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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF William Eugene Kent for the
Master of Science in Teaching in History presented April 5,
1973.

Title: The Siletz Indian Reservation 1855-1900.

APPROVED BY MEMBERS OF THE THESIS COMMITTEE:

George C. Hoffmann, Chairman

Gordon B. Dodds

Forbes Williams

The aim of my study was to try to bring forth the basic aspects and characteristics of the Siletz Reservation as it was in the nineteenth century. Concentration was placed on the life activities and concerns of a typical resident, while at the same time extremes in behavior and actions were also noted. Thus an entire spectrum of human life was recreated. Government policies and events and changes of the time were noted as to how they affected the life at the reservation.

I did not include all of the information available to me and all information is not known by any single authority or source of information. I feel that I have presented a broad and satisfactory picture of my topic. It is hoped

that someday more information and insight will be presented that will add depth to my initial study. Also out of necessity I could only briefly cover many topics which could easily be worthwhile covering in more detail. Thus there is more ground to cover.

Despite its importance, there is correspondingly not much written about the Siletz Reservation. This is largely probably due to the fact that the reservation fades fast from a center of attention. The population fell below five hundred by the turn of the century, thus making the place far from a population center. A second factor was that the people became a new people in a new world and so, instead of continuing to be a home to change Indians, it was merely a home for people who lived like other Americans but were Indian by heart and appearance.

Aside from a few studies and sources of information, there are two main sources of information. The first is the annual reports sent to the Secretary of Interior. These can be found in any major library. The second source is the manuscripts. These are the records and correspondence of the agency. The Siletz Manuscripts are in six boxes at the Oregon Historical Society Library in Portland. The material is unorganized and much of it is damaged. There is also material not related to Siletz. Some of Joel Palmer's Indian Treaties are there as well as quite a lot of records of the Grand Ronde Reservation. Unfortunately,

it is largely correspondence to the Agency rather than that sent out. The government archives may have some of the correspondence.

As every student and author knows, writing poses many problems. There are any number of ways to put together a study of this kind. I divided mine into three basic parts. The first section is a year by year analysis. The second is topic by topic, and finally the third is again yearly. This helped me keep on the general topic of the reservation itself while still being able to diverge and enlarge on important issues. It was a challenging and rewarding task which I hope will be enjoyed by others and will add to their knowledge and understanding of the Siletz Indians and their life on the Reservation.

THE SILETZ INDIAN RESERVATION 1855-1900

by

WILLIAM EUGENE KENT

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN TEACHING
in
HISTORY

Portland State University
1973

TO THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	BACKGROUND	1
	Extinguishing Tribal Land Titles . .	2
	Reservation Selection	4
II	THE FIRST YEAR	8
	Removal of Tribes	8
	Supplies	10
	Government Employees	12
	Army	13
	Tribal Information	14
	Indian Characteristics	16
	Rogue River Tribe	20
	Complaints of Indians	22
III	PERIOD OF HARDSHIP	25
	Policy and Progress	25
	Farming	26
	Fighting	29
	Reservation Garrison	30
	Indian Trouble	30
	Government Employees	33
	Soldiers	33
	Civilians	34
	Indians	34

CHAPTER

PAGE

	Flour Scandal	35
	Financial Problems	36
	Educational Attempts	39
IV	PERIOD OF DEVELOPMENT	41
	Establishment of the School	42
	Reservation Farms	49
	General Affairs	51
	Sale of Yaquina Bay	55
	Agent Evaluations--1870	60
V	PERIOD OF TRANSITION	63
	Allotment Attempt	65
	Ending of Welfare System	66
	Law and Order System	67
	Employees	68
	Non-Indian Troubles	69
	Religion	70
	Reservation Officially Established .	74
VI	LIFE OF THE SILETZ PEOPLE	76
	Recreation	77
	Native Customs	78
	Intertribal Marriage	79
	Alsea Indians	82
	Non-Reservation Indians	85
	Non-Reservation Indian Affairs . . .	86
	North Reservation	88

CHAPTER	PAGE
Nestucca Tribe	90
Tillamook Tribe	90
Employment	91
Natural Land Wealth	95
Rogue River War Settlement	98
Allotments	99
Land Ceded from Reservation	102
VII LAST YEARS OF THE CENTURY	104
Agent Lane Affair	104
Epidemics and Diseases	107
CONCLUSION	111
BIBLIOGRAPHY	114
APPENDICES	123
SILETZ TODAY	129

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

The Siletz Reservation was established on November 9, 1855, by executive order for the coast Indians of Oregon, although no treaty was signed with them. The reservation was first known as the Coast Reservation but was later called Siletz, after a band of Yakonan people of that name. For the Indians of Siletz, it marked the beginning of a new age, which had originated on July 30, 1840^{-9?}, when Joseph Lane, a territorial governor of Oregon, advised the state legislative assembly to ask the government that the Indian "right to the land" be bought.¹

The proposal was aimed at the tribes of the Willamette Valley. By 1840, settlers were moving into the valley at a rapid pace, taking the Indian land almost at will and driving away the game. In desperation and anger, the Indians sometimes resorted to stealing and causing trouble. From the non-Indian point of view, the only solution, other than extermination, was to buy-out the tribes and remove them from the valley.

¹Ethel Peterson, Oregon Indians and Indian Policy, 1849-1871 (Eugene: Master's Thesis, University of Oregon, 1934), p. 13.

Extinguishing Tribal Land Titles

On June 5, 1850, an act was passed by Congress authorizing appointed commissioners to extinguish Indian titles to the land.² Immediately to be affected were the Molallas, Clackamas, Upper Umpquas, Yoncallas, and the Calapooyas. Anson Dart, the first commissioner, made thirteen treaties, ceding six million acres of land at about three cents per acre.³ Joel Palmer succeeded Dart and became the second Superintendent of Indian Affairs of Oregon and Washington. With Palmer, there came a change in policy. Originally, the Western Oregon tribes were to move east of the Cascade Mountains, but it was Palmer's decision to move them to a location on the coast, with the Coast Range being the barrier to the valley. Palmer was a man with much understanding of and sympathy for the Indians. From that fact there arose three factors upon which he had made his decision. First, the Western Oregon tribes subsisted largely on fish and berries but, mistakenly, it was believed that these items could not be found there. Second, the climate was extremely different, being hot and arid versus cool and damp. Third, the Eastern Oregon tribes were more warlike and threatened to exterminate any Indians who would be

²Ibid., p. 14..

³Ibid., p. 19.

moved there.⁴ Not only did the Indians fear being moved there but they, of course, did not want to be moved anywhere, leaving the land of their ancestors. Thus the reservation on the coast was first to be established for the valley tribes rather than the coastal people.

Joel Palmer, like Dart, engaged in treaty making. Four of his treaties were with the Alsea, Chetco, Coquille, and Tutuni Indians. He sent these treaties to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which sent them to the Senate to be ratified. For reasons unknown, they were never ratified and consequently, in 1951, the descendants of these people were awarded claims against the government totalling \$3,128,900.20.⁵ If the original treaties had been ratified, the tribal lands could have been acquired for \$90,000.⁶

The operation of the reservation was held back until 1856 because of the Rogue River War of 1855. Relations between the settlers and gold miners and the Southern Oregon tribes had deteriorated to the point that conflict had broken out. Palmer was actively engaged in peace-making activities during the war and he concluded the

⁴Stanley Spaid, "The Later Life and Activities of General Joel Palmer," Oregon Historical Quarterly, Vol. IV, Dec. 1954, No. 4, p. 311.

⁵Jerry O'Callaghan, "Extinguishing Indian Titles on the Oregon Coast," Oregon Historical Quarterly, Vol. 52, 1921, p. 140.

⁶Ibid., p. 140.

major hostilities with the Table Rock Treaty of 1855.

Reservation Selection

The year 1856 was a busy one because it involved the removal and resettling of most of the Indians. Before moving any of them to the Coast Reservation, however, Superintendent Palmer and Captain Philip Sheridan (later a well-known general) made a tour of the Siletz River region from the 21st to the 27th of July in 1856, to select a site for the agency and a blockhouse. The blockhouse was built in October, three months before the arrival of the Indians.⁷ Palmer gave this account of his observations: "We went up the river for about nine miles . . . of prairies, surrounded by mountains, well adapted for settling."⁸

J. W. Perit Huntington, Superintendent of Oregon Indian Affairs in 1864, gave the following description of the reservation and its desirability as one:

The Coast Reservation was selected by the late Superintendent Joel Palmer in 1855, at a time when the Western slope of the Coast Mountains had been but partially explored, and was supposed to be nearly or quite worthless. The only valleys suitable for human habitation then known to exist were needed for occupancy of the Indians, and those best informed

⁷Christopher Augar, Correspondence, to Colonel Samuel Cooper, Adjutant General of the Army, April 27, 1858, in A History of Fort Hoskins, by Oscar Hoop (Master's Thesis, University of Oregon, 1928), p. 73.

⁸Joel Palmer, Pocket Diary (July 21, 1856).

believed that the rugged nature of the Coast range of mountains would forever debar the population of the Willamette Valley from using the harbors which were found at the estuaries of the Sinselaw (Siuslaw), Alsea, Tillamook, and Yaquina rivers. Under this belief it was quite natural that little regard should be paid to economy in appropriating territory which was considered so valueless, and consequently the Coast Reservation was made very large, extending north and south about 100 miles, and averaging in breadth about twenty.⁹

The Indian Bureau located the Siletz agency twenty-five miles from the ocean at the southern end of the Siletz River Valley. It had formerly been located on the Yaquina River, near present-day Toledo, and the place was called The Depot and also Canemah. It was here that the army built and maintained a blockhouse, but later moved it to the agency. The agency was six miles from the depot.¹⁰

Initial impressions of the Siletz valley were very favorable. A historian of the period described it as

. . . an oasis enclosed by a beautifully carved rim of high mountains . . . enriched by valuable timbers, the most fertile arable and grazing lands, and an abundance of fishes, wild game and wild fruits.¹¹

⁹J. W. Perit Huntington, Annual Report of Superintendent of Oregon Indian Affairs, Annual Report to the Secretary of the Interior, 1864 (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office), p. 106.

¹⁰Christopher Augar, Correspondence, to Colonel Samuel Cooper, Adjutant General of the Army, April 27, 1858, in A History of Fort Hoskins, by Oscar Hoop (Master's Thesis, University of Oregon, 1928, Appendix 32), p. 74.

¹¹David Fagan, History of Benton County, Oregon (A. G. Walling, Printer, Lithographer, Etc., 1885), p. 404.

Although the valley proved to be very fertile, Superintendent Huntington believed that it could even support more people than were eventually living on the Siletz, Alsea and Grande Ronde reservations combined.¹² There were also lesser valleys on the reservation on the Salmon and Nestucca Rivers and for many years the coastal people continued to live along the several bays and estuaries.

Soon after its selection, the Coast Reservation was divided into two parts. The Alsea sub-agency was established for the non-treaty Alsea, Coos, Siuslaw and Umpqua Indians. It occupied the territory between the Yaquina and the Umpqua Rivers which was the southern half of the reservation. The northern half became the Siletz Reservation and was to be the home of the tribes of Southern Oregon and for the tribes of the northern coast, the Tillamook, Nestucca and Yaquina.

In the fall of 1855, an additional area of land was added to the Coast Reservation when, after the removal of some Indians to the reservation, it was found that the "expense and difficulty" of transporting supplies across the mountains made it necessary to locate the Willamette Valley tribes on the eastern side of the Coast Range. The right of a few settlers in that area were purchased and thus the Grande Ronde Reservation was created.¹³ Although

¹²Huntington, Annual Report, p. 106.

¹³Ibid., p. 106.

a reservation on the coast would most likely have been established eventually for coastal Indians, it is ironic that the people for whom the original reservation was established were never to live there.

What eventually became the Siletz Reservation proper commenced at the mouth of the Yaquina River north to the mouth of the Salmon River with the eastern boundary the summit of the Coast Range and the western boundary the Pacific Ocean. It was a land of densely wooded, rugged mountains, small valleys and a few bays and estuaries. In the words of Superintendent Huntington, "none of it likely soon to be wanted for settlement."¹⁴ In accordance with the times, this, of course, made it an ideal home for Indians.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 107.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST YEAR

Removal of Tribes

The summer of 1856 was a busy one for Joel Palmer. The two main areas of his work involved the removal of the Indians and the supplying of the reservation. The removal and transportation of the tribes was either done by ship or by land, under a military escort. Most of the coastal people were naturally removed by ship. On June 24, 1856, 600 Tutuni, Coquille and Umpqua (Cow Cree band) departed from Port Orford via Portland to Siletz on the steamship "Columbia." 592 Rogue River, Chetco, Chasta Scoton made the same trip on July 12, 1856. The cost for both voyages totaled \$1,500.00.¹⁵

The interior tribes walked or rode in wagons under army escort to Grand Ronde. These were the Lower Umpqua, Rogue River, Shasta, Klamath and Modoc. All of these people were first destined to live at Grand Ronde but in the spring of 1857, 999 Rogue River and Shasta Indians were moved to Siletz.¹⁶ Most of the Klamath and Modoc were

¹⁵Joel Palmer, Copy of Voucher No. 27 (Abstract 3d. Qt. 1856).

¹⁶Peterson, Oregon Indians, p. 47.

returned to southern Oregon in the summer of 1857.¹⁷ A few Klamath went to Siletz. No matter which way the Indians came to Siletz, the trip was one that most of them would never forget. Those who went by sea got seasick and some tried to jump overboard and swim back to shore. Each Indian was allowed to take one package or pack and most of them wisely took food as their goods. There was great fear among them and some of them thought that they were going to be shot and then thrown into the ocean.¹⁸ Joel Palmer had to travel on the ship with them to calm their fears. They were naturally sad and reluctant to leave their homes. "We left behind many fine canoes, homes, tanned hides and other belongings found in an Indian colony at that time. We were all heart sick. . . ."¹⁹

Those who traveled by land usually had to walk and many became ill when deprived of their usual food. Some of them ate the soldiers' hardtack.²⁰ The trip must have been quite difficult because of the terrain and the distance which was around 200 miles for some of them.

Not all of the Indians were removed during that year.

¹⁷Philip Sheridan, Personal Memoirs (New York: Charles L. Webster & Co., 1888, Vol. I), p. 105.

¹⁸George Thompson, A Story of Siletz (Paper, Feb. 5, 1950), p. 2.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 2.

²⁰Ibid., p. 2.

A number of them eluded capture or they managed to escape from the army. For several years after the founding of the reservations, the army and agents made expeditions into the remote mountainous areas of southern Oregon, rounding up small bands of people. Although the bulk of the tribes was easy to locate and corner, there were some Indians who never resided on a reservation. For example, in 1882, an old woman called Alice was reported living near Port Orford. She was at that time totally destitute and authorities were making plans to move her to Siletz. Apparently she had never left her homeland when her people had been removed.²¹ Other people like her were less in luck in receiving help, living a life of loneliness and privation. Some others were hunted down and killed by settlers for sport or when they stole.

Supplies

Supplying the reservations was Superintendent Palmer's second major task. All of the supplies were purchased from Oregon businessmen, chiefly in Portland, and from local produce growers. Since Palmer was forced to resign in August of 1856, he only initially engaged in the supplying of the reservation. For the Indians arriving in June, he ordered from supplier Charles Albright 700 pounds of beef at

²¹Correspondence from H. Price, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to Edmund Swan, March 27, 1885.

eleven cents per pound for a total of \$77.00.²² In July, for the second major group of arrivals, he ordered 1,000 pounds of beef, which cost \$110.00.²³ Clothing, blankets, tobacco, needles, thread, cloth, shoes, carpenter and agricultural tools and equipment, seed and other items were ordered primarily from Portland firms. Among the items was also fishing equipment bought from Wells Fargo and Company.²⁴ Nearly all of these items were purchased on credit.

On hand to resettle the new residents and receive the supplies at Siletz was Courtney Walker, the local Indian agent and conductor. Walker's brief tenure at Siletz was a personally distressing period for him.

I am [and] have been almost entirely alone in receiving [sic] the goods, provisions etc. and doing every other duty connected with the department . . . the dispatch in many things cannot possibly be made²⁵

Besides being overworked, his two other main problems were with the Indians and with the employees. The Indians were naturally apprehensive about being at Siletz and they showed no signs of trying to settle permanently. They were also

²²Palmer, Copy of Voucher.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Palmer, Pocket Diary (Feb. 16, 1856).

²⁵Correspondence from Courtney Walker, Local Indian Agent and Conductor, to Joel Palmer, August 2, 1856.

restive and Walker felt that "it will require patient and prudently cautious Management to prevent an 'estampede'." ²⁶

Many of the Indians were sick when they arrived. Some of the Rogue River tribe arrived at Siletz on July 31st, and by August 5th, twenty of them had died. ²⁷ Agent Walker had generally gotten by as best he could on his job and he used Indian labor and horses freely in the execution of his duties.

