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At this moment the governor rushed in, saying as he saw the dead chief: "Who in ... has done this?" I replied I did not know. "In my office, too," he added. "This is a club for General Wool." General Wool had opposed the policy Stevens, and Governor Curry of Oregon, in the prosecution of the Indian war.

Before the governor reached the office I ran to the door, and by the dim morning light saw eighteen or twenty men outside the door. Never in my long and intimate acquaintance with Governor Stevens did I ever see him so enraged as he was that night, and justly, too, it seems to me, for even after all of these years it kindles my wrath when I think of the cowardly deed.

It was almost daylight, and the body of Quiemuth was left on the carpeted floor of the office till the coroner's inquest was held, which brought out the fact that Quiemuth had been shot with a pistol, the ball taking effect in the right arm and right side, which Dr. Willard, Sr., declared never could have killed any man. On closer examination he found the chief had been stabbed with a very fine blade, which had penetrated the heart, causing instant death....

Quiemuth now being dead, Leschi was soon captured and sentenced to hang, but the execution was stayed, and Leschi returned to prison. Court again convened, when he was sentenced and executed near Fort Steilacoom. This ended the Indian war.... Peace once again restored, the settlers returned to their homes to begin life anew.



Leschi was reburied in the tribal cemetery in 1895.



Leschi's grave marker in the tribal cemetery.



Annual Leschi - Quiemuth Honor Walk.



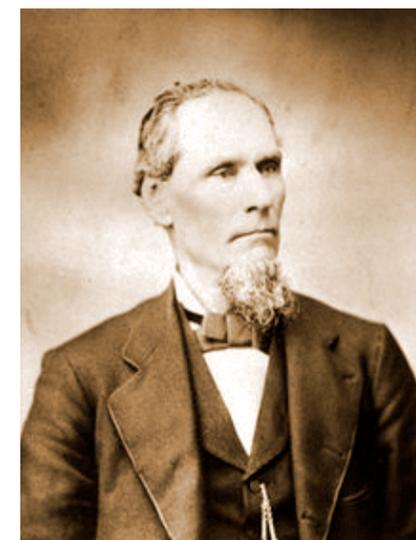
McAllister - Connell marker.

Fort Steilacoom

Remembrances of the Indian War 1855-1856

by James Longmire¹

Mr. Longmire relates incidents on the Yelm prairie during the Indian War of 1855-56, including the story of the surrender and subsequent murder of Quiemuth in the office of Governor Stevens. Longmire was the Indian's guard the night of the murder.



James Longmire

In July [1854] following the completion of the [Medicine Creek] treaty, Quiemuth and Slugyi came to me complaining that the settlers did not give them enough for their work, saying in Chinook that the "Bostons" were bad people, but the King George men were good; that the later had been here a long time and never stole land. Now the "Bostons" come and were fencing and stealing the land from the Indians. Slugyi, who could speak English, interpreted what I could not understand, which was nearly all of Quiemuth's Chinook. They finished by giving me the worst bemeaning I ever got. I tried to reason with them, saying the common people were not to blame, that the "tyees" had bought their land, the officials had made the treaty and they had agreed to it. Finding them unreasonable, I quietly took their abuse. When they had finished they got on their ponies and rode off. I saw Quiemuth once after this, when he was still growling about the "Bostons," but still called himself the "Boston's Tillicum." Notwithstanding these friendly assurances, we were greatly alarmed, but at a loss what move to make, as we did not want to leave

our home unprotected, neither risk our own and children's lives by staying at home.

On the 10th of October, while my boys, Elcaine and David, myself and John Mollhigh, an Indian who often helped me with my work, were putting in rye about a half-a-mile from my house, where Mrs. Longmire and the two younger children were alone, at least thirty Indians rode up in company with old Stub, an Indian who had supplied our table with wild game since we first came on the prairie, a first-rate hunter, and an Indian who was friendly and honest, got off their horses, walked in[to] the house with their guns and arranged themselves around the fireplace, crowding my wife and children in the back part of the room, the latter

crying with fright, while their mother sat in deadly fear, not knowing what moment they would strike the fatal blow. Stub sat in the corner taking little part in the noisy conversation, which lasted about an hour. They made demands for food in a rude impudent way, which was denied. They then got on their horses, after telling my wife in Chinook they were going to the Bald Hills on a hunt, and rode away, leaving Stub in his corner by the fire.

