mail between Montana and Washington was still sent through San Francisco, resulting in long delays. Because of this communication problem Ronan sent a runner named Kramee to Camp Coeur D'Alene for information. Captain William Mills, commander of the 25th. Infantry at the camp, reported all tribes in the area were peaceful. He anticipated no hostilities. General Howard's forces had turned the Nez Perce war parties eastward so contact with the Washington tribes had been prevented.

While Ronan was gathering information on Indian movements, a small force of thirteen regulars, two citizens, and a guide under the command of Lt. Wallace overtook the Nez Perce raiding party on a branch of the Clearwater River in Idaho. Wallace's report indicated that six of the Nez Perce were killed. Thirteen escaped, but most of the Indian's horses and mules had been killed.⁴⁷

⁴⁷Note: Wallace's 1st. name not given in rept. USDIA, Ronan to Comm., July 29, 1878. The head man in the Nez Perce party was Yellow Wolf. He claimed that none of his people were killed. He also indicated that the killing of whites had resulted from the language problem. See: L.V. McWhorter, Hear Me My Chiefs! (Caldwell, Idaho, 1952), 517-520. Merrill D. Beal, I Will Fight No More Forever (Seattle, 1963), 280-282.

The white settlers' excitement did not surpass the Indians' anxiety. Ronan reported that he encountered great difficulty in keeping the reservation Indians at home. He feared he would run out of supplies before the crops could be harvested.⁴⁸

During the Nez Perce raid, the citizens of Meagher County in central Montana, sent a petition to the military, protesting Indian travel through their country. They claimed Nez Perce and Pend d'Oreille also moved through the area. According to the settlers, the Flatheads not only committed deprivations, but were a shield for war parties. They declared their intention to put into effect a defense plan against all Indians.⁴⁹

Ronan was criticized by his superior for allowing the Flatheads to go on the hunt. He wrote the Commissioner a reminder that in a letter dated October 22, 1877, the Commissioner had stated that Ronan had no jurisdiction over the Bitterroot Flatheads.

Winter once again gave Ronan a brief respite from the danger of marauding bands, but not from white criticism. The Legislative Assembly of Montana Territory sent a memorial

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USDIA, Ronan to Comm., July 29, 1878.

⁴⁹USDIA, Copy of a petition of citizens of Meagher County, signed by C. C. Gilbert, Lt. Col., 7th Inf., July 24, 1878.

to President Hayes entitled, "Confining Indians on Reservations."⁵⁰ The memorial consisted of three pages of condemnation of all Indians. According to the document, all red men were nomads who roamed throughout Montana burning fences and killing livestock. According to the Montana citizens, Lemhi Indians and the Pend d'Oreille were especially guilty of deprivations.

Ronan had the proof that his Indians were innocent. From September, 1878 to March, 1879, all reservation Indians remained on the reserve except twenty lodges of Pend d'Oreille under Big Cave. The small party had gone on the winter buffalo hunt under the supervision of a military escort. The hunters not only had the permission of the Commanding Officer of the Montana Military District, but they were under written orders dictated by Michelle directing them to behave.⁵¹

On the same day that Ronan forwarded this information to the Commissioner, he wrote a second letter to his superior, requesting permission to let a small force of Indians go to the spring hunt. They were to be under the agent's written orders and would have a specially selected Indian police force to supervise their behavior. The agent explained that gradually the hunt was being abandoned in favor of farming, but for a time the Indians would consider the discontinuance of

⁵⁰USDIA, Legis. Assembly to Pres. Hayes, Feb. 5, 1879.

⁵¹USDIA, Ronan to Comm., March 3, 1879.

the chase to be a gross injustice.⁵²

The Commissioner did not reply. On March 26, Ronan issued passes to reservation Flatheads. Charlot's people had completed a successful hunt. Arlee sent fresh horses to help bring in the "...spoils of the chase."⁵³

In the years following 1878, Indian hostilities in western Montana gradually diminished. Most problems were created by small groups of drifters moving aimlessly throughout the area. Indian outrages against whites occurred, but the reservation tribes remained under the control of their chiefs and Agent Ronan. Some Nez Perce women and an occasional man visited the Flathead Reservation. Since the non-reservation Nez Perce were considered to be enemies of the United States, Ronan placed the men under arrest. This usually meant keeping them under Indian supervision or transferring the fugitives to Ft. Missoula.

In July of 1879, Eneas, Chief of the Kootenai on the reservation, appeared at the agency. He reported that a Nez Perce runner had arrived at his camp. The messenger represented the interests of ten lodges of Nez Perce which had deserted White Bird's hostiles. The small party had encamped at a place called Tobacco Plains, just north of the American border. Their situation was hazardous. Eneas reported that

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³USDIA, Ronan to Comm., March 27, 1879.

a small force of Nez Perce, attempting to catch up with the large group had been attacked by Gros Ventres and had been massacred (this was speculation for it may have been members of some other alien tribe that killed the Nez Perce). The surviving Nez Perce desired to live on the Flathead Reservation.

Ronan replied that if they came upon the reservation, he would take their weapons and horses and wait for orders from the Government. If they did not give up their arms, he would use the Indian police and, if necessary, troops from Ft. Missoula.

While the Nez Perce discussed their next move, Ronan gathered information about the band. There were fifteen lodges at Tobacco Plains under the leadership of the brothers of the deceased Looking Glass and of Eagle-of-the-Light. In a report to the Commissioner, Ronan reported:

...the Indians of this encampment are among the best and bravest of the unfortunate Nez Percés who were drawn into the war by evil influences and evil council; that they were overwhelmed by their misfortunes and utterly subdued by their chastisement, but owing to the exaggerated reports of the unhealthy climate in which Joseph is located, and the stories told to them that the tribe of Joseph is fast disappearing from the face of the earth by pestilence and death, they would rather face famine, or death by the whites, than consent to take their families to Joseph's reservation.⁵⁴

⁵⁴USDIA, Ronan to Comm., Oct. 6, 1879.

A second runner to Ronan presented him with the Nez Perces' proposals. Their first choice was to be permitted to settle in unoccupied country along the north shore of Flathead Lake. They would give up their weapons and become farmers. If their first idea was unaccepted, they would be willing to settle on any part of the reservation and be under the same rules and regulations as the Confederated Tribes. If either idea would be accepted by Ronan, the Nez Perce would immediately settle down to farming and do all in their power to encourage White Bird's band to come on the reservation.

Ronan appealed for swift action on the propositions by the Commissioner. If the Government would not permit the Nez Perce to settle in the area, he desired permission to care for them during the approaching winter. If he would not be permitted to represent the government, Ronan asked that he be allowed to help the Nez Perce until the Commission arrived.⁵⁵

Indian Commissioner E. A. Hoyt replied by telegram. Ronan could invite the Nez Perce to enter the reservation and feed them, but they would have to enter as prisoners of war.

A meeting took place at St. Ignatius Mission. The Nez Perce were represented by Eagle-of-the-Light, Red Mountain and the brother of the dead Looking Glass, named Tuk-Alik-

⁵⁵The Treaty of 1855 ended Dec. 31, 1879. The expected Commission would settle any major problems and arrange for a new or renewed agreement. USDIA, Ronan to Comm., Oct. 6, 1879.

Shimei. The two former Nez Perce had remained near the Flat-head Agency during the fighting. Rev. J. M. Cataldo acted as interpreter.

Ronan explained the contents of Hoyt's telegram to the Nez Perce. Tuk-Alik-Shimei favored removing to the reservation but would not decide for his people. He feared they would consider the offer a conspiracy to get them on Joseph's reservation on the southern plains. The Nez Perce leader promised Ronan that he would return in the spring.⁵⁶

According to Ronan's information, the Nez Perce encampment returned to the Sioux Chief, Sitting Bull's camp and rejoined White Bird for the winter. In July of 1880, Tuk-Alik-Shimei sent a runner to the Jocko Agency. He reported that White Bird's whole band of refugee Nez Perce were headed for the reservation. Ronan described the band for the Commissioner:

There are about one hundred and forty people, including men, women, and children, and they are traveling mostly on foot, having disposed of their horses and guns for provisions for their starving women and children. On their journey here of hundreds of miles thro [sic] a mountainous wilderness the runner informed me, they depend solely upon their bows and arrows, and fish-hooks for subsistence, - that they are almost-naked, and that the once renowned chief White-Bird is utterly broken in spirit - and health, and is perfectly blind. White Bird and his family have not a horse left,⁵⁷ and the blind Chief is being led hither on foot.

⁵⁶USDIA, Ronan to Comm., Nov. 10, 1879.

⁵⁷USDIA, Ronan to Comm., July 28, 1880.

Ronan asked for provisions and clothing to care for the Nez Perce. The agent favored permitting them to remain on the reservation. He was quite sympathetic with the Nez Perce refugees and indicated that he had great confidence in their ability to adjust to an agriculturally oriented life.⁵⁸

What happened to the Nez Perce plan to enter the reservation is not recorded in the government documents. White Bird, who also was a shaman, apparently died in Canada. He reportedly had been murdered by a Nez Perce father after two children under the chiefs care had died.⁵⁹

Ronan continued his efforts to help the Nez Perce. Finally, in 1885, Joseph and remnants of his band were transferred to the Colville Reservation in Washington.⁶⁰

Peter Ronan's reputation as a just agent became widely known among the western tribes. In August, 1887, Cree refugees from the Riel Rebellion of 1885 sent a half-breed, Pierre Busha, to the Flathead Reservation. He appealed to the chiefs to allow sixty families to settle on the reserve. Michelle declared that all land had been taken. Two months later, Busha returned to the reservation and consulted with Ronan. Busha requested permission to settle on public land or on a reservation in the United States or its territories. The Federal Government replied that no promises would be made.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹McWhorter, Hear Me, My Chiefs!, 524.

⁶⁰Ronan Thesis, 272-288.

Busha returned to the British territory and the idea was not further pursued by Ronan.⁶¹

Except for raids from plains tribes and personal feuds, the Flathead Reservation had remained generally free of homicidal violence. Unruly individuals had always been present but they had presented no major problem to the reservation. With the coming of the Northern Pacific Railroad and more frequent white contacts, the Flathead Agent experienced an increase in reservation crimes. Ronan's reputation among the tribes benefitted from such problems. He possessed a great amount of courage and the Indians admired his boldness. Mrs. Ronan boasted about an incident that occurred before 1890. Major Ronan

...walked into a council of forty sullen Indians and demanded that they surrender to him the Indian desperado, Koonsa, handcuffed the prisoner, and, accompanied only by a driver, set off to deliver the murderer safely at the county jail in Missoula, and did so.⁶²

In 1885, an altercation at Arlee Station resulted in the death of one Indian and the wounding of another. Other Indians threatened the white trader and the postmaster who had shot the two drunks. Before the night ended, Ronan and Arlee had prevented a serious confrontation between the army and the tribes. The incident developed into the infamous

⁶¹Verne Dusenberry, "The Rocky Boy Indians" (The Montana Magazine of History, Winter, 1954), 1-15.

