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Pioneer Problems

“Wanton Murder,” Indian War Veterans, and Oregon’s Violent History

MARC JAMES CARPENTER

IN 1885, ELWOOD EVANS, a lawyer and historian, gave the keynote address of the Washington Pioneer Association. As was typical for such an address, Evans lavished praise on the pioneers and celebrated the changes they had unleashed. A major purpose of pioneer gatherings was to gather “for the purpose of exchanging mutual congratulations.” On this occasion, Evans praised himself and the gathered throng as “pioneers in the real sense of the word — ‘Soldiers who have cleared the way for the advance of an army.’” Pioneers of the Pacific Northwest, Evans declared, were “Soldiers dedicated to the Americanization of the wilderness.” The notion that “the Native race . . . had proprietary rights to its lands or rivers or seas” was mere “sentimentalism [to be] repudiated. Practical experience,” Evans proclaimed, “teaches that American supremacy . . . can only be extended by Americans, utilizing the whole continent as the homes of American men, women and children.”¹

Evans’s attention to the martial roots of the term *pioneer*, when applied to those who arrived in the Pacific Northwest before 1860, matched the predilections of many who attempted to craft the history of Euro-American settlement in the area. During the late nineteenth century, historians local and national, pioneer associations, veterans’ groups, and others with a stake in history and public memory usually recognized that violence against Native people had been a constituent part of the Euro-American seizure of the region. While most Euro-Americans celebrated the expansion of the United States into what became Oregon and Washington, struggles over

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MEETINGS OF THE INDIAN WAR VETERANS of the North Pacific Coast were occasions for parades and pageantry. By the twentieth century, photojournalists would come to each annual meeting to take pictures of the old pioneers and their decorations. This photograph is titled "Survivors of the Cayuse Indian War," June 17, 1902.

the causes, frequency, and righteousness of the violence, which enabled that expansion were key to interpretive divisions over the past.

A major focus of struggles over historical memory in the late-nineteenth-century Pacific Northwest was how to deal with infamous incidents of violence committed by self-identified pioneers during the first major waves of Euro-American migration to the region. Much of the day-to-day violence was little noticed by the broader nation, but certain incidents — the pogroms waged against Native people in southern Oregon during the early 1850s, the Little Butte Creek Massacre of 1855, and the murder and dismemberment of Walla Walla leader Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox during peace negotiations that same year — made national news. Some historians depicted the volunteer "soldiers" who perpetrated such offenses as villains, thereby exculpating the rest of Oregon's colonizers. Volunteer veterans' groups, by contrast, pushed for histories that glorified race war and excused or erased any war crimes by exalting those who had taken up arms against Native people as especially worthy of pioneer praise. During the early twentieth century, however, many authors of academic and popular histories increasingly generalized and deemphasized violence against Native people. Pioneer societies, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and even Indian War veterans groups began to commemorate White victims as much or more than the volunteer veterans

who had purportedly avenged them. In pageants and historical fiction of the period, stories of violence joined or were subsumed by stories of peace and comity. Whereas nineteenth-century memorialists had justified, decried, or denied attempts at exterminatory violence against Native peoples in the Northwest, the stewards of Euro-American public memory in the twentieth century often simply ignored these acts.²

This article focuses on the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast (IWW-NPC), an organization of former volunteer soldiers from Oregon and Washington who had fought in the region's "Indian wars," and the historical narratives of those wars they reshaped. Founded in 1885, the IWW-NPC spearheaded a campaign with the paired goals of rehabilitating the historical reputes of the volunteers and acquiring for them military pensions from state and national governments. Volunteer veterans and their allies (including Elwood Evans) wanted their place in the vanguard of the violent conquest of the Northwest to mark them as pioneers par excellence, worthy of special praise. The volunteers achieved their immediate goals by the early twentieth century, but their fame did not outlive them to the extent that they had hoped. The IWW-NPC and the martial definition of *pioneer* the group championed was first claimed by a broader body of Pacific Northwest settlers, then subsumed by a kinder, gentler — and falser — story of how Euro-Americans came to take over the region.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many Americans understood the term *pioneer* as reference to a soldier of colonialism. They specifically conceptualized pioneers not as people filling an empty landscape but, rather, as people who were actively and often violently expelling Native people and overtaking their lands. Some items of public memory, such as Alexander Phimister Proctor's *Pioneer* monument in Eugene, Oregon, were so named with that older, violent sense of the word in mind. Others have used the concept of *pioneer* as a mechanism for erasure, in addition to or instead of deliberately evoking violence, by framing particular Euro-American migrants or buildings as the "first" in a given locale. I use the word *pioneer* in this article to refer to the Euro-American migrants to the Pacific Northwest who styled themselves as such, largely during the 1840s to 1860s, with the word's original, martial meaning foregrounded. I use the more general term *settler* to refer more generally to those Euro-Americans and the generations of migrants and descendants who have followed. Neither term is without flaws. To call the Euro-Americans who came to the Pacific Northwest in this period *pioneers* risks conflating colonialism with innovation and discovery. To label the Euro-Americans as *settlers* risks evoking stereotypes of Indigenous people as unsettled wanderers, rather than people with well-established traditional homelands. The term *settler* has

been usefully problematized by scholars and theorists in recent decades; the term *pioneer* needs similar recontextualization, as a way to signpost the centrality of violence in the American conquest of the Pacific Northwest and of the United States as a whole.³

IN THE EARLY-MORNING HOURS of October 8, 1855, a group of Euro-American men led by self-appointed “Major” John Lupton attacked a polity of (likely) Takelma people who were camping along Little Butte Creek.

Following his election as territorial delegate, Lupton had raised his volunteers without any real authority to do so from territorial or military officials. Lupton’s force was one of several self-organized groups of marauders raised during the preceding weeks for the purposes of a coordinated surprise attack against Indigenous communities. According to eyewitness John Beeson, Lupton himself had recently assured local Native people that no harm would come to them, all the while planning to “massacre them while off their guard.” The volunteers had perhaps deliberately picked a group whose fighting men were largely absent. Attacking while the camp was asleep, “the Exterminators” killed dozens of men, women, and children. As survivors fled or hid, Lupton and his men apparently “compelled” the few Native women captured alive to call out to “their husbands, and sons, and brothers, that they might be shot.”



BY THE TIME of the Lupton Massacre, calls for the mass extermination of Native people had been a recurrent feature of public life in the region for years. This image titled “Fighting the Indians” was published in Rodney Glisan’s 1874 *Journal of Army Life*.



TABLE ROCK rises above the Rogue River in Jackson County, Oregon, in 1887. The Table Rock Reservation was disbanded after the Rogue River War. In 1857 the Native survivors living there were marched to the Grand Ronde and Coastal (later shrunk to Siletz) reservations, and the land was seized for survey and settlement.

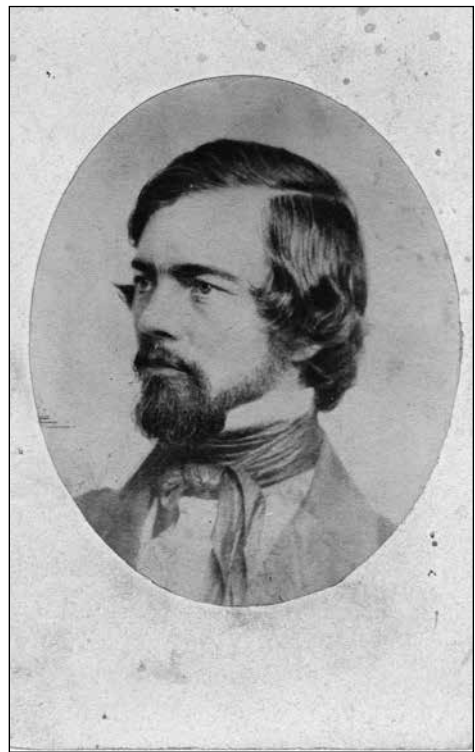
Lupton himself was shot through the lungs while pursuing such compulsion, one of only a handful of Euro-American casualties in what became known as the Lupton Affair or the Little Butte Creek Massacre.⁴

The wanton violence of the Little Butte Creek Massacre was extraordinary but not unusual. Lupton's attack became famous because it was the inciting incident of the official Rogue River War (1855–1856) and because the aftermath of the mass killings was widely reported by U.S. officials who, because they bore no direct responsibility, did not desire to minimize the violence. Similar episodes of violence peppered the mid-nineteenth-century American Northwest. Exterminatory violence for the purposes of land seizure is the critical component of settler colonialism, in which the colonized people are disposed of, or displaced, rather than exploited. Where the British in India, for example, envisioned a long-term colonial labor regime, Euro-Americans typically strove for a future in which Indigenous polities and people were wholly absent. A plurality of the Euro-Americans

who came to mid-nineteenth-century Oregon sought to create a racially exclusionary state. The federal government and Euro-American locals clashed over many issues during the nineteenth century, but people at the federal and territorial level alike envisioned Oregon and much of the rest of the region as a White man's republic, from which Native people had to be (or had been) expunged.⁵

Euro-Americans used violence, and the threat of violence, as key tools for the expropriation of Native land. As they had since the founding of the United States, federal treaty negotiators often threatened genocide to compel Indigenous leaders to sign iniquitous treaties. Isaac I. Stevens, for example, purportedly warned Yakama leaders in 1855 that they would “walk in blood knee deep” if they refused to sign an expropriative treaty. This threat has attracted historical attention as one of the potential causes for the Yakima War, but similar threats — explicit and implicit — were laced through other treaty negotiations. Many Native treaty-makers were nonetheless able to extract key concessions in negotiations, and treaties remain a cornerstone of protection for many modern Indigenous nations in the Northwest. But the skill, strategy, and success of Native negotiators should not obscure the threat of exterminatory violence that many Euro-American government officials brought to bear — a threat given teeth by the officially unsanctioned actions of men such as Lupton.⁶

Within and beyond formal “Indian wars,” settler violence sometimes escalated into unofficial “war[s] of extermination.” In southern Oregon between 1849 and 1856, Euro-Americans practiced workaday violence and occasionally launched pogroms against the “Indians” whom they often grouped together as a single, hostile mass. The Lupton Affair was but one



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ISAAC I. STEVENS'S threat that Yakama leaders would “walk in blood knee deep” if they resisted was not part of the otherwise detailed official record of the 1855 treaty talks, but the vivid turn of phrase was remembered by more than one participant. Stevens is pictured here around the time he served as Governor of the Washington Territory and Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the region.