After they were gone, my wife gave him some food in a tin plate, the best we had, which he ate in silence. Having finished his meal, he arose, went to my wife, laid his hand on her head and began to talk in a sad, mournful way. Not one word could she understand. Then he laid his hand on his own breast, then on the heads of the two frightened children, all the time talking and, as my wife thought, warning her of the fate of the white settlers and the horrible intentions of the Indians. He left silently, and this was the last time he ever came to our house.

He went to the hostile Indians, was captured with Utsalawah, or Chuck-Note, as the settlers called him, about two months after the opening of the Indian war, taken to Olympia, put in prison in chains. Here he killed himself by tying a strip of his blanket tightly around his throat. His companion was released later on, and lived till the summer of 1886 when he was laid to rest with the "tillicums" in a little burying

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¹ Old Settlers Contest of 1892

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Publication funded in part by City of
 Lakewood Lodging Tax Grant.

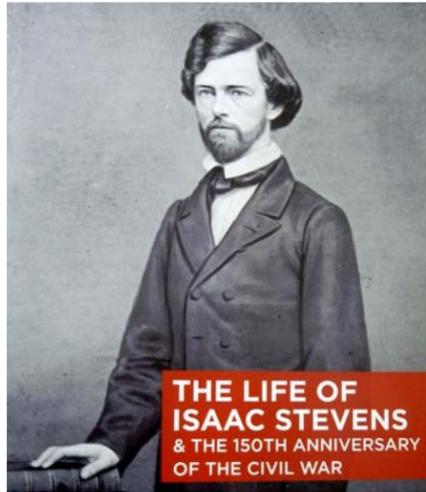
President's Message



It seems to many of us, that it was only yesterday that we were all wondering what was going to happen with Y2K, and now look. With the start of 2020, the third decade of this new century is upon us.

On March 15th, Historic Fort Steilacoom will host noted historian Erich Ebel. Erich will be continuing our investigation into the Puget Sound War of 1855-56. He will be illuminating the ill-fated Medicine Creek Treaty of 1854, which threw this region into two years of anxiety and heated turmoil.

The lower Puget Sound region was a much different place in 1855 from the tranquil area we know today. Roving bands of armed men criss-crossed the local rivers and prairies, bent on blood. The local Indian tribes were warring with the US Army and the Territorial Militia. The Militia were fighting against the Indians, and none too friendly with the US Army, the Army was chafing against the Territorial Volunteers in return, as well as fighting with several Indian tribes on both sides of the Cascade Mountains.



Stevens exhibit now on display.

In addition to this, everyone involved, at one time or another, was against Isaac Stevens, the Washington Territorial Governor. It was Stevens who had orchestrated the treaty at Medicine Creek. After things broke loose, Governor Stevens suddenly found an urgent and pressing need to run off to Montana and draft up even more treaties. He wanted to get as far away as possible from these groups of men that he had riled up. Stevens let out for a place called Hellgate, aptly named, to treat with the Indians there, leaving acting Governor Charles Mason to deal with the mess he had left behind.

We are honored to presently have the Secretary of State's, "Legacy Washington." traveling exhibit on the Medicine Creek Treaty. It is scheduled to be leaving us in another few months, so be sure and see it before it goes. Who knows when you might have another chance!

Next month, on April 4th, we will be offering our Annual Book Sale. It will be in conjunction with the Smithsonian Magazine's "National Museum Day." Not only will you find bargains galore, with titles on all sorts of subjects, but all of our buildings will be staffed with our fascinating Living Historians. They really bring this old Fort to life. This is something you will not want to miss! I will see you there. Historically Yours, *Gideon*.

Visitors

Jessica, Lawrence, and I held down the Fort as museum docents on a rainy Sunday afternoon in December of last year. An interesting couple—a young, diminutive, Chinese lady and her father. The girl spoke very little English, but what she knew, she spoke clearly. Her father, a citizen of Beijing, had a slightly bowed posture, and spoke no English. They had come to see the Hospital, assuming that the HFSA "OPEN" signs set out on Steilacoom Boulevard referred to possible Hospital visitation.

