

Four Deaths

The Near Destruction of Western Oregon Tribes and Native Lifeways, Removal to the Reservation, and Erasure from History

THE NOTIONS OF DEATH and genocide within the tribes of western Oregon are convoluted. History partially records our removal and near genocide by colonists, but there is little record of the depth of these events — of the dramatic scale of near destruction of our peoples and their cultural life ways.

Since contact with newcomers, death has come to the tribes of western Oregon in a variety of ways — through epidemic sicknesses, followed by attempted genocide, forced marches onto reservations, reduction of land holdings, broken treaty promises, attempts to destroy tribal culture through assimilation, and the termination of federal recognition of sovereign, tribal status. Death, then, has been experienced literally, culturally, legally, and even in scholarship; for well over a century, tribal people were not consulted and were not adequately represented in historical writing. Still, the people have survived, restoring their recognized tribal status and building structures to maintain and regain the people's health and cultural well-being. This legacy of death and survival is shared by all the tribes of Oregon, though specific details vary, but the story is not well known or understood by the state's general public. Such historical ignorance is another kind of death — one marked by both myth and silence.

An especially persistent myth is the notion that there lived and died a “last” member of a particular tribe or people. The idea began in the late nineteenth century, when social scientists who saw population declines at the reservations feared that the tribes would die off before scholars could collect their data and complete their studies. Their fear prompted several decades of frenzied



Eliza Young, called Indian Eliza, was often identified as the last Kalapuya Indian. In this photo taken in about 1912, she sits on her porch in Brownsville, Oregon, with a half-made basket.

collection of tribal artifacts and intellectual knowledge by anthropologists, linguists, folklorists, and museums in a process termed “salvage anthropology.”¹ A woman named Indian Eliza, or Eliza Young, is often identified as the “last” Kalapuya Indian. She lived in Brownsville and grew to an old age, well over 100, and died August 19, 1922. Eliza was blind for many years before her death and was a noted basket weaver. In various archival photographic collections, images of her are identified with the phrase “The Last Calapooya” (Kalapuya).² Some years ago, I encountered a photo with this description on the Oregon Historical Society’s website. I subsequently communicated the fallacy to the curators, and the description was changed in its online description, even

though other handwritten inscriptions like on her inscriptions like on her birth certificate and on original photos still display this statement. Clearly, the tribes have survived, and yet the notion of the last Kalapuya Indian persists. I have seen similar newspaper articles in regard to Chief Halo of the Yoncalla Kalapuya, as well as a book on his son Sam Fearn called *The Last Yoncalla*.³ This historical falsehood has been difficult to change in the records, regardless of the fact that the Grand Ronde tribe includes perhaps 2,500 people — I among them — who are descended from the Kalapuya peoples.⁴ The difficulty of changing this narrative speaks to the challenge of addressing large-scale erroneous or incomplete histories of the tribes contained in dozens of books written and published over the past 150 years.

Scholars correctly question whether older published histories have any effect today on people's understanding of regional history. The recent (2013–2014) project to name the new TriMet transit bridge in Portland included soliciting suggestions from the public.⁵ Of the many Native names proposed for the bridge, the name Chief Multnomah and the assumed Native name for Mount Hood, *Wy-east*, became two of the proposed finalists in the selection process, with Multnomah not making it to the final four. Both of these words are enormously popular in the Portland Metro area, where everyone seems to know and assume the names' Native origins. In fact, however, it appears that the mythical figure of Chief Multnomah was wholly invented, likely by Frederick Balch, a writer who took some details about the tribes and exploited them in his romanticized historical stories that created a new-age mythology.⁶ A plethora of artwork, including statues and graphics, was produced in Chief Multnomah's honor. An image found on some older Multnomah County literature is derived from an original photo of Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce, while other depictions of the chief are borrowed from a statue held by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.⁷ The Multnomah tribe inhabited what is now the city of Portland, and their last major chief before removal to reservations was Chief Keasno.⁸ Balch likely borrowed some characteristics from the histories of Keasno to create his fictional character of Chief Multnomah. Staff at the Grand Ronde Tribe's Land and Culture Department, consulting with linguistic experts, traced the origin of *Wy-east* to Balch's book.⁹ These two examples show that a book published over 100 years ago still has a direct effect on the public's understandings of Oregon's past — particularly as it relates to Native people.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, historical writing depicted the pioneer generation as a heroic group of people who struggled to reach Oregon, where they tamed the forests, prairies, and savages of the frontier. This mantra is a primary theme in innumerable books of Oregon history as well as museum exhibits across the state. It is an extremely powerful trope that

is difficult to surpass, despite changes that began in the 1970s with Stephen Dow Beckham's detailed histories of the tribes.¹⁰ Over the past forty years, more has been written about the tribes of Oregon than in the previous 130 years, with many authors utilizing Native perspectives and oral histories in their narratives. There is now a rich body of histories about Oregon that appears in journals such as the *Oregon Historical Quarterly*. That work is readily available at universities and has been a stable source of deeper histories of all aspects of Oregon history, but it is unclear how long it will take for those newer histories to begin to make an impact on public school education or history books that are consumed by the general public.

As an elementary and high school student in Salem (1972–1983), I received no education about Oregon's tribes. Fourth-grade Oregon history included only the stories of the pioneers and the Lewis and Clark Expedition. This experience is shared by generations of

Oregon students into the present. My children have now attended the same school I did in the Salem-Keizer school district, and forty years later, their education experience was nearly identical to mine. My personal interaction with their teachers and in-class presentations about the Native peoples of



The mythical Chief Multnomah was likely derived from a photograph of Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce. Imagery honoring the romanticized version of the Indian chief was perpetuated in the twentieth century through art and graphics such as this trade postcard's apocryphal depiction of Chief Multnomah in full regalia.

