

DRAFT

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

of Selected Materials Relating to
the Nez Perce Indians, the U.S. Military
and the Conflict of 1877

Compiled and written in part by

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Nez Perce National Historic Trail
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ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF
SELECTED MATERIALS RELATING
TO THE NEZ PERCE INDIANS AND
THE CONFLICT OF 1877

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PURPOSE:

This annotated bibliography has been compiled to aid the Trail Manager, interpreter, or novice researcher in the quest for quality information pertaining to Nez Perce history, culture and/or involvement with the U.S. military during the flight of 1877.

The search for understanding begins with these secondary sources. For many needs, these titles will suffice. Most works are readily available in libraries and bookstores. Serious scholars will wish to follow the trail to primary documents in archival and museum collections.

ANNOTATIONS:

Comments are offered on the content and historic focus of each work so that more intelligent selections can be made. The annotations presented come from a variety of sources. They include book reviews, index information, previously annotated materials, and my own opinions regarding books I've studied.

The sheer volume of material written on the Nez Perce Indians, the military and their fateful conflict in 1877, allows me to list but a select few entries. However, because this draft annotated bibliography is a dynamic and ongoing project, additions, deletions, updates and critiques are anticipated and encouraged. If the reader feels there are books, articles or information that should be included, or wish to comment on the annotations, please feel free to do so.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

In an effort to make this information as accurate and relevant as possible I sought the assistance and knowledge of others. I offer my sincere gratitude to Sue Buchel, Unit Manager, Big Hole National Battlefield and Chrisanne Brown, Librarian, Nez Perce National Historical Park, for their time and effort in editing, critiquing and offering titles for inclusion in this work. My thanks also to Mary Horstman, NPNHT Field Representative/Lolo Forest historian, and Keith Thurlkill, Regional Interpretive Specialist, Region One, for their assistance and suggestions. Finally, a special thanks to my wife, Kimberly, for her support and expert proofreading skills.

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NEZ PERCE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

To aid in determining the usefulness of titles listed below a coding system rates each entry using 1 to 3 stars:

- *** a "*must read*" title that offers a well-balanced overview.
- ** an important work that adds a unique perspective.
- * offers interesting but limited information on specific events or areas.

Beal, Merrill D. "I Will Fight No More Forever." New York: Ballantine Books, 1973.

Beal's work, done in 1958 under contract with the National Park Service, presents a fairly well-balanced account of the day-to-day movement and actions of both the nontreaty Nez Perce and their military pursuers. Good, in-depth battle analysis. Drawing heavily from the works of L.V. McWhorter and Mark Brown, Beal is among a host of historians who shake the myth of Joseph as war chief, placing him instead in the proper context of tribal protector and diplomat. **

Brown, Mark H. Flight of the Nez Perce. New York: G.P. Putnam & Sons, 1967.

Although this book focuses primarily on the military aspects of the 1877 conflict, it also contains good historical insight into the Nez Perce tribe. Brown draws primarily from contemporary written records using quotes from reports, diaries, reminiscences, firsthand accounts, newspapers and periodicals. Brown's military background led him to search for sources many had not previously found. **

Buck, Henry. "The Story of the Nez Perce Indian Campaign During the Summer of 1877." Manuscript in the Montana Historical Society Library, Helena, Montana.

A firsthand account of the events and actions of the nontreaty Nez Perce and the military (of which Henry was a citizen volunteer) as they moved through the Bitterroot Valley and on to the Big Hole River in August of 1877. Good insight into the thoughts and feelings of the local citizenry. Henry's account was later carried as a newspaper series. *

Calfant, Stuart A. and Verne F. Ray. Nez Perce Indians. New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974.

The Garland American Indian Ethnography series presents original documents on the history and anthropology of many American Indian tribes and groups who were involved in the Indian Claims actions of the 1950s and 1960s. These two reports, one written by Calfant and the other by Ray, were used as evidence in legal proceedings to determine the aboriginal rights of various Indian groups to certain geographical regions or areas with the United States. Calfant's report discusses the aboriginal territory of the Nez Perce Indians, while Ray discusses the ethnohistory of the Joseph Band of Nez Perce from 1805-1905. Findings of the Indian Claims Commission are presented in the final chapter. Interesting and useful. **

Cave, Will. Nez Perce Indian War of 1877. Missoula, Montana, 1926.