Government Employees

Good employees were hard to get and secure. Walker often complained about rumors and controversy. Foul language and improper conduct were also evident. In general, the work was not done very satisfactorily. The teamsters were singled out as being especially slow in the performance of their duties. Most employees neither understood Indians nor did they care. Trouble finally arose over an ugly incident that occurred in February, 1857. There was not enough food at the reservation and an Indian had gone into the mechanics quarters to ask for food, and upon being refused, he drew his knife. The cook drew his pistol, which he could not fire, and so used it as a club and beat the Indian to death. ²⁸ Walker was not surprised by the event. There

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Walker, Correspondence, Aug. 5, 1856.

²⁸Walker, Correspondence, Feb. 12, 1857.

were many employees he felt who were

. . . unaquainted with Indian character, and who are governed by no other principals, in the protection of their well being [and] advancement than the consideration of dollars and cents.²⁹

The incident naturally caused much commotion among the Indians, who had to be calmed.

Courtney Walker resigned as the Siletz agent in the spring not long after the killing of the Indian. Although he may have had some personal reasons, the state of affairs at the reservation undoubtedly contributed to the decision. Perhaps his most memorable experience was during the previous summer when he was "besieged in a log hut" by Coquille Indians and had to be rescued by the army.

The Coquille Indians on the Siletz and down near Yaquina Bay, became, on account of hunger and prospective starvation, very much excited and exasperated, getting beyond the control of their agent, even threatening his life.³⁰

Army

Walker was not entirely alone in the management of affairs at Siletz. He was greatly aided by the army, especially in the control of the Indians who would have fled the reservation if they had not been under guard. Before Palmer left office he had requested the army department to station a troop of soldiers at the Siletz Agency.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Sheridan, Memoirs, p. 97.

The army was there to prevent the Indians from leaving and to give the agents more support and control over them. Because Siletz was so isolated, the most warlike of the tribes were moved there to better control them. The army was also used to protect the Indians from attack by settlers and maintained nightly bed checks to keep account of the people. Palmer said,

Whilst I do not apprehend any immediate danger of collision between our citizens and the Indians upon this reservation, I regard it of the utmost importance that a military command should be temporarily established in its vicinity for a very slight provoke retaliatory steps and involve the entire bands in war. They are now entirely defenceless, and, as an act of justice, entitled to our protection, and if allowed to remain at peace would soon be able to nearly subsist themselves.³¹

Three forts were established around the boundaries of the Coast Reservation. They were Fort Umpqua, at the mouth of the Umpqua River, Fort Hoskins in Kings Valley, and Fort Yamhill near Valley Junction. They were located at strategic points to intercept any Indians leaving the reservation.

Tribal Information

In September of 1857, J. W. Nesmith, the third Superintendent of Indian Affairs, listed the population

³¹Joel Palmer, Annual Report of Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon and Washington, Annual Report to the Secretary of Interior 1856 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), p. 747.

of Siletz as 2,049.³² This was not a complete total since Indians were still being brought to the reservation. The highest total number of people who resided at Siletz is not exactly known. The highest official estimate given was made by Agent Benjamin Simpson in 1865, claiming a population of 2,800.³³ Simpson's estimate was far different from that made by J. W. Perit Huntington, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, who listed for the same year a population of 2,068, but he did not include all Siletz tribes, however.³⁴ It is simply safe to assume that the population probably averaged around 2,500 to 2,600 and declined from there. The great difficulty in census reports in the early years was that the Indians were spread throughout the reservation. Deaths, runaways, and new arrivals also caused the population figures to fluctuate.

Tribal identification was another vital statistic which received divergent opinions from the various authorities. The great difficulty was that some of the tribes were divided into bands which had their own names.

³²J. W. Nesmith, Annual Report of Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon and Washington, Annual Report to the Secretary of Interior 1857 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), p. 606.

³³Benjamin Simpson, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Reports 1865, p. 10.

³⁴J. W. Perit Huntington, Annual Report of Superintendent of Oregon Indian Affairs, Annual Reports 1865, p. 470.

The band name was often used as a tribal designation. Indian Bureau records and ethnographic studies indicate that at Siletz there were approximately thirty name designations. About half of the names listed are tribal divisions and the other half band names. The tribes were the Alsea, Chasta Scoton, Coos, Coquille, Chetco, Nestucca, Rogue River (Takelma), Port Orford, Shasta, Siuslaw, Tillamook, Tutuni, Umpqua, and Yaquina. Major band names were Cow Creek, Joshua, Galice Creek, Flores Creek, Euclee, Applegate, Nehalem, Siletz, Chasta Costa, Sixes, Noltnatnah, Mac-en-noot-e-way, Delwashe and Pistol River. The spelling will vary from authority to authority and, again, there is no absolute concensus on the usage of the names.

Indian Characteristics

These were a very diverse group of people who found themselves living together. Their customs, diets, and attributes sometimes varied greatly. Chinook jargon, the Northwest trading language, had to be used by the Indians to communicate because there were seven different languages spoken, which were Athapascan, Yakonan, Kusan, Takilman, Shastian or Hoka, Salishan, Chinookan, and Shahaptian.³⁵ Their attitudes toward white people and reservation life differed greatly. The Rogue River, Shasta, and Coquille had been at war with the army and reservation life was a

³⁵J. Owen Dorsey, The Gentile System of the Siletz Tribes (Unpublished Study 1884), p. 227.

radical change for them. The Siuslaw, Alsea, Tillamook and Yaquina had never been at war with the white people and even though they lived on a reservation, their old way of life continued for some time. As a matter of fact, the Tillamook and their neighbors, the Nestucca and Nehalem, lived far from the agency at the northern end of the reservation and even farther up the coast, and were primarily unaffected by any official changes in their way of life for over twenty years after the establishment of the reservation.

Aside from attitudes and adaptability to the new drastic change in their lives, physically and culturally they were also greatly diverse. The coastal Yakonans were short, heavy-set and dark complected. They practiced head-flattening and were peaceful and calm by nature.

Among the more handsome of American Indians, at least by non-Indian standards, were the Athapascans. They were tall, round-headed and intelligent. With relatives ranging from the southwest to Canada, the Athapascans at Siletz were represented by the Chasta Scoton, Umpqua, Chetco and Tutuni.

A very light-skinned tribe, comparatively speaking, was the Chasta Costa of southern Oregon. Their women wore chin tatoos.³⁶

The Takilman people of the interior mountains of southern Oregon were aggressive by nature and highly super-

³⁶Ibid., p. 2.

stitious. They were slave-owners and because they fought a war against the United States, they are better known than the other Siletz people, that is, to the average person.³⁷

After several generations of inter-tribal marriage at Siletz, the distinct characteristics of the different people disappeared. Like his typical Caucasian counterpart, the Siletz Indian is a product of several racial stocks. Many Siletz people also married non-Indians as well.

Naturally, the people who had been removed from their homes in southern Oregon were affected the most by the changes which had occurred in their lives. Most of these, because of their ordeal, were "Wretchedly poor, and destitute of all the necessities and comforts of life, except what is supplied them by the government."³⁸

They all wanted to return to their old homes. The more sensitive died from a "depression of spirits" ³⁹ Coming from warm and dry parts of the state, the Rogue Rivers found Siletz to be "cold, sickly and destitute of

³⁷Note: The above information is a brief tribal sketch that is general knowledge found in any good anthropological work on American Indians. One exception on a little-known tribe is noted.

³⁸Robert Metcalfe, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Reports 1857, p. 645.

³⁹Ibid., p. 645.

game."⁴⁰ They were forced out of necessity sometimes to eat oysters, clams, crab and fish, which they did not like but were relished by the coastal tribes. During the first winter there was little housing provided and the Indians had to provide their own accommodations. They sometimes received little sympathy and help. For example, once the Coquille chief, Washington, asked an army captain about housing; the captain replied, "You Indians don't know how to live in houses, so what do you want with a house?"⁴¹ The Coquilles, like the others, built a long-house and small huts for shelter and lived off the land.

Several hundred Indians died that first winter from measles, poor diets, weather exposure and various diseases. The Coos, Coquille and Port Orford many times sought to escape by sending small parties of women and children down the coast in two's and three's. Almost none of the parties were successful, being caught by the army. The Siuslaw and other coastal people often reported the movements of these people to the agent.⁴² After the first miserable winter, about 1100 Joshuas, Chetcos, Coquilles, Tutunis, Chasta Costas, Port Orfords and Rogue Rivers threatened to leave

⁴⁰Frances Victor, The Early Indian Wars of Oregon (Salem, Oregon: Frank Baker, State Printer, 1894), p. 416.

⁴¹George Thompson, A Story of Siletz, Paper, Oregon Historical Society Collections, Feb. 5, 1950, p. 3.

⁴²Christopher Augar, Correspondence, to Major W. W. Mackell, in A History of Fort Hoskins, Appendix 26, p. 63.

the reservation in March of 1857.⁴³ There was wide-spread dissatisfaction with the state of affairs, and most of it was justified.

Rogue River Tribe

One of the larger tribes at Siletz and the most dissatisfied were the Rogue Rivers. They were to cause the government the most trouble at the reservation. The tribe had been involved in a bitter war with the government and the settlers and they were very angry and resentful. There was nothing that they liked about Siletz, including the other Indians. "They openly boasted to the other Indians that they could whip the soldiers, and that they did not wish to follow the white man's ways."⁴⁴

They were haughty, insolent, and threatened life and property. Not only did they cause trouble for the army and the government employees but they terrorized the other tribes. The Port Orfords were greatly discontented and troubled by the fact that they were the neighbors of the Rogue Rivers. Problems arose over which they had a "fight every day or so."⁴⁵ Some Rogue Rivers under Chief John

⁴³Christopher Augar, Correspondence, to Captain Taylor, in A History of Fort Hoskins, Appendix 15, p. 48.

⁴⁴Sheridan, Memoirs, p. 106.

⁴⁵Correspondence from Courtney Walker, Local Indian Agent and Conductor, to Joel Palmer, August 5, 1856.

killed some other Indians in October of 1857, causing much excitement among the rest of the tribes. The army forced them to turn in all remaining weapons, which included twenty rifles, eight revolvers, and seven single-barreled pistols. They also had to pay the Siletz people for a person they killed on one occasion.⁴⁶ Perhaps the worst incident the Rogue Rivers had with other Indians occurred at the D River. The Yaquina claim this area as their fishing grounds and when they saw some Rogue Rivers fishing there, a battle ensued, lasting all night, with many deaths on both sides.⁴⁷

Culturally, the Rogue Rivers also did not fit well into reservation life. They believed in witchcraft and spirits like some other tribes. By 1859, more than 100 Indian doctors and doctresses had been killed.⁴⁸ It was a Rogue River custom to kill the doctor if his patient died and unfortunately many Indians, especially young ones, died at Siletz. Another custom relating to spirits was the burning of all their property at the time of death or if they moved. Thus the supplies the government issued them were frequently destroyed and as a result they created

⁴⁶Christopher Augar, Correspondence, to Major W. W. Mackell, in A History of Fort Hoskins, Appendix 29, p. 66.

⁴⁷Earl Nelson, "Delake," Pioneer History of North Lincoln County, Oregon (McMinnville, Oregon, 1951), Vol. 10, p. 86.

⁴⁸Robert Metcalfe, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Reports 1859, p. 793.

further hardships. Before the majority of them left Grand Ronde, they burned down the houses the government built for them and their children, "demolished" the school furnishings and broke out all of the windows. The tribe was also addicted to gambling and the older boys gambled away the clothes they were supposed to wear to school.⁴⁹ They felt that they were doing the agent a favor for going to school, as they saw no benefits for themselves.

As a people, they did not endear themselves to anyone else, and, being at Siletz against their will, they did not see any reason why they had to do anything other than what they wanted to, and escape was the only definite thing on their minds. Because they were viewed as "troublemakers," they were placed under tight security. Except for the first two years, the security was unfortunately not needed because the climate, poor diets, poor sanitation, fighting, and lung disease contracted during the war, killed 205 of them the first year, cutting their population from 590 to 385.⁵⁰ By 1865, there were only 121 of them left.⁵¹ Thus came the downfall of a proud people.

Complaints of Indians

The Indians frequently expressed much discontent

⁴⁹Peterson, Oregon Indians, p. 47.

⁵⁰Robert Metcalfe, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Reports 1858, p. 605.

⁵¹Note: See Appendix I.

about the situation they found themselves in. Chief Whiskus, of the Rogue Rivers, did not realize that he had to leave his country when he signed the treaty, and, when he realized that "it makes his heart sick."⁵² When special commissioner Ross Browne examined the reservation in the fall of 1857, he held a council with the Indians at which they expressed their feelings. Chief Joshua, of the Rogue River, claimed "we have not been dealt with in good faith."⁵³ They had been promised by Palmer a horse apiece, fishing utensils, sugar, coffee, a mill to grind wheat, lumber for houses, and a doctor.⁵⁴ The Shasta chief, John, said

. . . many of my people have died since they came here; many are still dying. There will soon be none left of us We have no game; we are sick at heart; we are sad when we look on the graves of our families.⁵⁵

Referring to the deaths, another Indian told Agent Metcalfe: "It is your peace that is killing us."⁵⁶ The Indians also did not want to work.

They cannot be made to understand why the government should take their country away from them and compel them to work for a living.⁵⁷

⁵²Joel Palmer, Pocket Diary, April 17, 1856.

⁵³Ross Browne, Letter, December 4, 1857, p. 44.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 44.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 45.

⁵⁶Peterson, Oregon Indians, p. 40.

⁵⁷David Goodman, A Western Panorama, 1849-1875, J. Ross Browne (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1966), p. 123.

Besides unfulfilled promises, work and sickness, they also wonder who was the "Great White Chief." The replacement of Courtney Walker by Robert Metcalfe and of Joel Palmer by A. Hedges and then James Nesmith, all within a year, left the Indians in a state of uncertainty as to what was going to happen to them. The removal of Palmer had disturbed them very much since they had placed their trust and faith in him. They said:

You [Palmer] had learned them to cease war; you had brought them here; and you had treated them kindly and would still provide for them, [and] why put in another; when you pleased them.⁵⁸

⁵⁸Correspondence from Courtney Walker, Local Indian Agent and Conductor, to Joel Palmer, August 9, 1856.

CHAPTER III

PERIOD OF HARDSHIP

Policy and Progress

Browne found himself in a very uncomfortable position because what they complained about was largely true. He tried to talk around their arguments but they were not deceived and they insulted both him and Joseph Lane, who was also visiting the reservation. Being a hot October day, Browne reportedly had some whiskey before the meeting and so the ordeal was taken "lightly." After the council, he and Lane played poker to see who had been insulted by Chief Limpy the most.⁵⁹ Commissioner Browne, however, filed a highly critical report about the affairs of Siletz.

Robert Metcalfe was the second Siletz Indian Agent. He had far more ability to handle the situation at Siletz than had Walker. A man of courage, industry, foresight, and stern methods, he was not to be taken lightly by the Indians and he never let them get the better of him as they had done of Walker. During the removal of the year before, he had been actively involved in the rounding up process

⁵⁹Goodman, A Western Panorama, p. 124.

and he had brought some of the people to Siletz himself.⁶⁰ Despite the fact that Metcalfe was not very well liked by either the government employees or the Indians, many Indians did however take the name Metcalfe as their own. One Rogue River man was even named Bob Metcalfe.⁶¹ Although he reportedly stole \$40,000 as an agent,⁶² at a time when the people he was to serve were destitute, his policies and methods did make the reservation function towards positive results. He achieved this in two ways, which were the harsh suppression and control of the Indians and by the devising of a viable plan of Indian self-help, along with the gradual development of the reservation itself.

Farming

In the spring of 1857, there were 300 acres of land broken and 280 in cultivation. It was divided into 150 wheat, 30 oats, 40 peas, 60 potatoes, and 8 turnips.⁶³ At various stages of construction were log cabins for the Indians, an office, storehouses, warehouse, drugstore,

⁶⁰Joel Palmer, Annual Report of Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Oregon and Washington, Annual Reports 1856, p. 747.

⁶¹Dorothy and Jack Sutton, Indian Wars of the Rogue River (Grants Pass, Oregon: Josephine County Historical Society, 1969), p. 274.

⁶²Victor, Indian Wars, p. 416.

⁶³Robert Metcalfe, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Reports 1857, p. 646.

"issue house," cook house, a men's house (employees), blacksmith shop, school house, slaughter house, and a hospital. During the previous winter there had been no permanent buildings on the reservation, but simply crude shelters and the army's blockhouse.

It was Metcalfe's aim to make the Indians self-sufficient. To do this he located the tribes on tracts of land to cultivate for their own needs.