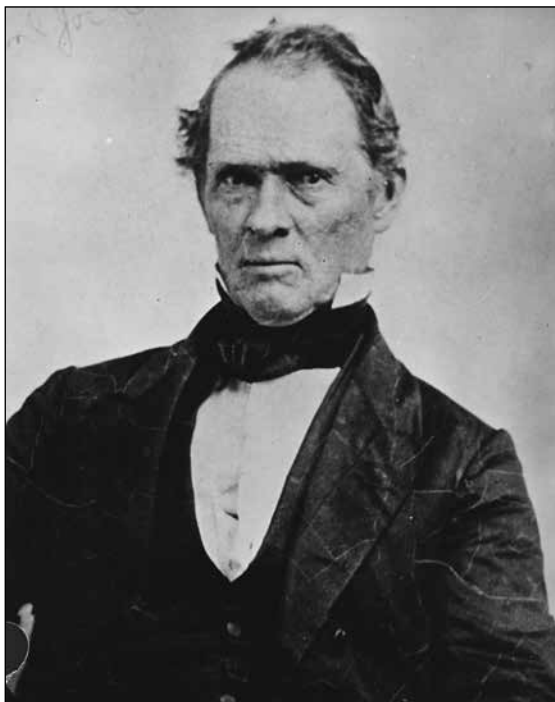
of many forays with the stated goal of mass extermination. One settler volunteer from southern Oregon remembered having “found several sick and famished Indians, who begged hard for mercy and food. It hurt my feelings, but the understanding was that all were to be killed. So we did the work.” The “work” might or might not be carried out under the cover of formal war. According to the recollections of Samuel Stewart, a volunteer veteran who killed and scalped Indigenous people in the Puget Sound region in 1855 (and likely before), “we were fighting Indians before we joined the army just the same as we did in the army. A man did not [have] to belong to the army in those days to fight Indians.” Local federal officials tended to object to the cost of genocide more than the morality of it; George E. Ambrose, the Rogue River Indian Agent in 1855, worried presciently that a war of extermination would bring harm to White settlers and sometimes prosecuted Indian killers in attempts to forestall war. But Ambrose also proclaimed of the Native people whose welfare was his official responsibility: “I would not care how soon they were all dead, and I believe the country would be greatly benefited by it.”⁷

The cascades of reciprocal violence that became “Indian wars” often began with individual acts of racially charged violence that some pioneers thought of as their right. A few years before the Little Butte Creek Massacre, in 1853, Lupton had to be talked down from shooting at a group of Native people he perceived as disrespectful, “to teach them better than to interfere with white men.” The Yakima War of 1855 started in response to Euro-American miners’ abduction and sexual assault of several members of the Yakama Nation. Such assaults were common enough, and accepted enough, that Gen. Joseph Lane cracked jokes about “tak[ing] a turn at the squaws” before an appreciative audience during his successful run for Territorial Delegate in 1855 — adding a note of sexual violence to his reputation, emphasized by his campaign, as an “Indian fighter.” Settler soldiers could commit acts of violence well beyond the boundaries of conventional war with impunity. When volunteers under Col. J.K. Kelly killed Walla Walla leader Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox while he was attempting peace negotiations in 1855, they attracted wide censure from the federal government — not least because they had mutilated his body for trophies afterwards more extensively than was customary — but no meaningful punishment.⁸

Most acts of violence and atrocities committed by Euro-American pioneers likely were not reported, but enough of them were nationally infamous to pose a problem for future hagiographers. Belief in manifest destiny was widespread, but support for genocide was more mixed. While most Euro-Americans (erroneously) believed that Native people were a doomed race, some had qualms about attempts at outright extermination. Those who

sought to paint a heroic picture of the Euro-American settlement of the Northwest had to find some way to reckon with the nationally known infamies of the era.⁹

One means of justifying settler violence was to emphasize and generalize Native perfidy. Pioneer supporters of war against Native people in the 1850s and 1860s routinely relied on this tactic. While policymakers and treaty negotiators might carefully differentiate among Indigenous nations, Euro-American press and popular sympathies often referred to “Indian depredation,” “Indian attacks,” and “Indian wars.” That last term was telling; despite their specific names, the Rogue River War(s) and the “Snake” War(s) were, on the ground, often persecuted against all Native people in a given region, not against particular nations or bands. Native soldiers fighting alongside U.S. forces in the “Snake” War(s) were issued red scarves to distinguish them from hostiles. During the “Snake” War(s), other “Indian wars” like it, and much of the time between, most Euro-Americans considered all Native people hostiles until proven otherwise. Samuel Stewart was far from the only volunteer who was “fighting Indians before [he] joined the army just the same as [he] did in the army.” In the reminiscences and family memories of pioneers and their children, the blending together of “Indian wars” with purportedly righteous general violence against Native people continued. Joseph Nathan Teal, who funded one of the few monuments to openly celebrate the violence of the pioneer era, described his father and uncle as having fought “in a number of Indian troubles early Indian Wars.” The change from “troubles” to “Wars” made his forebears’ violence more grand and more sanctioned; the lack of specificity is typical in reminiscences of pioneers and many of their descendants. The



JOSEPH LANE'S Confederate sympathies combined with rumors of his treasonous intentions to crater his statewide reputation during the Civil War. Later in life, Lane cast himself as unusually honorable in his dealings with Native people when trying to rewrite his place in history in the 1870s.

Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast tended to discuss “the Indian wars of 1847–1857” as a singular period rather than a series of discrete conflicts. The pioneer volunteers framed themselves as the “vanguard of civilization,” fighting an undifferentiated mass of “murdering, burning and plundering savages.” They celebrated settler violence as righteous and ignored pioneer atrocities as irrelevant.¹⁰

For other settlers, however, criticism of the worst excesses of pioneer violence could be a means of absolving settler society as a whole. Euro-American writers of the nineteenth century often bemoaned the more infamous atrocities committed by those at the fringe of settler society while nonetheless reaffirming the divine righteousness of manifest destiny. They were thus able to reap the fruits of settler colonialism while blaming a small subset for its moral costs. This instrumentality does not necessarily indicate duplicity; no doubt many Euro-Americans were earnestly horrified by reports of pioneer rape, murder, and mutilation. But condemnation of the violent fringe also served to absolve America as a whole. The volunteers who committed the worst of the atrocities were turned into what I call “settler colonial sin-eaters” — the violent few whose condemnation could rhetorically render blameless the Euro-American majority that had profited from that violence.¹¹

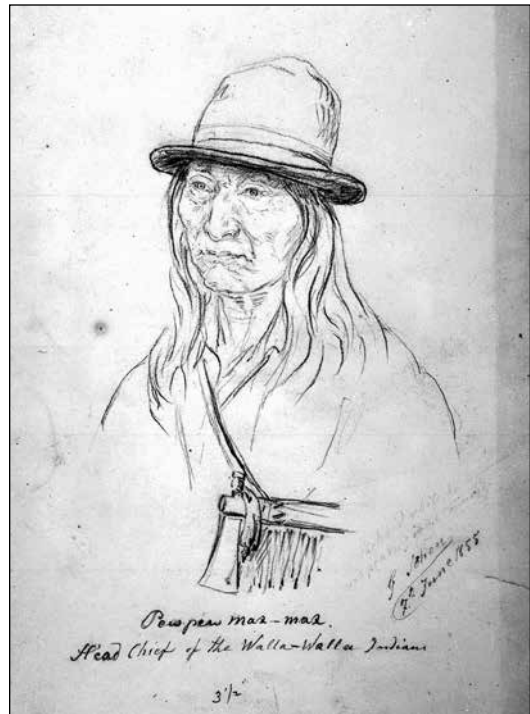
One of the earliest major histories of Oregon, Herbert O. Lang’s *History of the Willamette Valley* (1885), used the perfidious violence of the volunteer soldiers to differentiate them from “the Pioneers of Oregon,” whom the author exalted. Building his book from primary sources, pioneer informants, and personal reminiscences, Lang hoped to commemorate and celebrate the “Discovery and Settlement by the White Man” of the Pacific Northwest. Lang wanted to redeem the “virtuous” settlers from the violent reputation Oregonians had acquired on the national stage. Other early histories, such as A.G. Walling’s *History of Southern Oregon* (1884), bemoaned famous episodes of wanton violence, including the Little Butte Creek Massacre. But Lang was unusual in the reach and extent of his narrative and sources, and in his efforts to grasp at Native peoples’ motivations. *History of the Willamette Valley* was Lang’s attempt to square a heroic pioneer history with the torrid violence of his sources.¹²

Like most White intellectuals of his day, Lang believed that Native Americans were an inferior race rapidly headed to extinction in an unavoidable Darwinian struggle with Euro-Americans. Native people were, in his view, “so warlike, so brave, so intelligent, and so numerous” but were fatally undermined by “treachery . . . the predominating trait of the Indian character.” Although Lang assumed and supported an inevitable Caucasian triumph, he recognized that Native resisters were fighting to defend their homelands.