ORIGINAL AND COMMON NAMES OF KALAPUYAN
(k'alapúya, in Chinookan) SPEAKING PEOPLES

<u>ORIGINAL</u>	<u>COMMON</u>
atfálat'i	Tualatin
ayámil	Yamhill
anhánc'h'iyuk	Ahantchuyuk, Calapooia ¹
aláak'mayuk	Luckiamute
anhálbam	Santiam
amp'íinefu	Mary's River, Marysville
chantk'úbi?	Tekopa, Calapooia ²
chaméefu	Chemapho, Muddy Creek
chanchífin	Chafan, Lower McKenzie
[Pe-u] ³	Mohawk River
chambé?shna	Winnefelly ⁴
chalámalii	Chelamela, Long Tom
ayángalat	Yoncalla

1. Calapooia band of Calapooias in the 1855 Willamette Valley Treaty. See Henry Zenk, "Notes on Native American Place-names of the Willamette Valley Region" *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 109:1 (Spring 2008): 30m12, map of treaty tribes.
2. Calapooia band (of) Calapooia River in the 1856 Grand Ronde census, *Ibid.*
3. Name of Mohawk River on the map accompanying the 1851 (unratified) Champoege Treaty, *Ibid.*, 3m31.
4. This name appears only in the 1855 Willamette Valley Treaty. The group's location as given there suggests the ethnographically-given location of the group named in the left-hand column, *Ibid.*, 30m2.

Compiled by the author and Dr. Henry Zenk.

Oregon has changed that experience for the past few years.¹¹ During some twenty years spent pursuing my education in several colleges and universities, I found few occasions when students could learn about the tribes of Oregon. I have now taught anthropology courses during eight years and in six universities in western Oregon, and the students have told me in class discussions that education about Native people of Oregon is almost non-existent in their elementary, middle, and high schools. They never have heard of termination of the tribes, and they have almost no knowledge of how many tribes there are now in Oregon. They are completely unaware of the history of the tribes, who they vaguely associate with casinos.¹² Rarely, students will state that they had units on the Kalapuya or other local tribes in their public school education. In contrast, Douglas High School in Winston offers an advanced class on Native people taught by Joe Ruehl; one of his students has appeared in one of my classes at Oregon State University. Change is possible.

The shift begun in the 1970s has brought great depth to Oregon histories. Previously, it had been rare for historians to include Native perspectives, as many considered tribal oral histories to be unreliable and therefore did not use them as sources. Tribal historians have long held a responsibility to represent the history as accurately as possible. Previous to written history, tribal storytellers had to memorize every detail they were taught and tell that information to the next generation at the correct time of year. There were no other ways to convey the history from one generation to the next. Through my research into termination I confirmed, with primary documents, statements by elders claiming the tribe had not agreed to termination, demonstrating the reliability of oral accounts.¹³ This article therefore incorporates as many Native experiential accounts as possible. Though rare, such narratives can be found in, for example, reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and within letters and books of the period. I have also uncovered rare newspaper stories of Native activities. All are written by non-Native people, as Native people were not in control of their own narratives at the time. In order to determine their level of legitimacy, we therefore must always compare such accounts with what we know about tribal culture and people. New histories of the region will increasingly include Native perspectives as tribes take charge of the scholarship about themselves. The history presented here adds to that work by drawing on primary sources to outline the various ways death — literal, cultural, and legal — has been experienced by the peoples now gathered as the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. Before the erasure of tribes in historical writings, they were eliminated through more literal means of genocide — destruction of both the peoples and their cultures. The following is a portion of that story told through some of the historic events for two principal tribes in the confederation of Grand Ronde. The Kalapuyans

in the Willamette Valley and the Takelma in the Rogue River valley are widely divergent in their experiences with settler populations. Their histories conjoin at the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation in 1856.

THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY'S tribes, primarily the many Kalapuya tribes and bands, and the expeditions of traders who plied the rivers and lakes seeking to exchange their camas wheels (cooked camas mashed together) or obsidian trading blanks (large obsidian pieces that would be broken down to make individual spear points and other tools) for delicious dried salmon or dentalium strings, had an incredible network of commerce already established before the Americans and British arrived. Soon after, the tribal peoples got very sick. The cold sick visited them, and no tribal remedies were successful. Tens of thousands died of newly introduced malaria, influenza, smallpox, and other ailments, beginning in the 1780s and continuing into the 1850s.¹⁴ By then, the tribes were remnants of their former powerful nations. Many had occupied vast territories in the valley through several politically associated villages, but they were forced to collapse to a single village of survivors. Tribes of perhaps a few dozen souls, who once numbered into the thousands, banded together for protection and companionship after so many had died. On the heels of the epidemics came the pioneer settlers who began taking what appeared to be empty, unclaimed lands. The vast prairie land was an Eden with rich soils that were seemingly being wasted on the poor, miserable tribal peoples. The newcomers took over the best lands. Then, to add insult to this injury, they organized to completely eliminate the tribes from the land. In the southern portion of the state — the homeland of the Takelma — the objective was extermination, literally genocide. There, tribal people were in the way of gold mining activities. In the Willamette Valley, the tribes were bothersome pests who stole from the settlers, who spoke of them as savage and uncivilized. Indians were equated with wolves, which were equally hunted nearly to extinction.¹⁵

During the 1840s, all the tribes of Oregon were under an onslaught of the great migration of settlers, miners, and ranchers. Those pioneers gained the right to claim hundreds of acres of prime farm land under the Oregon Donation Land Claims Act (1849), without the United States having previously acquired the rights to the land from the tribes. For the tribes, this was a devastating invasion of their homelands. Newcomers drained and plowed the beautiful camas fields and rich wapato marshes to make way for wheat, cattle, sheep, and potatoes. Wapato Lake near Hillsboro is one such place. Once a huge lake full of wapato and surrounded by a dozen Tualatin villages, it now stands as agricultural fields. No wapato survives there today. With the first settlers in the 1830s had come missionaries, both Methodist and Catholic, to



In the 1880s, railroad promoter and historian Joseph Gaston drained Wapato Lake, near Hillsboro, Oregon, to create agricultural fields shown here in about 1911. No wapato survives there today.

save the tribal peoples and to educate them. At Willamette Mission Bottoms and later Salem, Jason Lee's mission and school took Kalapuya children from the Willamette plains and taught them how to live appropriately — farming, reading and writing, dressing properly, and worshiping in the Methodist way. Children had to run the mission's homestead operations and did much of the farming and household work while being exposed to a Methodist education.¹⁶