Thus they will be able to see that those who labor can always have plenty, whilst those who spend their time in roaming about and dissipation will often be reduced to extreme want.⁶⁴

Those who did not work would then see the wisdom of those who did. Each tribe was placed under the guidance of a hired farmer. The attitudes of the various tribes exposed themselves. Under Jacob Allen, the Shasta were reportedly industrious and anxious to raise good crops,⁶⁵ while the agency Indians were "lazy, discontent and shirk from work."⁶⁶ George Megginson reported the Moltanana and Sixes as also industrious, but the Coquille, Port Orford and Euchice were not.⁶⁷

For his coastal people, Metcalfe was very far-sighted

⁶⁴Metcalfe, Annual Reports 1858, p. 604.

⁶⁵Jacob Allen, Report of Shasta Farm Farmer, Annual Report, 1862, p. 425.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 425.

⁶⁷George Megginson, Report of Lower Farm Farmer, Annual Reports 1862, p. 422.

for his time when he recommended that the Indian Bureau establish canneries on the Siletz and Yaquina Rivers.⁶⁸ The Yaquina, Tillamook, Nehalem and Nestuca were not involved in the farming activities and would most likely dislike it, so cannery work in their area would benefit them and help the reservation out financially and food-wise.

Despite this wise policy, Metcalfe's intentions never fully materialized. He found the cold nights killed most of the vegetables and his hopes for livestock were so dimmed by the fact that there was little grazing land at Siletz. The soil was productive but what grew did not have the benefit intended. The Indians were used to digging and eating roots and they naturally ate the vegetable roots before the plants developed crops.⁶⁹ In this manner, the reservation lost most of its potatoes. Food for the next year had to be doled out to them throughout the year. A great portion of the reservation appropriation was spent on agriculture because of the crop failures. J. W. Nesmith, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon and Washington Territory, believed that "a great inducement for selecting Siletz Reservation was the fact that it did not have much farmland or favorable land."⁷⁰

⁶⁸Metcalfe, Annual Report 1858, p. 603.

⁶⁹Browne, Letter, p. 40.

⁷⁰Nesmith, Annual Reports 1858, p. 569.

Fighting

Metcalf was no stranger to Indian ways. He soon earned their respect for his courage and fear of his justice. The reservation contained hundred of half-starved, angered and rebellious people. Most of them were Rogue Rivers. Metcalfe worked fast and forcefully in keeping them under control. Two events stand out in his policy of control. In 1857, two Rogue River men killed Indian Agent Ben Wright on the Coast. The guilty Indians the rest of the tribes gathered at the agency for a scalp dance as a show of defiance to government authority. In front of the approximately 200 Indians, Metcalfe "dragged" the murderers into his office and threatened to kill them if the others did not give up the scalp. One was set free to get it and bring it back. The Indians were getting angrier by the minute, but peace was restored.⁷¹

Another time, an embittered man named Cultus Jim or Rogue River Jim tried to shoot Metcalfe and in the ensuing gun duel the Indian lost.⁷²

The agent was involved several times in arresting Indians who had warrants against them as a result of the war. He also spent time disarming them despite their defiance and threats.

⁷¹Browne, Letter, p. 48.

⁷²Augar, History of Fort Hoskins, Appendix 29, p. 66.

Reservation Garrison

The Army was also maintaining order at the reservation. Aside from the three forts, the Siletz agency blockhouse contained twenty-five men. It was Metcalfe who had asked for them. Captain Philip Sheridan was in charge of the blockhouse. Sheridan, like Metcalfe, had also experiences in dealing with Indians and he also was fast and firm in his actions. He learned to speak Chinook so that he could communicate with them.⁷³ The people's first test of his power came when he erected the blockhouse. The site he chose happened to be the burial grounds of the Yaquina. Sheridan had a council in which "at last they gave in, consenting, probably, as much because they could not help themselves, as for any other reason."⁷⁴ The next day fifty burial canoes went with the tide out to sea.

Indian Trouble

Sheridan, like Metcalfe, found himself in several tight situations.

Having brought with me over the mountains a few head of beef cattle for the hungry Indians, without thinking of running any great personal risk. I had six beefes killed some little distance from my camp, guarding the meat with four soldiers. The Indians soon formed a circle about the sentinels, and, impelled by starvation, attempted to take the beef before it could be equally divided. This was of

⁷³Sheridan, Memoirs, p. 106.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 102.

course restricted, when they drew their knives-- their guns having previously been taken away from them--and some of the inferior chiefs gave the signal to attack.⁷⁵

No attack occurred, however, because Sheridan, Tetootney Jim, and twenty other Indians argued with them long enough for troops to arrive.

A more memorable event occurred when the Rogue River and Shasta plotted to capture the agency garrison. They hid in the woods and waited for dinner-call. The soldiers customarily ate in the basement, leaving their arms in the room above. When the soldiers were eating, they would rush in and capture or kill them. Not all Indians believed in such violent tactics and a man named Klamath Joe reported the plot. When the Rogue River and Shasta came, they were "welcomed by a row of grinning muskets and concluded to postpone the entertainment."⁷⁶

Punishment and control of the Indians was harsh. Referring to sixteen men involved in a murder case, "The prisoners were issued ball and chains, and made to work at the post until their rebellious spirit was broken . . ."⁷⁷

Part of the law and order on the reservation dealt with inter-tribal disputes. The army had to settle these as best they could. Once some Molalla at Grand Ronde killed

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 98.

⁷⁶Fagan, Benton County, p. 406.

⁷⁷Sheridan, Memoirs, p. 118.

an Umpqua. The Molalla were forced to pay compensation to the Umpqua tribe.⁷⁸ In September 17, 1864, the army had to settle a dispute over a beached whale which had broken out between the Coos and Umpqua on one side and the Alsea on the other. The problem was settled by dividing the whale in half.⁷⁹

Stealing and alcohol were other major Indian problems. At Grand Ronde, three Indians were caught stealing from the settlers' store, and "after satisfying the settler in a pecuniary light with three horses, were tied up, and each received twenty lashes, and were released."⁸⁰ Some of the people at Siletz stole and it may be assumed that they also received similar treatment.

Some Indian troubles required more drastic measures. Chief John, of the Rogue River, and his son, finally had to be sent to Alcatraz Prison in San Francisco because they contributed to "unrest and rebellion."⁸¹ With their chief removed and their numbers dwindling, the spirit of the Rogue River was dissipating.

At times the fear of Indian trouble was more imaginary than real, but Siletz was a few times the scene of some

⁷⁸Royal Bensell, All Quiet on the Yamhill (Eugene: University of Oregon Books, 1959), p. 71.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 175.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 79.

⁸¹Victor, Indian Wars, p. 417.

lively events.

Government Employees

It is not hard to say that the army contributed to just as many problems as it solved. Single soldiers, quartered on isolated posts in a rain-drenched climate, can easily find ways of getting into trouble. At Siletz

there is all around any amount of squaws, young and old . . . to any virtue could be found out of the cradle is to lie, and to deny existence [of] soldiers' concubines would be equally untrue.⁸²

The soldiers also introduced diseases, which killed many Indians.

Securing competent, trustworthy and permanent employees was a major problem. During Walker's first year, nearly all the employees deserted, largely from fear of the Indians. The settlers near the reservations also had fears. One Irish immigrant said: "We went to bed every night expecting to wake up the next morning and find ourselves dead."⁸³ Most of the government employees detested the climate and social atmosphere of Siletz. Perhaps the most emotional and revealing account was written by H. R. Dunbar, Siletz teacher, in 1867. The reservation was a "God-forsaken region" of floods, foul weather, loneliness and employee conflicts of interest and

⁸²Bensell, Annual Reports 1865, p. 123.

⁸³Melvin Winstock, "The Siletz Reservation," Scrap Book No. 40, September 12, 1889, p. 1.

personality. Dunbar believed that:

No one that thinks anything of his family and that has never stepped in such a hole as this with his family absent from him, can realize what it is to stop in this lonesome, wicked place⁸⁴

Many of the employees were incompetent, or just plain not good workers. Walker claimed:

The teamsters are certainly very slow in making their trips it appears to be a very hard matter to get them to better thier [sic] motions.⁸⁵

One employee named George bothered the Yaquina women.⁸⁶ Many others were there for the "consideration of dollars and cents."⁸⁷ Being such an out-of-the-way place and in an area of recent frontier expansion, which attracted the rougher, opportunistic element of people, the Indian Bureau simply could not hire the best kind of employees.

Out of necessity, Indians were often, therefore, used to help haul supplies to the reservation. One hundred of them at a time would come to Fort Hoskins for flour. They had to

Pack it out on their backs a distance of over fifty miles over an almost impracticable mountain

⁸⁴Personal letter from H. R. Dunbar, Siletz Teacher, to R. P. Earhart, October 27, 1867.

⁸⁵Correspondence from Courtney Walker, Local Indian Agent and Conductor, to Joel Palmer, August 2, 1856.

⁸⁶Browne, Letter, p. 44.

⁸⁷Walker, Correspondence, February 12, 1857.

trail. They are almost naked, too. This after repeated promises, too, that they should be supplied with all that they require, is well calculated to cause dissatisfaction.⁸⁸

The distance between the Agency and Fort Hoskins was thirty-five miles.

Flour Scandal

Flour was an immediate need to feed the people and it tragically became an item of controversy and scandal. The reservation obtained the flour from an Oregon City mill owned by George Abernathy (a former Oregon governor) and Robert Pentland. The government contract was twenty dollars per barrel for good quality flour. After the Indians had laboriously carried it over the mountains, they became sick upon eating it, but they did just the same because no more could be immediately secured. The "good quality" flour turned out to be "shorts and sweeps" or what was then used as cattle feed.⁸⁹ No mention of the second received consignment of flour is on record but the third cargo of 48,394 pounds was of the "poorest kind of mill sweeps" and it was bought in Kings Valley.⁹⁰ Special Commissioner Browne tracked down the flour contractor in Portland, who claimed that he himself had been swindled by George

⁸⁸Augar, Fort Hoskins, Appendix 16, p. 49.

⁸⁹Victor, Indian Wars, p. 415.

⁹⁰Browne, Letter, p. 41.

Abernathy and Company. However, he agreed to a "fair arbitration."⁹¹

Financial Problems

A major problem the government had was the inability to pay. Nearly everything had to be bought on credit. This caused the agent to have a hard time finding suppliers and was one of the reasons for the bad flour. When the government failed to appropriate sufficient funds in the first year, the merchants and contractors raised prices twenty-five to thirty-three percent. It was the money dealers, however, who received the bulk of the money on their three percent interest charge.⁹² Many of the suppliers became angered at the Indian Bureau. A typical example was John Ainsworth, a Portland business man, to whom the bureau owed \$30,000 in unpaid vouchers.⁹³ Ainsworth demanded settlement. Superintendents Palmer and Hedges had spent and promised \$226,311.29 on Indians in Oregon, of which \$54,118.57 was spent at Siletz. Salaries and supplies created outstanding liabilities as of June 30, 1857, of \$176,511.29.⁹⁴

⁹¹Ibid., p. 42.

⁹²Ibid., p. 36.

⁹³John Ainsworth to James Nesmith, February 27, 1859.

⁹⁴Browne, Letter, p. 32.

The Siletz reservation was a prime contributor in overcosts to the bureau. Because of its "ideal" inaccessible location, ten dollars per ton transportation costs was added to flour. In the rainy seasons, which slowed down travel, transportation costs would nearly equal the value of the supplies. Flour that cost the agents seventeen dollars per barrel was worth about four dollars per barrel at the mill. The Indians at times were receiving as little in bounty as a third of the benefit of the appropriations made by the government.⁹⁵

Superintendent Nesmith and Agent Metcalfe wanted to supply the Siletz people by sea and thus did not assist the army in making a road from Fort Hoskins to the Agency. It was soon found that shipping from Portland was dangerous. One of the schooners loaded with flour was wrecked at the mouth of the Siletz River. Because of the delay in road building "some fifteen hundred Indians on the Siletz and the Auquina (Yaquina) are now and have been for over a month without a pound of flour and are now without meat" as reported in February, 1857, by Captain Augar, Commanding Officer of Fort Hoskins.⁹⁶

For a period of time conditions were unbelievably severe for Siletz people. Sometimes they starved, while

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 34.

⁹⁶Augar, Fort Hoskins, Appendix 11, p. 43.

at other times what they ate made them sick. Some even thought that they were being poisoned when they ate the bad flour.

The hiring of employees also added to the overcosts. All of them were boarded at the agency at government expense and the building mechanics, for example, were paid five dollars per day plus boarding.⁹⁷ Again the reservation's isolation in part added to the high cost.

The final factor in the overcost was the distribution of goods and presents to the tribes whose treaty was unratified. Legally, they were not entitled to any supplies but it was thought wise to avoid trouble which could arise by giving some of the people goods, while others received nothing. There was also the fact that those people had been dispossessed of their lands and so they were rightfully entitled to some compensation. The source of the problem was with Congress, thousands of miles away.

Indian labor was also figured in with the cost of employees. Besides those paid to haul supplies, those that were woodsmen earned between two and three dollars per day.⁹⁸ Indian Charley was the interpreter and earned five hundred dollars per annum plus working on odd jobs at

⁹⁷Browne, Letter, p. 43.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 43.

one dollar per day.⁹⁹ A few years later, Charley became the agency mail and expressman, using the military road between Siletz and Corvallis via Kings Valley. He was killed by other Indians in 1866 in an argument over a horse.¹⁰⁰ Most other Indians who were employed worked at odd jobs and were paid thirty dollars per month in certificates, which could be exchanged for goods at the settlers' store operated by Mr. Bledsoe, for such things as clothing, sugar, coffee, tea and other items.¹⁰¹

Agent Metcalfe said of some of the residents:

They are generally industrious, and manifest a disposition to imitate the whites, and they adapt themselves to our customs and learn the use of tools more readily than any people I have ever seen.¹⁰²

Educational Attempts

Metcalfe had two main goals in his policy toward "civilizing" the Indians. They were self-support and education. Schools did not successfully get started during the Metcalfe administration. Some of the children

⁹⁹Correspondence from Charles Mix, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to Edward Geary, Superintendent of Oregon Indian Affairs, August 23, 1860.

¹⁰⁰Fagan, Benton County, p. 400.

¹⁰¹Browne, Letter, p. 43.

¹⁰²Robert Metcalfe, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Report 1857, p. 645.

did, however, attend the two schools at Grand Ronde.¹⁰³ The Siletz school was erected in 1857 but the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, James Nesmith, advised that it be abandoned for reasons unknown.¹⁰⁴ Money would seem a likely answer. Even without a school, Agent Metcalfe still continued to think about education.

My experience would go to show that it would be folly in the extreme to attempt to educate them after they arrive at the age of ten years for their habits and superstitions are thoroughly fixed¹⁰⁵

Metcalfe recommended the hiring of female teachers who could teach needle work and garment making.

Besides all of the characteristics of a "wild" west, Siletz, like most other reservations, represents the convenience of one group of people at the expense of the other. If, given that reservations were inevitable, the Indian policy was completely backward. The reservation should have been established before the people were ever moved there. Instead, the Indians suffered several miserable, heartbreaking years while the Indian Bureau gradually got the reservation functioning piece by piece.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 645.

¹⁰⁴Robert Metcalfe, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Reports 1859, p. 749. (See brief History of Siletz School by L. C. Walker, Siletz teacher, in Annual Reports 1891, pp. 376-377).

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 749.

CHAPTER IV

PERIOD OF DEVELOPMENT

Despite the headway made, most of the people by spring were in an "enfeebled and half-starved condition," observed the new agent, Daniel Newcomb in 1860.¹⁰⁶ Except for Indian trouble, the Rogue River now reported as being "peaceable and perfectly content,"¹⁰⁷ Newcomb's problems were largely the same as those of his predecessors, agriculture and funds the main ones.

The reservation had about 1,200 acres under tillage in 1861, with half in oats, one-fourth in wheat, and the remainder in potatoes and turnips. Some of the Indians also had their own small gardens. Heavy spring rains and smut injured the wheat crop and the peas failed because of poor seed. Many Indians still ate the green roots of crops and thus became sick.

The agency saw-mill was completed in 1860 and the grist mill in 1861. They were of great benefit. Newcomb was, however, like the previous agents, embarrassed by the

¹⁰⁶Daniel Newcomb, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Reports 1860, p. 435.

¹⁰⁷Daniel Newcomb, Annual Reports 1861, p. 770.

fact that because of the "non-arrival" of appropriated funds he could not pay for the total construction of both, which amounted to \$10,000.¹⁰⁸

Establishment of the School

During the two years Newcomb was agent, there were two developments. The first was the reopening of a school. The teacher for 1860 was E. B. Ball. The school was opened in March, but was soon discontinued. Ball noted of the ten to forty who attended: "Seem to possess excellent minds, and exhibit an aptitude to learn not exceeded by white children of the same age."¹⁰⁹ The second development occurred in 1862, when some of the Rogue River Indians were allowed to hunt in their "old hunting grounds" of Southern Oregon, if they secured a pass from Newcomb.¹¹⁰

Just a short five years earlier the great effort had been made to keep them from returning, and now they were given the privilege. The times had changed and so had the conditions. It is not known who originated the idea of passes but it was a precedent for later years that many Siletz people took advantage of. A few people, of course, abused the pass privileges. Some of them were at Jacksonville and refused to return to Siletz. The army

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 770.