Another story of the war as related to a local newspaper. Like Henry Buck, Cave gives a good accounting of events on a local scale. Useful for perspectives from the citizen volunteer's point of view. *

Cous, Elliot. (ed.) History of the Expedition Under the Command of Lewis and Clark. New York: Francis P. Harper, 1893.

Excellent work using the journals of Lewis and Clark to describe their travels, particularly their contact with the Nez Perce in 1805 and again in 1806. Useful in understanding the importance of early Euro-American contact with the Nez Perce and the development of relationships and attitudes between these two disparate groups. **

Drury, Clifford M. Henry Harmon Spalding. Caldwell: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1936.

Along with being Spalding's biography, this book offers a good discussion of the early missionary period as well as insight into the relationship between Spalding and the Nez Perce. **

Garcia, Andrew. (Bennett H. Stein, ed.) Tough Trip Through Paradise. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1967.

Garcia's book presents a firsthand account of life on the western frontier during the mid to late 19th century. Valuable for its graphic account of scenes he and his Nez Perce wife, In-who-lise, encountered at the Big Hole battlefield in 1879, two years after the fight. In-who-lise was among the nontreaty Nez Perce fleeing U.S. military forces when their camp along the Big Hole River came under attack by Colonel John Gibbon on August 9, 1877. She later returned with Garcia to search for the grave of her father, Gray Eagle, who was wounded in the attack and died along the trail. Interesting insight into the day-to-day life of a white man living among the Indians. *

Gibbon, John. "Battle of the Big Hole." Harper's Weekly, XXXIX (December 21 & 28, 1895), 1215-1216 & 1235-1236.

Colonel Gibbon's firsthand account of the attack he led against the nontreaty Nez Perce on August 9, 1877. Fairly well balanced, considering his perspective on the event. **

NEZ PERCE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Haines, Aubrey L. "Historical Research Plan for Big Hole National Battlefield & Bibliography of the Nez Perce War, 1877." U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, November, 1967. 88 pages.

25 pages of bibliographic references. Further appendixes group references by theme: tribal background; Nez Perce/White Contact Proceeding War; Government Policies and Actions; Preliminary to War, and more. **

Haines, Aubrey L. An Elusive Victory. West Glacier, MT: Glacier Natural History Association, 1991.

Haines concentrates primarily on events and actions surrounding both the military and the nontreaty Nez Perce just prior to, during, and after the battle that took place along the Big Hole River in August of 1877. In-depth detail of the battle. Appendix lists the names of the Nez Perce, military, and civilian participants in the battle. Good maps and diagrams included. **

Haines, Francis. The Nez Perce. Tribesman of the Columbia Plateau. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955.

Haines traces the development of the Nez Perce over a ninety year period, from their initial encounter with whites to the division of the tribe following the missionary period. Only the final chapters of the book deals with events leading up to and through the flight of the nontreaty Nez Perce in 1877. Includes a good annotated bibliography. *

Hampton, Bruce. Children of Grace. New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1994.

The most recent book on the Nez Perce and the conflict of 1877. Provides an excellent overview of the history and events surrounding the conflict between the nontreaty Nez Perce and the military. A fast-moving, interesting and understandable presentation. Hampton tends to focus greater detail on the thoughts and actions of the military than on the nontreaty Nez Perce. He does, however, succeed in shifting the leadership focus away from Chief Joseph more towards Chiefs Lean Elk and Looking Glass, who were more directly involved in battle strategy. An excellent book for someone looking for a readable, well-written account of the Nez Perce War. ***

Howard, Helen Addison and Dan L. McGrath. War Chief Joseph. Caldwell, Idaho, 1952.

Follows the conflict of 1877 primarily from the military point of view. Contains a thorough and comprehensive bibliography. *

Howard, O.O. Nez Perce Joseph. An Account of His Ancestors, His Lands, His Confederates, His Enemies, His Murders, His Pursuit and Capture. Boston: Lee & Shepard, 1881.