Rev. Augustin Blanchet, the Catholic Bishop of Nesqually, expressed concern about the tribes' level of civilization in 1852, writing to the U.S. Congress about his:

wishes to submit to the consideration of Congress the advantage which would result to the Indians if certain religious institutions were placed among them, which will contribute to civilize them by teaching them to work. But this can only be done with the assistance of the government. And there are already several precedents of the kind. . . . Besides inculcating good morals and peace, the Priests are inducing the Indians to cultivate the soil, and there was an enclosure of three or four acres in which potatoes and beans were growing.¹⁷



Bishop Augustin Blanchet of Nesqually, his brother Archbishop Francis Norbert Blanchet of Oregon City, and Bishop M. Demers (left to right) were founders of the Catholic church in the Pacific Northwest. Christian missionaries, including the Catholic bishops, sought to assimilate Native peoples, who they deemed uncivilized, into Euro-American culture.

His brother, Archbishop Francis Blanchet of Oregon City, asked at the same time

that some provisions be made in favour of the poor, and numerous Indian tribes of Oregon, in land and money, to help the missionaries to establish themselves and remain in order to civilize them; this means being more successful than that of muskets for humanizing them and keep them peaceable.¹⁸

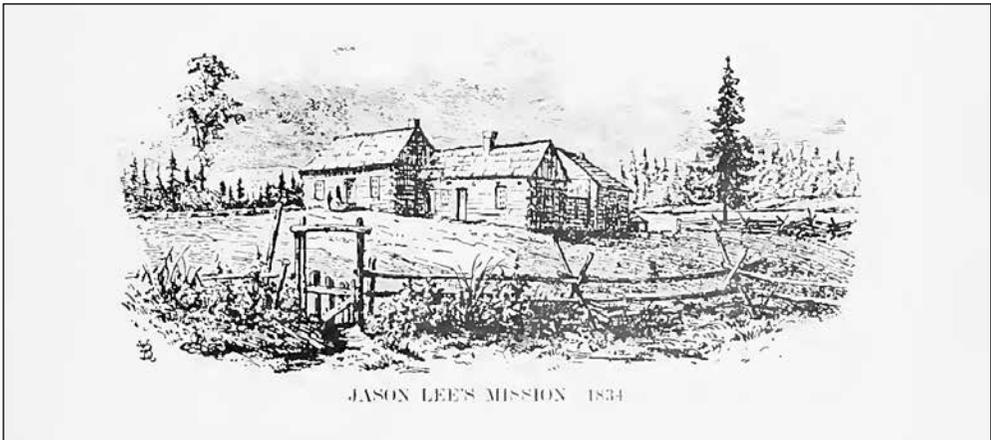
The mission of both men was to assimilate the tribal peoples, whom they deemed uncivilized (savage, not Christian, and not fully human) for many reasons. The Tualatin Kalapuya of the northern valley were perhaps the first to undergo this pressure. They quickly learned to farm and ranch; by the late 1840s, newspapers reported that: “The Twallatty’s [sic] are, many of them,

very good farmers, and are employed extensively during the harvest season in getting in the crops.”¹⁹

In 1840, Lee’s Methodists created a Manual Training Institute in Salem and continued to educate Indian children. Following the Methodist model, the federal government made assimilation the policy of the nation and employed various missionary organizations to begin the process at the reservations. Assimilation through education continued at the reservation day schools, the on-reservation boarding schools, and the off-reservation boarding schools. The boarding school at Forest Grove began in 1880, then moved to Salem in 1885 and was renamed the Chemawa Indian Boarding School. It remains one of the last fully operational off-reservation Indian boarding schools in the United States.²⁰

Assimilation was written into the treaties with the tribes from the beginning of negotiations. In 1851, the Kalapuyan tribes met with Indian Superintendent Anson Dart and his treaty commission at Champoeg, where they negotiated for at least five days. Each treaty version included the government’s policy of promoting agriculture, education, and the civilization of the tribes. The Santiam leaders proved to be the most powerfully spoken, and all the other tribes joined with them, allowing Chiefs Tiacan and Alquema of the Santiam Kalapuya to speak for all.²¹

The chiefs spoke with great emotion about their situation, expelling any doubt that they understood what had occurred and what was occurring in their homelands. Dart’s letter of April 19, 1851, documents the chiefs’ clear articulation regarding the importance of the location of their reservation:



Missionary Jason Lee established a Methodist mission and school in the Willamette Valley to educate Kalapuya youth. Lee’s mission, shown here in 1834, was illustrated in Joseph Gaston’s 1912 Centennial History of Oregon.

Before entering into these treaties we exhausted every argument, and availed ourselves of every means of persuasion which we were authorized to make use of, to induce the Indian to remove east of the Cascade mountains; but the Indians, without any exception, manifested a fixed and settled determination not, under any circumstances, or for any consideration, to remove. They urged, as reasons for not wishing to do so, that their fathers had lived and were buried in this country; that it was their native land, and that they wished to be buried by the graves of their ancestors; that they were unacquainted with the country east of the Cascade mountains, and were ignorant of the means of procuring a livelihood in any other than the one in which they now live; and that it would be more humane and merciful for the whites to exterminate them at once, than to drive them from this to the country east of the Cascade mountains.

They also stated that when the whites first came to settle here they expressed their willingness to have them occupy any portion of the country they might desire, except within the limits of these reservations; but that they had repeatedly declared their deter-

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Children from the Spokane tribe, shown here in 1881, were recruited for the Forest Grove boarding school in 1881. The boarding school moved to Salem in 1885 and was renamed the Chemwa Indian Boarding School. It remains one of the last fully operational off-reservation Indian boarding schools in the United States



The off-reservation boarding school assimilation process is evident in this 1882 photograph of children of the Spokane tribe seven months after their arrival at the Forest Grove school.

mination never to part altogether with this land containing the bones of their fathers, and that this intention was well known to the whites who are now residing on their reserves . . . [and] that they have always lived peaceably and on friendly terms with these white men, and that they presume they can continue to do so.²²

The depth of understanding by the tribes is also apparent in the transcription of the negotiations. That document reveals how deeply the Santiams felt for their lands and their heartfelt regret for allowing their lands to be taken in the first place.