¹⁰⁹E. B. Ball, Annual Reports 1860, p. 438.

¹¹⁰Bensell, Annual Reports 1865, p. 21.

had to go after them. On August 27, 1862, Captain Seidenstriker, arrested Chief John Chamberlain for encouraging Indians to go south and stay.¹¹¹

The tenure of Siletz's fourth agent, B. R. Biddle, was one year. During his administration much of the land was enclosed. From the mill came 10,200 rails, 400 fence posts, 10,820 pickets, and lumber for a blacksmith shop. Biddle noted that most of the people had a "great antipathy" for manual labor and it was the women who did most of the field work.¹¹²

Schooling was a main concern with Biddle and he opened the school doors for a further attempt. Margaret Gaines was the teacher and the following was the reason for quitting:

I will close my school now because I feel I am accomplishing nothing, comparatively speaking. I came here feeling a deep interest in my pupils and determining, if possible, to do something to benefit them permanently¹¹³

Some of her problems were lack of parent interest and no student application and perseverance. Many students were there to satisfy their curiosity only. They did not know what the school was for, and they did not know what the white people meant by education, and so, quite naturally,

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 47.

¹¹²B. R. Biddle, Annual Reports 1863, p. 179.

¹¹³Margaret Gaines, Annual Reports 1862, p. 425.

they were unresponsive.

The students also naturally reflected the general depression and hardships endured by the residents.

Referring to education, they told Mrs. Gaines "They may not live, and then it is all lost."¹¹⁴ They did not want to waste their time in school if they were going to die, as so many around them had.

Margaret Gaines was not the only teacher during these years because Agent Biddle charged that some of the people who had been teachers "conducted themselves in such an immoral manner as to inspire the Indians with contempt." They were there to "gratify their lust" and that the Indians were reluctant to send their older girls to school because "bad examples have been practiced."¹¹⁵

Education in the early years appeared to be going nowhere due to the conditions just mentioned. The school building itself was also enough to discourage any attempt made by teachers and students alike. By 1863, due to neglect and disuse, it was in a

dilapidated and filthy condition, destitute of doors and windows, the fence that had been erected around it entirely destroyed; in consequence, it had become a place of refuge for stock¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 426.

¹¹⁵B. R. Biddle, Annual Report 1863, p. 178.

¹¹⁶J. B. Clark, Annual Reports 1863, p. 171.

There were also no cookstoves or fireplace and the few faithful students who did attend wore clothes made from flour sacks.¹¹⁷

Such were the conditions described by the new teacher in 1863, former Army Captain, J. B. Clark. Along with his wife, he labored long and hard repairing the school and instilling an interest in the community toward education. Despite the hardships, the Clarks persevered and laid the permanent foundation upon which the Siletz school continued. They did this by initiating the "manual-labor" system. It was a boarding-school concept whereby the student lived at the school. Not only were they taught reading, writing and arithmetic, but the boys worked with Mr. Clark in planting a garden and learning various vocational trades, such as carpentry, horse-shoeing and others. Mrs. Clark taught the girls "housewifery," which included cooking, sewing, knitting and general homemaking. All of them were taught morals, manners and hygiene.

The students seemed to like the school very much. Most of them were under twelve and several were orphans who had no other home.¹¹⁸ The parents did not like the fact that their children did not live with them any more,

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 191.

¹¹⁸See J. W. Perit Huntington, Annual Reports 1865, p. 465.

and they also realized that their children were not learning the tribal language and customs, which bothered them. The older Indians never let a day pass in which they did not voice their opposition to education. They were glad their children were well treated and provided for, but the conflict in cultural interests between Indians and non-Indians was a sore point and still is today among some Indians. The government in the nineteenth century was also in the active process of "civilizing" the people, and the boarding-school was viewed as the fastest and best way of achieving the goal. Compulsory education was required at all reservations although it was not enforced in the early years because of the inadequacy of the schools.

Although they succeeded well, comparatively speaking, the Clarks soon left Siletz and moved to Grand Ronde to teach. Their brief tenure helped mark the beginning of a new era for the Siletz people, for in the latter part of the century the people were among the best educated ones in the state, Indian and non-Indian.

In 1862 Fort Umpqua was abandoned, apparently because the desire of the Indians to escape the reservation was diminished to a sufficiently low point as not to warrant the expense of a fort.¹¹⁹ The other forts remained, though. Most of their problems no longer concerned Indians but

¹¹⁹Letter from B. R. Biddle to James Nesmith, August 18, 1862.

civilians. Morale at the posts was hard to keep up. The Corvallis men, Mr. Hodes and Mr. Schuck, operated the settlers' store near Fort Hoskins and they were punished for selling whiskey to soldiers, which once caused problems and resulted in a fire.¹²⁰ The men were also thought to be selling powder and lead to the Indians, but in view of the fact that Siletz residents, at least, had hunting privileges, as already mentioned, the army's concern was not based upon anything serious.

A previous store-owner at Grand Ronde, Benjamin Simpson, succeeded Biddle in August, 1863. He would continue as agent until 1871, the longest tenure of any nineteenth century Siletz agent.

Agent Simpson largely carried on the progress of his predecessors in self-support and education. He felt that the people needed to realize "that they can by their present labors supply their future wants."¹²¹ To accomplish these goals, thirty families, to begin with, were given a plot of land to farm, and the school was further developed under the "manual-labor" system.

The Siletz school continued to operate on the plan devised by the Clarks.

¹²⁰Letter from Captain F. Seidenstriker to Lieutenant F. Mears, A History of Fort Hoskins, Appendix 38, p. 84.

¹²¹Benjamin Simpson, Annual Reports 1869, p. 613.

The scholars are kept in an enclosure six days in the week, cultivated a small tract of land, the boys performing the labor, and the girls needlework, housework . . . and at the same time due attention is given to elementary studies.¹²²

In 1864 there were fifteen students. The teacher that year quit because of what he felt was an inadequate salary.¹²³ Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Frazer taught in 1866.

Below is their description of the school: "At present the scholars are compelled to cook, eat, sleep, study and recite in the same room."¹²⁴ Naturally Frazer recommended the schoolhouse be enlarged. There were only sixteen students, two of whom died during the year. The scholars were "apt to learn, and take an interest in their studies."¹²⁵ Most of them could read and write a little and they were making progress in arithmetic.

When H. R. Dunbar taught in 1867, there were only eleven pupils. Superintendent Huntington visited Siletz then and he noted that

Those who have been in the school more than two years, surprised me much with their progress. They read and spell well; more of them write very well, and they have a knowledge of the rudiments of

¹²²Huntington, Annual Reports 1865, p. 465.

¹²³Benjamin Simpson, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Reports 1864, p. 247.

¹²⁴L. B. Frazer, Report of Siletz Teacher, Annual Reports 1864, p. 493.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 492.

geography and arithmetic. They were cleanly, tolerably clothed, well behaved, and altogether a credit to themselves and their teacher.¹²⁶

The school was uncomfortable and inadequate, and \$1,500 for a new one and \$3,000 per year for "books, stationery, fixtures and pay of the necessary teachers" was recommended.¹²⁷

Agent Simpson in 1868, however, was forced to change the school from a manual-labor system to the day system for two reasons. First, the enrollment rose to nearly twenty students and second, he did not receive the needed funds to operate the boarding school with all of its functions.¹²⁸ Although the parents provided room and board now, lowering the costs for the Indian Bureau, the switch was felt to be a step backward in education because the students would now be under the cultural influences of their people and the learning and training would suffer.

Reservation Farms

During this time improvements in farming varied among tribal groups. There were three main farms and a farmer assigned to each one. John Willis at the agency farm reported having erected four new homes there, and

¹²⁶Huntington, Annual Reports 1867, p. 74.

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 74.

¹²⁸Simpson, Annual Reports 1868, p. 581.

planted 1,500 apple trees.¹²⁹ In contrast was the Rogue River Farm, at which there were few new homes being built, and when the farming was done, the people moved to the hills to hunt.¹³⁰ The third farm was for the Chasta Scoton, and was supervised by R. A. Bensell in 1865. It had eleven frame and four log homes and some barns and fencing. There were seventy-five acres of oats, which yielded 2,175 bushels, fifteen acres of meadow, which yielded thirty-nine tons of hay, and one hundred acres of potatoes for 2,500 bushels. The Chasta Scoton were "generally contented, and desire to improve and cultivate their land."¹³¹ Agent Simpson claimed that

The Indians under my charge seem quite well satisfied to remain at this home, and to work with a will and determination to secure a livelihood by their own labor A spirit of rivalry and competition seems to be increasing among them--a powerful inclination to exertion, and ever conducive to success.¹³²

By 1869 Simpson felt that the people were "unusually docile" and that agriculturally it was the most extensive, important year, even despite the fact that most of the

¹²⁹John Willis, Report of Agency Farm Farmer, Annual Reports, p. 188.

¹³⁰Robert Hill, Report of Rogue River Farm Farmer, Annual Reports, 1863, p. 191.

¹³¹R. A. Bensell, Report of Superintendent of Farming and Chasta Scoton Farm Farmer, Annual Reports 1865, p. 494.

¹³²Simpson, Annual Reports 1865, p. 492.

potato crop was lost, due to the frost.¹³³

General Affairs

The other developments at the reservation continued at a steady pace. In 1864 there were nine large barns with sheds, 112 log dwelling houses, 26,000 rails made, with fences put up, and a total of 1,200 acres under cultivation. The mill produced 59,122 feet of sawed lumber.¹³⁴ The grist-mill was not usable, first, because of its unsuitable location and second, because it had been damaged by a flood. An allocation of \$4,000 was made to build a new one, and \$5,000 was needed for the purchase of teams, agricultural implements, and other items.¹³⁵

The general health of the Indians remained poor, although not as critical as in prior years. In 1863 over a thousand people were treated during the year. Two main causes were unhealthy, damp dwellings and improper cooking of agency-grown food. More serious were the diseases brought by the non-Indians, which continued to kill some of the residents. A special health concern was the location of the Coquille village, which happened to be near a marsh. Some of the Indians, when given medicine, did not use it properly and thus had to be watched to see how they

¹³³Simpson, Annual Reports 1869, p. 612.

¹³⁴Simpson, Annual Reports 1864, pp. 246-248.

¹³⁵Huntington, Annual Reports 1865, p. 464.

administered it.¹³⁶ A hospital was greatly desired during this period.

Agent Simpson was like Metcalfe in his evaluating of the potentialities of Siletz. He wanted the government to build a salmon cannery on the Yaquina River for the employment and benefit of the Indians.¹³⁷ He also wanted the government to build a grainery on the tidelands near the depot.¹³⁸ The Indians might then be able to find a market for their goods.

There was still discontentment among the Indians about having no ratified treaty. The Rogue River and Chasta Scoton were the only tribes with a treaty.

Money remained a problem throughout the Simpson years. The salaries of the employees and expenses were paid from the "fund appropriated for removal [and] subsistence of Indians not parties to any treaty." Most of them were thus receiving "meagre" appropriations.¹³⁹

Largely because of the funding problem, employee turnover continued. The employees argued that they did not have enough to support themselves with. The goods at Siletz also cost more by the time it got there.

¹³⁶James Bayley, Report of Siletz Physician, Annual Reports 1863, p. 187.

¹³⁷Simpson, Annual Reports 1863, p. 185.

¹³⁸Simpson, Annual Reports 1869, p. 613.

¹³⁹Huntington, Annual Reports 1865, p. 464.

Indian employment kept some of the people occupied. They built a road from the agency to the depot. Some were already learning the trades, with one of them being hired as a blacksmith in 1867.¹⁴⁰

The government in 1864 was still capturing and removing Indians. On July 12, Agent Simpson accompanied fifteen troopers, under Captain Scott, along with Indian guides, to southern Oregon and Coos Bay, where they captured about one hundred people. They reportedly traveled over 1200 miles on the expedition.¹⁴¹

Other Indians left the reservation in the summers and "idled" in the valley towns, begging or stealing food. Simpson had to keep rounding these people up and punish them. Not all of the Siletz residents were content to become farmers and tradesmen. By 1867, however, collectively the Siletz people personally owned \$6,000 worth of belongings.¹⁴²

All was not entirely peaceful during these years. The boarding-house keeper of the Cape Foulweather light house, Thomas Boyle, was arrested for selling alcohol on the reservation in 1871. He had quarrels with the Indians and had once killed Tootootena Jack, a Siletz resident, in a duel. The Indians in turn threatened to kill agent

¹⁴⁰Simpson, Annual Reports 1867, p. 89.

¹⁴¹Simpson, Annual Reports 1864, p. 248.

¹⁴²Simpson, Annual Reports 1867, p. 88.

Simpson because he was a white leader.¹⁴³ On another occasion, in 1869, Frank, a Chasta Scoton, was killed by a Mr. Ballard near Corvallis. Simpson reported the trial below:

I employed counsel to assist the district attorney in the prosecution of the case, and on the day of trial took a deputation of the leading Indians to Corvallis to witness the proceedings, and satisfy themselves that everything was done fairly.¹⁴⁴

Mr. Ballard was convicted of manslaughter and spent five years in the penitentiary. The Indians were not totally satisfied, feeling that he should have been hanged.¹⁴⁵

Although the old coast reservation was isolated, it was not long before it was desirable for settlement by non-Indians. The first sign of this change occurred in 1864 with the discovery of marketable oysters in Yaquina Bay by Captain Spencer. In 1864 Captain Hillyer, working for Ludlow and Company of San Francisco, harvested some oysters from the bay. He was followed by Captain Winant, who did the same for another company.

Agent Simpson was authorized to lease the oyster beds and he did so to Winant and Company. The Ludlow Company employees continued to harvest oysters and were

¹⁴³Fagan, Benton County, p. 491.

¹⁴⁴Simpson, Annual Reports 1869, p. 615.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., p. 615.

then arrested by General Alvord. The Ludlow Company filed suit in Supreme Court and lost.¹⁴⁶

Sale of Yaquina Bay

The government appropriated \$16,500 to purchase Yaquina Bay from the four tribes (Coos, Siuslaw, Alsea and Umpqua) and remove them from the area. The sum was viewed as a small amount compared with the eventual benefits. Not only would the initial expense of \$16,500 be covered by the sale of the land to the public, but a small profit was expected.¹⁴⁷ It was also in the best interest of the government:

As a mere measure of revenue, the government ought to open this district to the public; for the town site, under the act of March 3, 1863, will probably yield more money than will several times repay the cost of removing the Indians, and the thrifty town which must grow up at the head of navigation will be no mean source of wealth to the nation as well as to the state.¹⁴⁸

Superintendent Huntington linked three conditions for the opening of the area. First, a joint occupancy of whites and Indians was to be avoided. Second, Indian removal must come before white admission. Third, "That the wants of trade in an important part of this State require that access be given to the bay."¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶Huntington, Annual Reports 1864, p. 105. Fagan, p. 478.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 107.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 108.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p. 108.

As long as there was no "prejudice to the Indians" or "deleterious to [their] interests,"¹⁵⁰ the Indian Bureau looked favorably upon the move. In actuality they had little choice but to think positively. Agent Simpson claimed that "Unless something is done soon it will be impossible to prevent trespass upon that portion of the reservation unless a strong military force be kept on the grounds."¹⁵¹

By 1864 many people had applied to do business at Yaquina Bay. All applications were refused except Winant and Company, who paid annuities for the benefit of the Indians as part of the permit.¹⁵² The fact that the bay was by law part of the Alsea and Siletz reservations did not stop trespassers. The armed conflict with Captain Hillyer brought reminiscences of the trouble in southern Oregon before the outbreak of the Rogue River War.

The pressure of the people, residents of the Willamette Valley, was a very important factor. It was argued that only a small number of Indians (some of them were Coquille) lived in the area. Mistakenly it was thought that they did not need or use the bay. Siletz could "amply" support them. The main cash goods of the Indians was

¹⁵⁰Simpson, Annual Reports 1865, p. 492.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 492.

¹⁵²Fagan, Benton County, p. 478.

potatoes, which they could sell to the future settlement. The benefit to the farmers and merchants by having a closer route to California markets via shipping from Yaquina Bay was of great speculation. Already during the summer of 1864 a wagon road, built for heavy transportation, was opened up to the bay. After a two hundred year history of troubled relationships with Indians, most citizens cared little about the Indians' needs or wishes anyway, especially if they were in the way of their own. H. D. Barnard, who wrote to the Secretary of the Interior on the issue, thought it "folly" to obtain the consent of the Indians and no delay on account of them should occur because of the "immense interest of the State" were at stake.¹⁵³ Thus, with such pressure, the government opened up Yaquina Bay to settlement.