“The one great fountain head of all our Indian wars,” he proclaimed, was “the aggressiveness of the higher civilization and the natural resistance of a warlike people to the encroachments of a superior race.” Lang expressed ugly racial assumptions about the Native people who had fought against Euro-American settlers in the Rogue River region, but he recognized at least in some cases that they had been fighting “to expel white intruders from the home of their ancestors, superinduced by special acts of ill-treatment by the invaders.”¹³

Echoing one of his principle primary sources, Lang divided White settlers in the early Northwest into “two classes of persons, rogues and honest men.” His heroes were White missionaries and administrators, gentlemen whom he saw as fair dealers — whether British factors or American governors and generals. He also praised Native peacemakers and negotiators — at least those who, like Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox, were tragically dead rather than inconveniently alive. The archetypal buckskin-clad frontiersmen, and the rough-and-ready volunteer soldiers more generally, were far from heroic in Lang’s telling. They were “a class of wild, reckless and brutal men” for whom “Indian fighting was one of their chief accomplishments.” Setting gentlemen like himself apart from the violent conquest of Oregon territory, Lang condemned trappers and frontiersmen as “the lowest stratum of American society. . . guilty of many acts of injustice.”¹⁴

Lang’s assessment of “rogues and honest men” shaped how he narrated racial conflict. Where missionaries such as the Whitmans had “fallen before the treacherous blows of ungrateful savages,” the Rogue River War,



Washington State Historical Society, 1918.114.9.64

THE KILLING OF PEO-PEO-MOX-MOX (also spelled Piupiumaksmaks) was one of the most contested narratives of the period. He had been a well-known leader who was killed and then butchered while in captivity trying to broker a cease-fire. Various Euro-American histories used him to their own ends, with Herbert Lang flattening him into a martyr and the IWV-NPC deforming him into a villain.

Yakima War, and most other “trouble with Indians” were caused by “wanton murder” inflicted by violent racists. He framed such violence as inevitable and regrettable,

but a continuation of that fierce race conflict which began with the first advent of settlers into the valley, and ended only with the extermination or removal of the native proprietors of the soil. [In the Rogue River valley], more than at any other place, had race prejudice been developed to its extreme pitch by four successive years of conflict. Indians were both despised and hated. The least “insolence” on their part met with swift retribution, while on the other hand, indignities put upon them, even, in instances, to the taking of life, went uncondemned by the better portion of the community, and by the more irresponsible and less morally developed, were approved as being “good enough for them.”⁵

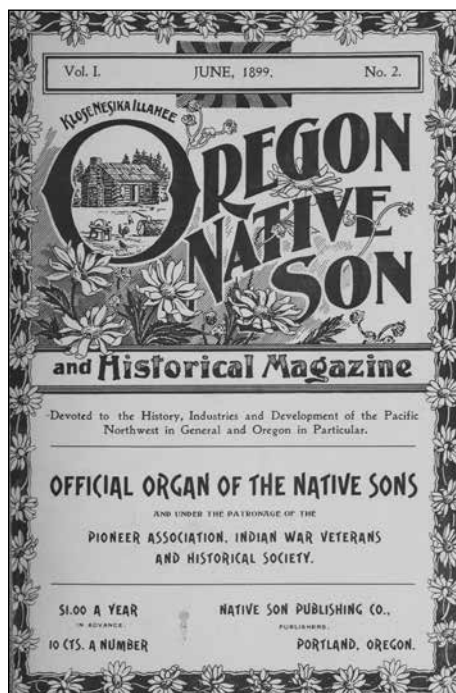
The essential accuracy of Lang’s assertions in no way dimmed the outrage his book provoked both among those he classed as “rogues” and the “better portion” that had refused to restrain them. Lang condemned an unusually broad swathe of the Euro-American populace, but many other early histories of Oregon shared a frame that deliberately differentiated heroic settlers from violent rogues.

Hubert Howe Bancroft’s mammoth *History of Oregon Vol. II* (1888), written largely by local historian Frances Fuller Victor, used the famous incidents of Euro-American volunteer depredations to separate violent fringe from pioneer posterity, balancing respect for the historical record with a heady mix of Darwinian scientific racism and manifest destiny. “The fate of the savages was fixed beforehand; and that not by volunteers, white or black,” they wrote, “but by almighty providence, ages before their appearing, just as we of the present dominant race must fade before a stronger, whenever such a one is sent.” To Victor and Bancroft, average settlers were heroes “whose brave deeds during these savage wars of southern Oregon must forever remain unrecorded.” They either downplayed most settler violence or framed it as justified retribution for Native aggression. Victor and Bancroft blamed the more famous episodes of unprovoked settler violence on a small subset who alone acted “with the avowed purpose of waging a war of extermination against the Indians without respect to age or sex.” The “mangled bodies . . . [of] mostly old men, women, and children” found in the aftermath of the Little Butte Creek Massacre of 1855, Victor and Bancroft wrote, “incited great indignation among the better class of white men.” Unlike in Lang’s work, the better classes in *History of Oregon* were entirely blameless. Both books, however, declared the wanton violence against Native people that had been broadly supported during the 1850s and beyond to be inevitable *and* isolated to volunteers, leaving

the rest of settler society blameless. On the heels of the publication of Lang's book in 1885, and as Victor and Bancroft's tome was winding its way forward, former volunteers organized a counteroffensive against this emerging historical consensus.¹⁶

The Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast (IWV-NPC) was created in 1885 to pursue pensions and posterity for volunteer soldiers who had fought in the wars of the region during the 1840s and 1850s. The purpose of the organization, according to its constitution, was the building of brotherhood among former soldiers, the transmission of patriotism to future generations, and the creation and propagation of the "true history of the Indian wars of the North Pacific Coast" — one that painted the volunteers as unrivaled heroes rather than useful villains. Over the next four decades, the volunteer veterans largely achieved their goals. They helped bring into being new history books that minimized the wantonness of the violence they had inflicted within and beyond the wars they had fought. By the twentieth century, the volunteer veterans gained eligibility for pensions from the federal government (along with additional payments from the states of Oregon and Washington), and they were feted as heroes by local newspapers and the cheering crowds at pioneer events.¹⁷

The IWV-NPC was one among a welter of heritage groups and fraternal orders attempting to craft a heroic history for the Pacific Northwest during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The organization began as an especially rarefied offshoot of the Oregon Pioneer Association (OPA). The volunteer veterans held their meetings in the same locations and near the same times as the OPA, and their proceedings were sometimes published jointly. IWV-NPC members framed themselves as



THE IWV-NPC formed in 1885 to secure pensions for soldiers who fought in regional wars during the 1840s and 1850s and to craft their version of Pacific Northwest history through publications and annual meetings. The *Oregon Native Son*, a publication that began in 1899, is an example of joint ventures among the Indian War Veterans, Oregon Pioneer Association, and Oregon Historical Society to valorize pioneers and reframe the violence inflicted during wars and resettlement.

pioneer paragons, a “vanguard of civilization” especially worthy of honor because of their leading role in the conquest of the Northwest. While a standard pioneer procession marched by year, with an earlier date of arrival indicating especial honors, the IWV-NPC marched separately; its members saw their role in the “Indian wars” as marking them out for special praise over and above their seniority as settlers.¹⁸

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WHILE HE SELDOM attended meetings, Harvey Scott (brother to Abigail Scott Duniway) was a particularly vital member of the IWV-NPC. As the editor of the *Oregonian* from 1865 to 1910, Scott helped ensure the organization remained reported in the papers. Here, Scott reads a copy of the *Oregonian* in July 1900 in Seaside, Oregon.