Alquema said, “they had once been a great people but now they had decreased to nothing, and in a short time the whites would have all their lands, without their removing.”

Alquema objected to removing, saying that “they could now see that they had thrown away their country; but that they wanted to keep this piece of land as their reserve.”

Tiacan [said], “their hearts were upon that piece of land, and they didn’t wish to leave it.”²³

This record of a negotiation tells us that the Santiams and the associated Kalapuya tribes knew that unless they removed they would suffer the fate of the tribes undergoing battles and conflicts on the Columbia River and in southern Oregon. Dart continued with his negotiations, and during the sum-

mer of 1851, he visited with the tribes in southern Oregon and wrote several treaties with the coastal tribes. Disappointed that the treaties were never ratified, the tribes continued to resist incursions into their lands, fighting for their very survival from 1853 to 1856 in a series of progressively more violent battles collectively called the Rogue River Indian wars.²⁴

At the southern border of Oregon, the Rogue River tribes, one of which was the Takelma peoples, suffered no less of a fate than the Kalapuya peoples in the north but were at the forefront of the battles with the other area tribes — Chasta Costa, Shasta, and Umpqua — for survival in their lands. The Takelma peoples were suffering wide-scale invasions in their lands beginning in 1849 with gold miners and settlers seeking to take the best land alongside gold-bearing rivers. By 1853, miners and ranchers sought the ultimate destruction of the tribes, whose villages stood in the way of the Americans' aspirations of wealth. That invasion caused a series of scattered back-and-forth conflicts over territory and resources that continued to at least 1856, encompassing northern California and southwestern Oregon.²⁵

Joel Palmer was appointed Indian Superintendent of the Oregon Territory in 1853, and he immediately began negotiating treaties in southern Oregon, working to encourage peace between the combatants. His Treaty with the Rogue River Tribes of September 10, 1853, established the Table Rock Reservation and separated the combatants. After the tribes were removed to the reservation, they had to endure continued attacks by the neighboring Euro-Americans. Now, they were stationary targets of the militia, which wished to exact genocide on the whole race of Indians and was supported by politicians in Oregon and California. Chief John (Tecumtum) of the group identified as Rogue River tribes gathered his influence over his tribes, and later the Chasta Costas, who were removed to the reservation in 1854, and led those who would follow him from the reservation to hide in the Siskiyou and Coastal ranges.²⁶ From there, they fought guerrilla-style warfare against the white militias who sought their complete destruction. The blame for this war was found to rest solely on the Euro-Americans by no less than Gen. John E. Wool, Commander of the Pacific, who in 1854 concluded:

Almost every mail brings us information of some outrage by either the Whites or the Indians. Generally the latter are quiet and peaceably inclined, but are frequently goaded to acts of cruelty by the conduct of the Whites, of whom many consider them no better than wolves, and apparently take as much pleasure in killing them as they would the latter. With almost innumerable tribes of Indians dispersed throughout the Pacific Department, embracing the country above mentioned, some of which are warlike & troublesome, with emigrants in large numbers daily encroaching upon them & dispossessing them of their lands.²⁷

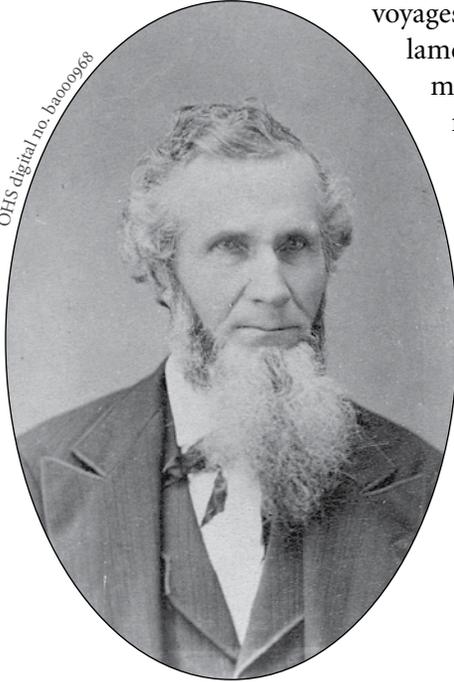
In 1856, Palmer made arrangements for removal of all of the tribes in western Oregon to the newly created Grand Ronde Indian Reservation. Palmer ordered that beginning in February, all Indians on these temporary reservations were to be marched to the Grand Ronde Agency. The tribes at the Table Rock Reservation began marching their “Trail of Tears” in February and reached Grand Ronde in late March, a journey of about thirty-three days through the dead of winter. Most people walked the whole way, and during the journey, eight people died and eight babies were born. Along their path, the caravan endured extreme hardship because some settlers, in their newly established towns, hated Indians and

attacked them, forcing the caravan to avoid many settlements.²⁸ One story has the caravan avoiding Rickreall by heading west up Falls Creek and northward over the dividing mountains into the Grand Ronde Valley. The Rogue River tribes is a misnomer. It is a collective term for several tribes living near the Rogue River, which include Shasta, Takelma, Chasta Costa, and some Umpqua. The original Rogue River designation referred to Takelma people who were central to the valley. The area tribes likely shared the same culture and became united against incursions in their territory.²⁹

Chief John’s people continued to fight for several months, but by May 1856, many of the holdouts in the mountains were finished with fighting, their force being exhausted. They eventually filtered into Port Orford and settled nearby so they could have protection of the United States military. Palmer had about 1,400 people shipped from Port Orford on two schooner



Alquema, chief of the Santiam band, was one of two Kalapuya leaders who attended the 1851 treaty negotiations with the United States government. Alquema expressed his desire to stay on the people’s native land and the importance of place to the tribes.