They soon realized their mistake, but were very pleased and interested in touring our Interpretive Center, here in Quarters 4. Much was successfully conveyed about what they were seeing, by way of hand gestures, and the daughter's limited knowledge of our tongue.

They left quite pleased with their visit, the girl and her eighty year old father, but then rushed back in later for a "photo-shoot" with our soldier cut-out. I watched as the old man put on the replica forage cap, and squatted down to have his face line up, within the collar of the cut-out figure. It was the transformation of that ancient face as he did so that struck me. As he knelt down, gone was the elderly face that I had seen, replaced instead with the deadly serious, and foreboding, countenance of a soldier.

Eighty years in China. What a life he must have lived. What sights he must have seen. What turmoil he must have endured. I am very privileged to have been given just a slight glimpse, of the soul within the man. The man I was privileged to be able to see in that moment will remain in my mind for years.

The daughter also wanted a picture of her father in front of the fort's 150 year old tattered flag, the last one flown here, which was taken down in 1868.

The moral of this story? Never discount those last minute visitors who sometimes hold us beyond our "closing time." *Gideon*

purpose, however, for not an Indian could be found. We became convinced they were getting information and assistance from friends, and so reported to Governor Stevens, who ordered the arrest of all persons suspected of rendering them assistance. Arrests were made of all men whom we suspected of harboring Indians. They were taken to Fort Steilacoom and tried, but nothing could be proved against them, so they were released.

After this the volunteers began to find Indians in small bands all over the country, whom they killed or captured wherever found. However, depredations continued, and several more arrests were made. Then Governor Stevens proclaimed martial law to prevent persons suspected of aiding the Indians from returning to their homes, holding them as prisoners at Fort Steilacoom.

Shortly after this move on the part of our worthy governor, some of the Indians surrendered and were placed on the reservation in charge of the Indian agent. The Puget Sound rangers were now discharged, and I made preparations to move back to Yelm prairie with my family, taking with me a friendly Indian named Peallo and his family, who camped near our house. We did not feel safe in our home, and Peallo and I took turns standing guard at nights; working with our guns beside us during the day.

The war had been going on now for nearly a year, and the settlers were tired and discouraged, and many of them living in blockhouses. One night when Peallo was standing guard he came to the door saying: "Mesatchee tillicums choco" (the bad Indians are coming). I got up, took my gun and went outside, when Peallo came to me, saying in Chinook, "If they do come I die with you." He lay down, putting his ear close to the ground, and listened a few minutes, but got up, saying he was mistaken. "It was the spirits, not Indians." But he was not mistaken, as examination next morning showed that horses had been fastened about a half mile from my



Quiemuth

house, on the edge of a swamp apparently all night, the riders probably prowling near my house. When Peallo saw this he begged me to go to the blockhouse, saying we were not safe in our house. I told him I was not afraid. He then went to my wife and begged her to talk to me and get me to go to the blockhouse and not let her and the children be killed. On the second day after this we moved to the blockhouse, where we found Levi Shelton and family and Thomas Chambers, Sr., and family, besides five men to guard the commissary store, which was kept there....

Quiemuth and Leschi now separated, for what cause I never knew. The former grew tired of fighting and came to Ozha, a Frenchman, who lived on the Nisqually near the crossing of the Northern Pacific railroad bridge, and asked him to see me and see if I would take him safely to Governor Stevens, as he wanted to surrender and would risk his life to the governor. I told Ozha to bring Quiemuth to me after dark for if he were seen someone would surely kill him. I was glad he had surrendered as he was the only chief on our side of the river whom we feared, but I hardly know why he came to me unless he thought, as I was a friend of Governor Stevens, it would make his sentence lighter.

It was early in the summer of 1856

when he came one night with Ozha into my house unarmed, shaking hands with me and my wife as friendly as if he had not been fighting us and our friends for months and months. I got my horse and taking Van Ogle, George Brail, Ozha and Betsey Edgar, a squaw and friend of Ozha's, we started for Olympia. Quiemuth riding close to me, talking freely all the way, telling me if the governor did not kill him he would show me where there was lots of gold, as he knew where it was. It was a gollmy [sic] ride that night through the rain, and when we reached Olympia between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning we were wet, muddy and tired.