⁶²Ronan Thesis, 346.

Pierre Paul episode. At its conclusion, one Indian and two whites had been murdered and four Indians and half-breeds were hung in Missoula.⁶³

The removal of Charlot's band from the Bitterroot continued to be a major problem to white settlers and government officials. In August of 1877, Ronan discovered the existence of the fifty-one land patents Medary had been unable to distribute to the Bitterroot Flatheads.⁶⁴ His letter of inquiry resulted in orders to issue the patents. Due to the Nez Perce crisis and the winter migration to the buffalo country, Ronan did not attempt to carry out his orders until the following summer. Charlot again refused to accept assigned plots of land.⁶⁵

Charlot's refusal to remove to the Jocko was not without good reason. Appropriations for Confederated Tribes sometimes arrived late or were inadequate. The chief's animosity toward Arlee prevented any serious negotiations from occurring. Although the original copy of the Garfield Agreement did not have Charlot's mark on it, other copies did. When the chief saw the forgery, he became more determined to remain in the Bitterroot.

In 1883, Congress sent Senator G. G. Vest and Montana's

⁶³Ibid: 349-351.

⁶⁴USDIA, Ronan to Smith, Aug. 6, 1877.

⁶⁵Ibid: Aug. 20, 1878.

Delegate Martin Maginnis as a Senate sub-committee to the Bitterroot Valley. Charlot's conference with the congressional delegation was far from cordial. Charlot listened to their proposals for his removal to the reservation. When they completed their offer, Charlot told them, "...he had no confidence in their promises..." and emphatically stated that, "...he would never go to the Jocko alive." Charlot declared:

Your Great Father Garfield,...put my name to a paper which I never signed. How can I believe you or any white man after the way I have been treated?⁶⁶

Maginnis and Vest agreed that the Chief's past experiences with government promises justified his stubborn refusal to remove from his valley.

Ronan, the Jesuits, and reservation Flatheads convinced the delegation that Charlot would very likely change his mind if his long desired trip to see the President could be arranged.

On January 16, 1884, Charlot's trip to Washington, D.C. began. Other members of the party were Antoine Moise, Louis, John Hill, and Abel; all chiefs and head-men of the Bitterroot Flatheads. Michel Revais, Ronan's excellent interpreter accompanied the group.⁶⁷

⁶⁶L. B. Palladino, Indian and White in the Northwest, Lancaster, Pa. (1922), 88-89.

⁶⁷Peter Ronan, History of the Flatheads.

The Flathead delegation traveled by train to Washington, D. C. and arrived there late in the evening of the 22nd. During the first days of the visit the President and the Secretary of the Interior were both absent from the Capitol. Charlot and his tribal members were very popular with Washington society and they and Ronan were almost continually entertained. On February 5th., the chiefs and their agent attended a party given by the Chief Executive and stood in President Arthur's reception line.

Meetings with Secretary of the Interior H. M. Teller and a conference with the President occurred. The officials encouraged Charlot to remove to the Flathead Reservation. If he would, they would have a house built for him, plow and fence in farmland and give him livestock. Seed would be given for the first planting season. Agricultural equipment and supplies would be issued to the head of each Flathead family removing to the reservation. Charlot would receive a yearly pension of \$500, be recognized as heir to Victor's chiefly title and replace Arlee as head chief of the Confederated Tribes.

To the disappointment of the government, Charlot refused the offer. He told the President that he desired no assistance. He just wanted to remain in the Bitterroot Valley until he died.

A private interview between Ronan and Secretary Teller concluded the conferences. The agent gave a complete

description of the poverty of the Bitterroot Flatheads. Ronan was ordered to return to the valley and determine what the extent of the Flathead needs were so that the Department of the Interior could relieve them.⁶⁸

On February 7, Charlot and the interpreter, Michel, were operated on. Michel was almost totally blind. Charlot was blind in one eye and within a year he would have lost the use of his left eye. For Charlot, the operation was a success, but Michel remained blind.⁶⁹

On March 7, 1884, the delegation returned to Missoula and Ronan sent the chiefs home in rented wagons. During the next few days, the agent counselled the Bitterroot Indians. He told them that although Charlot refused to remove, he would help any families that moved to the Jocko. Twenty-one lodges left Charlot's band. Because of the houses, fields, and equipment received by this group, ten more families decided to remove. Ronan had authority to help only those who immediately left Charlot's band. The ten later families obtained no help, as Congress had to authorize such an action. Mrs. Ronan later commented, "No act caring for these destitute families was ever, to my knowledge, passed."⁷⁰ According to his wife, the agent made the welfare of the ten families his own responsibility.

⁶⁸Ronan, Hist. of the Flatheads, 67-69.

⁶⁹Ronan Thesis, 355.

⁷⁰Ronan Thesis, 365.

Each year passed with more of Charlot's band leaving the poverty of their farms for the slightly more secure life of the reservation. In 1887, Ronan reported that only 278 Flatheads remained in the Bitterroot. Sixty-three others removed during the year.⁷¹ By 1888, Charlot's followers had dwindled in numbers to 189.⁷²

The following year, an incident occurred that made the possibility of removing Charlot to the Jocko Valley a reality. On August 8, Arlee died. With the death of the old war chief, Ronan realized that the major obstacle to concluding the Bitterroot problem was gone. Soon after the funeral, Ronan met with Charlot. The agent could see that the old chief was wavering in his refusal to leave. Ronan reported the changed situation to the Commissioner.⁷³

On March 2, 1889, Democratic President Grover Cleveland had signed into law an act of Congress for the removal of Charlot's band. The act recognized the validity of the disputed fifty-one land patents. It provided for the appraisal of the land and improvements made by Indians and whites. Money obtained from the sale of the plots were to be given to the Secretary of the Interior "...to be expended by him in payments to the patentees, or, at his discretion,

⁷¹U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1887, 220.

⁷²Annual Report, 1888, 155-158.

⁷³Ronan Thesis, 366-367.

otherwise, for their benefit."⁷⁴

The act proved to be very difficult to fulfill for every owner had to sign a contract for land title clearance. Some owners were insane, some were children; some widows had remarried and had children by both husbands.

Special Commissioner, General Henry B. Carrington arrived at the Arlee rail station on October 19. He and Ronan planned for the removal of Charlot. Adolphe, the chief who had removed to the Jocko with Arlee had died in 1887. The white officials called on Michelle and Francois, both Pend d'Oreille, for advice. They decided to hold a conference at St. Ignatius Mission. Father D'Aste, then in charge of the mission would help with the negotiations. All Flatheads, including Charlot's people, were invited to attend a meeting after Sunday Mass.

With Father D'Aste and Michel Revas acting as interpreters, the conference began. Little was achieved from the meeting. Carrington asked the Flatheads to sign new contracts so that their fifty one plots in the Bitterroot could be sold for them. Most agreed to the proposal.

More important than any decision, the visit to St. Ignatius and the Jocko Agency enabled Carrington to make important observations. He discovered that not one of President Arthur's promises to Charlot had been fulfilled. He

⁷⁴Carrington Manuscript, Chapt. VI, 1.

also observed that there were not enough supplies on hand to care for Charlot's band. More would be needed to make the anticipated 1890 removal successful. The next step for Carrington was to visit Charlot's home. His description of the chief's farm presented an excellent example of how poor Charlot was.

...after ascending a slight hill confronted by formidable gate bars, Charlot was seen in negligee Indian apparel [sic] fixing a plow, near a corn stock in front [sic] of his home cabin. A few acres of wheat stubble in front, half an acre, perhaps, of corn stumps, and a smaller spot of meadow, with old harrows, wagons, broken wheels, a few farm and garden tools, a very small smoke house, and one half covered tepee, or lodge, constituted the immediate surroundings, while a rude rack which supported some old harness, three lean horses, a few hogs, some chickens, more dogs, and a cow crumping dry corn fodder in the angle of the fence constituted the other visible farming resources of the Flathead Chief.⁷⁵

Carrington's friendly visit to Charlot's house resulted in a series of conferences lasting several days. According to Carrington, the white population of western Montana desired a successful termination of the Bitterroot problem. One major reason for white interest was an anticipated land rush into the Bitterroot Valley. The editor of the paper "Rocky Mountain Gazette," appealed to white citizens to halt the sale of whiskey during the crucial negotiations so that

⁷⁵Carrington Manuscript, Chapt. VII, 2.

the possibility of an incident would be lessened.⁷⁶

Charlot remained unmoved during the early days of the meetings. He repeatedly testified that he would not sign another agreement and that he preferred suicide to such an act. When Charlot's close friend, Vanderberg, signed Carrington's removal agreement, Father D'Aste showed how strongly he supported such a move. Charlot realized what a lonely position he had taken.⁷⁷ In defense of his position, Charlot said, "...the women will call Charlot a coward and a liar, if he change his promise and sign."⁷⁸ Charlot reviewed the loyalty of his people to the whites and how he had saved his neighbors from Joseph in 1877. During a later speech, Charlot drew out of his shirt a worn copy of Steven's Treaty of 1855. Holding the document for all to see, Charlot asked:

Will the white man at last, and now, do what this paper says? Is the white man like the Blackfeet, who only steal, and kill and lie? Charlot will sign no more papers.⁷⁹

⁷⁶Ibid: 6.

⁷⁷Carrington Manuscript, Chapt. VII, 6. Carrington's Vanderberg was either Antoine Moise, Louis, John Hill, or Abel. Since Carrington's observations of the conferences were the only known documents, all comments and opinions are based on the General's. His manuscript indicated that Carrington tended to overemphasize his part in the Flathead removal. The complete account of the conferences are in Chapters VII and VIII.

⁷⁸Ibid:

⁷⁹Ibid: 8.

During the early evening, two young Flathead braves became intoxicated. An argument ensued and the two began slashing one-another with knives. Hearing the cries of frightened women, Charlot hurried upon the scene and struck both men to the ground. Using a whip he furiously beat the offenders until pleas from onlookers caused him to stop. Carrington's narrative hinted that the incident was decisive in helping the chief change his mind. On Sunday, November 3, 1889, the Flathead leader signed the removal agreement with apparent relief.

During the same meeting, Charlot listed the terms that he demanded the Federal Government honor. All documents and agreements were made in duplicate and Charlot received one copy. Carrington had to stipulate when the Flatheads would get the money for their land. Charlot was to get a new wagon and harness so that he could supervise his people. Each Flathead family would get a fresh cow for their children. Charlot wanted Arlee's house as a symbol that he was once again Head Chief of the Flathead Tribes. He also demanded a two-seated covered spring-wagon.⁸⁰

Carrington's next task was to have all land claims surveyed. This project included an area twenty-five miles in

⁸⁰Carrington Manuscript, Chapt. VIII, 3-6. Charlot's signing prompted a major celebration in Stevensville. Peter Ronan opened the festivities with an address of welcome. What part he took in actual negotiations was not recorded by Carrington.

length, located in five different townships. The General discovered eighty-one forty acre tracts of Indian land in Stevensville Township alone. The last signatures for land sales of the Indian claims were obtained on the 18th. of December.⁸¹

General Carrington filed his completed report of the Bitterroot negotiations and developments on January 29, 1891. On February 12, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs Belt (no first name cited in documents) gave two copies to Secretary of the Interior Jown W. Noble. Six days later, President Benjamin Harrison obtained a copy. Congress received the President's recommendation for immediate approval on February 24th. Charlot, informed of the prompt action of government officials, prepared his people for the planned spring migration to the Jocko Valley. During the winter and early spring, beef cattle were slaughtered and eaten. Old wagons and worn out farm equipment were sold to white neighbors. By the time warm weather arrived Charlot's band was ready to remove.