Joel Palmer became Indian Superintendent of the Oregon Territory in 1853, a hostile time when ranchers and miners sought to remove Indians from their land. Palmer established the Table Rock Reservation to separate Indians and neighboring Euro-Americans.

voyages up the coast to Portland and down the Willamette River to Dayton. From there, they were marched overland to Grand Ronde. Another removal occurred on the coast, with the last of the holdouts being marched along the ocean shoreline, while being attacked by settlers, to temporarily settle on the coast near Newport. After the trail of tears concluded, the business of establishing the reservations produced two: the Coast Indian Reservation and the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation.³⁰

The tribes of western Oregon had endured horrible atrocities, but at the reservations, they settled in among some twenty-seven other tribes from the various regions of western Oregon and the lower Columbia River.³¹ Military forts protected them against further incursions from the Euro-Americans. On reservations, the United States continued the policy of assimilation, which worked to degrade tribal culture, language, and identity. Missionary education, poor health care, lack of food and basic services, and forced removal of children to off-reservation boarding schools — all aiding in the process of assimilation — propelled generations of tribal people to leave the reservations and seek benefits in the relative equality and anonymity of the cities. What the

settlers failed to do through their militias, the government was accomplishing through assimilation.³²

One distinctive story of Grand Ronde has been told about my ancestor, Hattie Sands, a Rogue River Indian who lived among the tribes in southern Oregon as a young girl. The story begins with her visiting some relatives among the Umpquas at the same time as removal to the reservations was instigated. She was very afraid and hid in a beaver dam. Sometime later, she emerged to find all the people gone. She walked by herself the nearly three-hundred miles from southern Oregon to Grand Ronde. Later, she became renowned for the baskets she made and sold to the neighboring

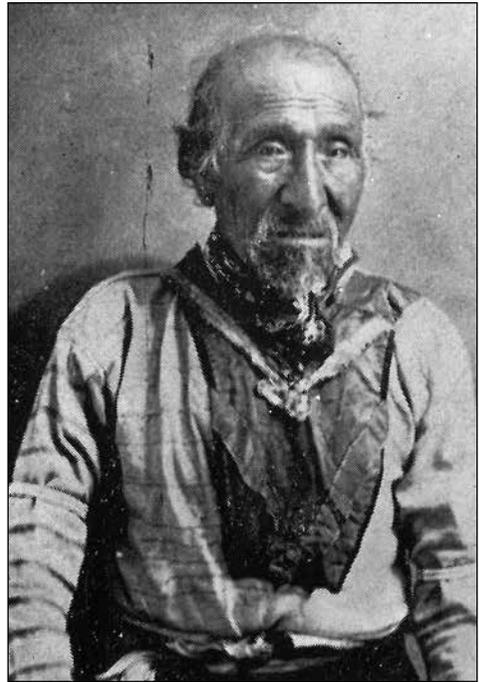
Euro-Americans. Stories like this are rare and unique to the tribes. They speak to tribal members about the character, strength, and perseverance of the people who came to the reservation and continued their cultural traditions despite all the pressures to assimilate and stop being Indian in America. Other documents record the work that tribal leaders were doing to contend with the politics of the U.S. federal government that did not allow for sufficient resources at the reservation.

Records from an 1871 Indian council (an encampment with other tribes held in Salem to discuss how to spend the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation's annual budget) demonstrate tribal frustration over agreements with the federal government for the treaties rights that still were not fulfilled:

Jo Hutchins — Chief of Santiams — said, “I am watching your eye. I am watching your tongue. I am thinking all the time. Perhaps you are making fools of us. We don't want to be made fools. . . . We are not dogs. We have hearts. We may be blind. We do not see the things the treaty promised. Maybe they got lost on the way. The President is a long way off. He can't hear us. Our words get lost in the wind before they get there.”³³

Three years later, the tribes were again gathered at Salem for a traditional Indian council. They seemed to have taken the opportunity to remember and perhaps also begin to heal from their traumas of the past century. John Minto wrote a contemporary account of the meeting:

[The people were asked:] “Do you remember when all this country belonged to your people?” the answer was in the affirmative. “Do you remember when your people were many in numbers; when you had many young men and many old men?” Do you remember when many of your people died? Did your heart sorrow for the death of your people?



Indians removed to Table Rock Reservation in 1853 became targets of white militias. After repeated attacks, Chief John Tecumtum of the peoples identified as Rogue Rivers led a group to hide in the Siskiyou Mountains to fight against neighboring white combatants.



Hattie (Sands) Hudson, pictured here with her family, was the author's ancestor. As a little girl, she walked nearly 300 miles from southern Oregon back to Grand Ronde after family members she was visiting among the Umpquas had been removed to a reservation.

These questions evidently had allusion to the terrible "cold sick" (epidemics) that swept such numbers of the Indian off. . . .

Being asked some questions about the sale of their lands by her people, she [Mrs. Jo Hutchins] expressed an enduring love for her native land and an abiding sorrow that it had been parted with, but expressed herself free from malice or hate on that account. These questions seemed intended to revive the love of country, people and former condition in the hearts of the audience, and so make the coming form of worship more effective and impressive. The [Klamath] stranger then commenced a recital of traditional history.³⁴

This example of traditional storytelling evokes a powerful way for the tribes to come to terms with the catastrophes of the past, events that likely were in the memories of some of the people present during that time. Those people lived through the initial explorers, diseases, and era of pioneer settlement, and saw the decline of their people and rights to their traditional lands. The intent of such storytelling would be to help all people come to terms with and complete the grieving over what has occurred and move forward with good hearts.

