

would make good use of it. They are above the average Indians and they should be given all the assistance that could be given.

Some of them have good farms here that white people are very anxious to purchase, and some few of the Indians would like to sell and go to the reservation, while others do not wish to sell, but do want to provide lands for the children growing up.

I can not give you the number of Indians who would accept lands on the reservation, for the reason that they are nearly all away; however, I think nearly all would accept lands who are not owners of land. They will always spend more or less time here if allotted on the reservation, but at the same time as the children become old enough to farm they would gradually become weaned away from here and live upon their lands.

The Colville Reservation was set aside by Executive order dated July 2, 1872, for the use of the Indians therein named, "and for such other Indians as the Department of the Interior may see fit to locate thereon." As the Wenatchi disclaim all connection with the Yakima, the office believes that the Department would be warranted in settling such of these Indians on the Colville Reservation as desire to go there for the purpose of securing homes, and that this should be done. It is believed, however, that it would not be proper to allot lands to them in severalty until all the Indians on the south half of the Colville Reservation come to be allotted. It is the desire and purpose of the office to settle the question of providing for homes for all these people at the earliest practicable date.

With his report of June 22, 1900, Mr. Casson inclosed a census of the Wenatchi, including those scattered along the Columbia, giving names, ages, relationship, and stating whether they now have lands or not. The list contains 166 names. About one-half the Indians now have lands, including the eighteen allotted by him.

CHIEF JOSEPH AND HIS BAND OF NEZ PERCÉ.

Last March Chief Joseph visited this city and submitted to this office a petition to be allowed to leave his present location on the Colville Reservation in Washington and return with his band of about 150 Nez Percé to Wallowa Valley, Oregon. This, he claimed, was the home of his ancestors and was his own home until he and his people were removed from Idaho to the Indian Territory in 1877, at the close of the Nez Percé war. By Department reference the office also received a communication, dated April 7, 1900, from Maj. Gen. Nelson A. Miles, United States Army, recommending that Joseph's request be granted.

April 21, 1900, the office submitted a report to the Department on the history and status of this band of Nez Percé, the condition of the Wallowa Valley, and the treaties with the Nez Percé tribe, and it was recommended that Joseph's request to be removed to the Wallowa Valley or elsewhere be denied. Joseph, having been informed of this

action, requested a conference with the office, which was granted May 1 last. On the 3d of that month a report of the conference was submitted to the Department, with the recommendation that an inspector be instructed to accompany Joseph to the Wallowa Valley for the purpose of ascertaining whether land sufficient and suitable could be found therein for making allotments to him and his band. May 24 Inspector James McLaughlin was so instructed, and June 23, 1900, he submitted his report, of which the following is a résumé:

The Wallowa Valley is about 40 miles in length from southeast to northwest, and averages about 15 miles in width. It has four prosperous towns, Wallowa, Lostine, Enterprise, and Joseph, the latter being at the upper end of the valley and about 1 mile from the foot of Wallowa Lake, a lake situated in a gap of the Powder River Mountain where the range is 8,000 feet high. The upper townships of the valley, Joseph and Prairie Creek, extend into the mountains, and only about one-third of their area is tillable. The lake is fast becoming a favorite summer resort. It is 1 mile wide, 4 miles long, and 275 feet deep, with a temperature in summer of about 45°. The adjoining lands are held very high, one 80-acre tract at the outlet (north end) being valued at \$6,000.

The country south of the Wallowa Lake is rough, broken, and worthless, except the lower portions of the mountains, which are grazed by cattle and sheep about three months of the year. This is true of the country east of Wallowa Lake and of the town of Joseph, through to Snake River, about 30 miles, except in the narrow valleys of the Innaha River and its tributaries, which are from 2,500 to 3,500 feet lower than the plateau levels of the surrounding country. Every spot in these narrow valleys is under irrigation and in a high state of cultivation, devoted chiefly to fruit orchards, even tropical fruits being successfully raised, protected as they are by the high canyon walls between which the creeks run.

In Wallowa County, which is the northeastern county of the State of Oregon, the lands are held at from \$5 to \$75 per acre, and in the Wallowa Valley at from \$20 to \$75 per acre, according to the quality of the soil and the nature of improvements. The following is the assessed valuation of the lands in Wallowa County:

Tillable lands	\$166,420
Nontillable lands.....	193,625
Town lots.....	12,040
Improvements on lands.....	101,250
Improvements on lots.....	52,205
Total assessed value	525,540
For actual value add 50 per cent.....	262,770
Approximate actual value.....	788,310

The assessed valuation of realty and live stock is about \$1,100,000, to which should be added 50 per cent on realty and 33½ per cent on live stock to arrive at the actual value of such property.

The county has a population approximating 6,000, mainly located in the Wallowa Valley. The votes polled in the county at the recent State election were as follows:

Wallowa precinct	250
Lostine precinct.....	200
Enterprise precinct.....	235
Joseph precinct	160
Prairie Creek precinct	87
Trout Creek precinct	85
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Total votes in Wallowa Valley proper	1,017
Divide precinct (which is east of Prairie Creek in the Sheep Creek country).....	30
Imnaha precinct, including the settlers along the tributaries of the Imnaha River.....	160
Paradise, Flora, and Lost Prairie precincts, which are in the northern portion of the county.....	300
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Number of votes cast in Wallowa County in May, 1900....	1,507

It is therefore evident that Wallowa County is well populated, and that practically all desirable agricultural lands in the county which control adjacent grazing privileges are owned by whites and mostly occupied by the owners. The settlers are an intelligent and prosperous class of farmers and stock growers, who have their farm lands nearly all under irrigation and well fenced.