The dues-paying membership of the IWV-NPC was likely small but potent, led by men of influence and serving a constituency much larger than the core members who could afford to join. The first Grand Commander elected, T.B. Wait, was the former mayor of Salem as well as a prosperous merchant and farmer. Later long-serving Grand Commanders T.A. Wood and Cyrus Walker were similarly successful, and the organization counted among its ranks politicians John Minto, Elwood Evans, and LaFayette Mosher as well as history-makers such as *Oregonian* editor Harvey Scott and longtime Oregon Historical Society curator George Himes. While initially conceived as a sprawling fraternal order across the Northwest, the IWV-NPC

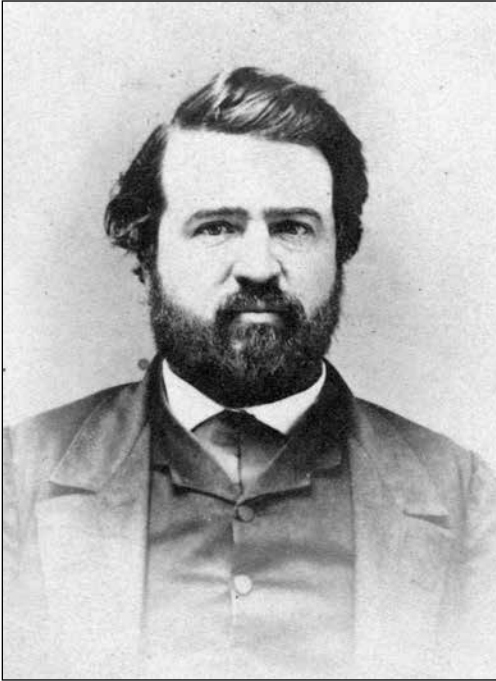
drew most of its dues-paying members from Oregon’s Willamette Valley, particularly from Portland, Salem, and farther south in Roseburg. Incomplete records and inconsistent rolls make it difficult to estimate the exact membership during the early decades, particularly because the leadership had good reason to exaggerate numbers. A reasonable estimate would be somewhere around 100 members at the organization’s founding, rising nearer

to 150 once widows of volunteer veterans were permitted to join in 1887 and tapering to dozens due to mortality by the 1900s. The few surviving letters from Grand Commanders suggest that the organization enjoyed support and engagement from many more volunteer veterans, perhaps hundreds, unable or unwilling to travel to meetings or pay dues. This support was reciprocated; Grand Commanders helped several indigent non-member "Indian war" veterans get coveted spaces in the Oregon Soldiers' Home (a state-funded retirement community for veterans). Moreover, the IWV-NPC achieved political power beyond its size. By the early twentieth century, the remaining volunteer veterans could reasonably expect not only mayors but also local candidates for national office to attend their meetings and heap praise upon them.¹⁹

When the general membership of the IWV-NPC had its inaugural meeting in Oregon City in 1886, the first order of business (after the parades, the celebratory welcoming speeches, and a barbecue lunch) was to proclaim that the organization "[did] not approve of the extreme statements of cruelty by white people toward the Indians" in Lang's *History of the Willamette Valley*. In 1887, they expanded this statement and accused Lang of being "wantonly malicious" toward them and "flagrantly inaccurate, incorrect and unjust to the early settlers of Oregon and Washington" more generally. The volunteers responded to Lang's descriptions of the "wanton murder" committed by some among their membership by accusing the historian, in turn, of "wanton malice."²⁰

The Indian War Veterans' attacks on unflattering histories were not limited to Lang's *History of the Willamette Valley*. They also loudly disdained the "loose and incorrect ways of nearly all so called histories of Oregon," also including those by Walling, Bancroft, and every other author not among their ranks. The volunteer veterans believed themselves entitled to be the sole arbiters of the truth about the "Indian wars"; particularly, they pushed against histories that documented the many acts of wanton violence their members had performed.²¹

The men (and, after 1887, women) of the IWV-NPC tended to respond to accusations of war crimes with counterattacks rather than direct denial. Their attempts to sanctify their service rested on the creation of a legion of enemies. They painted the national government as inept and out of touch, the regular troops as high-handed and wrong-footed, and historians who relied on the records of either rather than the reminiscences of pioneers as arrogant and unscholarly. Above all, the IWV-NPC evoked an image of Native people as "dreaded red men" who were more "demons of another world" than human beings. It is difficult not to read at least some deliberate duplicity in the IWV-NPC's objection to "extreme statements of cruelty by white people toward the



ELWOOD EVANS, pictured here in about 1865, was a nimble Republican politician and lawyer, an avid collector of historical documents as well as a writer. Throughout the various versions of his *History of the Pacific Northwest* and his many speeches on historical issues from positions of power, his devotion to the rectitude of race war seems never to have wavered.

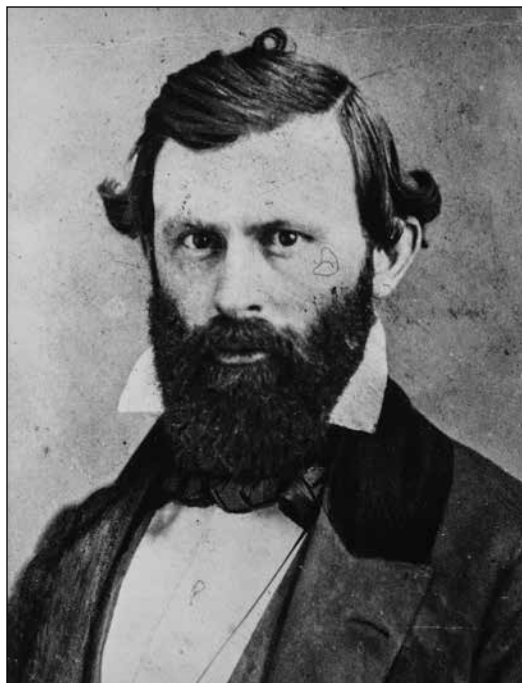
indians,” not least because Kelly, the leader of the men who had killed and butchered Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox, was among the founding members — and (perhaps justificatory) celebrations of the mutilation of Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox became a recurrent theme in private meetings of the organization.²² T.B. Wait, the first Grand Commander, proposed as the organization’s motto “Ick Close Tillicum,” Chinook Jargon typically translated as ‘One Good Indian’ — a reference to the adage that “the only good Indian is a dead Indian” — with a matching badge featuring a volunteer shooting down a Native man about to scalp a White woman. This was rejected in favor of “Omne solum forti patria est,” Latin for ‘Every land is homeland for a brave man’ — in part because many members, such as Mosher, found the use of Chinook Jargon to be distasteful.²³

While IWV-NPC members celebrated wanton Indian-killing when swapping stories among themselves and wanted their part in “Indian wars” celebrated, the “true history” they demanded would leave out the

details of volunteer violence. The IWV-NPC’s clearest voice in countering the emerging historical consensus was Evans’s 1889 book *The History of the Pacific Northwest*. Evans was a former volunteer, and he shared writing duties for the section on the Rogue River Wars with Mosher, who was elected Grand Commander of the IWV-NPC in 1888. The two men financed publication of the book in part by having the membership solicit preorders. Taking aim at “certain publications called histories,” Evans and Mosher attempted to redeem “the good name and fame” of the volunteers by highlighting supposed Native atrocities and remaining silent on settler violence. The “mangled bodies . . . [of] mostly old men, women, and children” at the aftermath of the Little Butte Creek Massacre that Victor and Bancroft’s *History of Oregon* had decried were neither mentioned nor specifically denied in Evans

and Mosher's history. Instead, the book described the incident as a "murderous band" getting "the punishment they deserved" in an "attack which resulted in the killing of most of the warriors." This silence regarding the deaths of Native women and children is palpable throughout much of the book; although mentions of the *capture* of Indian women are relatively frequent, virtually all descriptions of settler violence imply that it was meted out only against Native men.²⁴

Evans argued that Native violence against Euro-Americans always had the same cause: "not because of any personal outrages committed by Whites, not because of any injustice sought to be inflicted . . . but solely because it was the Indian purpose to exterminate the white settlements." Most Euro-American historians of the Northwest at the time agreed with Herbert Lang's assertion in *History of the Willamette Valley* that "treachery . . . [was] the predominating trait of the Indian character." But Evans, unlike these historians, made few distinctions between "good" and "bad" Indians, and Mosher, who had been an active participant in the pogroms and wars of the Rogue River region, made none. Treaties and declarations of peace were tricks designed "to allure the white race into a belief of their security." Indian "perfidy" — Evans's favorite descriptor — justified and sanctified any White violence. Any Indian group could be considered "a standing menace to the Whites," and thus could be attacked in an act of proactive defense. The murders of Native leaders during peace negotiations Evans and Mosher excused as "the taking of an adequate revenge" upon "implacable savages" by White "men who had lately buried the mutilated bodies of murdered helpless women and children." That the volunteers also had created plenty of mutilated bodies passed without mention. This formulation rendered officials who protested



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LAFAYETTE MOSHER, like Evans, was a lawyer and politician, a fiery Democrat in the vein of his father-in-law Joseph Lane. He described all histories of Oregon previous to Evans's as "a shame, and a disgrace, both as to facts and typography." He is pictured here in about 1870.