Also in the 1870s, the tribes at Grand Ronde formed a legislature with a representative government and twenty-six laws.³⁵ By that time, direct funding through Congress was slow to come to the reservation, and the agents were not able to support the tribes as they had before. The lack of funding was in direct relation to the end of the twenty years of payments in the treaties for education and other reservation services. So, with lack of funding and few jobs at the reservation, Grand Ronde tribal people were forced to leave every year to find wage labor in the valley. They became the first migrant farm workers of the new agricultural economy, an irony considering they were the land's original inhabitants. Despite such adaptations, their population continued to decline. By 1900, there were barely 400 people at the reservation, down from the original population of 1,200.³⁶

Mismanagement of the reservation and lack of medicines were major problems. Some correspondence suggests that the medicines in use at the reservation in the 1880s were remnants of original supplies that had arrived in the 1850s. Death was a way of life for many families, with many children dying before puberty. Some of this can be attributed to the lack of food and basic services. Continual reports from Indian agents suggested that the people were starving and asked for the Commissioner of Indian Affairs' permission to slaughter the older cattle to feed them. The winters in Oregon are harsh, and warm clothing and blankets were constantly being requested of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.³⁷ Finally, the removal of the children to boarding schools, on and off the reservation, was a big hardship on the people, who depended on the young to care for the elderly or help run their farms. The federal government wanted to assimilate those children and make them stop being Indians culturally, but in doing so, officials caused generational trauma to the people.

Joe Apperson, a Clackamas Indian, wrote in an 1887 letter about the many problems he was facing due to the policy of forcing all children to the reservation boarding school:

I went and get [*sic*] my niece in the school house to do a little work for me[.] I got permission from the Agent. Then I got her out then the Sister's went and told the Agent. I took my niece out of school for good then after two days the Agent sent the Polismen [*sic*] after me and told me to take my niece back to school and the Agent wanted to see me. So when I got to the Agent we settled that together then he told me it is my order to sent [*sic*] the Polismen after the children.

Apperson continued, detailing the lack of feed and seed, deaths, and the need for labor on his farms:

Twenty acres is not enough we can't get enough wheat and we [can't] raise any stock. We just got enough to make our living. I let you know that we are hard up here. We are

all out of feed and we are out of everything we haven't got no seed to sow only the rich people . . . round here and please help us all you can. The reason I tell you that because all the Indians were asking the Agent for the seed last fall and I don't know if the Agent rote [*sic*] to you about that.

Well my friend I let you know I have bin [*sic*] here in the Reservation for thirty two years and besides I have been raised in this Reservation and I never had trouble with the Agent or with the Teacher or with anybody I always act a good man. I always sent my children to School and all my children are well educated. The reason I act that way because my father he act the treaty [he is] the chief in the tribe we are full of blood Indian we not no half-breed. Now I am a single man my wife died and my children died and my Father's dead. One my Brother died in the Sylum [*sic*] his name was Moses Apperson.³⁸ I suppose you heard from him. Well my friend that the reason I want to get my niece out of school because I am a single man and I don't want to work and do my own cookin and as soon as I am done ploughing [*sic*] and done with all my work then I will sent [*sic*] my niece back to school again.

Well my friend I let you know we ain't many here now there were many people died last summer before you sent this Doctor, nearly all the best mens died but now since you sent this Doctor he always gave us good Medson [*sic*] and we think he is the best Doctor we ever had.³⁹

Apperson did not see the end of the government's desire to eliminate the tribes. His story begins with living off reservation, signing treaties, moving to the reservation, and having to adapt to a new life. Adaptation for Apperson meant having to manage his life as his community and cultural life ways were dying around him. There was less intergenerational help for the older people at the reservation when the children were taken away. This too is a huge effect on the traditional culture, because the youth were expected to help the elders of the tribe. The government promises of safety and security at the reservation may have been partially true, but with the pressures of assimilation, the people continued to decline.

Little help came to the people as they struggled to save themselves. The Dawes Act (1887) and its required segregation of the reservation into smaller parcels for individuals represented another step in a shift from community, then to family, and finally to nuclear family identity — a change that severely damaged the Grand Ronde community.⁴⁰ The loss of our lands and changes to our community consciousness were perhaps the greatest threats to the culture and life ways of my ancestors and tribal family at Grand Ronde.

The reservation continued to maintain about 350 members into the twentieth century. Left without much aid from Indian agents, members found ways to continue as a tribe and even formed a reorganized government in 1936. By 1950, the reservation contained only about 600 acres, much reduced from the original 1857 acreage of over 60,000.⁴¹ After a century of liquida-

tion, termination was forced on the tribe. In 1954, without any approval from the tribe, the U.S. Congress terminated Grand Ronde, ending the federal government's recognition of the tribe's status as a sovereign nation within a nation. After termination, the people were forced to move from the reservation to find work in the local cities. The loss of the land caused a loss of tribal identity, community continuity, and tribal languages and culture, as well as lasting psychological and health effects. Poverty was normal for tribal members. It was not until 1983 that the tribe was restored, after tribal elders convinced Congress that only tribal self-determination could help the declining descendants of the original reservation.⁴²

The federal government adopted assimilation as a policy that continued as each successive administration sought different ways to eliminate tribal culture and, by extension, tribal peoples. That elimination succeeded with termination in 1954. In one hundred years, the tribes of western Oregon went from owning approximately fourteen million acres to possessing a 2.5-acre cemetery.⁴³ During the 1970s and 1980s, the tribes returned and are now stronger than before in many ways, having learned from this history of loss. Termination was the most recent colonizing act of the United States to rid lands and resources from people who were said to be wasting them. The effects of attempts at both literal and cultural genocide are still with us today. Tribal families have maintained the histories, and our elders yet remember the stories of termination and of what they heard from their parents and grandparents about the reservation. This has all survived despite over 150 years of work on the part of the United States to assimilate and eliminate the tribes and cultures. Now the work continues to recover scattered historical accounts and teach this history to the generations that were not privileged to grow up with it. Part of this effort is for each individual in the tribe to come to a realization of what the American government attempted to accomplish through a series of efforts to eliminate the tribes. We are now deeply confronting the history of what has occurred for our peoples and are working outside the tribes to educate the public about our histories and where we come from, so that we may collectively find healing and reconciliation for those still engaged by historical trauma.

In the common histories of Oregon, the early wars, treaties, and reservations are addressed, but significant details of tribal life on the reservation and the interaction of the tribes with the surrounding Oregonian people over the past century and a half are not told. This is the experience that I had as a student of Oregon history and as I engaged in various projects at the Grand Ronde tribe to tell the history of my people.