Unless some portion of Wallowa Valley were included, suitable agricultural lands for Joseph and his band could not be found in the county, and it would be very expensive to secure any portion of Wallowa Valley upon which to locate those Indians. Even the two upper townships, less valuable than any others in the valley, could not be purchased with their improvements for less than \$150,000. No one with whom the inspector conferred manifested any desire to sell his holdings; while all expressed themselves as opposed to Joseph's band being brought into that country.

While a majority of the settlers of the Wallowa Valley retain no ill will against the Nez Percé for the troubles of 1877, yet there are some whose relatives were ravished and killed by Indians on Salmon River and Camas Prairie during that outbreak who vow vengeance against all members of the band, and more particularly against Joseph, and many of the settlers predict that should the Indians be returned to this valley to stay permanently Joseph would be assassinated within a year.

Joseph's band would now hardly recognize this valley as the one over which they roamed twenty-three years ago, with an abundance of game in the mountains and fish in the streams. The game has

almost entirely disappeared and fish are fewer every year. Moreover, it was the custom of the band to remain in Wallowa only during the summer months and to return into the valleys of Imnaha and Snake rivers about the end of October, remaining there all winter.

In the Nespelim Valley, Washington, where Joseph and his band have been located for seventeen years, the climate is much milder in winter than in the Wallowa Valley. The lands are equal to the average lands in the mountains of Oregon, and superior to the greater portion lying outside of the more fertile valleys. In fact, it is quite equal to the Wallowa Valley, except that the area of the bottom land is not so extensive. The Nespelim Valley also equals, if it is not better than the Wallowa Valley for both hunting and fishing. The Nespelim and Little Nespelim rivers are both good trout streams. The San Poil River, about 30 miles east of Joseph's settlement, and entirely within the south half of the Colville Reservation, is said to be one of the best salmon fishing streams in eastern Washington. There are immense quantities of "huckleberries" in the mountains, from which the Indians derive quite a revenue. The soil is a rich loam, the surface is well sodded, and native grasses are luxuriant.

The Nespelim River has excellent valley lands on both sides for some 15 miles in length, and averaging about 1 mile in width. The Little Nespelim, a few miles east of the main river and running nearly parallel with it, is similar, except that the stream and valley are smaller. Both of these rivers have their sources in the mountains and are swift-running, never-failing streams of excellent water, sufficient to irrigate the lands of their respective valleys. The valleys alone afford ample tillable land for twice the number of Indians now located upon that portion of the Colville Reservation. Excellent pine timber is plentiful on the uplands and along the foothills of the adjacent mountains. The Indians can obtain all the lumber they need free of cost if they will but fell the trees and get the logs to the Government mill. The main Nespelim River furnishes a good water power which runs a flour mill and a sawmill, both in good condition and capable of doing first-class work. They are used exclusively for grinding into flour the wheat raised by the Indians, and sawing for their use the logs brought by them to the mill.

Chief Joseph has a large tract of excellent land inclosed with a good fence and situated on the west bank of the main Nespelim River. A portion of it is very good meadow land and there is also some timber and all the land is tillable. On this tract he has a small house in fairly good condition, but a poor barn. He is not living here but upon another tract near by, upon which he has built another house, situated about one-quarter of a mile south of the subagency. The fields occupied by his band are nearly all fenced and include both meadow and pasture.

Joseph is regarded as a nonprogressive Indian, one who will not work, and it is alleged that the advancement of his people is greatly retarded by his influence which offers no encouragement to industrial pursuits. The inspector is convinced that he does not represent the wishes of his entire band regarding his desired change of location, but that a considerable number of them do not wish to leave Nespelim.

From these facts it seemed clear that neither the welfare nor the happiness of the Indians nor the good of the service would be promoted by allowing Joseph and his band to remove from their present location to the Wallawa Valley, and this office reported accordingly to the Department July 21 last. This opinion was concurred in September 4 and the United States Indian agent of the Collville Agency has been instructed to advise Joseph of that decision.

YAKIMA BOUNDARY CLAIM.

For some years the Yakima Indians in Washington have claimed that the southern and western boundary of their reservation as established by the Government survey was erroneous, and that they were deprived of lands which should properly be embraced within the reservation boundaries. Somewhat more than two years ago, after carefully looking into the matter the office concluded, as indicated in a report to the Secretary of the Interior dated April 12, 1898, that there were good grounds, at least, for the contention of the Indians that a portion of the tract intended to be reserved for them had been excluded on the west by the Government survey.

During the fall of 1898, in accordance with departmental instructions, Mr. E. C. Barnard, of the Geological Survey, proceeded to the locality in question for the purpose of making an examination of the disputed west boundary. He was prevented, however, by heavy snows from completing the work at that time, and in accordance with instructions of the Department, dated August 23, 1899, the examination was renewed September 15 and concluded October 15, 1899. January 12, 1900, Mr. Barnard made his report to the Geographer of the Geological Survey, accompanied by a map of the reservation and of the territory in dispute. He states as a result of his investigation that the wording of the treaty of 1855 can not be made to conform to the topography of the country; that the reservation as at present surveyed does not extend to the main ridge of the Cascade Mountains, as provided in the treaty, and that in his opinion the Indians have been deprived by the survey of the boundary as it now exists of a tract of territory embracing about 357,878 acres. The boundary of the tract claimed by the Indians does not extend as far west as Mr. Barnard thinks it should and embraces a tract of only 293,837 acres, or 64,041 acres less than he thinks they are entitled to.