GEORGE HIMES was certified as a member of the IWW-NPC based on his service as armed guard in the Rogue River War through 1855, when Himes was around eleven years old. His certificate includes the IWW-NPC badge on the bottom left, designed by Kate Mosher (a Confederate cousin of Lafayette), which features rifles framing a Maltese cross with the “Star of Empire” in the background.

settler violence as fools, and volunteer veterans who persisted in the face of federal blandishments as the sole saviors of the White Northwest.²⁵

Victor and Bancroft’s condemnation of the more outrageous actions of the volunteers had allowed them to separate the volunteers’ violence from America’s broader civilizing mission. Evans’s assertion of overriding Indian perfidy elevated those volunteers as the necessary shock troops of American empire and excused them from culpability:

However much it is to be regretted. . . Indian wars are but the essential concomitants of American settlement, the necessary evil from which untold good

*emanates. It measurably, however, removes the asperity of such cruel fact by the remembrance that the Indian himself has invariably selected. . . . the place and time for the commencement of hostile operations.*²⁶

In Evans's work, the "perfidious cruelty" of Indians was absolute, and "Indian wars" sprang solely from "repeated and unprovoked outrages which were committed by savages upon unoffending and defenseless white men, women, and children." He discounted any of the voluminous evidence to the contrary as partisan backbiting or the ignorance of those too far removed from events.²⁷

Lobbied by the IWV-NPC in 1890, the state of Oregon sponsored a new *Early History of the Oregon Indian Wars* along these lines, hiring Victor to compile and compose it. One purpose of this work was to craft a record of who had volunteered in which conflicts, because official paperwork was often lacking, and some proof would be needed if the volunteer veterans were ever cleared for pensions. Notably, the Oregon Legislature passed a bill in 1891 giving the IWV-NPC Grand Commander plenary power to certify the service of "Indian wars" veterans, with no further evidence required (according to the letter of the law). Drawing from interviews and records, Victor, a diligent historian, recreated "Indian wars" rolls, preserving evidence that remains a critical resource for proving participation in the "Indian wars." But the new history that the volunteer veterans had pushed the state to commission also supported their version of historical events.²⁸

In a sharp departure from her work with Bancroft, Victor absolved the volunteers of nearly all blame. While not going as far as Evans, Victor's discussion of the Little Butte Creek Massacre now contained no discussion of "mangled bodies" or "butchery," but repeated the unlikely volunteer claim that none had known women and children were present — and tartly noted that the U.S. regulars who reported the massacre "went out to view the field after the slaughter, instead of preventing it." Denying the well-established historical truth that the Little Butte Creek Massacre had provoked the counterattacks that followed (because "savages do not move with such celerity"), Victor instead embraced the volunteer fantasy of a vast Native conspiracy to make war that had been encouraged by the presence of federal forts and reservations. The IWV-NPC complained that Victor's history was "incomplete," a mild critique compared to what they had leveled at previous works. The fact that this mild complaint was attached to a request to furnish all members with a free copy of the book suggests that this book came closer to the "true history" the organization had been founded to transmit. The volunteers' assertions of their own blamelessness and of the foolishness of the regular troops were now a part of official Oregon history.²⁹



A.B. STUART AND CYRUS WALKER were photographed at a June 19, 1912, Grand Encampment meeting. Walker (right) made speeches and songs in Chinook Jargon a regular part of IWV-NPC meetings in the twentieth century, often followed by “war whoops” from the assembled volunteers.

The IWV-NPC achieved pensions on the heels of its victories over the historical record. Pensions and land grants had been a means for the federal government to recruit and reward Euro-American settlers who had soldiered against Native people since the foundation of the United States. The main barrier for the IWV-NPC was getting the irregular volunteer forces of Oregon’s “Indian wars” counted and included in the expanding pension regime the federal government was then building, primarily for veterans of the Civil War.³⁰ Congress extended eligibility for benefits to veterans of some earlier “Indian wars” in 1892, and to the Oregon volunteers of the IWV-NPC in 1902. Rather than listing all specific conflicts, the 1902 law provided pensions for veterans of the “Cayouse war” and “the Oregon and Washington Territory Indian wars from eighteen hundred and fifty-one to eighteen hundred and fifty-six, inclusive.” United States policy now embraced the volunteer veteran historical narrative of a general period of Northwest “Indian wars,” rather than a narrative of specific inglorious or valorous conflicts. During the 1850s, U.S. federal officials such as Gen. John Wool differentiated attacks such as

the Little Butte Creek Massacre from formal war. By 1902, federal policy no longer made such a distinction.³¹

While they framed themselves as excluded underdogs, the volunteer veterans of the IWV-NPC always enjoyed political support in Oregon, with a membership that included judges, mayors, and representatives from both political parties. Convincing Oregon politicians to request national funds for local veterans was relatively straightforward; the pursuit of federal recompense for the costs of Oregon “Indian wars” had been a state-level campaign issue since Joseph Lane had run for Congress in the 1850s. The expectation of federal funding may even have helped spur some of the Rogue River conflicts. During the nineteenth century, convincing the state itself to set aside funds for veterans’ claims was more difficult. William Paine Lord, elected governor in 1895, likely echoed many previous governors when he politely rejected the volunteer veterans’ entreaties and declared pensions a national rather than state issue. By the twentieth century, however, the volunteer veterans’ cause was popular enough, and their ranks thin enough, that the state of Oregon could be convinced to pick up the some of the costs that federal pensions would not cover. In 1903, the Oregon state legislature set aside up to \$100,000 for outstanding “Indian war” claims from 1855 to 1856. After the 1912 election, during which representatives from both parties promised to do more, a bill setting aside an additional \$50,000 for Indian war claims related to horses passed the Oregon state legislature, and the Pacific Coast delegation in the national Congress got federal pensions for Indian war veterans raised from eight dollars to twenty dollars a month. In a triumphant speech before the remaining volunteer veterans of the IWV-NPC, Grand Commander Cyrus Walker declared “a jubilee, a season of rejoicing[,] for after long years of waiting our National Government has recognized to a more adequate degree the heroic and valuable service you endured.” Men who had perpetrated the worst violence of the colonial conquest of Oregon, men who had previously been used as a foil to excuse other settlers, were officially now recognized as the heroes they believed themselves to be.³²

The IWV-NPC did not shift the historical narrative alone; many pioneer organizations and historians beyond the IWV-NPC and Evans put a premium on pioneer honor over historical truth. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there were active efforts to bowdlerize the unseemly aspects of the Euro-American conquest of the Northwest. Omission rather than outright fabrication was the tool of choice; pioneer societies distorted historical narratives when they ignored violence by settlers while condemning retributive violence by Native people. Professional historians, too, sometimes chose a “pioneer code” that embraced accuracy but not

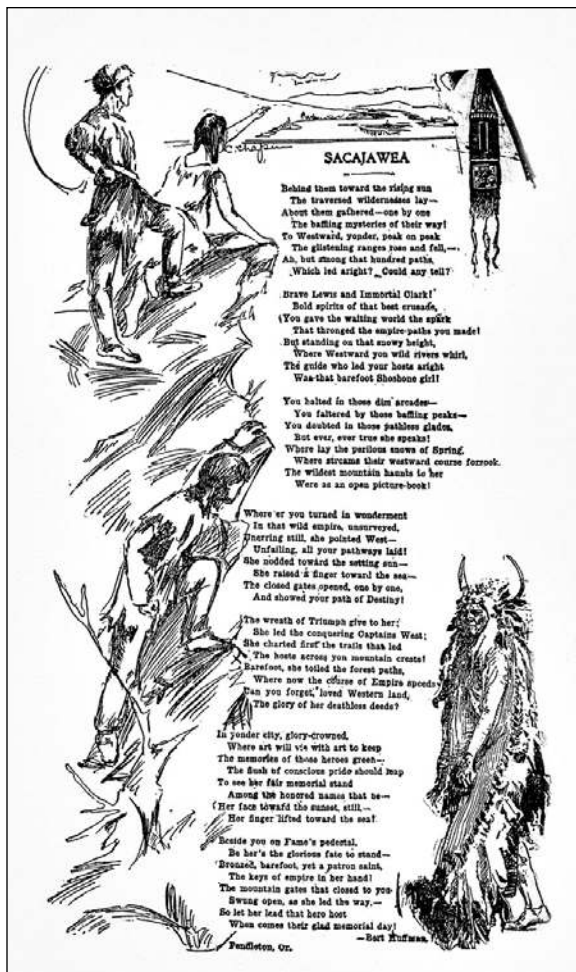
completeness. Victor's *Early Indian Wars of Oregon* was carefully sourced in both senses, leaving aside some of the contemporary primary sources she had relied on when working with Bancroft in favor of those that painted Oregonians in a more flattering light. As Clarence Bagley wrote to Edmond Meaney in 1911, "while what I shall say will be the truth I shall not give all the truth. I shall rake up no old stories of evil." This communication, between two of the most celebrated Pacific Northwest historians of the early twentieth century, illustrates a broader ethos of popular pioneer history that was already taking shape in the nineteenth century and continued for much of the twentieth. Careful use of sources in the creation of deliberately incomplete narratives, moreover, gave authority to the careful erasure of violence. Victor's book was scrupulously sourced compared to Lang's; a careful reader might assume, then, that Victor's story was truer, even though Lang more accurately described the violence of Oregon's creation.³³

Although most early-twentieth-century pioneer histories omitted *wanton* violence by settlers, they still celebrated the taking of the Northwest as a conquest. Historians and heritage groups often edited out pioneer violence they viewed as iniquitous — rapes, attacks on the unarmed, mutilation, mass murder — as they embraced American imperialism as a virtue. They celebrated "pioneers" as the vanguard of an American army conquering a new land. Indeed, while they omitted illicit violence, they depicted purportedly righteous violence against Native people as part of the legacy of all pioneers, not just the volunteers. Recollections of righteous violence against "bad Indians" were matched with stories of "good Indians" who had aided explorers, welcomed settlers, and then mythopoetically faded away. At the risk of oversimplifying, it could be said that one popular narrative, a history of good and bad pioneers facing off against entirely treacherous Indians, increasingly gave ground to another, a history of entirely honorable settlers facing off against good and bad Indians.³⁴