Needless to say, the Indians were less than pleased at what happened. The coastal Indians of the Alsea Agency, who lived at or near the bay, were terribly upset.

They ask Where are we to be taken? Where are we to be moved? We gave up our former homes and lands; we are assured this should be our permanent and lasting habitation. Here we have erected comfortable houses; our land is just being put in such a condition that we may live comfortably; we are also growing old and are not able to till new fields or erect new homes; and more than this, we have always lived by the coast--been used to subsisting on fish and game, and to remove us to the interior we must die.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³H. D. Barnard, Annual Reports 1864, p. 109.

¹⁵⁴George Collins, Annual Report of Alsea Agent, Annual Reports 1864, p. 480.

They were not satisfied when Alsea Agent Collins told them that they would be provided for at Siletz.

Once it was decided to open Yaquina Bay for settlement, an "intense excitement prevailed." In no time the area was stormed by speculators and settlers. The situation elicited such comments as "all became mad with excitement," "speculators ran riot," and "claims changed hands rapidly."¹⁵⁵ In such an atmosphere the modern town of Newport was born. Unfortunately, many Indians had not been moved before the mad rush descended upon them. One description of what occurred is as follows:

"A" walked into Coquelle John's hut, on Coquelle Point, informed him with the untutored mind that the land belonged to the whites, hustled the Indians out and seated himself on a soap box by the fire. In less than an hour "B" arrived on the scene, gave "A" eighty dollars for his claim. "A" jumped into his canoe and quickly had another claim¹⁵⁶

The newcomers seized the Indian farms and houses and ejected the inhabitants. Some of the Indians were given whiskey. The Indian Bureau also lost some buildings and boats.¹⁵⁷ Not all of the bay residents went to the agency; some lingered in the area, becoming shiftless. Some of the Coquilles left the reservation permanently and went back to their southern Oregon homeland.¹⁵⁸ Those who went to

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 479.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p. 479.

¹⁵⁷Huntington, Annual Reports 1867, p. 65.

¹⁵⁸Simpson, Annual Reports 1867, p. 88.

Siletz bitterly asked: "when the whites were coming there to settle?"¹⁵⁹

The old coast reservation was not as undesirable and isolated as thought, for in less than ten years already a chunk of it had been sold away. This was only the first piece and for the Indians only another chapter in the injustice done to them. Caught in the middle was the Indian Bureau that promised vigorously to repel all parties that tried to dispossess them until they were removed. This, the Indians saw, was another broken promise. The Yaquina Bay affair enriched the citizens, embarrassed the government and Indian Bureau and hurt the Indians.

As predicted, the Siletz people did economically benefit from the new settlement from the sale of furs, skins, and surplus vegetables. On the other hand, whiskey and other vices were also more readily available.

By the summer of 1866 it was felt that the army was no longer needed and so the agency blockhouse was closed, along with Forts Hoskins and Yamhill. The only problems Agent Simpson saw with the departure of the army was the lessening of discipline and the harder it would be to control the whiskey trade.¹⁶⁰

The settlers in the area also expressed some fears

¹⁵⁹Huntington, Annual Reports 1867, p. 65.

¹⁶⁰Simpson, Annual Reports 1866, p. 85.

and by September of 1868, there spread a rumor that the Indians were going to kill all the agency employees as well as the people in the settlement.¹⁶¹ Some of this fear was caused by the murder of the Chasta Scoton man by Mr. Ballard. Although the Siletz people were angered by the event, an uprising was far more imaginary than a probability.

Another sore point in the Siletz community which heightened the tension during this time was the attitude of some of the people in the non-Indian community. When it was agreed that the bay was to be opened up, Indians were to be employed in the construction of the road between the coast and the Willamette Valley. Not surprisingly, the settlers deemed it "not in their power to comply with the stipulation agreed to in respect to the employing of Indians." They deliberately solicited aid from "any citizen in the country."¹⁶² Economically, however, all was not lost because Agent Simpson hired the Indian men to build roads on the agency for which they asked only that the payment be in goods to the most needy.¹⁶³

Agent Evaluations--1870

When Ben Simpson relenquished his duties at Siletz

¹⁶¹Fagan, Benton County, p. 483.

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 480.

¹⁶³Simpson, Annual Reports 1867, p. 87.

in 1871, he was quite satisfied with the accomplishments which had occurred. Not only did the reservation have around three hundred buildings and much land under cultivation, but the changes that the people had made were also impressive. They had been forced by circumstances, persuasion, and, in some instances, by coercion, to completely change their way of life. In varying degrees they all had resented what had happened to them, but some managed to adapt to the new situation better and more readily than others. Below is Ben Simpson's observation on the situation.

Here they have been kept ever since as prisoners of war, supported by a removal and subsistence fund, appropriations for which, varying from \$10,000 to \$30,000, have been annually made by Congress. For sixteen years this such irregular, and uncertain charity, doled out to them from time to time . . . they have been fed upon promises that were made only to be broken They have seen the white man gather in annually his golden harvests from the lands which they surrendered; and for all those sixteen long, weary years they have waited, and waited in vain, for the fulfillment of the . . . pledges with which the white men bought those lands.¹⁶⁴

Simpson also had some more personal praises for the people. He said: "I am fully satisfied that no Indians on this coast have made any more rapid advancement than those under my charge" They had

attained a comparatively high degree of proficiency in the useful arts. About all the mechanical work needed on the reservation can now be done by them.

¹⁶⁴Simpson, Annual Reports 1871, p. 732.

Indeed, so great has been the improvement among them in every respect that, in my judgment, many of them are today capable of becoming citizens of the United States, and should be admitted to citizenship as soon as circumstances permit.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 732.

CHAPTER V

PERIOD OF TRANSITION

Joel Palmer returned to Indian Affairs, succeeding Simpson as Siletz agent. Looking from a different point of view, Palmer was generally aghast at conditions of the Indians.

If we take the Indians of this agency as a criterion by which to judge the merits of civilizing progress for the last sixteen years, there is but little to encourage us, for while a little improvement may have been made among a portion in regard to apparel and ordinary work in the field, it is difficult conceiving of a people who have sunk lower in the scale of morals and all the vices to which civilized or savage people can reach If there be an honored or virtuous male or female among them it is the exception rather than the rule. The child is educated from its infancy to steal. The women are bought and sold like cattle The daughters are loaned, hired, or sold at from twelve to sixteen years of age.¹⁶⁶

Agent Palmer found a number of other conditions needing rectifying. Some of the agency oxen were so old they would not eat and "a few" were totally blind. The work horses were generally old and badly "stiffened." Only George Harney, a Rogue River, owned any cattle or cows; the rest of the tribe using agency stock. Much money had been spent on trinkets, "useless" farming implements, and unprofitable experiments by the former agents. A new

¹⁶⁶Palmer, Annual Reports 1871, p. 735.

saw-mill was needed; the agency was buying from lumber mills on Yaquina Bay. All of the flour used at the reservation was bought in Kings Valley because Agent Metcalfe had located the mill in a stream which the backwater rendered useless. Most Indians lived in huts and lodges, "destitute of floors, windows, chimneys . . . and they subsisted mainly on potatoes and oats most of the year."¹⁶⁷ Their vegetables were available only in season, naturally. Besides poor diets, four-fifths of them had syphilitic infections. Many Indians were also destitute. Since there was not enough funds for subsistence, Palmer gave passes to them so that they might work off the reservation. This plan had both good and bad results.

Some of those leaving were industrious and purchased clothes, provisions, and, in a few cases, work horses; while many others idled their time about the town, drinking and selling out their women to profligate whites, and greatly annoying the citizens, and having since returned to the agency, many of them sick, as they were imprudent in their diet as well as habits¹⁶⁸

Education on the reservation was not progressing well. When Palmer mentioned establishing the school, the idea was "received with disfavor." The school building was deemed unfit. It was simply a dwelling attached to another and it was old, dilapidated and had no seats or desks. Palmer doubted that there were even six children who knew

¹⁶⁷Ibid., p. 738.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., p. 739.

the alphabet.¹⁶⁹ This was probably an exaggeration, but considering the personnel problems and inadequate funds, education was most likely in a sad state of affairs.

Palmer felt the need for three day-schools and one manual labor school. Although during this era most teachers were men, and preferably so, according to the Indian Bureau, he wanted women teachers because they could be hired for less and the Indians would like them more.

Those were just a few of the problems Joel Palmer had to face. Although he was Siletz agent for two years, in that time a great many changes occurred and some of those were lasting.

Allotment Attempt

Agent Palmer, like his predecessors, wanted to make the Indians more self-sufficient. There were two main plans he had for accomplishing it and they were by more allotments and personal accomplishment. In the area of allotments he failed. After the surveys had been made, the Indians destroyed the landmarks, pulled the corner posts, cut down or burned marked trees and leveled the mounds. Palmer was personally discouraged. He had even supervised the surveying and seen that the lots had more river frontage for irrigation purposes.¹⁷⁰ He believed

¹⁶⁹Ibid., p. 739.

¹⁷⁰T. W. Davenport, Oregon Historical Quarterly, Vol. 8, 1907, pp. 242-243.

that the failure was caused by a lack of trust the Indians had toward the government because of the unratified treaties.¹⁷¹ The sale of Yaquina Bay and the attempt of the Oregon legislature to abolish the reservation in 1870 added to their lack of confidence. They may have associated allotments with loss of land.

Ending of Welfare System

Although there were some quite successful Siletz people, there was also a growing state of welfare and government dependence by some of the residents. Since nearly all of them borrowed the government stock and equipment, one of Palmer's aims was to have them own their own implements and then they would have more self-reliance and responsibility. They would also learn to repair and take care of what they used. The poor and the lazy were given what they needed. Except for the old and the sick, work was provided for them in building more roads, clearing land, making rails and other jobs for which they were paid one dollar per day. In that manner they worked for what they got and they had money besides. The policy before was that everyone could receive goods without doing anything. The Indians also now could purchase things and were charged at cost for the goods. Some trouble arose, though, because some of them thought they were charged for things

¹⁷¹Palmer, Annual Reports 1872, p. 753.

they should have free.¹⁷²

Many of the Indians who worked in the valley earned enough to buy work horses and sometimes wagons and harnesses. Palmer received many requests from farmers to hire Indian men for field work and the women as domestic servants. Not all of those who were off the reservation left during Palmer's management. Former Agent Simpson had also given passes and some Indians had been gone for many years. James Magone was assigned to induce those people to return. Palmer wanted all of the "wanderers" returned to the reservation.¹⁷³

For those who did not or could not buy their own equipment and animals, about \$6,000 was spent for cattle and sheep for them to raise and a fish net was also purchased for them to harvest salmon and smelt from the Siletz River. Those who were completely destitute, mostly those formerly from Yaquina Bay, continued to be given food.¹⁷⁴

Law and Order System

There were other important changes of a different nature which Palmer made. Immediately after assuming duty he abolished the severe modes of punishment which were the whipping-post and the chain and gag. This resulted in the

¹⁷²Ibid., p. 753.

¹⁷³Stanley Spaid, "The Later Life and Activities of General Joel Palmer," Oregon Historical Quarterly, Vol. LV, December 1954, No. 4, p. 331.

¹⁷⁴Joel Palmer, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Reports 1872, p. 754.

people having a better opinion of themselves and they had more of a desire to improve. Palmer organized a tribal court and had Indian councils draw up rules and regulations. The jury or courts would decide the minor cases and disputes and the jury had the power to fix the penalty for the violation of law. By now the tribal chiefs ceased to have any function and the agent had the task of "ruling" the tribes. With the change, the Indians gained self-esteem and more control over their own affairs. It also brought the people closer together in more "friendly intercourse" and "friendly relations." Instead of fourteen tribes and many bands, they were now more like one people.¹⁷⁵

Employees

Like his predecessors, Palmer continued to have problems with employees and with the non-Indian population at large. The conflicts with employees were now taking on a political and social nature rather than the economic and moral implications of the previous years. Most of the employees were recommended for their jobs by officers of the government, U.S. senators, representatives, influential politicians and even the churches. Their allegiance was owed to people other than Palmer or the Indian Bureau. It was said that Palmer had a "mixed cabinet" when it came to

¹⁷⁵Spaid, Oregon Historical Quarterly, p. 331.

loyalty.¹⁷⁶

Non-Indian Troubles

One particular trouble was Reverend John Howard, the Methodist minister assigned to Siletz. Reverend Howard disapproved of the way Palmer was running the reservation and he also believed that the agent lacked zealousness when it came to religion. Palmer was criticized at a Methodist convention, but later it was Howard who was reprimanded by his church.¹⁷⁷ Problems with deeply religious feelings of various denominations were also of concern in Simpson's time.

The people that concerned Palmer the most were those who sold whiskey to the Indians. Many of these were the "first" citizens of Newport. Most of the offenders remained uncaught, but in 1872 four people were convicted of the offense in U.S. court.¹⁷⁸ In the same year, a principal chief was killed by a whiskey dealer who sold his liquor to the Indians.¹⁷⁹ This man also went to court. Some Indians were whiskey dealers as well.

There was more agitation to open up the reservation

¹⁷⁶Davenport, Oregon Historical Quarterly, p. 240.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 241-242.

¹⁷⁸Palmer, Annual Reports 1873, p. 753.

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p. 753.

for white settlement and a petition was circulated by settlers to that effect. This caused much excitement among the Indians, naturally. There was also the thought of combining the three coastal reservations, which Palmer opposed.

Joel Palmer resigned as Indian Agent in 1872 and retired to his home in Dayton. All of the problems mentioned, plus a ridiculous rumor of an Indian uprising, plagued his administration. In part he was forced out of office again, but he also had personal debts to pay off and friends suggested that he resign to settle his mind and feelings as well.¹⁸⁰

The two-year administration of Palmer marked a significant turning point in the lives of the Siletz people. From now on they would be less dependent upon the government for their needs. They were guided in the way toward self-management, and the forced control of the agent and the hiring of many non-Indians to develop the reservation would no longer be necessary. The people would not, of course, overnight become independent and prosperous, but a change did occur.

Religion

Another change that did occur during the Palmer years, although introduced long before, was the stronger emphasis

¹⁸⁰Spaid, Oregon Historical Quarterly, p. 331.

on religion and the establishment of a "sabbath-school." The various reservations throughout the land were assigned to different churches. The Methodists were assigned to Siletz but it was not until 1872 that they started any formal religious instruction. The reservation had before, though, been visited by some ministers of various faiths from time to time, with Father Croquet, a teacher at Grand Ronde, a yearly visitor. The Indians seemed to readily accept Christianity for the membership rose from forty in 1873 to one hundred in 1874.¹⁸¹ This was out of a population that had dropped to 1,400 or a loss of approximately 1,000 people in twenty years from the original total.¹⁸²

The year 1873 proved to be an exciting one for new agent J. H. Fairchild. Early in the year, an Indian prophet came to the reservation, stating that if the people danced "long and strong," the great "Siwash" (Spirit) would return to help them successfully win a war against the white men and then they could regain their old homes and hunting grounds.¹⁸³ Some of the Indians believed him, while others did not. The employees became fearful but the only real incident to occur was the burning of the teacher's house.

¹⁸¹Fairchild, Annual Reports 1874, p. 629.

¹⁸²Ibid., p. 628.

¹⁸³Fagan, p. 485. Note: It was not uncommon for Indian prophets to visit reservations and Indian tribes. The best and most tragic examples of prophets occurred prior to the Wounded Knee Massacre, Whitman Massacre, and as early as Pontiac's Conspiracy in 1763.

It was never proven, however, that Indians did it.¹⁸⁴

On April 12, 1873, a permanent company of state militia was organized at Yaquina Bay to protect the citizens. The recent disturbance from Siletz coupled with the outbreak of the Modoc War in southern Oregon, caused the bay area settlers apprehension.

The main emphasis of Fairchild's management was in agriculture and trades. Although 1874 was a disaster year because of a potato crop failure and around one thousand were furnished food, the people were progressing remarkably. Many of them bought cows and cattle. They made butter, which they sold. Many wanted allotments now. In 1873 the agency farm had been abandoned and the government farmers released, giving further testament to the fact that the Siletz people were becoming more efficient. Agent Fairchild did much to encourage and help them. Except for a few necessary things, all of the government equipment, such as wagons, implements, tools, and stock were given to industrious people on payment of the same in labor or produce. There they could obtain what they needed at cost and they had the incentive to work for what they obtained. The Palmer philosophy continued to prevail. In 1875 Fairchild was proud to report: "Most of the heads of families have applied for lands, and are earnestly at work to improve

¹⁸⁴Ibid., p. 485.

and bring them into cultivation."¹⁸⁵ Agent Fairchild was a devoted Christian and he was equally proud to state that "on the Sabbath a well-dressed, orderly congregation assembles for worship."¹⁸⁶ The agent had adopted regulations against "Sabbath-breaking," profanity and general vices. Either by persuasion and more so by an overall change in attitude, the old habits of some people, such as adultery, theft, fighting, wife-beating and brawls were coming to an end. Supplementing them were industry, thrift, and pride. The people were now selling surplus flour ground in the reservation mill, and about one hundred families had teams and fifty had wagons.¹⁸⁷

These changes were not without a price. Hard work and privation sometimes accompanied those who labored off the reservation. Some of the men died of diseases caught while working in the Willamette Valley.