Congress refused to approve the Bitterroot agreement. During much of 1891 Charlot's people were on the verge of starvation. No crops had been planted because of the anticipated removal. Most of their beef cattle had been eaten. They lived on roots, wild game and what aid Ronan could

⁸¹Carrington Manuscript, Chapt. IX, 1-6.

provide for them. The Indian Bureau eventually donated \$1500 for the purpose of providing Charlot's people with food.

President Harrison finally obtained Congressional approval for the agreement for fiscal year 1892. Funds became available in July. Carrington, who had gone to the east for the winter, returned to Montana in July. He discovered that Ronan had received no orders for the construction of homes or for obtaining supplies for Charlot's people. The agent had but four hundred pounds of bacon that he could spare. According to Carrington, there was "...no flour, coffee, tea, sugar, rice or hominy, and neither logs, lumber, nor nails..."⁸²

Neither had the Missoula Land Office been instructed to advertise the Bitterroot land for sale. 1892 had been a bad year for crops. A minor economic depression had occurred due to the failure of mining and building ventures. Real estate sales were off. The expected land boom did not occur. Ronan said that Charlot's people would not leave the Bitterroot until the land was sold and the owners paid.

Carrington arrived in the Bitterroot on July 27th. He found the Flathead to be near starvation. Charlot lamented that his people would die before Carrington could get supplies sent in by train. The General arranged with Missoula merchants to immediately supply the Flatheads with provisions. Before

⁸²Carrington Manuscript, Chapt. X, 3.

the removal occurred, this plan had to be used several times.

Charlot remained suspicious of Government promises. By October 5th., only four land sales had occurred. Carrington and Ronan urged immediate removal before another winter of hardship occurred. Charlot's people who had already removed to the Jocko Valley counseled that the Chief not leave until his people were paid. In his manuscript, Carrington accused them of being selfish and fearful that the removal would place an economic burden upon the reservation Flatheads.

Finally, the old chief agreed to leave his homeland. The Commanding Officer of Ft. Missoula offered an ambulance and medical personnel to accompany the exodus. Charlot refused. He did not want anyone to think the military had forced him to leave.⁸³

Early in the morning of October 14, the Bitterroot Flatheads packed their belongings in wagons and on travois. Livestock were herded together in preparation for the journey. During the day, Indian families moved toward St. Mary's Mission for the rendezvous. By dark the Indian cabins around the mission were filled with Charlot's people. Twenty tepees had been erected to provide shelter for those unable to find room in the cabins.

That night the Indians sang, danced and told the old

⁸³Carrington Manuscript, Chapt. X, 1-12.

tribal tales. Charlot distributed meat for the all-night feasting. At dawn boys and girls selected the mounts and work-animals from over 500 Indian ponies. One Indian hoisted the American flag on a staff above his wagon. At seven, the first signal was given to prepare for the march.

Charlot, holding an eagle's wing across his breast, drew the provisions for the march from his supply center. The Head Chief had drawn up a line of march. He divided his band into three groups, one under himself, one led by Vanderburg and the remaining force under the supervision of La Moose. By three in the afternoon, the tribe had progressed fourteen miles. The day had been hot and dusty but a cold rain forced the Flatheads into an early camp. Six hundred head of livestock were secured for the night. The evening meal was completed by six. Charlot permitted two hours for visiting. At ten, the camp became silent.

October 16 dawned cold and clear. Charlot rang a bell for morning prayer. By eight, the journey began again. Charlot and his leaders wanted to pass through Missoula so that the town's saloons would be left far behind before evening camp was made.

The town waited in anticipation for the Indians. Soldiers were kept out of town as Charlot had wished. As they neared the Missoula bridge, the Flatheads stopped and donned their best attire. Then, with a guard of honor of their best warriors dressed in traditional clothing and decorated

with war paint, the procession crossed the bridge and moved through the main street.

Missoula's streets were lined with curious onlookers. As the Flatheads passed, there was only the noise of moving animals and vehicles. The Indians looked straight ahead and "...gave no hint that many were weeping and longing to get away from the gaze and criticism of the white observers."⁸⁴ Carrington reported that the tribe seemed happier after leaving the town behind.

That night they camped near a railroad station named De Smet. The following morning they entered Evaro Canyon. As they passed through the narrow defile, a Northern Pacific train passed with its whistle blowing. Livestock stampeded and a woman broke her hip as a horse threw her.

Just before they began the last miles to the Agency, the tribe once again painted their faces and put on their best garments. Their arrival at the agency had almost been a surprise. Ronan had not been informed of their removal until the previous day. After Benediction services had been concluded at the new mission church, Ronan gave Charlot three steers for an evening feast. The Bitterroot problem was concluded.⁸⁵

Although government documents are few after 1880, the

⁸⁴Carrington Manuscript, Chapt. XII, 2.

⁸⁵Ibid: Chapt. XI, 1-8.

annual reports and the agency ledger recorded brief comments on what Major Ronan's problems were. Minor problems over the status of half-breeds, illegal whiskey sales, disease, inadequate schools and the Indian police continued to be time-consuming in the agent's crowded schedule of duties.

Ronan and the Confederated Tribes opposed the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad through the reservation for somewhat different reasons. In 1882, Ronan recorded the sentiments of the tribes toward the Northern Pacific.

A fierce spirit of opposition still prevails on the part of many of the Indians to the Construction; they regarding the road as fatal to their interests, and the sure precursor of the abandonment of their homes and lands to the whites.⁸⁶

Ronan urged that the Commissioner approve the Indian proposal for an extension of the north reservation boundary to Canada in return for the Northern Pacific right-of-way. Although he was a good agent, Ronan apparently had difficulty in anticipating western growth. He wrote that the land north of the reservation consisted only of mountains and forests. He thought the whites would not be interested in the area for another fifty years. Within a few years whites inhabited the area in large numbers.

The agent's concern over the railroad pertained to the troubles that railroad construction brought to the reservation.

⁸⁶Annual Report, 1882, 102.

An immense crew of railroad constructors is now at work west of the Reservation, consisting of 7,400, with camp followers, gamblers, ex-convicts, and lewd women. They are rapidly advancing to the borders of the Reservation, accompanied by portable saloons, gambling houses, etc:⁸⁷

The Northern Pacific crossed the Jocko Valley in 1883. Stations were established on the reservation and named Arlee and Ravalli. That same year, the eastern and western work crews met at Independence Creek on the north bank of Deer Lodge River just sixty miles west of Helena. A golden spike was placed and the Flathead Reservation became part of a modern, rapidly growing society.

Although the railroad had been constructed, the final agreement between the Department of the Interior and the Northern Pacific did not occur until the year of its completion. H. Price, Commissioner of Indian Affairs recorded some of the terms in his annual report to the Secretary of the Interior.

The right-of-way extended in a general east-west direction. Its two points of entry to the reservation were at Evaro Canyon and along the north bank of Flathead River near Robertson Creek. It was 200 feet wide and encompassed 1,300 acres. An additional 130 acres were set aside for depots and miscellaneous uses. In return for this land, the Northern Pacific Railroad was to pay the Flathead Tribes

⁸⁷Ronan Thesis, 341.

\$16,000 or \$11.18 per acre. The sum would be deposited in the United States Treasury and would be used for the advancement of the Indians. An additional sum of \$7,625 would be paid to individual Indians for fencing and other improvements necessitated by the construction of the railroad.⁸⁸ The agreement was in accordance with the terms of the July 16, 1855 Treaty.⁸⁹

Although the railroad completed the construction on reservation land in 1883, the Second Session of the 47th. Congress failed to act on the agreement. Commissioner Price re-submitted the document and it was approved on July 4, 1884. The agreed sum of \$16,000 had been deposited in the United States Treasury during the previous year. Upon ratification of the agreement by Congress, the money came under the control of the Secretary of the Interior. It had taken Congress nearly two years to approve the agreement.⁹⁰

Assistant Attorney-General Joseph K. McCammon had represented the United States in the railroad negotiations. McCammon had succeeded in coming to an agreement with the Confederated Tribes primarily because he encouraged their dream of acquiring the land north of the reservation. They were informed that if they would cooperate with the Northern

⁸⁸Annual Report, 1883, 14.

⁸⁹U. S. Senate Documents, Vol. 35, No. 452, Indian Affairs Laws and Treaties, Vol. 2, 57th. Congress, 1st. Session, 1901-1902 (Washington, 1902) 542-545.

⁹⁰Annual Report, 1882, 163.

Pacific the Federal Government would very likely reciprocate and give the tribes the hunting and fishing lands to the north.

One objection to the railroad had been the Indian's fear that the presence of constant outside influence would destroy the traditional Indian customs and values. Such consequences were not immediately apparent. Relations between the Northern Pacific and the reservation Indians remained generally good.

Inadequate fencing presented one serious problem. Losses resulting from livestock standing on or attempting to cross the tracks in front of approaching trains were frequent. By 1884 sixty claims by individuals were recorded. From the advent of the railroad to July 1, 1888 total claims amounted to \$11,469.50. Northern Pacific paid full market value for the cattle and horses injured or killed by locomotives. Arrangements were made to fence off areas where most of the accidents occurred.⁹¹

Reservation Indians and railroad claim agents worked in close harmony with the result that the Indians were satisfied and uncomplaining. Money received was highly welcomed and a spending spree usually ensued. Seldom was the money used to replace the deceased livestock.⁹²

In many ways the arrival of the railroad did help the

⁹¹Annual Report, 1888, 158.

⁹²Ibid.

reservation. Supplies were more readily available, shipping times were cut, transportation expenses diminished and, of prime importance, markets for the reservation's produce and livestock were accessible. During the construction of the railroad and even afterward, several Indians supplemented their income by cutting and selling timber to the railroad.

Arrival of the railroad did bring more white settlers to the region. Indian-white relations gradually worsened. With the exception of broken treaty promises and a few minor problems, early reservation years had been times of fairly good Indian-white cooperation.