This emerging metanarrative is perhaps best demonstrated in the works of early-twentieth-century historical novelist Eva Emery Dye, who celebrated righteous violence *and* peacemaking in the service of race and empire. She based her creations on extensive historical research, filling gaps in the historical record and details in the historical fabric with her own imagination to create fictions that sometimes had more evidence behind them than conventional histories of the time. Her most successful work, *The Conquest* (1902), brought popular attention to the Lewis and Clark Expedition and to Sacagawea's role within it. It was, as the title implies, a celebration of conquest, putting Lewis and Clark *and* Sacagawea within a broader story of generations of righteous violence. The conquest of Oregon had followed on the conquest of Missouri had followed on the conquest of Illinois; the "con-

quest” of a “weaker race” by a stronger one was inevitable to Dye, as it had been to Victor and Bancroft. Dye ended her mammoth book with praise for those “fighting new battles, planning new conquests. . . of the Poles and Tropics,” celebrating the seizure of the Philippines and pointing to further imperial expansion as the natural corollary of Anglo-Americans’ manifest destiny.³⁵

While praising righteous violence, Dye deliberately ignored misdeeds she knew from her research had occurred. Dye knew that historically Touissant Charbonneau, who had bought Sacagawea as a “wife” and claimed her wages for the expedition, beat her viciously enough to attract rebuke from William Clark. But Dye had her character “Sacajawea” praise her fortune at being married to a White man. Dye knew from her Native informants that Euro-American volunteers had sexually assaulted Native women during the wars of the 1850s — but the fictional volunteer soldiers across her works are unflinchingly gallant. Dye knew from every facet of her research that many trappers had been “loose and lawless in almost every particular,” but she broke from historians such as Lang and Bancroft to make them into rustic champions in her novels. Dye wrote heroic historical fiction, and such stories had no place in it. She prided herself on being “as impartial as any one” in the creation of what she



BERT HUFFMAN'S “Ode to Sacagawea” was likely written to commemorate the bronze statue of Sacagawea created for the 1905 Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition. Like Dye’s *Conquest*, Huffman’s poem celebrates a fictive “Sacajawea” as an enabler of the extension of American empire.



A GROUP GATHERS for the dedication of *The Pioneer* on May 22, 1919. Alexander Phimister Proctor's *Pioneer* was unusual in its explicit celebration of pioneer violence. Later pioneer monuments in Oregon tended to minimize the violence of Oregon's conquest.

called her “living histor[ies],” but her impartiality only went in one direction. She might mint new heroes, but any sense of settler crimes was generally scrubbed from her narratives. Dye’s “living histor[ies],” anticipating popular memory to follow, typically framed “Indian wars” as short outbursts of violence spurred by a few treacherous Native people amidst a sea of honorable men and women on both sides, after which Native communities would obligingly fade into the background.³⁶

While the original generation of pioneers was alive, many did not embrace the “disappearing Indian” myth to render the American conquest of Native lands bloodless. On the contrary, volunteer veterans and others wanted and sometimes received special recognition and honors for the part they had played in that conquest. “Indian fighters” were praised as such in the public art of the early-twentieth-century Northwest, from the sculptures of Alexander Phimister Proctor to the stories of Fred Lockley to the paintings of Worth D. Griffin. Before John W. Cullen, the last member of the IWW-NPC who had participated in the “Indian wars,” died in 1939, newspapers hailed him as a “scout on the picket line of Christian civilization,” “the last man [who made] Indians ‘bite the dust.’” At least for the first few generations of settlers, the idea of the “pioneer” retained its soldiering roots.³⁷

It bears mentioning that neither pioneer attempts to exterminate Native people nor settler attempts to erase the atrocities during and beyond those

attempts were successful. The Indigenous peoples of the Northwest have persevered in protecting their populations and their cultures, and many Native nations emerged from the twentieth century much stronger than they began it. Scholars continue to peel back pioneer myths, revealing the violence of colonialism. Work continues to interrogate the myriad ways that Native people remained in or returned to their usual and accustomed places after periods of supposed removal, and of the ways they took part in the labor markets, legal systems, and social fabric of what became Oregon and Washington in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries. Important histories have been and continue to be written examining nuance and negotiation in Native-White encounters and relationships in the Pacific Northwest. Most vitally, Native communities and scholars are crafting Indigenous histories that shift assumptions and teleologies based on Euro-American actions.³⁸

It is vital that widespread settler support for racial violence, atrocity, and attempted extermination *and* settler attempts at the obfuscation of the same remain in the historical frame. This article demonstrates how one organization deliberately cleaned up the sordid actions of its members, while many other pioneers and settlers also tried to reshape their image for posterity. Joseph Lane won office as an Indian fighter, cracked jokes about raping Native women, and celebrated the deaths of Native men, women, and children at the hands of U.S. forces. But in old age he recast himself as a (stern) friend of the Indians, with enough success to influence the perceptions of his family and some future historians. Similar stories abound. Native people and Euro-Americans sometimes formed alliances, families, and friendships during the nineteenth century. Some few Euro-Americans even valued justice and fair play for Native communities over the extension of American empire. But pioneer claims to have been a “friend to the Indians” must be examined with special care.³⁹

This article also suggests the utility of pioneer archives and organizations in crafting a fuller history of Euro-American violence in the Pacific Northwest, particularly because the standards for what “stories of evil” should be suppressed were not stable between organizations, between contexts, or between decades. “Indian war” veterans were much more frank about the acts they had committed when writing to their own than they were when writing for the general public. The IWV-NPC thought stories of pioneers mutilating Native bodies for trophies unsuitable for history books, but members continued to discuss and celebrate such mutilations for decades. Historians such as Dye, Bagley, and Meany retained in their papers many of the stories of rape, murder, and pillage that they did not wish to publish. Local pioneer organizations sometimes recounted lynchings,

scalpings, and shootings their memberships had committed that they did not necessarily share with the wider world. And some settlers and pioneers once again framed themselves as honest men among rogues, registering individual acts of colonialism by others to distance themselves from it. One of Lockley's pioneer tales, for example, came from a man named Benjamin Franklin Bonney, whose recounting of "the charm and romance of the old west" included several stories of pioneers attempting with intermittent success to murder or enslave Native men and children in California and Oregon. Bonney told these stories as a way of demonstrating the superior morality of his own family, which had not participated in these acts of wanton violence (or stopped them).⁴⁰

This story of settler-colonial erasure has implications beyond the Northwest. Settler colonialism is often differentiated from other forms of conquest by the way settlers obscure their origin as invaders. Settler populations lay claim to indigeneity for themselves, proclaiming themselves the "first" in the newly conquered land and rhetorically condemning the Indigenous people they dispossess to the mythic past. The violence of colonialism can thus, in settler societies, be attenuated and forgotten by the dominant settler group, even when the structures of colonialism continue to oppress Indigenous peoples. Settler colonial structures are seldom monolithic, however; in the fissures between different settler strategies, alternate narratives and Indigenous actors can find purchase. Settler colonial erasure in the Northwest was neither simple nor straightforward, as competing Euro-American historical claims to heroism yielded competing narratives of what should be celebrated, condemned, or forgotten. The story of how public memory of pioneer violence in Oregon was made and remade can inflect our understanding of how settler societies generally have grappled reluctantly with their unseemly pasts. Other settler societies had their own settler colonial sin-eaters, and one might look for similar frictions — that might, in turn, generate their own records of violence and erasure.⁴¹

These palimpsestic traces of violence can buttress Indigenous nations' own historical memory of pioneer attacks and help explain the motivations and ideology of those who thought Oregon should be reserved exclusively for the "Caucasian race."⁴² A true history of the Pacific Northwest must reckon with the legions of Euro-American pioneers who, during the 1840s, the 1850s, and beyond, pursued pogroms and inflicted acts of workaday racial violence in pursuit of a White ethno-state. A true history of the Pacific Northwest must also reckon with the tens and hundreds of thousands of Euro-American Oregonians, then and since, who chose racial solidarity with the perpetrators over justice for those they attacked — and then helped hide the evidence.

NOTES

1. Address of Hon. Francis Henry, 1884, *Washington Pioneer Association Transactions 1883–1889*, box 30, Western Washington University, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Bellingham, Washington [hereafter CPNWS], 31; Address of Hon. Elwood Evans, 1885, *Washington Pioneer Association Transactions 1883–1889*, CPNWS, 50.