The theme of tribal peoples and deeper histories of the tribes is now becoming a popular idea for many museums. A recent project with the Wil-



With the assistance of an interpretive history written by the author, the Willamette Heritage Center in Salem curated a permanent exhibit on the rich history of the Kalapuya tribes. The river canoe, fishing net, and traditional regalia shown here are part of the “kuri-tsfqw tilixam: River People of the Willamette” exhibit, photographed at the tribal opening in April 2014.

lamette Heritage Center in Salem is a good example of this idea. The center asked me to write an interpretive history of the Kalapuyan culture a few years ago, which I accomplished. From this, the Willamette Heritage Center in Salem, led by Museum Director Keni Sturgeon, produced a rich history of the Kalapuya tribes that is now a permanent exhibit in one of the historic houses at the center. In addition, the center and the Grand Ronde tribe host an annual exhibit at the Mission Mill gallery, curated by the tribe.⁴⁴

Previously, many histories were written with limited perspectives because Native people and other minorities were not consulted. Perhaps at best, half of the history of Oregon was revealed. In my estimation, we are now writing Grand Ronde tribal history for the first time, because earlier histories simply were not detailed enough. Recently, there have been great strides toward bringing Native voices into all areas of historic interpretation. Museums are now asking the tribes for help with exhibits, and numerous consultation

requests come to Grand Ronde on an annual basis. We are now seeing a great change in the organizations and individuals that produce and interpret history that continue to develop and will result in a better history for all Oregonians.

NOTES

1. Douglas Cole, *Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985).

2. Callapooia is one spelling of many in the historical literature. Contemporarily, the tribes of this name follow the linguistic spelling, Kalapuya, while historically named landforms and some official documents like treaties spell the word as Calapooia.

3. *Register Guard*, July 2, 2006; *Register Guard*, July 6, 2006. Dean Baker, *The Last Yoncalla: The Legend of Sam Fearn* (Eugene, Ore.: Blind John Publications, 1981).

4. The descendant population number is my broad estimate, as the Grand Ronde tribe does not keep data like this on the individual tribes. The Kalapuya population in the nineteenth century was originally from about half to a third of the membership at the reservation, which is consistent with the estimate above.

5. "History in the Making: We Have a Name!" TriMet website, <http://trimet.org/namethebridge/> (accessed August 7, 2014). I served on the special committee to name the bridge.

6. Frederic Homer Balch, *Bridge of the Gods: A Romance of Indian Oregon* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg and Co., 1890). The book is written in a romantic literary style, which incorporates some facts about the tribes in a form of historical literature.

7. For example of graphic image, see Marguerite Norris Davis, *The Building of a Community, Multnomah* (Portland: Davis and Cecil R. Tulley, 1976). In various sources the statue is called Chief Multnomah, while the actual title is *A Chief of the Multnomah Tribe*, by artist Hermon Atkins MacNeil, 1903. For image of statue, see, [http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-](http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/11492?rpp=30&pg=1&gallerynos=765&rndkey=20140813&ft=*&pos=5)

[online/search/11492?rpp=30&pg=1&gallerynos=765&rndkey=20140813&ft=*&pos=5](http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/11492?rpp=30&pg=1&gallerynos=765&rndkey=20140813&ft=*&pos=5) (accessed August 13, 2014).

8. Sometimes written Cassino or Casino as well.

9. To date, no linguists or scholars in the region can attest to a Native-language origin of *Wy'east*; one suggests Balch derived it from hearing Native people speak the word *Wyam*, the name for a Native community at The Dalles. Proposed by Dr. Henry Zenk, 2014.

10. Stephen Dow Beckham, *Requiem for a People: The Rogue Indians and the Frontiersmen* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971); and Beckham, *Indians of Western Oregon: This Land was Theirs* (Cape Arago, Ore.: Arago Books, 1977).

11. Two of my children attended Swegle Elementary 2006–2014, as I had done in 1972–1975, and they were initially taught about covered wagons. We asserted our opinions to the instructor to allow my first child to make a Native canoe as a project to some protest. My second child's teacher invited me into the class to address the Native people of Oregon.

12. In my dissertation, I noted the phenomenon of the lack of education about native peoples. I associated it with the fact that the tribes were terminated for some twenty-five to thirty years, and during this period education about Native peoples of Oregon paradoxically disappeared for most. But I also noted that history books about the tribes were similarly lacking in details. David G. Lewis, "Termination of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, Politics Community Identity," (Ph.D. diss., University of Oregon, 2009). This document can be accessed on the University of Oregon's Scholar's Bank online.

13. I found that it was true that the tribes did not agree to termination, as elders had stated, as I proved in my dissertation on the subject. Lewis, "Termination of the Confederated Tribes."

14. Robert Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence: Introduced Infectious Diseases and Population Decline Among Indians, 1774–1874*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999). For first epidemics, see 21–60; for western Oregon epidemics, see 1830–1850, 84–115.

15. "Generally the latter are quiet and peaceably inclined, but are frequently goaded to acts of cruelty by the conduct of the Whites, of whom many consider them no better than wolves, and apparently take as much pleasure in killing them as they would the latter." General John E. Wool, Head Quarters Dept. of the Pacific, San Francisco March 29, 1854. Oregon Territorial Superintendency Correspondence.

16. Cornelius Brosnan, *Jason Lee: Prophet of the New Oregon* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1932).

17. A.M.A Blanchet, Bishop of Nesqually, to the U.S. Congress to Joseph Lane, May 25, 1852, in Joseph Lane Collection, MSS 1146, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland [hereafter OHS Research Library]. The correspondence is ordered alphabetically.

18. Catholic Archbishop Francis Norbet Blanchet to the U.S. Congress to Joseph Lane, in Joseph Lane Collection, MSS 1146, OHS Research Library.

19. *Oregonian*, April 26, 1851.

20. Sonciray Bonnell, *Chemawa Indian Boarding School: The First One Hundred Years, 1880 to 1980* (M.A. diss., Dartmouth College, 1997).