Dispute over the northern boundary location and specifically the Dayton Creek area broke out again in 1887. Agent Ronan reported to the Indian Commissioner:

The Indians claim that the boundary line designated by the Stevens Treaty, and pointed out to them as the line of their reserve, is not the line described in the printed treaty, and therefore all survey of their reservation is looked upon by them as a pretext to encroach on their lands.⁹³

This boundary dispute in the north led to the realization that the reservation was not necessarily a permanent condition. Government attitude substantiated the idea, since the 1882 request to extend the reservation to the Canadian border had never been seriously considered. White authorities began to

⁹³Annual Report, 1887, 220.

support the white farmers' claim that the northern boundary was approximately five miles south of where the Indians had thought it existed. The fear then arose that the whole reservation would be opened to white encroachment. Ronan, in apparent good faith, attempted to dispell those fears.⁹⁴

In 1891 an application to construct a Missoula and Northern Railway was filed. This proposed railroad would have run from the mouth of the Jocko River, where St. Regis later developed, to the south end of Flathead Lake. From the lake the route would have been along either the east or west side of the lake and northward to the Canadian border.⁹⁵

Definite routes were not filed with the Federal Government and the railroad proposal was dropped. But the threat had been real. More white encroachment had been narrowly averted.

1891 was also a year of crisis for Chief Eneas' Kootenais. Agent Ronan, by then well informed of a secretive northern boundary survey in 1887 by the Federal Government, took a firm stand in support of his charges. The surveyors report indicated that the boundary line ran very near to the Kootenai village on Dayton Creek and excluded from the reservation land that the Kootenais had considered theirs since Steven's Treaty of 1855. This newly-defined border cut the disputed hay meadows in half.

Fearing a border dispute of a more serious nature, Ronan

⁹⁴Annual Report, 1887, 140.

⁹⁵Ibid: 1891, 95.

suggested that the Federal Government accept Governor Steven's point of designation for the beginning of a new survey which would incorporate all lands claimed by the Kootenais back into the confines of the reservation.

In reply the Commissioner of Indian Affairs firmly stated that the half-way point up the side of Flathead Lake would remain as the northern boundary marker in spite of "...whatever may have been the understanding of the Indians." Commissioner Morgan concluded his comments on the subject by writing, "It is of course a matter of great regret that the Indians should not have all the land to which they believe themselves entitled."⁹⁶

As he observed the Kootenais reaction to the Commissioner's decision, Ronan decided that further action was necessary if trouble was to be averted. He jeopardized his position as agent by issuing a series of verbal instructions. He ordered the Indians to carefully fence in their individual claims. Upon completion of that project they were to cultivate the fields within the fences and raise various crops. In support of these acts of land ownership, Ronan contacted the nearest Federal Land Office and requested titles that would give the Indians legal right to their homesteads. Ronan also sent word to the Commissioner and requested permission to continue his activities. The immediate result was that seventeen claims were made and small crops were actually harvested.⁹⁷

⁹⁶Annual Report, 1891, 277.

⁹⁷Annual Report, 1891, 277.

In his annual report of 1892 Ronan changed the number of claims to nineteen. His report stated that cooperation from the land office resulted in claims numbered from one through nineteen being filed and receipts for said claims were forwarded to the Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to substantiate and approve the transaction.

Soon Eneas reported that whites were claim-jumping and the chief demanded legal action. Because of the slow movement of communication and action between the Land Office and the Indian Bureau the Kootenais became discouraged and failed to progress in their farming.⁹⁸

Two harbingers of what the future held for the Flathead Reservation occurred in 1892. Indian legislation, passed by the first session of the 52nd Congress, permitted the Secretary of the Interior to spend \$5000 for re-negotiations to acquire portions of reservations from three particular Indian groups. The Confederated Tribes of the Flathead Reservation was one of these groups.⁹⁹

More ominous than the legislative act was a paragraph in Commissioner Morgan's annual report. "Inquiry is now being made as to the advisability of allotting the lands of the Flathead Reservation".¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸Ibid: 1892, 293.

⁹⁹Annual Report 1892, "Miscellaneous," 720.

¹⁰⁰Ibid: 67.

Delay in securing approval of the Dayton Creek land titles by the Indian Bureau continued. Ronan pressed for consideration on the part of the Government and for the continued use of restraint by the Kootenais. Finally, approval arrived and the nineteen claims unquestionably belonged to the Indians. Despite the decision, white encroachment increased.¹⁰¹

During Ronan's administration Flathead agricultural improvements were significant. During his sixteen years in office, the cultivated acreage for the Confederated Tribes increased to 10,600 acres in 1893.¹⁰²

When Ronan took office in 1877, the chiefs had requested that a boys' school be established. St. Ignatius had but twenty-seven girls enrolled at the school. Due to Ronan's favorable reports on St. Ignatius and his urging for a boys' division, the school became co-educational in 1878.¹⁰³ The school prospered and enrollment of both boys and girls increased until the Democratic Administration of Grover Cleveland took office. Under Cleveland, a new program of non-sectarian government schools was embarked upon. A plan to gradually cut off all aid to mission schools brought severe hardships on the St. Ignatius Mission. In 1886 alone,

¹⁰¹Ibid: 184.

¹⁰²Annual Report, 1893.

¹⁰³Ibid: 1878, 94.

the national budget for Indian education was reduced by 1¼ million dollars.¹⁰⁴ Harrison's administration continued the reduction in aid to non-government schools. Although St. Ignatius School's government support was to be stopped no government school existed on the reservation while Ronan was agent.

Peter Ronan had worked many years to help the Confederated Tribes. The constant need for travel and the occasional dangerous situation the agent encountered caused him to look forward to retiring to a less trying life. His future appeared to be very promising. Mining claims seemed to have a favorable chance of becoming valuable. He had homesteaded land around Lake Mary Ronan, just north of the reservation. At the termination of his term as agent in 1893, Ronan planned to resign.

In June of 1893 Ronan visited the World's Fair in Chicago. While in the city a physical examination revealed that his heart had been severely damaged by the strenuous life of the reservation. He was ordered to move to a lower altitude.

Ronan returned to the Jocko Agency to take his family on a vacation. Mrs. Ronan was ill so Ronan went to the Puget Sound area for a rest. On August 20th. he once again

¹⁰⁴Ibid: 1887.

returned to the reservation. His wife told of his home-coming:

He seemed to be much benefitted and in the best of spirits. That evening he died suddenly. He was laid to rest in St. Mary's Cemetary in Missoula.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵Ronan Thesis, 379.

CHAPTER V

LASTING PEACE

Although the Confederated Tribes experienced many periods of extreme crisis in their existence under the 1855 Treaty and until Ronan's death in 1893, they were able to survive without once making war on the whites. The Nez Perce, Spokane, Snake, Crow and other neighboring tribes experienced warfare between themselves and the whites. Only the Blackfeet were able to maintain a reasonably peaceful relationship throughout the latter half of the 19th Century but not as successfully as did the Confederated Tribes.

John Owen's relationship with the Indians was one of toleration, respect and mutual understanding to a degree that Owen seemed unaware of. His influence helped in the development of the attitude toward whites that Victor and Charlot possessed.

John W. Wells' brief term of office also differed from most of the other agents due to his personality. Wells arrived at the agency as an Indian lover. His ideas of the noble redman were soon discarded for a more realistic approach but up to the time of his death Wells considered the Confederated Tribes to be his people and his responsibility. Impetuous, over-imaginative, often wrong in his appraisals of a situation, Wells was still a good agent. Although

politically alienating some territorial whites, Wells did win the respect of the Indians and was able to improve the conditions on the reservation.

The military agents, Galbraith and Ford were insignificant in their contributions and influence. All other agents until Ronan took office were involved in questionable activities. Most undoubtedly stole government property. It was quite easy to place the blame for poor conditions totally on the agents. Such accusations were unfair.

Many of the Flathead agents came from the East or from the West Coast. Suddenly they found themselves surrounded by a race of primitive people whom they did not understand. The extreme isolation from civilized contacts, long periods during which no word was received from the Indian Bureau, and delayed pay resulting in dire poverty made it difficult for most to succeed. Abusive treatment from their superiors, the Indians, the press, and white settlers made the agents sometimes alone in a seemingly completely hostile world.

The title, "Indian Agent," had acquired a bad connotation long before Ronan became agent. He considered it necessary to write his relatives:

No doubt your reading of "Indian Rings" and thieving agents gives you the idea that it is hard for human nature to withstand the temptation of becoming a public robber, but make your mind easy on that score. I came into the office with clean hands and with clean hands I shall go out.¹

¹Margaret Ronan, Memoirs of a Frontier's Woman, (Missoula, 1932), 247.

In 1879 the Commissioner of Indian Affairs received part of an article clipped from a Montana newspaper.

But per contra, it appears that a United States Indian Agent has no rights that any man is legally, or in honor, bound to respect. He is, almost invariably charged with all manner of crimes before he has fairly entered upon the duties of his office, and before he has gained sufficient experience to be of efficient service to the Indians or a valuable officer of the Government, he may consider himself extremely fortunate, if he has not been unceremoniously hurled from his position and "hounded" out of the country by the combined influences of envy, prejudice and avarice.

The article continues to tell of the good merits of a newly appointed agent to the Crow Reservation and concludes with:

Yet, judging from the history and experience of all his predecessors, it is safe to predict that before he shall have been here twelve months he will in all probability be charged with all manner of "crookedness," and that a popular clamor will be raised against him sufficient to sink him in, apparent, obliquity and thus effect his removal.²

Although many of the Indian officials were thieves it would have been difficult to condemn them if one had realized that many good men in such a situation would have broken what were often stupid regulations to obtain economic redress. With the realization that millions of dollars were

² U. S. Dept. of Interior, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, Montana Superintendency, 1864-1880. 1879. Name & date of paper not cited.

being wasted and stolen, leaving little hope for the starving, disease-ridden savages, it is to be agent's credit that the thefts did not reach greater proportions. Such facts did not justify their deeds. It was possible to remain honest. Owen, Wells, and Ronan apparently did.

Ronan's success was another exception. His courage and honesty were outstanding to such an extent that it was difficult to find that he did have faults. Although Ronan's administration made considerable progress on the reservation, his wise direction arrived too late to be the determining factor in keeping the Confederated Tribes peaceful during Joseph's uprising. He somehow did immediately win the respect of the tribes. His wife and young children undoubtedly were partly responsible for this early success. Although he did not fully understand the Indian mind he realized that the inhabitants of the reservation were not lacking in intelligence. He admitted his inability to comprehend the savage mind but he held a deep conviction that the Indians under his care could understand and adjust to white civilization if double standards would have been discarded.³

The various Indian Commissioners, Secretaries of the Interior, and Presidents cannot be credited with the success of maintaining peace among the Confederated Tribes and the whites. Some were understanding, many were inept, and a few

³See Appendix

were hostile to Indian welfare. As in the case of the Bitter-root removal the final approval had to come from Congress and Congress reflected the attitude of the American people.