The agents at Siletz for the next decade were J. H. Fairchild (1873-1875), William Bagley (1876-1878), Edmund Swan (1879-1882), and F. M. Wadsworth (1883-1886). These were largely years of change and transition for the people and fortunately the reservation was in capable hands.

¹⁸⁵J. H. Fairchild, Annual Reports 1875, p. 854.

¹⁸⁶Ibid., p. 853.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., p. 854.

Reservation Officially Established

On March 3, 1875, an anticlimatic event took place. By an Act of Congress, the Siletz reservation was "officially" established as a permanent home for the non-treaty people.¹⁸⁸ This was after about 1,160,000 acres of the original Coast Reservation had "melted away." The Alsea Agency was abolished and Siletz now had 223,000 acres, with the coastal boundaries being Cape Foulweather in the south and Cascade Head in the north.¹⁸⁹ With the establishment of the reservation, the non-treaty tribes were legally receiving provisions and support.

The only aspect of the reservation that did not improve during the 1870's was the school. It is not exactly known why, but the school continued to "fumble" along. It was closed half of the year in 1874 due to lack of funds, and closed in 1876. In 1878, sixty students attended and they received a daily lunch and fifty dollars worth of clothes.¹⁹⁰ Still being a day-school kept the enrollment down until the new boarding-school was completed in 1880. In 1881 Agent Swan noted a change in some of the coastal students from Alsea. They were formerly "wild,

¹⁸⁸Investigation of Bureau of Indian Affairs (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1853), p. 491.

¹⁸⁹Bagley, Annual Reports 1878, p. 617.

¹⁹⁰Ibid., p. 617.

filthy, illy clad and indolent" but they were now advanced in "deportment, industry and tact." He attributed the boarding school to the change.¹⁹¹ The Alsea agency had no school and the children had no decent clothes, so it was not surprising that the students were the way they were.

¹⁹¹Swan, Annual Reports 1881, p. 206.

CHAPTER VI

LIFE OF THE SILETZ PEOPLE

After twenty years, the Indians showed signs of permanently becoming self-sufficient and what non-Indians called "civilized" or, in other words, of adopting new social customs and habits. At the end of Fairchild's administration in 1875 most could provide their own food. Harnesses, boots and shoes were made on the reservation with Indians as journeymen in the trade.¹⁹² In 1878, nearly all of the construction of houses and barns was done by the Indians.¹⁹³ They also cut and sawed their own lumber. They owned over 200 homes in 1879. On August 15, 1878, the Indian police force was organized and in 1880 it had two sergeants, one captain, and nine privates, all Indians.¹⁹⁴ The chief of police was a white man. This was for guidance and supervision purposes. By 1882 Indian government employees outnumbered the non-Indian ones by twenty-five to eight.¹⁹⁵ In that same year the residents raised 2,490

¹⁹²Fairchild, Annual Reports 1875, p. 854.

¹⁹³Bagley, Annual Reports 1878, p. 617.

¹⁹⁴Swan, Annual Reports 1880, p. 265.

¹⁹⁵Swan, Annual Reports 1882, p. 200.

bushels of wheat, 24,750 bushels of oats, 23,520 of potatoes, 900 of turnips, 800 of carrots, 750 of parsnips, and 849 tons of hay.¹⁹⁶ The boarding school had two acres in garden. Unfortunately one statistic that was not promising was the population, which continued to plunge downward from 1,085, in 1878,¹⁹⁷ to 998 in 1880,¹⁹⁸ and even lower, to 637 in 1883.¹⁹⁹ The statistics do reflect people leaving the reservation, but disease was still a major factor. Five hundred people were treated during the year 1883 for something, and that was not far below the total population.²⁰⁰

Recreation

While most of the progress made by the people was at the expense of their native customs, they did continue in the area of recreation to exhibit their traditional games. A game called Kho-ho was popular. It was played with a club and a maple burl ball. The people of Siletz often played against those at Alsea and on a few occasions a "free-for-all" resulted.²⁰¹ Gambling festivals were

¹⁹⁶Ibid., p. 199.

¹⁹⁷Bagley, Annual Reports 1878, p. 617.

¹⁹⁸Wadsworth, Annual Reports, 1883, p. 190.

¹⁹⁹Ibid., p. 190.

²⁰⁰Ibid., p. 188.

²⁰¹Paul and Henriette Van de Velde, South Lincoln County (Newport: Lincoln County Historical Society, Pub. No. 4-A, 1956), p. 5.

popular and were played with the Grand Ronde Indians. They bet horses, cattle, saddles and other personal belongings. These festivals involved a fasting by young men, and the actual betting was done with bundles of sticks. One stick was stained with the blood of a young man and it was the "lucky" stick, or what in cards would be an ace. Their festivals were often held at Boiler Bay.²⁰²

Native Customs

By the 1880's there were few native Indian traditions and traits that were actively practiced. J. Owen Dorsey, a noted anthropologist, visited Siletz in 1884, primarily to study languages. He did not come too soon because he learned that already two-thirds of the adults could speak English. He found the people living and working on "neat" farms and wearing non-Indian clothing.²⁰³ A typical description of a Siletz home in 1885 listed it as being from twelve to fourteen feet square with an attached kitchen and woodshed. Although the older people still preferred to sleep on the floor, half had bedsteads and tables, and a third had cooking-stoves. Many had their own barns and equipment sheds and nearly every home had a sweat house.²⁰⁴

²⁰²Mrs. Tony Wisniewski, "Pioneering at Old Kenville" (Newport: Lincoln County Historical Society, Pub. No. 4-A, 1956), p. 5.

²⁰³J. Owen Dorsey, The Gentile System of the Siletz Tribes, Unpublished Study, 1884.

²⁰⁴Fagan, Benton County, p. 404.

In the later years the more prosperous families had carpets, curtains, wallpaper and other furnishings found in any other non-reservation house. It was not uncommon for non-Indians to speak highly of the manners, dress, and fine meals the Indians cooked.

Intertribal Marriage

Aside from the policies of the Siletz agents and the adaptiveness of most of the people, one other factor significantly reinforced the changes taking place in the late 1870's and early 1880's, and that was intertribal marriage. Recalling that Siletz had originally fourteen different tribes, it stands to reason that marriages among the tribes would occur sooner or later. With the decline in population, young people almost had to marry outside of their tribe. Mrs. William Smith, for example, was half Lower Umpqua and half Siuslaw, and her husband was an Alsea.²⁰⁵ The children of mixed heritage usually do not perpetuate any tribal characteristics to any extent, and, coupled with a non-Indian education, the Indian cultures were disappearing. Some tribes by now had as few as five members and ~~most no more than fifty.~~²⁰⁶ There was in fact hardly any tribe in which to perpetuate traditions.

²⁰⁵Dorsey, The Gentile System of the Siletz Tribes, p. 230.

²⁰⁶J. B. Lane, Annual Reports 1887, p. 189.

Like every society, the Siletz community had members whose actions and behavior was viewed as being unacceptable. Most cases were minor and were settled in the reservation court. Some of the people appeared in state and federal courts. In 1899, Fred Harney appeared in Lincoln County Court for some offense.²⁰⁷ He had been earlier sent to an insane asylum in Portland.²⁰⁸ A Siletz man killed someone in Eugene in 1878 and stole a gun and a horse.²⁰⁹ Four Indians were arrested in Lane County in 1888.²¹⁰ Agent Swan in 1880 arrested three men for the murder of Tillamook George. They were sent to Vancouver Barracks in Vancouver, Washington.²¹¹ In 1884, Joe Duncan murdered Kane Kelsey in Tillamook and was tried in State Court.²¹² Kelsey, an Alsea, had been one of those who killed Tillamook George and the murder was probably an act of revenge. Alcohol selling, "lewd" conduct, and thievery were lesser offenses.

²⁰⁷Correspondence from J. F. Stewart, Lincoln County Judge, to Thomas Buford, February 21, 1899.

²⁰⁸Correspondence from H. Price, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to Edmund Swan, March 7, 1882.

²⁰⁹Correspondence from S. B. Eakin, Sheriff of Lane County, to William Bagley, Letters of August 12, 1878 and August 20, 1878.

²¹⁰Correspondence from J. D. C. Atkins, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to J. B. Lane, June 11, 1888.

²¹¹Correspondence from Assistant Adjutant Generals Office, to Edmund Swan, Dec. 7, 1890.

²¹²Correspondence from H. Price to F. M. Wadsworth, March 18, 1884.

Expulsion from the reservation was used on continuous offenders. Such was the case of Joseph Howard in 1881 when he was removed for the "best interests" of the Indians.²¹³ His wife was also evicted. Not all Siletz people were, unfortunately, industrious, prosperous farmers and tradesmen, but this was the trend for the majority of them to the end of the century.

Contrary to popular belief, it was not illegal to sell whiskey to all Indians, except on reservations. While shamefully most Indians had to wait until 1924 to become citizens by a special act of Congress, many did become citizens in 1877 under the standards of the Dawes Act. Because of their great advancement, most Siletz people were therefore citizens after 1877 and could buy and be sold whiskey off the reservation.²¹⁴ Off the reservation they also had the same rights and were under the same regulations as non-Indians.

What jurisdiction the agent had at Siletz was often confusing. Except for the annual reports, all of the early records and documents of the reservation perished in a fire at the agency. As with much of the Indian Bureau's affairs, legal matters were chaotic, varied and changed frequently. Commissioner H. Price, in a letter to Agent Wadsworth,

²¹³Letter from S. I. Kirkwood, Secretary of Interior, to the Office of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, October 15, 1881.

²¹⁴Beal Gaither, Annual Reports 1895, p. 271.

shed some light on their perplexing topic:

The Siletz Reservation was not except [sic] out of the state at the time of its admission into the Union, nor its jurisdiction restricted by any treaty with the Indians now enforce. The State of Oregon has jurisdiction over offenses committed upon the reservation, whether by Indians or others.²¹⁵

Alsea Indians

While original Siletz people were making great changes in their lives, the reservation in the years 1881 and 1884 became responsible for more Indians. On March 3, 1875, the Alsea reservation was officially closed by an act of Congress. The Alsea people had the option of moving to Siletz or re-settling along the coast. Those who chose to move to Siletz were to be provided for and could receive allotments. To encourage settlement of the Salmon River area, the Indian Bureau appropriated \$1,000 to resettle some of the Alsea people there so as not to crowd the Siletz Valley. In 1881, fifteen families or a total of sixty-seven people moved from Alsea to Siletz to start new lives.²¹⁶ Most former Alsea residents did not move to Siletz. In 1876, the government gave each of these Indians homestead rights to 160 acres.²¹⁷ Since they were descendants of coastal

²¹⁵Correspondence from H. Price, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to F. M. Wadsworth, January 17, 1884.

²¹⁶Correspondence from H. Price to Edmund Swan, June 16, 1881.

²¹⁷Margie Knowles, "The Siuslaws," The Siuslaw Pioneer (Pamphlet, 1952), p. 19.

people, most of them returned to the land of their forefathers. Some Siuslaw, therefore, settled along the Siuslaw River in the Florence area. Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson Harney, for example, homesteaded in the area that is now in part of Florence. The Coos headed for Coos Bay, where some of their descendants reside. One well-known Coos, Frank Drew, however, lived near Florence.²¹⁸ In 1883 it was estimated that 360 Siuslaw, Alsea, Coos and Umpqua lived independently along the coast.²¹⁹ Some of these people soon sought the security of Siletz, apparently not being able to "make it" on their own, but Agent Wadsworth was short of funds and could not even provide for those who were at the reservation.

For those who went to Siletz, they did not receive all that had been promised them. Two years after they were there, some of them did not have their own home. Like other Siletz people, they were given items by the government it no longer needed or that were old. Some of them divided, in 1884, four horses, two sets of harness, four wagons, and four oxen with yokes, chains and whiffletrees.²²⁰ In 1885, Agent Wadsworth distributed forty tin plates and cups and two worn-out saddles to Indians; presumably some former

²¹⁸Ibid., p. 19.

²¹⁹F. M. Wadsworth, Annual Reports 1883, p. 190.

²²⁰Correspondence from H. Price to F. M. Wadsworth, Dec. 1, 1884.

Alsea people were among the recipients.²²¹

The problem at Siletz in the early 1880's was insufficient funds. Commissioner H. Price wrote to Agent Wadsworth in 1884: "The office is constantly embarrassed by the meager appropriation of Congress and the great and important work it has in hand is greatly retarded and prolonged"²²² The amount of supplies and the number of employees had to be decreased. The sawmill which had been cutting 1,000 to 1,500 feet per hour in 1881 was out of operation in 1883 for want of funds to hire an engineer to operate it. The conversion from water to steam power and the lack of a trained Indian, necessitated the hiring of an engineer.²²³ In the mid-1870's, Agent Bagley faced the same problem and in 1877 he had to fire nearly all of his regular employees for part of the year.²²⁴

Money was not always a problem. In the Swan years, 1879-1882, there was often a balance left over. In 1880 there was \$1,985.86,²²⁵ \$939.38 the next year²²⁶ and a

²²¹Correspondence from J. D. Atkins to F. M. Wadsworth, April 15, 1885.

²²²Correspondence from H. Price to F. M. Wadsworth, Sept. 12, 1884.

²²³F. M. Wadsworth, Annual Reports 1883, p. 188.

²²⁴Bagley, Annual Reports 1877, p. 573.

²²⁵Swan, Annual Reports 1880, p. 265.

²²⁶Ibid., 1881, p. 206.

balance of \$1,644.78 in 1882.²²⁷

Non-Reservation Indians

During this period of change, 1870-1880, a new aspect was entering into the lives of the people. While formerly they had largely been forced to remain on the reservation and abandon their native cultures, now, twenty years later, the provincialism and isolation of the reservation was declining. As already occurred, many had worked off the reservation. In the latter years of the century many Siletz people would move away from the reservation. In 1877 Agent Bagley reported that three Indians had left the reservation, "took up land," and intended to become citizens.²²⁸ Throughout the 1880's and 1890's Siletz Indians departed. During the years when allotment payments and annuity payments were due, many of these people wrote to the agent asking if they were to receive any money. When the interest was due on Indian payments in 1899, that year Donnie Flannery was residing in Chetco, J. W. Myer in Smithfield, and Betsy Samuel in Portland. Inquiries in 1898 placed Mrs. Charles Johnson in Scottsburg and Lucy and Julia Wilson in Eugene.²²⁹ This was just a small listing of non-reservation Siletz Indians. Most of these people

²²⁷Ibid., 1882, p. 202.

²²⁸Bagley, Annual Reports 1877, p. 573.

²²⁹See Siletz Manuscripts for letters to Agency.

were to "disappear" within the general population.

There were several factors to induce this phenomenon. First was the Homestead Law of 1878. Second, the previous experiences of working off the reservation and earning money to spend. Third, the Alsea residents who did not go to Siletz gave confidence to Siletz people to leave. Fourth, the Siletz people were well advanced toward self-sufficiency and adoption of non-Indian customs and cultural attributes. Fifth, the reservation was getting smaller due to the government sale of it and allotments among the residents. In 1890, for example, the Indians were pressuring the agent for more allotments and by 1891 many had to settle coastal land because all of the better interior land was occupied.²³⁰ The same thing was also occurring at Grand Ronde. When some Nestucca tried to move there, Agent Sinnott turned them away, saying that he had no vacant land for them to settle on and their children could not attend Grand Ronde schools. They could use the flour mill and have free passage over the toll road.²³¹

Non-Reservation Indian Affairs

The students were also leaving the reservation for education. Many went to the special school in Forest

²³⁰Buford, Annual Reports 1891, p. 375.

²³¹Letter from Benjamin Simpson to J. Q. Smith, August 28, 1876.

Grove now located near Salem, called Chemawa. In 1885 six students went to the school.²³² The students did well there and the parents were "very much pleased." In 1886 one Siletz girl graduated from Chemawa.²³³ By 1888, twenty-two students were at Chemawa.²³⁴ The best students were sent to school there in order to receive better training and education. A few Siletz students went to eastern schools. In April, 1898, Andrew Chetco, for example, arrived at Haskell Indian School in Kansas.²³⁵ In 1894, five students went to Carlisle Institute in Pennsylvania.²³⁶

The non-reservation Indians were not always welcome and conflicts of interests frequently occurred. There were Indian brawls at Coos Bay.²³⁷ Indians dammed part of the Umpqua River near Scottsburg, preventing fish from migrating;²³⁸ fish dams were also placed in the Siuslaw River, petty thefts occurred near Florence and Mapleton; and the Indians killed large numbers of game to sell the

²³²Wadsworth, Annual Reports 1885, p. 167.