2. I use the term *pogroms* here to describe settler attempts to wreak havoc on and destroy Native communities, beyond the scope of the law but with the complicity of state institutions. *Pogrom*, like other terms describing mass killings (genocide, massacre), has meanings that are multiple and contested; I use it here in preference to other descriptors to draw attention the ways in which these acts of exterminatory violence sprang from the popular will rather than emanating from official policy. The acts of organized (but decentralized) violence for the purpose of eliminating Native peoples from a region described herein could certainly be called genocidal, by most definitions of the word. According to Article II of the 1948 U.N. genocide conventions, the territory and state of Oregon perpetrated genocide against Native nations not only in the 1850s but well into the twentieth century. Werner Bergmann, “Pogroms,” trans. Richard Sharp, *International Handbook of Violence Research*, vol. 1, eds., Wilhelm Heitmeyer and John Hagan (Norwell, Mass.: Kluwer Academic Publishing, 2003): 351–67; Benjamin Madley, “Reexamining the American Genocide Debate: Meaning, Historiography, and New Methods,” *American Historical Review* 120:1 (2015): 98–139; David G. Lewis, “American Complicity in Genocide in Oregon,” NDNHistory Research, <https://ndnhistoryresearch.com/2016/08/12/american-complicity-in-genocide-in-oregon> (accessed March 4, 2020). For incidents of settler violence that made national news, see among others “Oregon - Rogue River War,” *New York Daily Tribune*, November 14, 1855, p. 6; and “The Indian War in Oregon,” *Washington D.C. Daily National Intelligencer*, May 2, 1856.

3. Jean M. O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Corey Snelgrove, Rita Kaur Dharmoon, and Jeff Cornthassel, “Unsettling Settler Colonialism: The Discourse and Politics of Settlers, and Solidarity with Indigenous Nations,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3:2 (2014): 1–32; Lisa Ford, *Settler Sovereignty: Jurisdiction and Indigenous People in America and Australia, 1788–1836* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010).

4. The exact number of casualties in the Little Butte Creek Massacre is difficult to determine. Euro-American observers found the bodies of twenty-eight Native people, but an unspecified number of the slain were washed downriver, and the number of uncounted wounded and killed remains unknown; two Euro-Americans died of wounds inflicted by the defenders. Quotations from John Beeson, *A Plea for the Indians; with Facts and Features of the Late War in Oregon* (New York: John Beeson, 1857), 46, 50–51; E.A. Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War and Its Aftermath, 1850–1980* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 85–89. A.G. Walling, *History of Southern Oregon, Comprising Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Curry and Coos Counties* (Portland, Ore.: 1884), 243; Gray H. Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee: U.S. Empire and the Transformation of an Indigenous World, 1792–1859* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 204–205.

5. I use the term official here to denote the portion of the Rogue River War(s) that included the involvement of federal troops and money. For the centrality of violence in the seizure of Oregon, see David G. Lewis and Thomas J. Connolly, “White American Violence on Tribal Peoples on the Oregon Coast,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 120:4 (Winter 2019): 368–79; and Gray H. Whaley, “Oregon, Illahee, and the Empire Republic: A Case Study of American Colonialism, 1843–1858,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 36:2 (Summer 2005): 157–78. On

White supremacy and settler colonialism in the foundation of Oregon, see Katrine Barber, "We were at our journey's end": Settler Sovereignty Formation in Oregon," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 120:4 (Winter 2019): 382–411; Kenneth Coleman, *Dangerous Subjects: James D. Saules and the Rise of Black Exclusion* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2017); Elizabeth McLagan, *Peculiar Paradise: A History of Blacks in Oregon, 1788–1940* (Portland, Ore.: Georgian Press, 1980); and David Alan Johnson, *Founding the Far West: California, Oregon, and Nevada, 1840–1890* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), chap. 5.

6. Jo N. Miles, "Kamiakin's Impact on Early Washington Territory," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 99:4 (Fall 2008): 159–72, quotation from 166–67. See also Jeffrey Ostler, *Surviving Genocide: Native Nations and the United States from the American Revolution to Bleeding Kansas* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2019), esp. 121; Paige Raibmon, "Unmaking Native Space: A Genealogy of Indian Policy, Settler Practice, and the Microtechniques of Dispossession," in *The Power of Promises: Rethinking Indian Treaties in the Pacific Northwest*, ed. Alexandra Harmon (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008): 56–85; and M. Susan Van Laere, *Fine Words and Promises: A History of Indian Policy and Its Impact on the Coast Reservation Tribes of Oregon in the Last Half of the Nineteenth Century* (Philomath, Ore.: Serendip Historical Research, 2010).

7. John Beeson, *A Plea for the Indians*, 52 [southern Oregon volunteer quotation]; Frances Fuller Victor, *The Early Indian Wars of Oregon* (Salem, Ore.; Frank C. Baker, 1894), 342 [Ambrose quotation]; Samuel Stewart to T.A. Wood, December 30, 1896, folder 44, box 4, Military Collection, Mss 1514, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland, Oregon [hereafter OHS Research Library] [Stewart quotation]; Frances Fuller Victor, *History of Oregon, Volume 2*, ed. Hubert Howe Bancroft, (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888), 372; Karl Jacoby, "'The Broad Platform of Extermination': Nature and Violence in the Nineteenth Century North American Borderlands," *Journal of Genocide Research* 10:2

(June 2008): 249–67; Schwartz, *Rogue River Indian War and Its Aftermath*.

8. George E Cole, *Early Oregon: Jottings of Personal Recollections of a Pioneer of 1850* (Spokane, Wash.: Shaw & Borden Company, 1905), 51 [Lupton quotation]; Matthew Deady to James W. Nesmith, April 29 1855, box 1, folder 16, James W. Nesmith Papers, Mss 577, OHS Research Library [Lane quotation]; Gray H. Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee*, esp. chap. 8; Donald Cutler, "*Hang Them All!": George Wright and the Plateau Indian War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016); Benjamin Madley, "California and Oregon's Modoc Indians: How Indigenous Resistance Camouflages Genocide in Colonial Histories," *Colonial Genocide in Indigenous North America*, eds. Alexander Laban Hinton, Andrew Woolford, and Jeff Benvenuto (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2014): 95–130.

9. For histories of memory and erasure grappling with specific wars in the region, see Schwartz, *Rogue River Indian War and Its Aftermath*; and Boyd Cothran, *Remembering the Modoc War: Redemptive Violence and the Making of American Innocence* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

10. On Native soldiers being issued bandannas as identifiers during the "Snake" War(s), see John W. Hopkins to John M. Drake, March 24, 1864, box 1, folder 6, John M. Drake Papers, Mss 80, OHS Research Library. On the memory of the Teal family, see Joseph Nathan Teal, "Autobiography" [undated, but likely about 1929], p. 38, box 3, folder 1, Thompson and Teal Family Collection, Coll 168, OHS Research Library. On Native participants fighting on both sides of wars during this period, see also Lissa K. Wadewitz, "Rethinking the 'Indian War': Northern Indians and Intra-Native Politics in the Western Canada-U.S. Borderlands," *Western Historical Quarterly* 50:4 (Winter 2019): 339–61.

11. On the uses and transformations of settler memory and settler guilt, see Rebecca Weaver-Hightower, *Frontier Fictions: Settler Sagas and Postcolonial Guilt* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018); Lorenzo Veracini, "Settler Collective, Founding Violence and Disavowal: The Settler Colonial Situation," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 29:4 (Fall 2008): 363–79;

Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1:1 (Fall 2012): 1–40; and David M. Wrobel, *Promised Lands: Promotion, Memory, and the Creation of the American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), esp. 125.

12. Herbert O. Lang, *History of the Willamette Valley: Being a Description of the Valley and Its Resources, with an account of its Discovery and Settlement by White Men, and its Subsequent History*, (Portland, Ore.: Himes and Lang, 1885), 2–4; Minnie Roof Dee, *From Oxcart to Airplane: A Biography of George H. Himes* (Portland: Binfords & Mort, 1939), 107–108; Walling, *History of Southern Oregon*, esp. 242.

13. Lang, *History of the Willamette Valley*, 366–67.

14. *Ibid.*, 229, 139, 188. Lang got his key-stone quote "rogues and honest men" from John McLoughlin.

15. *Ibid.*, 367–68.

16. "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933," 97, box 1, folder 3, Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Records, Mss 364 [hereafter Mss 364], OHS Research Library; Frances Fuller Victor [uncredited], *History of Oregon, Volume 2*, ed. Hubert Howe Bancroft, (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888), 379, 373, 385, 372; Jim Martin, *A Bit of a Blue: The Life and Work of Frances Fuller Victor* (Salem, Ore.: Deep Well Publishing Co., 1992). Victor (and Bancroft) spoke specifically of pioneer women as having their "brave deeds . . . unrecorded," but their admiration for the "better classes" knew no gender.

17. The Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast pursued the interests of volunteer soldiers of early Northwest Indian wars, distinct from those who had enrolled as soldiers with the federal government proper. They thus excluded not only regular troops, but also volunteers in later conflicts such as the "Snake," Modoc, Nez Perce, and Bannock Wars. These exclusions were lifted briefly in the 1890s, and permanently "after spirited debate" in 1921 (by which time most of the original membership had already died). Article II, Section 1, *Constitution and By-Laws of the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast*, 1885, box 1, folder 2,

Mss 364, OHS Research Library [quotation in paragraph text]; Article II, Section 1, *Constitution and By-Laws of the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast*, 1890, box 1, folder 2, Mss 364, OHS Research Library; Article II, Section 1, *Constitution and By-Laws of the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast*, 1898, box 1, folder 2, Mss 364, OHS Research Library; "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933," 282, Mss 364, OHS Research Library.