Carl Schurz, one of the best Secretaries of the Interior, wrote to President Hayes:

From its very beginning the Indian service may be said to have been the "best abused" branch of the government. While the Indian question is discussed by conscientious and well-informed persons with good judgement and a fair appreciation of circumstances, and their praise and censure are alike valuable, the number of American citizens "who know all about Indian matters" without even having given a moments study to that large and complicated subject, has been incredibly great, and the readiness and volubility of their criticism, mostly condemnatory of everything that is done, seems inspired by an inexhaustable fertility of imagination as to facts.⁴

Until the humanitarians of the late 1800's began defending the Indian, most Americans considered them to be cruel savages blocking the way of progress. Stern and sometimes cruel actions by the military were in actuality mild compared to the desires of many Americans who wished to put into effect a policy of genocide as a solution to the costly Indian problem. Men who had a personal relationship and understanding of the Indians were far too few in numbers to influence Congress to pass better Indian legislation.⁵

⁴U. S. Dept. of the Interior, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1880, 13-14.

⁵For an enlightening account of Indian behavior and needed government action see: Gen. Nelson A. Miles, "The Indian Problem" (North American Review, Vol. 128, N. Y.), 1879, 304-314. Also see: Robert W. Wardock, "Irresolvable Enigma?" (The Montana Magazine of History, Vol. 7, No. 1), Winter, 1957,

One group of whites did claim considerable credit for maintaining peace in Western Montana. The Jesuit Missionaries recorded their belief that they preserved the peace in the area. To a certain extent the Catholic Missionaries were correct in their claims. During most major conferences, Jesuits were present as advisors and interpreters. Their influence on Indian behavior was significant.

Much of the criticism of the Jesuits stemmed from highly opinionated writings such as Palladino's Indian and White in the Northwest. Without historic foundation Palladino ignored important contributions made by officials and gave too much credit to his fellow-Jesuits.

This concept was reflected in an article written by R. Ignatius Burns, Society of Jesus. Burns declared that Jesuit teachings prevented a general uprising during Joseph's rebellion. He claimed that since the Flathead were Catholic they refused to aid the Nez Perce, who were not. If that had been the case then one could have assumed that Charlot would have joined Joseph in war if the latter had been Catholic.⁶ The sincere efforts of Agent Ronan, Governor Potts, and the military were equally ignored.

Jesuit activity at St. Ignatius and in the Bitterroot did contribute much to improving Indian-white relations.

⁶R. Ignatius Burns, "The Jesuits, the Northern Indians, and the Nez Perce War of 1877" (Pacific NW Quarterly, Vol. 42), 1951, 40-76.

Although often opposed to progress that imperiled their control over the Indians, the Jesuits still did much to create an understanding between the two races.

In the field of education they were for a time very successful. This success had been underrated because of the Indian student's return to his original culture after completing school. Reverting to traditional tribal life did not necessarily indicate that all attempts at education had failed. Proof of this was found in the quality of the Indian farms and the rapid adjustment they made to an agrarian life.⁷

However successful the Jesuits were, they were not responsible for the continual peace between the Confederated Tribes and the white settlers.

Physical environment was not the dominant factor in the transition from hunter to farmer. The climate of Western Montana was rather mild, and the soil, in places, was fertile enough to support grain and vegetable crops. Unseasonable frosts, long periods of drought, extreme cold, insect plagues and hail storms made farming a hazardous way of obtaining food.

Until the 1890's, the tribes journeyed to buffalo country for the chase. Early attempts by the Jesuits, agents, and military all failed to stop the practice. The hunts were abandoned when the wild game no longer existed in substantial

⁷See Gerald L. Kelly, The History of St. Ignatius Mission, Montana (M. A. Thesis, 1954, Univ. Mont., Missoula). Kelly arrived at somewhat different conclusions than the author.

numbers and after many of the Indians had taken up farming.

The chiefs of the Confederated Tribes were responsible for the maintenance of peace.

Victor, Charlot's father, was later criticized for creating the Bitterroot problem. In the early days of white contact Victor not only welcomed settlers to the Bitterroot Valley but he helped them to find good locations for farming. A result of Victor's kindness was the encroachment of settlers upon Indian land.

During Victor's lifetime the Flathead Tribe was being decimated by the stronger Crow and Blackfeet. Due to their geographical location the Confederated Tribes served as a buffer between their enemies of the plains and their allies to the west.

Victor's recorded speeches and letters indicated that he was quite intelligent. He seemed very much aware of the strength of the white man. By encouraging white settlement among his people he devised a way to save his homeland and to swing the balance of power to the side of the Flathead. Although still weak when east of the mountains, in the Bitterroot Valley his people would be safe from enemy attacks. Any such attack would result in military action against the aggressor, for whites would have invariably become victims.

With this policy in effect it remained an easy task for Victor to base his actions upon the teachings of the Jesuit Fathers. Christianity professed brotherly love. Victor

forbid any molestation of whites. The missionaries also provided the best opportunity for the Indian to adjust to a white society. Proof of such adjustment was clearly indicated in the many reports of good Indian farming practices and successful breeding of livestock.

Victor and later Charlot were devout Christian leaders. Although they successfully used the religion as a tool to control their people, it was also quite evident that they and many of their people were sincere, practicing Catholics.

Another factor that helped the Flathead Chiefs was that their people were simply superior to other contemporary tribes. Their morals, social structure, and social values were as good as, if not superior to their white neighbors. Strict tribal discipline meted out by strong chiefs kept the younger, more adventurous braves in check.

At times Charlot's personality seemed to indicate that he was selfish, unreasonable and complaining. Later agents, even Ronan, declared he was constantly grumbling and causing dissatisfaction among his band. By then he was older and the long list of lies and broken promises must have made him bitter and resentful. Although Charlot lost his Bitterroot Valley he did obtain more from the Government by his policy of resistance than if he had passively removed to the reservation before Arlee died.

Arlee, despised by Charlot, pompous, troublesome toward some agents, was still an influential personage. It was

Arlee's excellent police force that enabled Ronan to maintain order on the reservation without military intervention. Arlee maintained satisfactory control over all of the reservation tribes after his removal to the Jocko Valley.

According to the Garfield Agreement, Arlee had become head chief of all the Confederated Tribes.

Little information was recorded concerning the Pend d'Oreille Chiefs. The crippled Michelle exerted considerable influence over his people. Ronan had relied heavily upon his advice and aid in the critical years of 1877 and 1878.

The small band of Kootenai living along the shores of Flathead Lake were fortunate to have perhaps the greatest chief of the Confederated Tribes. Mrs. Ronan reported:

My observation led me to the conclusion that when an Indian was chief he was so by virtue of being a chief among men. This was true of every chief I knew well personally; of none was it more true than of Eneas (the Indian way of pronouncing Ignatius), the Kootenai chief. Though his tribe was the poorest, the most miserable, inferior and dirty of the confederated tribes on the Flathead Reservation, Chief Eneas was otherwise. His name was Big Knife. He was tall, handsome, clean, commanding in his brilliant striped blanket and decorated of weasel skins pendent from his right shoulder.⁸

Not one agent criticized Eneas. Most praised him for his good works and friendship. He worked diligently to convert his impoverished people to agrarian ways. Since the

⁸Ronan Thesis, 316.

government habitually neglected the Kootenai, Eneas would sometimes use his government income as chief to purchase sorely needed agricultural equipment for his tribe. Despite the wholesale debauchery and prostitution among the Kootenai and their white neighbors, Eneas was able to prevent a serious outbreak against the whites. Major criminal offenses were minimal.

It was Victor, Charlot, Arlee, Michelle, Eneas and other head men who maintained peace in Western Montana. Their usually wise and just service to their people was the primary reason that a larger war did not erupt in 1877. All were primitive men and excellent warriors. Arlee and Eneas had the capability of becoming another Chief Crazy Horse or White Bird. Charlot could have possibly become more famous than Joseph for other tribes would have rallied around his leadership. Instead of glory, the Confederated Chiefs sought and obtained lasting peace with a patience that seemed limitless before the insults and injustices of the white society.

APPENDIX A

TREATY WITH THE FLATHEADS, ETC., 1855

Articles of agreement and convention made and concluded at the treaty-ground at Hell Gate, in the Bitter Root Valley, this sixteenth day of July, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five, by and between Isaac I. Stevens, governor and superintendent of Indian affairs for the Territory of Washington, on the part of the United States, and the undersigned chiefs, head-men, and delegates of the confederated tribes of the Flathead, Kootenay, and Upper Pend d'Oreilles Indians, on behalf of and acting for said confederated tribes and being duly authorized thereto by them. It being understood and agreed that the said confederated tribes do hereby constitute a nation, under the name of the Flathead Nation, with Victor, the head chief of the Flathead tribe, as the head chief of the said nation, and that the several chiefs, head-men, and delegates, whose names are signed to this treaty, do hereby, in behalf of their respective tribes, recognize Victor as said head chief.

ARTICLE 1. The said confederated tribes of Indians hereby cede, relinquish, and convey to the United States all their right, title, and interest in and to the country occupied or claimed by them, bounded and described as follows, to wit:

Commencing on the main ridge of the Rocky Mountains at the forty-ninth (49th) parallel of latitude, thence westwardly on that parallel to the divide between the Flat-bow or Kootenay River and Clarke's Fork, thence southerly and southeasterly along said divide to the one hundred and fifteenth degree of longitude, (115°,) thence in a southwesterly direction to the divide between the sources of the St. Regis Borgia and the Coeur d'Alene Rivers, thence southeasterly and southerly along the main ridge of the Bitter Root Mountains to the divide between the head-waters of the Koos-koos-kee River and of the southwestern fork of the Bitter Root River, thence easterly along the divide separating the waters of the several tributaries of the Bitter Root River from the waters flowing into the Salmon and Snake Rivers to the main ridge of the Rocky Mountains, and thence northerly along said main ridge to the place of beginning.

ARTICLE 2. There is, however, reserved from the lands above ceded, for the use and occupation of the said confederated tribes, and as a general Indian reservation, upon which may be placed other friendly tribes and bands of Indians of the Territory of Washington who may agree to be consolidated with the tribes parties to this treaty, under the common designation of the Flathead Nation, with Victor, head chief of the Flathead tribe, as the head chief of the nation, the tract of land included within the following boundaries, to wit:

Commencing at the source of the main branch of the Jocko River; thence along the divide separating the waters flowing into the Bitter Root River from those flowing into the Jocko to a point on Clarke's Fork between the Camash and Horse Prairies; thence northerly to, and along the divide bounding on the west the Flathead River, to a point due west from the point half way in latitude between the northern and southern extremities of the Flathead Lake; thence on a due east course to the divide whence the Crow, the Prune, the So-ni-el-em and the Jocko Rivers take their rise, and thence southerly along said divide to the place of beginning.

All which tract shall be set apart, and, so far as necessary, surveyed and marked out for the exclusive use and benefit of said confederated tribes as an Indian reservation. Nor shall any white man, excepting those in the employment of the Indian department, be permitted to reside upon the said reservation without permission of the confederated tribes, and the superintendent and agent. And the said confederated tribes agree to remove to and settle upon the same within one year after the ratification of this treaty. In the meantime it shall be lawful for them to reside upon any ground not in the actual claim and occupation of citizens of the United States, and upon any ground claimed or occupied, if with the permission of the owner or claimant.