Considered by some to be the most important single work done on the military aspect of the U.S. government and the nontreaty Nez Perce. Differs from his official account of the war, due perhaps to the prior publication of Chief Joseph's version of events. As the title indicates, Howard chose to recognize Joseph as the primary leader of the Nez Perce rather than acknowledge the chiefs of the other bands as the true decision makers. Don't look to Howard for a well balanced version of events. ***

Howard, O.O. My Life and Experiences Among Our Hostile Indians. Hartford, Connecticut, 1907.

A record of Howard's personal observations, adventures and campaigns among the Indians of the West, including the Nez Perce. Howard offers his insight into Native American habits, traits, religion, ceremonies, dress and customs during times of peace and war. Illustrated. *

Joseph, Chief. "Chief Joseph's Own Story." North American Review, April 1879.

While these are supposed to be the words of Chief Joseph, one has to consider the accuracy and validity of the translation from Nez Perce to English. Still, this work is valuable in terms of understanding the Nez Perce War and associated events from the viewpoint of a man intricately involved. Joseph's account helped dispel many of the misconceptions about the conflict put forth by the military and the press. **

Josephy, Alvin J. The Nez Perce and the Opening of the Northwest. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965.

Excellent work covering the post-contact history and culture of the Nez Perce people and various Northwest tribes, including the Cayuse, Walla Walla, Joseph's Wallowa band and others. Josephy focuses less on the events of 1877 and more on the cultural and historical aspects of the Nez Perce. Solidly researched with a good bibliography. ***

McBeth, Kate C. The Nez Perce Since Lewis and Clark. New York, 1908.

McBeth, who served as the Presbyterian mission leader in Kamiah, Idaho, deals with the Nez Perce primarily in the context of the mission environment and their involvement as Christian Indians. Useful in understanding the Christian Nez Perce who became part of the Lapwai reservation following the Treaty of 1863. **

McDermott, John D. Forlorn Hope, The Battle of Whitebird Canyon and the Start of the Nez Perce War. Boise: Idaho Historical Society, 1978.

McDermott focuses almost solely upon the events that triggered the first armed conflict between the military and the nontreaty Nez Perce at White Bird Canyon, Idaho. Well researched, he uses primary documentation wherever possible. Interesting and pertinent quotations from both sides involved in the conflict are included at the start of each chapter. An important work for anyone interested in the battle that led to the Nez Perce flight of 1877. ***

McDonald, Duncan. "The Nez Percés, the History of Their Trouble and the Campaign of 1877." New North-West, April 26, 1878 to April 11, 1879.

McDonald, a Nez Perce descendent and reporter for the New North-West, conducted interviews with Nez Perce refugees following the conflict in order to tell the story of the 1877 flight from the Indian point of view, a first for any western newspaper of the day. His articles, which ran for one year beginning in April of 1878, gave voice to the Nez Perce never before heard during the course of the conflict and helped change public opinion about the role played by the nontreaty bands. **

McWhorter, Lucullus Virgil. Yellow Wolf: His Own Story. Caldwell: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1940.

One of the few firsthand accounts of the 1877 conflict from a Nez Perce participant. Yellow Wolf, a young warrior at the time of the flight, fought in every battle from White Bird Canyon to Bear Paw, where he escaped to Canada in October, 1877, just prior to Joseph's surrender. From 1908 until 1935, McWhorter conducted numerous interviews with Yellow Wolf in an effort to record events surrounding the Nez Perce flight from the point of view of a man who was there. Yellow Wolf, McWhorter, and a Nez Perce interpreter returned to various places along the trail where Yellow Wolf reminisced and described events and actions in which he took part. Excellent photographs help to highlight Yellow Wolf's incredible story. ***

McWhorter, Lucullus Virgil. Hear Me, My Chiefs. Caldwell: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1940, 1983.

A must read for anyone interested in the Nez Perce and the events of 1877. McWhorter's close association and friendship with several survivors of the Nez Perce conflict allow him to bring this stirring account to life. Though thoroughly researched, McWhorter's version of the war comes strictly from a Nez Perce side of the story. As he states in the introduction, "It is an Indian story, told from an Indian point of view, and depends largely upon Indian sources." McWhorter died before completing his manuscript so it was left to his son, who drew upon his father's extensive notes, to complete this work. ***

Miles, Nelson Appleton. Personal Recollections and Observations of Nelson A. Miles. Chicago: Werner, Co., 1897.