²³³Wadsworth, Annual Reports 1886, p. 216.

²³⁴Lane, Annual Reports 1888, p. 209.

²³⁵Letter from H. B. Reairs, Superintendent of Haskell Institute, to T. J. Buford, April 23, 1898.

²³⁶Gaither, Annual Reports 1894, p. 266.

²³⁷Letter from Robert Starkey, to William Bagley, April 18, 1878.

²³⁸Correspondence from J. Q. Smith, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to William Bagley, Sept. 17, 1877.

hides.²³⁹ Some Indians at Florence practiced polygamy and would not let whites settle on land open for settlement.²⁴⁰ The severest complaint came from an Albany banker named John Connor, who wrote to all of the Indian agents in Oregon and to the Commission of Indian Affairs.

They [Indians] steal more or less, will get whiskey, and have fights, and one murder here in this county, a few years ago, and cost this Co. [sic] quite amount. It serves for licentious purposes enticing our young men, and . . . married man. Their dances and pow wows at night are disturbances and in behalf of all our best citizens we ask, as a favor, and a right, that you demand of your agents to keep their Indians on their reservations.²⁴¹

On the other hand, many non-Indians praised Indians, especially the better educated, more industrious Siletz people. The Siletz Indians were always sought after by farmers and firms as workers. There was even some interest in Indian culture, not only from professionals like J. Owen Dorsey but from the average person. The prestigious Lipman, Wolfe and Company of Portland wanted to sell Indian baskets made at Siletz.²⁴²

North Reservation

In 1884 Agent Wadsworth became concerned over the

²³⁹Letter from James McLeod to the Secretary of Interior, June 28, 1881.

²⁴⁰Ibid.

²⁴¹Letter from John Connor to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 12, 1877.

²⁴²Letter from Lipman, Wolfe and Company to T. J. Buford, April 11, 1899.

welfare of the people in the northern part of the reservation, the Tillamook, Nestucca and Nehalem. These people had been greatly neglected by the Indian Bureau and, in terms of progress, they had practically made none. Their homeland was now far along in settlement by non-Indians, which had been gradually destroying their old way of life. However, they still hunted, trapped and fished for a living and brought their furs to the agency store in exchange for provisions and cash.

Benjamin Simpson had tried to do something for them when he was agent. He wrote to Agent Bagley in 1877 that he had promised them, the Nestucca and some Alsea, if they would move to the Salmon River, the government would

. . . give them assistance in farming and also in building houses for themselves and that they would be furnished seed potatoes for the first year and that they would share all other benefits with the Siletz Indians. The Nestucca Indians accepted the proposition and moved on to the ground selected for them and I am told they have not received assistance promised.²⁴³

Two years had now elapsed since the Nestucca had moved there.

Agent Wadsworth was luckier than Simpson because the government provided him with the funds he needed to work with in helping these people. However, in 1885, before he could make any plans, he had to block an attempt by the Oregon citizens to cut off and sell the northern part of

²⁴³Simpson to Bagley.

the reservation. Wadsworth thought the act "manifestly unjust" and the sale was halted.²⁴⁴ The next year the Tillamooks had seven houses, fenced 300 acres and were raising horses, cattle and swine.²⁴⁵

Although Wadsworth called the people collectively Tillamooks, they were really the Nestucca. Some of these people still live near the town of Beaver. The real Tillamooks during this time had not changed very much. Many still lived along the northern coast, making a meagre living by fishing and odd jobs. Such was their condition that Agent Buford in 1891 could make the following comparison of the people of the reservation.

To be found here in every degree of advancement, from the old salmon eater, who hasn't a care apparently except to fill his stomach, on up to the thrifty, intelligent farmer, mechanic, and school boy.²⁴⁶

Tillamook Tribe

Originally a large tribe of around 2,000 members, by 1898 there were only thirty-eight Tillamooks surviving. Sixteen lived at Siletz, sixteen at Bay City, and six at Grand Ronde.²⁴⁷ Most of those at Bay City were of the

²⁴⁴F. M. Wadsworth, Annual Reports 1886, p. 217.

²⁴⁵Ibid., p. 217.

²⁴⁶T. J. Buford, Annual Reports 1891, p. 375.

²⁴⁷Report by F. R. Madison, Government Investigator, to T. J. Buford, March 2, 1898.

renowned Kilchis family, descendants of the supposed "Black giant" who ruled the tribe in the 1830's. On July 30, 1898, the remaining Tillamooks received shares from the sale of their lands. The shares ranged from twenty dollars to \$262.50. Some individuals collected on more than one share. Grant Wantalkam, for example, received three shares while Nancy Gervais collected on six shares. There was a balance of \$858.75.²⁴⁸

Employment

As in the early days, the Siletz people earned money of their own. From 1880 onward, the number of employed increased, more diversity of work appeared and off-reservation employment became more evident. Those employed on the reservation were hired as "irregular service" and government employees. The former did part-time work, such as farm work, cleaning the boarding school, building and repairing roads and bridges, cutting and sawing timber, transporting goods, and any work the agent wanted done collectively. The people generally did not earn much from this type of work. The budget in 1887 allowed only \$3,200 for this type of work.²⁴⁹ Some individuals, however, could earn a sizeable sum, especially as a hauler. Although he could

²⁴⁸Unclassified material, Siletz Manuscripts, Box No. 5 (as of this writing).

²⁴⁹Correspondence from J. D. C. Atkins to J. B. Lane, June 15, 1887.

not be paid the full amount for budgetary reasons, Alexander Catfish requested \$284 for hauling agency flour in 1887.²⁵⁰ Full time government employees could earn more. On a yearly basis, the interpreter received \$300, teamster \$400, mail carrier \$300, and a ferryman \$100 in 1887.²⁵¹ In 1889 wheelwrights and blacksmiths earned \$400.²⁵² In 1886, a matron and seamstress earned \$480, while a cook and laundress earned \$320. A few Indians, many young women, were assistant teachers throughout the years.²⁵³ In 1885 an eighteen year old woman taught for seven months²⁵⁴ and in 1899 Robert DePoe, of the prominent DePoe family, for whom the bay and town are named, was the teacher.²⁵⁵ He was among those students who had been educated at the Carlisle Indian School.²⁵⁶ Teachers during this period earned between \$600 and \$800. In 1888 the policemen and judges earned only

²⁵⁰Correspondence from J. D. C. Atkins to F. M. Wadsworth, June 17, 1887.

²⁵¹Correspondence from J. D. C. Atkins to J. B. Lane, June 15, 1887.

²⁵²Correspondence from Department of Interior to Beal Gaither, May 10, 1889.

²⁵³F. M. Wadsworth, Annual Reports 1886, p. 215.

²⁵⁴Edmund Swan, Annual Reports 1882, p. 200.

²⁵⁵Quarterly Report of Indian Schools 1899, Siletz Manuscripts.

²⁵⁶Note: Information on the DePoe family can be found in Dorothy and Jack Sutton, Indian Wars at the Rogue River (Grants Pass, Oregon: Josephine County Historical Society, 1969).

eight dollars per month.²⁵⁷ Despite that fact and plus the fact that they arrested over a hundred people in 1886, most of them Indians, Agent Wadsworth said: "I find some little antipathy among some of the Indians against the police, but whenever there is a vacancy there are plenty of applicants for the position."²⁵⁸

Young people also could find some work on the reservation. In 1889 two girl apprentices to the seamstress earned five dollars per month²⁵⁹ while two boys at the shops earned sixty dollars per annum.²⁶⁰ Even as early as 1867 some young adults were hired by the government. Benjamin Simpson, who took a deep interest in the welfare of the people, in that year helped some of those who showed promise toward becoming self-sufficient. He found such promising qualities in Jerry Cass, who was a

. . . very apt mechanic, naturally, I [agent] have placed him in the carpenter shop, at a nominal salary, with a view to his learning the trade. He has, thus far, shown a commendable skill and industry in that capacity, and bids fair to become a useful man.²⁶¹

In some years there was naturally more work for the people than in others. Most of these jobs were few in

²⁵⁷J. B. Lowe, Annual Reports 1888, p. 209.

²⁵⁸Wadsworth, Annual Reports 1886, p. 215.

²⁵⁹R. B. Belt to Beal Gaither, May 23, 1889.

²⁶⁰Department of Interior to Gaither, May 10, 1889.

²⁶¹Simpson, Annual Reports 1867, p. 89.

number and part-time in duration. In fairness to everyone, the jobs were rotated among all the people. Another problem was that "all cannot be tillers of the soil, and some have no taste for it."²⁶² The Siletz reservation lacked sufficient suitable land for all of them to have allotments of good farm land and the more ambitious and adventurous did not want to be farmers and tradesmen. The better educated and less provincial also knew of other things to do. In order for most of them to better their lives, the only answer was to work off the reservation as some of them had done off-and-on throughout the years. In 1884, collectively, the people earned around \$10,000 hop-picking, farm labor, stock handling and from odd jobs.²⁶³ Their earnings had increased to \$15,027 in 1893. They made \$4,000 by sowing oats, \$769 freighting, \$3,435 in goods sold to the government, and \$6,820 in goods sold off the reservation.²⁶⁴ In 1897 the people earned \$2,000 selling fish to a cannery²⁶⁵ and by then they were receiving interest on trust funds which then amounted to \$5,853.²⁶⁶ The next year they sold \$2,300 worth of hay, grain and stock.²⁶⁷ By 1899 they

²⁶²Lane, Annual Reports 1887, p. 290.

²⁶³Wadsworth, Annual Reports 1884, p. 439.

²⁶⁴Buford, Annual Reports 1893, p. 270.

²⁶⁵Beal Gaither, Annual Reports 1897, p. 254.

²⁶⁶Ibid., p. 254.

²⁶⁷T. J. Buford, Annual Reports 1898, p. 258.

received \$2,500 from chittum bark, \$3,250 from fish and \$1,581.27 for lumber.²⁶⁸ These different items represented the spectrum of their major sources of personal income.

Some people managed to find other types of work. John Adams was for many years a preacher who gave his sermons in Chinook. Joe Briggs made use of his native talent to hunt sea otter for a living.²⁶⁹ One man highly praised for his work was George Harris, who worked as a teamster hauling gravel for Bernardi and Dunsford in 1899.²⁷⁰ The photographer on the reservation in 1894 was an Indian.²⁷¹ Most women either worked in the school or they wove baskets and made garments which they sold. Noted for their outstanding work were Nellie Carmichael, Mary Yanna and Julia Megginson who did much to perpetuate native crafts.²⁷² Other people at Siletz also found work more to their liking and some made the choice to move away to make their future.

Natural Land Wealth

If anything, economics was the great paradox of

²⁶⁸T. J. Buford, Annual Reports 1899, p. 318.

²⁶⁹Mrs. Tony Wisniewski, "Pioneering at Old Kernville and Lincoln Beach," Pioneer History of North Lincoln County, Oregon (McMinnville, Oregon: Vol. 1, 1951), p. 53.

²⁷⁰Letter from E. E. Kightlinger to T. J. Buford, March 17, 1899.

²⁷¹Beal Gaither, Annual Reports 1894, p. 266.

²⁷²Sutton, Indian Wars of the Rogue River, p. 275.

Siletz. The income that the people earned was very minute compared to the potential which surrounded them. The Indians' great problem was that although the land they lived on was to be for their benefit, it was not owned by them. They were legally tenants. For that reason the early proposals of building canneries for the people to earn a living from never materialized. The Indians also wanted to raise hops and sell them, but this also never happened. A "bold" idea of Indians cutting and selling timber was proposed by Agent Bagley in 1878, but Commissioner E. A. Hoyt explicitly denied the request. Under the Act of Congress, March 3, 1875 (18 Statutes p. 446) the Indians possessed only occupancy rights to the land.²⁷³ They could harvest timber for their own use but could not cut it for commercial sale. While the aim of the government was to make the Indians "civilized" and self-supporting, some of the best avenues to achieve these ends were blocked by the government itself. Such legislation was a real setback for the Siletz people, considering the great progress they had made and the great benefits they could have realized from canneries, mills and other enterprises. Non-Indians throughout these years cast coveted eyes upon the land waiting for the day that the reservation would be open for settlement. In 1910, there was still five billion board

²⁷³Correspondence from E. A. Hoyt, to William Bagley, June 27, 1898.

feet of timber on the remaining reservation lands.²⁷⁴ This was mainly thick Sitka spruce in the quantity of 150,000 feet per acre and three billion feet of it accessible to the tidewater.²⁷⁵

Hardly surprising, it was non-Indians who profited from these natural resources. J. H. Kern and Brothers of Portland in the late 1890's leased land from the reservation for lumber mills and canneries. One of their canneries was built in 1896 five miles from the bar of the Siletz River. The Kern Brothers Company did not hire Indians, but instead, like other canneries of the time, used Chinese labor.²⁷⁶ The Siletz people probably would not have worked for the low wages the Chinese received anyway, but the Indians did sell salmon for twenty-five cents each and silversides at ten cents each to the cannery.²⁷⁷

Not all non-Indian economic ventures succeeded, however. As a guardian of the reservation, Agent Wadsworth, in 1884, turned down a request to lease tideland as pasturage,²⁷⁸ and in the previous year he refused to

²⁷⁴Royal Bensell, "Siletz Name of Land, Not of Tribe, as Some Declare," Scrap Book 49 (1910), p. 228.

²⁷⁵Ben Maxwell, "The Ghost of Old Kernville," Pioneer History of North Lincoln County, Oregon (McMinnville, Oregon: Vol. 1, 1951), p. 23.

²⁷⁶Ibid., p. 21.

²⁷⁷Ibid., p. 22.

²⁷⁸Correspondence from H. Price to F. M. Wadsworth, Aug. 30, 1884.

grant mining rights to some people at Cape Foulweather on black sand which contained gold elements.²⁷⁹ For his stand, Wadsworth was bitterly denounced by a Portland newspaper.²⁸⁰

Indian agents could lease reservation lands or grant certain rights to non-reservation residents if such projects did not conflict with the interests or rights of the Indians and all such ventures had to be approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

Rogue River War Settlements

While the people were progressing toward a better future in the 1880's, there were still some remembrances of the past. The Rogue River War was still to haunt them. The government paid the Rogue River tribe \$60,000 for their lands, of which \$15,000 was set aside in payment for property they destroyed in the war.²⁸¹ Thus at this time nearly thirty years after the war, non-Indians were able to file compensation claims against the Rogue Rivers and others because the government had finally legalized the displacement of the Indians by the Act of 1875 and had settled payment with them. A large claim was the \$9,266 awarded

²⁷⁹Correspondence from H. Price to F. M. Wadsworth, Oct. 15, 1885.

²⁸⁰Ibid.

²⁸¹Investigation of Bureau of Indian Affairs (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1953), p. 940.

to Isaac Bent in 1886.²⁸² An even larger claim was that of Michael Thomas for \$12,117.50.²⁸³ James Malcom filed \$255 against the Coquille tribe in 1887.²⁸⁴

Next to employment, land was the second major concern of the Siletz people. Although they had been allotted land earlier with many of the allotments surveyed in 1881, these allotments were not official until the allotment act was passed. "Indians can't have title to lands until the allotment bill becomes law and then the lands can be divided in severalty and obtain titles."²⁸⁵

The people were naturally very much concerned about obtaining the titles. It was important to them to know that what they worked for and what they lived on was actually theirs and that no one could take it from them, and that they never would have to leave Siletz.

Allotments

Finally the Agreement of 1892, ratified in 1894, ultimately resulted in 551 allotments, totalling 44,459

²⁸²Correspondence from A. B. Upshaw to F. M. Wadsworth, Dec. 4, 1886.

²⁸³Correspondence from F. A. Galpin to William Bagley, June 17, 1877.

²⁸⁴Correspondence from J. D. C. Atkins to J. B. Lane, Nov. 4, 1887.

²⁸⁵Correspondence from H. Price to F. M. Wadsworth, May 21, 1884.

acres.²⁸⁶ The land was formally allotted in 1888 by Special Agents M. C. Connelly and William Jenkins, and by the Agreement of October 31, 1892, 425 allotments became official.²⁸⁷ The Indians were disappointed, however, that more allotments were not made. Thus in 1892, General Odell conducted more surveying parties, mostly on mountain sides, to create a total of 536 allotments covering 43,257.82 acres, which was approved on June 2, 1894.²⁸⁸ The summer of 1894 saw the creation of fifteen supplemental allotments, consisting of 1,201.48 acres, added to the final total, which was ratified August 15, 1894.²⁸⁹ Most Indians disapproved of the last fifteen allotments on the grounds that the applicants were not interested in farming but only wanted to share in the proceeds of the unlotted land, which was to be sold.²⁹⁰ Any Indian who was allotted land was an official resident, and therefore entitled to any benefits as such. The Indians who had permanently moved away forfeited any rights,

²⁸⁶General Data Concerning Indian Reservations, Prepared under the direction of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1930), p. 15.