21. Beckham, ed., *Oregon Indians: Voices from Two Centuries* (Corvallis, Oregon State University Press, 2006), 117–21. Relationships between Santiam, Kalapuya, and others can be confusing. All villages had autonomy, but some were associated by kinship or politics. The Santiam Kalapuya were an autonomous set of Kalapuya speakers in distinct villages. Kalapuya broadly refers to the language and culture; there was not one Kalapuya Nation,

but as many as nineteen distinct, autonomous Kalapuya villages and tribes. We call them tribes and bands.

22. Commissioners Gaines, Skinner, and Allen to Hon. L. Lea, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 19, 1851, in *Report of the Commission of the General Land Office* (Washington, D.C.: A. Boyd Hamilton, 1851), 467–68.

23. Beckham, ed., *Oregon Indians*.

24. Most scholars place the beginning of the Rogue River Indian Wars in 1855 but there are noted conflicts, skirmishes, and attacks for retribution beginning in 1853. These are all related to the build up of enmity between the tribes and the Americans that culminated in active war from 1855–1856 with removal of the tribes to the reservation in the summer of 1856. See E.A. Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War and its Aftermath, 1850–1980* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997). For early conflicts see 53–54; for end of the war and removal see 113–147.

25. Beckham, *Requiem for a People*; and Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War*.

26. Chief John is variously described as Shasta, Athapaskan, or Takelma in sources. Jeff LaLande, *Cultural Resource Overview for the North Siskiyou Planning Unit: Rogue River National Forest, Klamath National Forest, Siskiyou National Forest* (USDA Forest Service, 1977), 18 (Athapaskan); Carl Waldman, *Encyclopedia of Native American Tribes* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2009), 287 (Takelma); Betty Lou Hall and Monica Jae Hall, *Shasta Nation* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2004), 11 (Shasta). For discussion of similarity of Takelma culture to California tribal culture, see Victor Golla, ed., *The Collected Works of Edward Sapir: Takelma Texts and Grammar* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1990), 320.

27. John E. Wool to Gen. Joseph Lane, March 29, 1854, in Joseph Lane Collection, MSS 1146, OHS Research Library.

28. Beckham, "Trail of Tears, 1856 Diary of Indian Agent George Ambrose," *Southern Oregon Heritage* 2:1 (Summer 1976).

29. Louis Lachance narrated this to the author in 2010.

30. The Coast Indian Reservation was established in 1855 by executive order, but

not occupied as the Siletz Agency until 1857. The reservation was settled by the coastal tribes (Tututni, Coos, Coquille, Yaquina, Alsea, Siuslaw, Siletz), then in 1857 some Rogue Rivers were moved to Siletz Agency from Grand Ronde. The reservation was subsequently reduced in 1865. In 1875 there was more loss of coastal lands, closure of the short-lived Alsea Reservation. That year, the remaining lands in the Siletz Valley and on the coast (now Lincoln County) became the Siletz Reservation. In the winter of 1856, the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation was settled by all of the interior tribes (Chinook, Kalapuya, Umpqua, Rogue River, Molalla) first as a temporary reservation called the Yamhill River Reserve and/or Grand Ronde Agency. In 1857, it was formally established as a reservation under presidential executive order. Beckham, *Requiem for a People*; and David G. Lewis and Robert Kentta, "Western Oregon Reservations: Two Perspectives on Place," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 111:4 (Winter 2010).

31. The number of tribes, is derived from the number of tribes listed on the seven treaties combined with a few tribes, like the Klickitat and Tillamook tribes who did not have treaties but people from these tribes came to the reservation, sometimes later.

32. Lewis, "Termination of the Grand Ronde Reservation."

33. Alfred B. Meacham, *Wigwam and Warpath* (John P. Dale and Co, 1875).

34. John Minto, *Willamette Farmer*, November 6, 1874, Salem, Oregon. Minto was a renown explorer, guide, and Oregon historian, see William L. Lang, "John Minto (1822–1915)," *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, http://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/minto_john_1822_1915/#.U7w6kkAaRZM.

35. Confederated Tribes of Siletz Reservation Collection, Oregon Historical Society Library.

36. Lewis, "Termination of the Grand Ronde Reservation"; U.S. Census Records for 1900, and Bureau of Indian Affairs Census Records for 1900, Microfilm M 595.

37. Thomas Norwest to Bureau of Indian Affairs, May 15, 1886 [14026], Southwest Or-

egon Research Project (SWORP) Collection, Coll 268, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon Libraries, Eugene, Oregon [hereafter SWORP Collection]; John Warren to Bureau of Indian Affairs, October 26, 1886 [28665], SWORP Collection; Jack West to Bureau of Indian Affairs, October 15, 1891 [38574], SWORP Collection.

38. "Sylum" refers to the Oregon State Hospital for the Insane, which was first located in east Portland and then relocated to Salem in 1883. It was a known practice to place Indians in the State Hospital, and most who entered would die there.

39. Joe Apperson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 5, 1887 [no. 7139], SWORP collection.

40. Charles Wilkinson, *Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations* (New York: Norton, 2005).

41. After termination the government sold 594.5 acres. Lewis, "Termination of the Grand Ronde Reservation"; E. Morgan Pryse, "Proposed Withdrawal of Federal Responsibilities Over the Property and Affairs of the Indians of Western Oregon," (1950), RG 75, Portland Area Office Records 1, National Archives and Records Administration, Seattle, WA., p. 8.

42. Lewis, "Termination of the Grand Ronde Reservation."

43. Rick Attig, "The Grand Ronde celebrates a proud history," *OregonLive* November 19, 2008 http://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2008/11/the_grand_ronde_celebrates_a_p.html (accessed August 14, 2014). The author testified to this number at a Jackson County Board of Commissioners work session on September 17, 2013, see "Minutes for the Board of Commissioners State of Oregon, County of Jackson Work Session," http://www.co.jackson.or.us/Files/02_2013_09_17_Work_Session_Minutes.pdf (accessed August 18, 2014).

44. There have been four curated exhibitions for as many years: Grand Ronde Canoe Journey (2011), Grand Ronde Women: Our Story (2012), We Were Here First...And We are Here to Stay! (2013), and River People of the Willamette (2014). The exhibits are staged from April to May every year.