The thoughts and memories of General Miles, embracing a brief view of the Civil War and the story of his Indian campaigns, including the Nez Perce War in 1877. It was Miles who accepted the surrender of Chief Joseph at Bear Paw battlefield. This book offers another look at the war from a military standpoint. *

Noyes, Alva J. The Story of Ajax: Life in the Big Hole Basin. Helena: State Publishing Company, 1966.

Although not directly related to the Nez Perce flight of 1877, this book offers insight into the settlement and lifestyle of the Big Hole basin during this same period of time. A section of the Nez Perce route crossed Noyes' property and he writes of seeing rifle fortifications built by the Indians during their flight through the valley. Noyes was also part of a group of volunteers who came to the aid of Colonel Gibbons following the Battle of the Big Hole. *

Ross, Alexander. Fur Hunters of the Far West. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956.

Useful as a background source for ethnographic interpretations and information on the Nez Perce people. Ross came into contact with the Nez Perce and other northwest tribes during his stint as a clerk for the Northwest and, later, Hudson's Bay Fur Company in the 1820's. He led a fur trapping brigade through the Big Hole and Horse Prairie basins in 1825-26. Offers insight into trading and commerce between Euro-Americans and among various northwest tribes, including the Nez Perce. Also helpful for those looking for uses of the Nez Perce trail prior to 1877. *

Scott, Douglas D. A Sharp Little Affair. Reprints in Archaeology, Volume 45, 1994. Lincoln: J&L Reprint Company.

Financed by a private grant in 1991, Dr. Scott conducted the most thorough historical archaeological investigation of the Big Hole National Battlefield. Through state-of-the-art ballistics analysis, Scott was better able to determine events and movements of both soldiers and Nez Perce participants during the course of the battle. Sheds new light on the tactics of each side in this struggle. Interesting and useful with a short bibliography. **

Sheridan, Phillip Henry. Record of Engagements with Hostile Indians within the Military Division of the Missouri, from 1868 to 1882, Lt. Gen. P.H. Sheridan, commanding. Facsimile edition. Bellevue, NE: The Old Army Press, 1969.

Sheridan's official accounts of military activities in various campaigns, including the Nez Perce of 1877. *

Spinden, Herbert J. The Nez Perce Indians. Lancaster, PA., 1908.

Brief, but about the only anthropological study of the Nez Perce during the early 20th century. Includes a selected bibliography. **

Sutherland, Thomas A. Howard's Campaign Against the Nez Perce Indians, 1877. Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1980. Reprint of 1878 ed. published by A.G. Walling, Portland, OR.

A look at the 1877 conflict from the viewpoint of Thomas Sutherland, a volunteer aide-de-camp on General Howard's staff during the campaign against the Nez Perce. Sutherland shows occasional glimpses of respect and compassion for the fleeing bands. **

Wilfong, Cheryl. Following the Nez Perce Trail: A Guide to the Nee-Me-Poo National Historic Trail with Eyewitness Accounts. Corvallis: Oregon State University, 1990.

Not only a useful tool for anyone interested in following the Nez Perce Trail, but a good narrative as well. Wilfong traces the 1,170-mile route from its start at Wallowa Lake, Oregon to Bear Paw Battlefield in Montana and beyond to Canada and Oklahoma. Describes the route and the type of vehicle capable of driving it. Excellent maps and photographs. Includes a short bibliography. *

Wood, C.E.S. "Pursuit and Capture of Chief Joseph," in Chester A. Fee, Chief Joseph: Biography of a Great Indian. New York: Wilson-Ericson, Incorporated, 1936.

Wood recorded many of the events of 1877 as he traveled with Howard during the campaign against the Nez Perce. Useful firsthand accounts of the military's thoughts, actions and movements. *

U.S. Congress. "Report of the Secretary of War, 1875-1877," in U.S. 45th Congress, 2nd Session, House Representatives Executive Document 1, Part 2, Volume 1.

Official report to the Secretary of War detailing the military events and actions during campaigns against various Indian tribes, including the Nez Perce in 1877. Excellent accounts of campaign activities, but shown only from the viewpoint of the military commanders who rendered the reports. Very useful and interesting information. ***