²⁸⁷Schedule of Allotments, Siletz Reservation (Bureau of Indian Affairs, Portland, Oregon, Allotment Schedule, Vol. 42).

²⁸⁸Ibid.

²⁸⁹Ibid.

²⁹⁰Beal Gaither, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Reports 1894, p. 266.

except those they were entitled to as a member of a specific tribe, such as a share in the Rogue River payments. Here is an example of the dilemma some people found themselves in: "You are informed that unless the Indian woman Mary Wilson, and her children, return to the agency with a bona fide intention to remain, you cannot aid them."²⁹¹

By 1894, one hundred heads of families lived on allotted lands,²⁹² of eighty acres per family member. The land was either in trust patent or fees patent. The former, which included most of the allotments, meant that the land could not be sold to non-Indians while the latter could be sold upon approval of Congress by recommendation of the Indian Agent and the Indian Bureau. Such approval occurred in 1901.²⁹³ The reservation was trimmed down to five sections by the Act of August 15, 1894, in which the Siletz people received \$142,600 at seventy-five dollars annually for each adult. An interest rate of five percent was placed upon the delayed payments, and held in trust, which was \$100,000.²⁹⁴ In terms of modern values, some of the

²⁹¹ Correspondence from H. Price to F. M. Wadsworth, Nov. 18, 1884.

²⁹² Beal Gaither, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Reports 1894, p. 266.

²⁹³ Charles Kappler, Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, Vol. 1, 1904), p. 743.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 533.

people were left with quite valuable land. Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Johnson owned the land where present-day Taft is located.²⁹⁵ The DePoe family land totaled two hundred acres in the Cutler City and Depoe Bay area, which today is very valuable scenic coastal resort area. The DePoes, unfortunately, like most other Indians, eventually sold their lands and their land went into the hands of an investment company.²⁹⁶

Land Ceded from Reservation

The land that was ceded from the reservation in 1894 was destined to return to the public domain for settlement and exploitation. By President Cleveland's proclamation of May 16, 1895, all of the ceded land was opened up.²⁹⁷ During this period of time the government was making great efforts to settle and develop Western lands among which was the former Siletz land. In Midwest newspapers, land was offered at \$1.50 per acre in the West.²⁹⁸ It was not uncommon for similar ads to appear in foreign newspapers,

²⁹⁵Earl Nelson, "Taft," Pioneer History of Northern Lincoln County, Oregon (McMinnville, Oregon: Vol. 1, 1951), pp. 58-59.

²⁹⁶Ibid., p. 150.

²⁹⁷Kappler, Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties, pp. 986-987.

²⁹⁸Marjorie Boetger, "The Sijota Family," Pioneer History of North Lincoln County, Oregon (McMinnville, Oregon: Vol. 1, 1951), p. 141.

and due to this fact, the Siletz area had a number of settlers from Poland and Finland.²⁹⁹ When some of the Poles arrived in the Kernville area, the Indians taught them how to dig clams and catch fish, a situation on the order of the Pilgrim episode.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ Nelson, Pioneer History of Northern Lincoln County, Oregon, p. 9.

³⁰⁰ Wisniewski, Pioneer History of North Lincoln County, Oregon, p. 51.

CHAPTER VII

LAST YEARS OF THE CENTURY

While during the latter part of the century the more significant impacts upon the Siletz peoples' way of life dealt with non-reservation aspects, the reservation itself continued to develop and it continued to be a place of both tragedy and hope.

Agent Lane Affair

The reservation was not without its controversy, either. In 1887 J. B. Lane became the Siletz agent.³⁰¹ In his two-year term of office he managed to create an atmosphere few people would soon forget. Although he was an observant person with much insight into Indian affairs, he soon found himself in several embarrassing positions. In his second year gossip soon spread throughout the Siletz community, finally reaching the Indian Bureau, about the fact that he and the teacher, Hattie Hansell, were engaged in suspicious activities. Not only was Miss Hansell reportedly a poor teacher but she "neither eats nor sleeps in the school building but patronizes or looks after the agents

³⁰¹Note: This is not the famous General Joseph Lane, ex-governor of Oregon, mentioned previously in this thesis. General Lane died in 1881.

household affairs, eating and sleeping there."³⁰²

The Indian Bureau also found out that Agent Lane was using a great amount of government property for personal use, such as bedsteads, blankets, comforts, mattresses, tubs, chairs, pillows, sheets and many more items. He was also using the milk of a government cow.³⁰³ Lane had bureaucratic problems, too. Many of his requests were turned down by the Bureau, and his record-keeping and correspondence procedures were continually being criticized. There were also conflicts with some of the employees. A teacher, Ruth Gaither,³⁰⁴ and an Indian hauler named Scott Lane³⁰⁵ claimed that he failed to pay them, and another teacher, F. Marion Carter, wrote to the Indian Bureau stating that he was relieved of his duties and Lane was going to close the school, having all the students sent to Chemawa.³⁰⁶ That was too much, and the Indian Bureau reprimanded Lane. The next year Beal Gaither, the former

³⁰²Correspondence from J. D. C. Atkins to J. B. Lane, Jan. 13, 1888.

³⁰³Correspondence from J. D. C. Atkins to J. B. Lane, Jan. 23, 1888.

³⁰⁴Correspondence from R. V. Belt to Beal Gaither, April 25, 1889.

³⁰⁵Letter from Scott Lane to John Atkins, March 30, 1888. Also letter from Indian Bureau to Beal Gaither, Dec. 19, 1888.

³⁰⁶Letter from F. Marian Carter to John Oberly, Nov. 14, 1888.

agency clerk and farmer, became the new agent. Gaither was replaced in 1890 by T. J. Buford. Agent Buford had nothing but praise for the accomplishments of the people and he helped at times by providing more irregular employment so that they could spend more time at Siletz instead of leaving to find work.

In 1891 the school consisted of 170 acres of fenced land. Besides the two-story box-like main structure, there were other buildings, such as a laundry, woodshed, stock barn, smoke house, chicken house, night watchman's house and other minor buildings. The school orchard had over 300 trees in it. The school received magazines and newspapers and gifts sent by visitors and friends. Student home visits were one per month.³⁰⁷

By 1892 the total population had dropped to 568, including a racially mixed population of fifty.³⁰⁸ The people lived in wood houses, owned wagons and buggies, spoke English, wore "citizens clothes," and some of the women raised beautiful flower gardens and sold woven baskets to tourists on the coast. For activities, they celebrated all of the holidays, including Independence Day, in which they would parade down the main street of

³⁰⁷Report of Superintendent L. C. Walker, Annual Reports 1891, p. 377.

³⁰⁸T. J. Buford, Annual Report of Siletz Agent, Annual Reports 1892, p. 414.

Newport in their native Indian clothes.³⁰⁹ Hunting and camping ranked high as their recreation and in the summer entire families would camp along the coast in old "army surplus" tents.³¹⁰ Many men were members of the reservation band and held native dances. Aside from a few who frequently drank, most of the people were industrious and seemed to adapt well to a basically non-Indian way of life. Their attitudes naturally varied. "Some are thrifty farmers and seemed to take a pride in their homes; while many simply use the home as a stopping place when they cannot go elsewhere."³¹¹

The school in that year reached seventy-seven students and Dr. Eugene Clark taught anatomy, physiology and hygiene to them.³¹² The Methodist Church under Reverend C. R. Ellsworth had forty-eight members and the Catholic Church had an equal number, led by Grand Ronde's Father Croquet, who held his services in the school.³¹³

Epidemics and Diseases

One unfortunate problem still with the Indians in 1892 was disease. Although there were twenty-seven births

³⁰⁹Sutton, Indian Wars of the Rogue River, p. 276.

³¹⁰Ibid., p. 282.

³¹¹T. J. Buford, Annual Reports 1892, p. 415.

³¹²Eugene Clark, Annual Reports 1892, p. 417.

³¹³T. J. Buford, Annual Reports 1892, p. 416.

that year, there were also twenty-four deaths. Dr. Clark treated 382 patients for such ailments as bronchitis, fever, syphilis, neuralgia, tuberculosis, rheumatism and various diseases of the eye and ear. The reservation had no hospital, the old one was no longer used, but did have two infirmaries with older girls assisting in the care of patients. There were two known causes for some of the problems. One was that some of the children would get uncovered at night and would thus get chilled in the cool, damp climate. The second factor noted was the Indians love of pork, of which they consumed a great quantity. Pork caused glandular trouble and the doctor recommended that they raise more sheep for meat.³¹⁴

The year's major construction achievement was a forty foot high water tower for the school. Other construction consisted of barns, fences, and minor repairs on existing buildings.

The next year was an especially sad one. Forty-two people died, half of them victims of tuberculosis, the reservation's number one killer.³¹⁵ Three of the victims were students. This contributed to the drop in population to 519 in 1894.³¹⁶

³¹⁴Dr. Eugene Clark, Annual Reports 1892, p. 417.

³¹⁵Dr. Eugene Clark, Annual Reports 1893, p. 272.

³¹⁶Beal Gaither, Annual Reports 1894, p. 266.

From 1890 to 1894 the agent was T. J. Buford. Beal Gaither returned in 1894 to 1898 until Buford came back to finish the century. Other personnel changed more frequently as it always had. Because of disharmony, 1894 saw a great turn-over of employees, with the school under Lydia Hunt changing all employees except one during the year.³¹⁷

In 1897 the main concern of the people was education. Some parents refused to send their children to school, having an "aversion" to education and disliking the personnel troubles which plagued the school. The problem got so bad that the next year Agent Buford denied money and rations to some of the parents. In turn, they threatened Habeas Corpus against him, but the government upheld Buford's actions.³¹⁸ The name of the school changed in 1897 to Liberty Industrial School, but that did not seem to help solve some of its problems.³¹⁹

In 1898 an epidemic of measles hit the reservation and there was much grieving. Discipline problems arose at the school and new county roads penetrated into the area, opening the reservation to more outside contact.

By 1900 the number of Siletz residents had fallen

³¹⁷ Lydia Hunt, Annual Reports 1894, p. 267.

³¹⁸ Letter from John Hall, U.S. District Attorney, to T. J. Buford, Nov. 4, 1898.

³¹⁹ W. Vincent Graves, Annual Reports 1897, p. 255.

to a mere 482,³²⁰ down from the approximate original of 2,500. Noteworthy items in the agent's report that year was the fact that the school had a new organ and the reservation had a 4,000 gallon concrete reservoir. With the turning of the century, Siletz was almost like every other small Oregon community, with its small farms and lumber mills. Only the people themselves could best describe the cultural and physical impact that had affected their lives and, in this respect, Siletz was different.

³²⁰T. J. Buford, Annual Reports 1900, p. 360.

CONCLUSION

When General Philip Sheridan returned to Siletz for a visit, he payed a visit to the Rogue River people, and the following is what he found:

When I saw them, fifteen years later, transformed into industrious and substantial farmers, with real homes, fine cattle, wagons and horses, carrying their grain, eggs and butter to market and bringing home flour, coffee, sugar, and calico in return

These comments are found in his "Personal Memoirs," on page 119.

In terms of an overall assessment of the Siletz Reservation, it can be termed a success in its aims of "civilizing" or having the people adopt new life styles and the reservation was successful in making most of the residents self-sufficient to meet their basic needs by the end of the century.

The reservation was not, however, without its scandals, misery, fighting and general vices and turmoil which was so tragically characteristic of Indian affairs. These problems were, however, limited to a small period of time. Physically, the reservation was very large and was not one of the infamous "desert" reservations. Even though the climate leaves something to be desired, Siletz is livable and undoubtedly many Indians found it to their liking.

Most of the social problems at Siletz and other reservations reflect the conditions of the reservation itself. With their old life styles destroyed supplemented with the poor conditions of reservation life, many people turned to drinking and poor social behavior. The lowering of moral standards was also a tragic part of the early reservations.

One area which the Indian Bureau had little success in was employment. For reasons already indicated, reservations rarely generated much employment. The people raise their own food and construct their own homes, but they could not be totally self-sufficient until they could earn a living, thus separating themselves from government welfare. Many left the reservation, but to do so meant to break ties with friends and relatives, and enter a world of people who did not look like themselves and sometimes were unfriendly. The isolation of a place like Siletz, coupled with the unity common to a racial group that is a minority in a country, creates a provincialism that is hard to break and hinders individual success in this case. Although there are many successful Siletz people, employment is still a problem as it is in many other areas where Indians live.

The problem was that the government intended for Indians to live only temporarily on reservations until they could become a part of the American melting pot and then the reservations would be sold and no industries or

economic ventures were to be established on them by Indians.

Siletz Indians went on to follow many paths. Robert DePoe went to teach on a reservation in South Dakota. Reuben Sanders was a famous athlete in college and was elected to the Indian Hall of Fame. Sanders Field at Chemawa School is named after him. Siletz people, after the turn of the century, were to be found living from Los Angeles to Seattle and employed in a variety of occupations. After its development, Siletz, too, was a good place to live and work.

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APPENDIX I

Census Report for Siletz, 1865. J. W. Perit Huntington,
Superintendent of Oregon Indian Affairs. Annual Reports,
1865, p. 470.

Alsea Agency 530 people

Alsea	150	
Coos	140	No treaty with any of them
Siuslaw	130	
Umpqua	110	

Siletz Agency 2,068 people

Chasta Scoton and Umpqua	123	Treaty, November 18, 1854
Rogue River (Takeima)	121	Treaty, September 10, 1853
Chasta Costa	162	
Too-toot-e-way (Tutuni)	227	
Chetco	221	
Mac-en-noot-e-way	348	
Coquill	142	No treaty with any of them
Delwashe	87	
Sixes	125	
Flores Creek	70	
Euches	150	
Joshua	250	
Nol-nat-nah	161	
Port Orford	125	

Note: The names listed and the spellings are those of Superintendent Huntington and may or may not coincide with other authorities. The Tillamook, Nehalem, Nestucca and Yaquina people are not on this list but were assigned to the Siletz Reservation.

APPENDIX II

Partial list of supplies for the reservation. E. A. Hoyt,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs, December 1, 1879.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>@</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
Bacon	7500 lbs.	\$10	\$750
Beans	3000 lbs.	\$350	\$105
Corn	4000 lbs.	\$350	\$140
Coffee	2500 lbs.	\$20	\$500
Flour	50000 lbs.	\$2.50	\$1250
Hard bread	4000 lbs.	\$5	\$20
Hominy	2000 lbs.	\$3	\$60
Lard	500 lbs.	\$10	\$50
Rice	4000 lbs.	\$6	\$250
Tea	300 lbs.	\$45	\$135
Salt	1500 lbs.	---	\$13.75
Sugar	5000 lbs.	\$10	\$500

Note: The rest of the list was destroyed.

APPENDIX III

List of supplies for the Siletz School. H. Price, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 9, 1884.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
Carpet	44 yds.	\$40
Lounge	One	\$15
Center Table	One	\$8
Large Mirror	One	\$7
Arm Rocking Chair	One	\$5
Chairs	Six	\$10
Wall Brackets	Two	\$2
Zinc Lined Bath Tub	Two	\$30
Window Shades	Twenty	\$35
Patent Double Seats	Forty-eight	\$80
Heating Stoves	Eight	\$60
Elbow Pipes	Eight	\$24
Joint Pipes	Fifty	(Included in above)
Construction of two sinks		\$11

Note: Most of the above items were purchased by the Indian Bureau from Eastern distributors and were shipped to the reservation by the Northern Pacific Railroad.

APPENDIX 4

NATIVE HOMELANDS

APPENDIX 5

COAST RESERVATION SYSTEM, PLATE I

APPENDIX 6

COAST RESERVATION SYSTEM, PLATE II

SILETZ TODAY

Siletz is a small community of around seven hundred people of whom forty percent are of Indian descent. Although the area still lacks any industry and has few employment opportunities, logging is the main occupation. Some residents also work in the mills at Toledo.

The former agency buildings are located on Government Hill east of town. The buildings are all decaying and some have collapsed. Junked autos, blackberry vines and brush mar and obscure the area. There is, however, a well kept cemetery on one side of the hill. At the foot of Government Hill is a historical marker and a log cabin.

Today not many people know where Siletz is and even fewer know that it ever was a reservation. That is a sad fate for a place which played an important role in the history of Oregon. It was the home of most of the better-known and more prominent tribes, and among the list of non-Indians associated with the reservation reads like a "Who's Who" of Oregon history. Its present sereneness and natural beauty obscure the rich heritage it had in the nineteenth century.