Guaranteeing however the right to all citizens of the United States to enter upon and occupy as settlers any lands not actually occupied and cultivated by said Indians at this time, and not included in the reservation above named. And provided, That any substantial improvements heretofore made by any Indian, such as fields enclosed and cultivated and houses erected upon the lands hereby ceded, and which he may be compelled to abandon in consequence of this treaty, shall be valued under the direction of the President of the United States, and payment made therefor in money, or improvements of an equal value be made for said Indian upon the reservation; and no Indian will be required to abandon the improvements aforesaid, now occupied by him, until their value in money or improvements of an equal value shall be furnished him as aforesaid.

ARTICLE 3. And provided, That if necessary for the public convenience roads may be run through the said reservation; and, on the other hand, the right of way with free access from the same to the nearest public highway is secured to them, as also the right in common with citizens of the United States to travel upon all public highways.

The exclusive right of taking fish in all the streams running through or bordering said reservation is further secured to said Indians; as also the right of taking fish at all usual and accustomed places, in common with citizens of the Territory, and of erecting temporary buildings for curing; together with the privilege of hunting, gathering roots and berries, and pasturing their horses and cattle upon open and unclaimed land.

ARTICLE 4. In consideration of the above cession, the United States agree to pay to the said confederated tribes of Indians, in addition to the goods and provisions distributed to them at the time of signing this treaty the sum of one hundred and twenty thousand dollars, in the following manner-- that is to say: For the first year after the ratification hereof, thirty-six thousand dollars, to be expended under the direction of the President, in providing for their removal to the reservation, breaking up and fencing farms, building houses for them, and for such other objects as he may deem necessary. For the next four years, six thousand dollars each year; for the next five years, five thousand dollars each year; for the next five years, four thousand dollars each year; and for the next five years, three thousand dollars each year.

All which said sums of money shall be applied to the use and benefit of the said Indians, under the direction of the President of the United States, who may from time to time determine, at his discretion, upon what beneficial objects to expend the same for them, and the superintendent of Indian affairs, or other proper officer, shall each year inform the President of the wishes of the Indians in relation thereto.

ARTICLE 5. The United States further agree to establish at suitable points within said reservation, within one year after the ratification hereof, an agricultural and industrial school, erecting the necessary buildings, keeping the same in repair, and providing it with furniture, books, and stationery, to be located at the agency, and to be free to the children of the said tribes, and to employ a suitable instructor or instructors. To furnish one blacksmith shop, to which shall be attached a tin and gun shop; one carpenter's shop; one wagon and ploughmaker's shop; and to keep the same in repair, and furnished with the necessary tools. To employ

two farmers, one blacksmith, one tinner, one gunsmith, one carpenter, one wagon and plough maker, for the instruction of the Indians in trades, and to assist them in the same. To erect one saw-mill and one flouring-mill, keeping the same in repair and furnished with the necessary tools and fixtures and to employ two millers. To erect a hospital, keeping the same in repair, and provided with the necessary medicines and furniture, and to employ a physician; and to erect, keep in repair, and provide the necessary furniture the buildings required for the accommodation of the said employees. The said buildings and establishments to be maintained and kept in repair as aforesaid, and the employees to be kept in service for the period of twenty years.

And in view of the fact that the head chiefs of the said confederated tribes of Indians are expected and will be called upon to perform many services of a public character, occupying much of their time, the United States further agree to pay to each of the Flathead, Kootenay, and Upper Pend d'Oreilles tribes five hundred dollars per year, for the term of twenty years after the ratification hereof, as a salary for such persons as the said confederated tribes may select to be their head chiefs, and to build for them at suitable points on the reservation a comfortable house, and properly furnish the same and to plough and fence for each of them ten acres of land. The salary to be paid to, and the said houses to be occupied by, such head chiefs so long as they may be elected to that position by their tribes, and no longer.

And all the expenditures and expenses contemplated in this article of this treaty shall be defrayed by the United States, and shall not be deducted from the annuities agreed to be paid to said tribes. Nor shall the cost of transporting the goods for the annuity payments be a charge upon the annuities, but shall be defrayed by the United States.

ARTICLE 6. The President may from time to time, at his discretion, cause the whole, or such portion of such reservation as he may think proper, to be surveyed into lots, and assign the same to such individuals or families of the said confederated tribes as are willing to avail themselves of the privilege, and will locate on the same as a permanent home, on the same terms and subject to the same regulations as are provided in the sixth article of the treaty with the Omahas, so far as the same may be applicable.

ARTICLE 7. The annuities of the aforesaid confederated tribes of Indians shall not be taken to pay the debts of individuals.

ARTICLE 8. The aforesaid confederated tribes of Indians

acknowledge their dependence upon the Government of the United States, and promise to be friendly with all citizens thereof, and pledge themselves to commit no depredations upon the property of such citizens. And should any one or more of them violate this pledge, and the fact be satisfactorily proved before the agent, the property taken shall be returned, or, in default thereof, or if injured or destroyed, compensation may be made by the Government out of the annuities. Nor will they make war on any other tribe except in self-defence, but will submit all matters of difference between them and other Indians to the Government of the United States, or its agent, for decision, and abide thereby. And if any of the said Indians commit any depredations on any other Indians within the jurisdiction of the United States, the same rule shall prevail as that prescribed in this article, in case of depredations against citizens. And the said tribes agree not to shelter or conceal offenders against the laws of the United States, but to deliver them up to the authorities for trial.

ARTICLE 9. The said confederated tribes desire to exclude from their reservation the use of ardent spirits, and to prevent their people from drinking the same; and therefore it is provided that any Indian belonging to said confederated tribes of Indians who is guilty of bringing liquor into said reservation, or who drinks liquor, may have his or her proportion of the annuities withheld from him or her for such time as the President may determine.

ARTICLE 10. The United States, further agree to guaranty the exclusive use of the reservation provided for in this treaty, as against any claims which may be urged by the Hudson Bay Company under the provisions of the treaty between the United States and Great Britain of the fifteenth of June, eighteen hundred and forty-six, in consequence of the occupation of a trading-post on the Pru-in River by the servants of that company.

ARTICLE 11. It is, moreover, provided that the Bitter Root Valley, above the Loolo- Fork, shall be carefully surveyed and examined, and if it shall prove, in the judgment of the President, to be better adapted to the wants of the Flathead tribe than the general reservation provided for in this treaty, then such portions of it as may be necessary shall be set apart as a separate reservation for the said tribe. No portion of the Bitter Root Valley, above the Loolo Fork, shall be opened to settlement until such examination is had and the decision of the President made known.

ARTICLE 12. This treaty shall be obligatory upon the contracting parties as soon as the same shall be ratified by the President and Senate of the United States.

APPENDIX B

The terms under Article 6 of Omaha Treaty of 1854 also applied to the 1855 Treaty as indicated at the end of Article 6 of the Flathead Treaty.

Indian Affairs Laws & Treaties, Vol. II, Washington, 1903.
57th. Congress, 1st. Session, Doc. No. 452.

TREATY WITH THE OMAHA, 1854

Article 6. The President, may, from time to time, at his discretion, cause the whole or such portion of the land hereby reserved, as he may think proper, or of such other land as may be selected in lieu thereof, as provided for in article first, to be surveyed into lots, and to assign to such Indian or Indians of said tribe as are willing to avail of the privilege, and who will locate on the same as a permanent home, if a single person over twenty-one years of age, one-eighths of a section; to each family of two, one quarter section; to each family of three and not exceeding five, one half section; to each family of six and not exceeding ten, one section; and to each family of over ten in number, one quarter section for every additional five members. And he may prescribe such rules and regulations as will insure to the family, in case of death of the head thereof, the possession and enjoyment of such permanent home and the improvements thereon.

And the President may, at any time, in his discretion, after such person or family has made a location on the land assigned for a permanent home, issue a patent to such person or family for such assigned land, conditioned that the tract shall not be aliened or leased for a longer term than two years; and shall be exempt from levy, sale, or forfeiture, which conditions shall continue in force, until a State Constitution, embracing such lands within its boundaries, shall have been formed, and the legislature of the State shall remove the restrictions. And if any such person or family shall at any time neglect or refuse to occupy and till a portion of the lands assigned and on which they have located, or shall rove from place to place, the President may, if the patent shall have been issued, cancel the assignment, and may also withhold from such person or family, their proportion of the annuities or other monies due them, until they shall have returned to such permanent home, and resumed the pursuits of industry; and in default of their return the tract may be declared abandoned, and thereafter assigned to some other person or family of such tribe, or disposed of as is provided for the disposition of the excess of said land. And the residue of the land hereby reserved, or of that which may be selected in lieu thereof, after all of the Indian persons or families shall have had assigned to them permanent homes, may be sold for their benefit, under such laws, rules or regulations, as may hereafter be prescribed by the Congress

or President of the United States. No State legislature shall remove the restrictions herein provided for, without the consent of Congress.

APPENDIX C

THE GARFIELD AGREEMENT

FLATHEAD RESERVATION, August 27, 1872. - -

Articles of agreement made this 27th day of August, 1872, between James A. Garfield, special commissioner, authorized by the secretary of the interior to carry into execution the provisions of the act approved June 5, 1872, for the removal of the Flathead and other Indians from the Bitter Root valley, of the first part, and Charlot, first chief, Arlee, second chief, and Adolph, third chief of the Flatheads, of the second part, witnesseth:

Whereas, it was provided in the eleventh article of the treaty concluded at Hell Gate, July 15, 1855, and approved by the senate March 8, 1859, between the United States and the Flatheads, Kootenai and Pend d-Oreille Indians that the president shall cause the Bitter Root valley above the Lo Lo Fork to be surveyed and examined, and if in his judgment it should be found better adapted to the wants of the Flathead tribe, as a reservation for said tribe, it should be so set aside and reserved; and whereas the president did, on the 14th day of November, 1871, issue his order setting forth that "the Bitter Root valley had been carefully surveyed and examined in accordance with said treaty," and did declare that "it is therefore ordered that all Indians residing in said Bitter Root valley, be removed as soon as practicable to the Jocko reservation, and that a just compensation be made for improvements made by them in the Bitter Root valley, and whereas, the act of congress above recited approved June 5, 1872, makes provisions for such compensation: therefore:

It is hereby agreed and covenanted by the parties to this instrument:

First. That the party of the first part shall cause to be erected sixty good and substantial houses, twelve feet by sixteen each, if so large a number shall be needed for the accommodation of the tribe, three of said houses for the first, second and third chiefs of said tribe, to be of double the size mentioned above; said houses to be placed in such portion of the Jocko reservation, not already occupied by other Indians, as said chiefs may select.

Second. That the superintendent of Indian affairs for Montana territory shall cause to be delivered to said Indians 600 bushels of wheat, the same to be ground into flour without cost to said Indians and delivered to them in good condition during the first year after their removal together with such potatoes and other vegetables as can be spared from the agency farm.

Third. That said superintendent shall as soon as practicable, cause suitable portions of land to be enclosed and broken up for said Indians, and shall furnish them with sufficient number of agricultural implements for the cultivation of their grounds.