18. "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933," 5, 76, Mss 364, OHS Research Library.

19. *Ibid.*, 5, 12–13, 219; John F. Winters application to the Oregon Soldiers' Home, January 29, 1899, Folder: "Oregon Soldiers Home Applications: 1898–1933; Wilson-Withrow," box 29, Military Dept. Records, 89A-12, Oregon State Archives, Salem, Oregon [hereafter Oregon State Archives]; "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1937–1941," 11–12, box 2, folder 4, Mss 364, OHS Research Library; Nan Wood Honeyman Scrapbooks, vol. 7, box 6, Nan Wood Honeyman Collection, Mss 193, OHS Research Library; Shelton Hawkins to T.A. Wood, January 4, 1897, box 4, folder 37, Military Collection, Mss 1514 [hereafter Mss 1514], OHS Research Library; Harvey Kimball Hines, *An Illustrated History of the State of Oregon* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1893), 768–69, 909–911.

20. "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933," 7, 11, Mss 364, OHS Research Library; Lang, *History of the Willamette Valley*, 231.

21. "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933," 97, 109, Mss 364, OHS Research Library; A.B. Roberts, "Account of the Battle of Walla Walla," n.d., box 2, folder 1, Mss 1514, OHS Research Library.

22. "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933," 94, 7, Mss 364, OHS Research Library; "Sons+Daughters of Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Minutes, 1908–1936," June 17, 1936, box 2, folder 9, Mss 364, OHS Research Library.

23. I use the term "Chinook Jargon" rather than "Chinuk wawa" here to indicate the simplified variant of the Indigenous trade language spoken by most Euro-American pioneers.

See Henry B. Zenk and Tony A. Johnson, "A Northwest Language of Contact, Diplomacy, and Identity: Chinuk Wawa/Chinook Jargon," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 111:4 (Winter 2010): 444–61. For discussions regarding the mottos and badges for the IWV-NPC, see Thomas B. Wait to LaFayette Mosher, July 9, 1886, box 2, folder 5, Mss 364, OHS Research Library; LaFayette Mosher to U.E. Hicks and Jennings [?] Smith, July 16, 1886, box 2, folder 5, Mss 364, OHS Research Library. From 1902, Cyrus Walker made songs, performances, and speeches in Chinook Jargon a regular feature at IWV-NPC meetings, see "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933," 143, Mss 364, OHS Research Library. On the uses and ubiquity of Wait's favored phrase, see Wolfgang Mieder, "'The Only Good Indian Is a Dead Indian': History and Meaning of a Proverbial Stereotype," *Journal of American Folklore* 106:419 (Winter 1993): 38–60.

24. "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933," 22; Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington, Volume 1* (Portland: North Pacific History Company, 1889), 434; John Maceachern, "Elwood Evans, Lawyer-Historian," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 52:1 (January 1961): 15–23.

25. Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest*, 529, 444, 405.

26. Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest*, 528.

27. *Ibid.*, 529.

28. Certification from the Grand Commander of the IWV-NPC allowed volunteer veterans to secure spots in the Oregon Old Soldiers' Home, but it was not enough to secure state money for supplies or back pay. *Oregon Laws: Showing All the Laws of a General Nature in Force in the State of Oregon*, Vol. II, ed. Conrad Patrick Olson, vol. 2 (San Francisco: Bancroft-Whitney Company, 1920): 3482–83. By 1903, the muster rolls in Victor's book had become the standard to prove eligibility for state monies set aside for veterans of Indian wars, although the law had not changed, see for example, Andrew J. Miner Indian War Claim, June 23, 1903, box 29, folder 25, Military Dept. Records, 89A-12, Oregon State Archives.

29. Victor, *The Early Indian Wars of Oregon*, 343, iv. See also Martin, *A Bit of a Blue*, 183–84. For the IWV-NPC response, see "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933," 109, Mss 364, OHS Research Library.

30. Laura Jensen, *Patriots, Settlers, and the Origins of American Social Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), chap. 2; Franklin M. Aaronson, "Pensions and Compensation to Veterans and Their Dependents," *Social Security Bulletin* 5:11 (Fall 1942): 10–24.

31. "An Act To extend the provisions, limitations, and benefits of an Act entitled 'An Act granting pensions to the survivors of Indian wars . . .,'" Public Law No. 174, U.S. 57th Congress, 1st Session, *Congressional Record* (June 27, 1902), 399–400. Of course, the right to pursue pensions did not make acquiring them easy or straightforward. In 1903, IWV-NPC Grand Commander T.A. Wood was found guilty of pension fraud after fudging the dates (although not other facts) on an affidavit and was compelled to pay \$1,000. See *Hillsboro Argus*, June 16, 1904, p. 2; and *The Federal Reporter* 127 (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing Company, 1904), 171–73.

32. *The General Laws . . . Adopted by the Twenty-Second Regular Session of the [Oregon] Legislative Assembly* (Salem, Ore.: J.R. Whitney, 1903), 228–29; *Oregon Laws* (1920): 3483–84; "Records of the Annual Encampments: 1885–1933," 69–70, Mss 364, OHS Research Library. On the uses and misuses of "Indian wars" claims, see Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee*, chap. 8.

33. Clarence Bagley to Edmond Meany, June 12, 1911, box 24, folder 26, Edmond S. Meany Papers, Acc. 106-001, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, Seattle, Washington [hereafter UW Special Collections].

34. Both of these narratives had been and continued to be present, of course. On questions of historical memory and shifting metanarratives in Oregon and the West, see

among many others Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1987); Mark Axel Tveskov, "A 'Most Disastrous Affair': The Battle of Hungry Hill, Historical Memory, and the Rogue River War," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 118:1 (Spring 2017): 42–73; and Lisa Blee, *Framing Chief Leschi: Narrative and the Politics of Historical Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

35. Eva Emery Dye, *The Conquest: The True Story of Lewis and Clark* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1902), 403–404, 442–43. See also Sheri Barlett Browne, *Eva Emery Dye: Romance with the West* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2004), esp. 98–99.

36. For Dye's knowledge of Touissant Charbonneau's abuse and her use of the phrase "living histories," see Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 90, 97–98; for Dye's knowledge of pioneer rape and violence, see among others Christina Williams to Eva Emery Dye, March 28, 1904, box 3, folder 15, Eva Emery Dye Papers, Mss 1089, OHS Research Library. For Dye's assertion of herself as an impartial historian, see Eva Emery Dye, "A Paper for the Future Historian of Oregon," n.d., box 5, folder 7, Mss 1089, OHS Research Library.

37. On Proctor's "Pioneer," see Marc James Carpenter, "Reconsidering *The Pioneer*, One Hundred Years Later," report submitted to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, June 27, 2019. On Lockley, see Fred Lockley, *Conversations with Bullwhackers, Muleskinners, Pioneers, Prospectors, '49ers, Indian Fighters, Trappers, Ex-Barkeepers, Authors, Preachers, Poets and Near Poets, and All Sorts and Conditions of Men*, ed. Mike Helm (Eugene: Rainy Day Press, 1981; original about 1905–1925). On Worth D. Griffin's pioneer paintings, see J.J. Creighton, *Indian Summers: Washington State College and the Nespelem Art Colony, 1937–41* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 2000); and Joseph "John" McClain description, Worth D. Griffin Collection folder, Acc 37.1.76, Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art Permanent Collection, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington. On John W.

Cullen, see "Captain Cullen Dies at 101 Years," *Oregonian*, December 15, 1939, p. 1, 14. For quotations on Cullen from pasted newspaper stories, see "Sons + Daughters of the Indian War Veterans of the North Pacific Coast Minutes 1937 July 2–1944 Sept 10," 38–39, box 2, folder 10, Mss 364, OHS Research Library. In addition to the works cited elsewhere in this piece, excellent scholarship also includes (but not limited to) Andrew H. Fisher, *Shadow Tribe: The Making of Columbia River Indian Identity* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010); Charles Wilkinson, *The People Are Dancing Again: The History of the Siletz Tribe of Western Oregon* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010); Michelle M. Jacob, *Yakama Rising: Indigenous Cultural Revitalization, Activism, and Healing* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013); and Joshua L. Reid, *The Sea Is My Country: The Maritime World of the Makahs, an Indigenous Borderlands People* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2015).

39. Lisa Brooks, *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), chap. 5; Patrick Wolfe, "Against the Intentional Fallacy: Legocentrism and Continuity in the Rhetoric of Indian Dispossession," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 36:1 (2012): 1–45; Marc James Carpenter, "'Justice and Fair Play for the American Indian': Harry Lane, Robert Hamilton, and a Vision of Native American Modernity," *Pacific Historical Review* 87:2 (Spring 2018): 305–332.

40. Lockley, *Conversations with Bullwhackers*, 9–25.

41. Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8:4 (Winter 2006): 387–409, esp. 389; Lorenzo Veracini, "On Settlerism," *Borderlands* 10:1 (May 2011); Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "Settler Colonialism as Structure: A Framework for Comparative Studies of U.S. Race and Gender Formation," *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1:1 (2015): 52–72.

42. John R. McBride, "Annual Address," *Transactions of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association* (Portland, Ore.: Himes and Co, 1898), 42.