Fourth. That in carrying out the foregoing agreement as much as possible shall be done at the agency by the employees of the government; and none of such labor or materials, or provisions furnished from the agency, shall be charged as money.

Fifth. The whole of the \$5,000 in money now in the hands of the said superintendent appropriated for the removal of said Indians, shall be paid to them in such forms as their chiefs shall determine, except such portion as is necessarily expended in carrying out the preceding provisions of this agreement.

Sixth. That there shall be paid to said tribe of Flathead Indians the sum of \$50,000, as provided in the second section of the act above recited, to be paid in ten annual installments, in such manner and material as the president may direct; and no part of the payments herein promised shall in no way affect or modify the full right of said Indians to the payments and annuities now and hereafter due them under existing treaties.

Seventh. It is understood and agreed that this contract shall in no way interfere with the rights of any member of the Flathead tribe to take land in the Bitter Root valley, under the third section of the act above cited.

Eighth. And the party of the second part hereby agree and promise that when the houses have been built as provided in the first clause of this agreement they will remove the Flathead tribe to said houses (except such as shall take land in the Bitter Root valley) in accordance with the third section of the act above cited, and will thereafter occupy the Jocko reservation as their permanent home. But nothing in this agreement shall deprive said Indians of their full right to hunt and fish in any Indian country where they are now entitled to hunt and fish under existing treaties. Nor shall

anything in this agreement be so constructed as to deprive any of said Indians so removing to the Jocko reservation from selling all their improvements in the Bitter Root valley.

Signed James A. Garfield,
Special commissioner for the removal of the
Flatheads from the Bitter Root valley.

Charlot,
(His x mark)
First Chief of the Flatheads.

Arlee,
(His x mark)
Second Chief of the Flatheads.

Adolf
(His x mark)
Third Chief of the Flatheads.

Witness to contract and signatures:

Wm. H. Clagett,
D. G. Swain,
Judge Advocate U.S. army.
W. F. Sanders,
J. A. Vail,
B. F. Potts,
Governor of Montana.

I certify that I interpreted fully and carefully the foregoing contract to the three chiefs of the Flatheads named above.

Baptist Robwanen,
(His x mark)
Interpreter.

Witness to Signature:

B. F. Potts,
Governor

APPENDIX D

CHAP. 308 -- An act to provide for the removal of the Flathead and other Indians from the Bitter-Root Valley, in the Territory of Montana.^a

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That it shall be the duty of the President, as soon as practicable, to remove the Flathead Indians, (whether of full or mixed bloods,) and all other Indians connected with said tribe, and recognized as members thereof, from Bitter-Root Valley, in the Territory of Montana, to the general reservation in said Territory, (commonly known as the Jocko reservation,) which by a treaty concluded at Hell Gate, in the Bitter-Root Valley, July sixteenth, eighteen hundred and fifty-five, and ratified by the Senate March eighth, eighteen hundred and fifty-nine, between the United States and the confederated tribes of Flathead, Kootenai, and Pend d'Oreille Indians, was set apart and reserved for the use and occupation of said confederated tribes.

SEC. 2. That as soon as practicable after the passage of this act, the surveyor-general of Montana Territory shall cause to be surveyed, as other public lands of the United States are surveyed, the lands in the Bitter-Root Valley lying above the Lo-Lo Fork of the Bitter-Root River; and said lands shall be open to settlement, and shall be sold in legal subdivisions to actual settlers only, the same being citizens of the United States, or having duly declared their intention to become such citizens, said settlers being heads of families, or over twenty-one years of age, in quantities not exceeding one hundred and sixty acres to each settler, at the price of one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, payment to be made in cash within twenty-one months from the date of settlement, or of the passage of this act. The sixteenth and thirty-sixth sections of said lands shall be reserved for school purposes

^aReport Commissioner Garfield, November 15, 1872. (See Annual Report for 1872, p. 109.)

The above act is amended as to the payment of the annual installments and the purchase of land provided in section 2 by the act of June 22, 1874, 18 Stat., 173, and as to the lands allotted to individual Indians by the acts of March 2,

in the manner provided by law. Town-sites in said valley may be reserved and entered as provided by law: Provided, That no more than fifteen townships of the lands so surveyed shall be deemed to be subject to the provisions of this act: And provided further, That none of the lands in said valley above the Lo-Lo Fork shall be open to settlement under the homestead and pre-emption laws of the United States. An account shall be kept by the Secretary of the Interior of the proceeds of said lands, and out of the first moneys arising therefrom there shall be reserved and set apart for the use of said Indians the sum of fifty thousand dollars, to be by the President expended, in annual instalments, in such manner as in his judgment shall be for the best good of said Indians, but no more than five thousand dollars shall be expended in any one year.

SEC. 3. That any of said Indians, being the head of a family, or twenty-one years of age, who shall at the passage of this act, be actually residing upon and cultivating any portion of said lands shall be permitted to remain in said valley and pre-empt without cost the land so occupied and cultivated, not exceeding in amount one hundred and sixty acres for each of such Indians, for which he shall receive a patent without power of alienation: Provided, That such Indian shall, prior to August first, eighteen hundred and seventy-two, notify the superintendent of Indian Affairs for Montana Territory that he abandons his tribal relations with said tribe, and intends to remain in said valley: And provided further, That said superintendent shall have given such Indian at least one month's notice prior to the date last above mentioned of the provisions of this act and of his right so to remain as provided in this section of this act.

SEC. 4. That in case John Owen, an actual settler in said valley, above the Lo-Lo Fork, shall come within the provisions of the act of Congress of September twenty-seventh,

continued.

^a1889, post, p. 326, and July 1, 1898, post, p. 667, providing for the sale of such lands with the consent of the allottees and the removal of the Indians to the Jocko Reservation.

By the act of March 3, 1891, post, p. 437, right of way was given the Missoula and Northern Railway through the Jocko Reservation.

A commission to negotiate with the Crow, Flathead, and other tribes was provided by the act of June 10, 1896, 29 Stat., 341, which was continued, by June 6, 1900, 31 Stat., 302, to June 30, 1901. (See Annual Report, 1900, p. 52.).

eighteen hundred and fifty, entitled "An act to create the office of surveyor-general of the public lands in Oregon, and to provide for the survey, and to make donations to settlers of the said public lands," and the acts amendatory thereof, he shall be permitted to establish such fact in the land-office in the said Territory of Montana, and, upon proof of compliance with the provisions said act or acts, shall be permitted to obtain title, in the manner provided therein, to such quantity of land as he may be entitled to under the same. All disputes as to title to any lands mentioned in this act shall be decided according to the rules governing the decision of disputes in ordinary cases under the pre-emption laws of the United States.

Approved, June 5, 1872.

APPENDIX E

CARRINGTON AGREEMENT

"ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT, made this 3rd day of November, A. D., 1889 between Henry B. Carrington, "Special Disbursing Agent in the Field" designated by the Secretary of the Interior to secure the several consents of certain of the Flathead Indians to whom patents were issued for lands assigned to them in the Bitter Root Valley, Montana Territory, under the provisions of An Act of Congress approved June. 15. A. D. 1872, entitled "An Act to provide for the removal of the Flatheads and other Indians from the Bitter Root Valley, in the Territory of Montana, or the heirs at law of said Indians," --to the appraisement and sale of said lands, under the provision of an Act of Congress, approved March 2, 1889."

Of The First Part, and the hereditary Chief Charlos Victor, sole surviving chief of said Flathead Indians, who alone of the three Chiefs then living, viz, Charlos, First Chief; Arlee, Second Chief; and Adolph, Third Chief, did not sign the contract called the Garfield Agreement, dated at Jocko Reservation, Flathead Indian Agency, August 27, 1872.

WITNESSETH: -that for himself and his heirs, and as the heir of his father, Eneos Victor, hereditary Chief of the Flathead Tribe deceased, he does hereby consent to the appraisal and sale under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior,

of the lands assigned to his father Chief Victor, and to himself, to wit, the S $\frac{1}{2}$ of S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec.-32: T.9, n:R 20 W, containing 160, 80 acres and as well, also the N $\frac{1}{2}$ of the S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec., 27:T.9: N: R.20 W, with the N $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE, $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 28, of T.9N: R.20W, said last two tracts containing 160 acres."

"And the said Second Party, as the hereditary Chief of the Flathead Indians, known as Charlos's Band, agrees also to move with the Indians of his tribe, now in the Bitter Root Valley, to the Jocko Reservation in the Spring of the year 1890, upon the acceptance given in writing upon this day and date, of propositions submitted, viz, that besides the choice of location on the Jocko Reservation allotted him in paper of this date, viz, the old Arlee property, for the benefit of himself and his children and grand-children, and the removal of himself and his effects without cost to him, that the thirty two families of his people, who, on account of the dry season last past, have had scant crops, and who in view of their removal

(The remainder of the document was obscured due to an overlay when the University of Montana libraries copy was made).

APPENDIX F

Chap. 391.--An act to provide for the sale of lands patented to certain members of the Flathead bands of Indians in Montana Territory, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Interior, with the consent of the Indians severally, to whom patents have been issued for lands assigned to them in the Bitter Root Valley, in Montana Territory, under the provisions of an act of Congress approved June fifth, eighteen hundred and seventy-two, entitled "An act to provide for the removal of the Flathead and other Indians from the Bitter Root Valley, in the Territory of Montana," or the heirs at law of such Indians, be, and he hereby is, authorized to cause to be appraised and sold, in tracts not exceeding one hundred and sixty acres, all the lands allotted and patented to said Indians; said lands shall be appraised as if in a state of nature, but the enhanced value thereof, by virtue of the settlement and improvement of the surrounding country, shall be considered in ascertaining their value: Provided, That the improvements thereon shall be appraised separate and distinct from land: Provided, further, That where any such patentee has died leaving no heirs, the lands and improvements of such deceased patentee shall be appraised and sold in like manner.

SEC. 2. That after the appraisement herein authorized shall have been completed, and after due notice, the Secretary of the Interior shall offer said lands for sale through the proper land-office, in tracts not exceeding one hundred and sixty acres, which shall be the limit of the amount any one person shall be allowed to purchase, except in cases, if any, where a tract contains a fractional excess over one hundred and sixty acres to the highest bidder: Provided, That no portion of said lands shall be sold at less than the appraised value thereof: Provided, That the said Secretary may dispose of the same on the following terms as to payment, that is to say, one-third of the price of any tract of land sold under the provisions of this act to be paid by the purchaser on the day of sale, one third in one year, and one-third in two years from said date, with interest on the deferred payments at the rate of five per centum per annum: but in case of default in either of said payments, or the interest thereon the person so defaulting for a period of sixty days shall forfeit absolutely the right to the tract which he has

purchased, with any payment or payments he may have made; and the land thus forfeited shall again be sold as in the first instance: Provided further, That before the second or any subsequent payment shall be received, the purchaser shall prove to the satisfaction of the land office that he is actually residing upon the tract of land so purchased and that he is entitled under the laws of United States to the benefit of the homestead laws.

SEC. 3. That the net proceeds derived from the sale of the lands herein authorized shall be placed in the Treasury to the credit of the Indians severally entitled thereto, and the Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized to pay the same in cash to original allottees and patentees, or the heirs at law of such, or expend the same for their benefit in such manner as he may deem for their best interest.

SEC. 4. That when a purchaser shall have made full payment for a tract of land, as herein provided, and for the improvements thereon, patent shall be issued as in case of public lands under the homestead and preemption laws.

SEC. 5. That for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act there be, and hereby is, appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the sum of five hundred dollars, or so much thereof as may be necessary, which sum shall be reimbursed pro rata out of the proceeds of the sale of the lands herein authorized.

SEC. 6. That in the event of the sale of the lands herein authorized it shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Interior to remove the Indians whose lands shall have been sold to the general reservation, known as the Jocko Reservation, in the Territory of Montana.

SEC. 7. That all acts and parts of acts in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

Approved, March 2, 1889.

APPENDIX G

The following letter was sent by Agent Ronan to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. It revealed Ronan's attitude toward the Indian and various Indian problems.

Flathead Agency, Montana
August 12, 1884

Sir: In submitting my eighth annual report it is gratifying to be able to state, without fear of successful contradiction, that the Indians of this reservation have steadily advanced during the past year in all the civilized pursuits which are necessary to be a self-reliant and self-sustaining community, and in reply to the signified disbelief and sneering remark contained in last year's report of a certain agent, that "it is interesting to read agent's reports of how their good Indians love to work, and how they are rapidly becoming self-sustaining, etc.:", "I may be pardoned if I quote a paragraph from the report of the subcommittee of the special committee of the United States Senate appointed to visit the Indian tribes in Northern Montana last summer, and it, I think, ought to go far to silence in an effectual manner the implied "fling" at representations made to you from agencies, of the condition of which the writer referred to has evidently no conception. Alluding to this reservation, the following remarks are to be found in the report: The general condition of these Indians, however, is so good that we feel justified in reporting that, in a very few years they will be as useful and prosperous a community as any in the far West. They are kindly, intelligent, and anxious to learn. Their relations with Major Ronan, the agent, are of the most satisfactory character, and more than all, they appreciate largely the new order of things and the necessity of self-support by honest industry. Many of them are cutting wood for the railroad, and many cut logs and haul them to the agency saw-mill to procure lumber for their houses. In no tribe is there such an opportunity for testing the capability of the Indian for the modes and arts of civilized life, and their progress so far demonstrates that this unfortunate people have a future other than barbarism or ultimate extinction.--

As germane to the above statement, I will here mention that within the last two months there were delivered at the agency sawmill by male members of fifteen Indian families 379 pine logs, which were cut, loaded, and hauled by the Indians with their own teams, and were sawed into 128,000 feet of lumber of various dimensions, suitable for the erection of dwellings and outhouses, the only assistance furnished by the Government being the load of trucks and logging chains and the services of the agency sawyer. This lumber has now been hauled off, and has been carefully piled upon the farms of the owners, where it will remain until after harvest, when these same Indians will construct with their own labor and by their own ingenuity the buildings for which it is intended, assisted by a very little aid from the agency in the way of glass, nails, hinges, and, in some of the more helpless cases, doors and sashes, and this in addition to 18 new dwelling-houses, which have already during the year been put on this reservation by the Indians and for the Indians. I would also add that the surroundings of these houses and others of longer standing--the vegetable gardens and waving grain, the latter of which is now beginning to fall before the graincradle wielded by stalwart Indian arms, as well as before not a few reaping machines run by Indians in their own fields and paid for by Indian toil and thrift--to my mind tell a story of advancing civilization which cannot be successfully jeered at.

Such are facts in this case, and for many who cannot be personally cognizant of them I am proud to have in at least their partial support the evidence of the eminent statesmen who composed the committee aforesaid. Still there are doubts and doubters, and for those I have still an argument left--a fact which incredulity can neither overcome nor even combat. In the list of appropriations for Indians for the fiscal year 1883-'4 those who run may read:

For subsistence and civilization of the Flatheads and other confederated tribes, including pay of employees, \$13,000.

That this munificent sum was not exceeded can be verified by your office. Therefore it will be evident that had the amount expended in their behalf been equally distributed among the 1700 Indians of this reservation, each would have been benefitted to the extent of nearly \$8. It is unnecessary to explain that a wagon, for instance, valued, let us say, at \$80, could not well be distributed in ten equal parts; and that when one Indian, of necessity, became the recipient of the vehicle the portions of the appropriation assigned others were correspondingly reduced, nor will it be requisite to prove that even had each received the full sum of \$8 the amount would scarcely suffice during a twelvemonth for

"subsistence and civilization."

I shall therefore allow the fact itself to work its own way toward a proof that the Indians of the Flathead Reservation are rapidly learning to work according to the methods of the white man, which, indeed, is about the only manner they now have of supporting themselves, and that they are "rapidly learning to work according to the methods of the white man, which, indeed, is about the only manner they now have of supporting themselves, and that they are "rapidly becoming," if they may not already be considered, "self-sustaining," etc.

Again, in connection with the Indian schools of this reservation, in order that I may escape any accusation of originating rose-colored statements regarding them, I will quote from the committee report already made use of:

The schools have now 100 scholars, about equally divided between the two sexes, and the Government pays \$100 annually for the board, tuition, and clothing of each scholar to the number of 80. The boys and girls are in separate houses, the former under a corps of five teachers (Three fathers and two lay-brothers) and the girls under three sisters and two half-sisters. Father Van Gorp being at the head of the institution. The children are taught reading and writing, arithmetic, grammar, and geography, and their recitations, all in the English language, are equal to those of white children in the States of the same age. The mission has a saw and grist mill and planing and shingle machine, worked by the boys, several hundred head of cattle and horses, and 300 acres of land belonging to the mission, cultivated successfully by the male scholars, the produce being sufficient to furnish enough wheat and oats and vegetables for all purposes. The girls are taught by the sisters, besides the branches we have mentioned, music, sewing, embroidery, and housekeeping. For a time the school was only for females and the result, was that the young women, after being educated, married ignorant half-breeds or Indians and, unable to withstand the ridicule of their companions, relapsed into a barbarism worse, if possible, than that of the husband and the tribe. Now, after the establishment of the department for males the young people, when they leave school, intermarry and each couple becomes a nucleus for civilization and religion in the neighborhood where they make their home, the fathers and agent assisting them in building a house and preparing their little farm for raising a crop. We cannot sufficiently commend this admirable school and we do not envy the man who can see only a mercenary object or any but the highest and purest motives which can actuate humanity in the self-sacrificing devotion of the noble men and women, fitted by talents

and accomplishments of the highest order to adorn any walk in life who are devoting their lives to the education of these Indian children.

On this topic I will only further add that the beneficial results of those schools are now still more apparent than when the above report was written, nearly a year ago; that two new and commodious school-houses, described in my last annual report as in course of erection, have lately been completed and are of the greatest credit to the reservation, and that by recent contracts entered into by your Department the number of scholars which may be paid for by Government funds has been increased to 100, and it is to be hoped that hereafter Congress will grant such appropriations as well, as every other boarding-school for Indian children.

Referring to the subject of crime, I desire to say that while I am too practical a believer in the "Survival of the fittest," and have suffered too many annoyances personally from objectionable traits of the Indian character to permit of my being much of a sentimentalist on the Indian question, I still am prepared to endorse what I have hitherto reported, viz, that, upon this reservation at least, the behavior of Indians will compare favorably with the conduct of any community of a like size in any locality of which I have any knowledge; and here permit me to intrude the remark that what little success I may be accredited with in my treatment of these people is, to a great extent, I believe, due to my readiness to admit that even "red devils," like others, are not so bad as they are painted. Indians are extremely good judges of the feelings of others; they are naturally thoroughly independent, and full of, if not pride, at least vanity. It is by no means strange that such characters (comparatively easily led, but almost impossible to drive) should meet contempt with aversion and dislike with hatred.

With this digression I will proceed to state that while crimes here are of rare occurrence, I consider that they, with offenses of a nature less grave, might be easily reduced by the enactment of laws rendering Indians amenable to the same regulations and penalties as those to which their white neighbors are obliged to submit. I know, I regret that it is so, that in this opinion I am at variance with some of the brightest minds of our legislators; with men who have a true friendship and a Christian sympathy for a race much in need of their powerful aid; but I feel compelled to record my belief that their efforts in this particular are misdirected, and with this view I can find many of our best Indians who coincide. It has been the policy (I believe, a good one) of the Government to abolish tribal relations and annul the power of the chiefs, but by these means the unruly spirits of the tribes were heretofore controlled,

and when such means are destroyed we should be prepared to offer something better as a substitute.

True, the establishment of Indian courts has been proposed and may be of great service, but it can hardly be expected that such tribunals would deal out capital punishment for capital crimes, or take very severe views of thefts of horses from supposed enemies. In fact, the transition from an autocratic to a republican form of government is too sudden. We have deprived these people of their pillars and should be prepared to support them. We treat them as children, and should be prepared to protect, guide, and control them. I repeat, and with emphasis, that, while guided and controlled they should also be protected, for, while many of the headmen have expressed their desire that their rebellious bretheren be made to succumb to the white man's laws, they have also expressed a fear that such laws would be enforced in different manners as against the red and the white man; a fear, which I regret to say, knowledge and experience do not tend to allay. It has been urged that Indians should not be punished for breaking laws they do not understand, but I would submit that all Indians, at least all of whom I have any knowledge, have codes of morals not at all dissimilar to our ten commandments. Their consciences are pretty fair guides as to what is right and as to what is wrong, and it will be found that a good Indian among Indians would be considered a pretty good man in any community. Our penalties for crimes and methods of punishment are doubtless somewhat different, but, when not already known, I have no doubt that a couple of months would be sufficient to convey to the tribes, at least of which I write, a clear understanding thereof. I have three murderers roaming at will on this reservation, who, having escaped the vengeance of relatives of the slain, know full well they have no other punishment to fear, and yet as fully know that white men in their position would be liable to be hanged. While, therefore, not presuming to suggest, I still hope that some code, a simple one if necessary, will be enacted through which the lawless natives of Indian reservations may be held in check. That with the clear understanding of many of the people of their immunity from punishment their crimes should be so few is the highest evidence in favor of their behavior and dispositions.

APPENDIX H

Agents to the Flathead Reservation

Dr. R. H. Lansdale	1855-1856
Major John Owen	1856-1862
Charles Hutchins	1862-1865
Agustus H. Chapman	1865-1866
John W. Wells	1866-1868
M. M. McCauley	1868-1869
A. S. Galbraith	1869-1870
G. E. Ford	1870-1870
Charles S. Jones	1870-1872
Daniel Shanahan	1872-1874
Peter Whaley	1874-1875
Charles S. Medary	1875-1877
Peter Ronan	1877-1893

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