I awoke Governor Stevens and told him I had Quiemuth, who wanted to see him. He got up, invited us in, and ordered lunch, of which we partook heartily, being hungry as well as tired. Ozha, Van Ogle and Geo. Brail went to put our horses in the stable, while I remained with Quiemuth. The governor handed our prisoner a pipe of tobacco which he smoked a few minutes telling me between whiffs he thought the governor was a good "tillicum."

Governor Stevens offered me a bed, which I declined, as I was wet and muddy, and told him if he would give me a blanket I would lay down by the fire in the office. Blankets were brought for me and Quiemuth, and we lay down, one on either side of the fireplace, I being nearest the door. In the meantime, news of the chief's surrender must have been circulated, although I had intended it should be kept secret.

Governor Stevens left lights burning in the office, bade us good-night, and once more retired, and I was soon in a deep sleep, from which I was aroused by a great noise. I hardly knew what. I spring up to hear the sound as of persons running out of the house, and to find the lights blown out. I saw by the dim firelight a man fall and heard a deep groan. I ran to the falling man and found it was Quiemuth, speechless and dying.

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Indian War *(from page 1)*

ground about 300 yards from where my house now stands, the spot he had begged of me from year to year for his last resting place—almost since I had known him.

On the 11th of October 1855, the day after the Indians came to my house, I started with my family to Olympia, as we now knew there was no safety for us in our own home, which had already been under guard for two weeks. Our bachelor neighbors McLean, Chambers, Frank Goodwin and Mr. Perkins, the two former now living near Roy, in Pierce County, the later at rest long since, came to our house for mutual protection, and kindly stood guard, taking turns, whose kindness we shall never forget.

Arriving at Olympia I rented a house for my wife and children, put the two boys in school and returned to my farm, intending, with the help of John Mollhigh, to finish my fall work.

On the 20th of October, Quiemuth paid a visit to Secretary Mason, who was acting governor in the absence of Governor Stevens, who had gone east of the Cascades to make treaties with those tribes which seemed to be leaders in the rebellious movements which we began to fear would end in a general massacre of the white settlers.

Quiemuth assured Mason again and again of the friendship of his tribe, whereupon Mason told him to get his half brother, Leschi, and with their families, come to Olympia, where he would give them food and shelter. This Quiemuth agreed to do and returned to Yelm prairie for that purpose, but he had forgotten both his promise and his friendship long before his arrival, for no sooner did he meet Leschi than they took their families and moved as fast as they could to Puyallup.

As the chief did not come the following day, Mason feeling somewhat alarmed for the safety of the white settlers, appointed Charles Eaton and twelve men, among them

Connell, McAllister and George McAllister, son of the latter, and a man named Wallace, to go to Puyallup and invite the chiefs to come to Olympia. I was to have gone, but as I was four miles from the main road, they hurried on without me.

Crossing the Puyallup river they went to where Van Ogle's farm now is, and sent a friendly Indian who had come with them from Olympia to learn the whereabouts of the Indians. Upon his return he reported about 200 Indians having collected further on, with the two chiefs, Quiemuth and Leschi; also the Puyallup tribe. Hearing this, Eaton said it would never do to go further, for that meant war. McAllister and Connell ridiculed the idea, saying they knew those Indians well, and would go and have a friendly talk with them. Eaton replied that if they did go it was contrary to orders.

Confident of success, they laid down their guns and, after buckling on their revolvers, started on what they meant as a friendly errand, with the two friendly Indians, but which proved their death, for in about twenty minutes Eaton and his little band heard the firing of guns, when Eaton said the men were killed and they must get ready for defense at once.

They took refuge in a cabin which stood near, and fastened their saddle blankets over the open spaces between the logs, and filled a barrel full of water, in case the hostile Indians should fire the building. They then hid their horses close as possible to the cabin and declared themselves ready for battle, which began just before dark, a large band of Indians opening fire on Eaton and his ten men; one a friendly Indian who had returned with news of the sad fate of the McAllister and Connell, the other Indians having gone with the hostile tribes who were now fighting, sending bullet after bullet into the little cabin.

One bullet struck Wallace, who, with the exception of being stunned, received no permanent injury except

losing the upper part of one ear. The Indians tried to fire the cabin, but Eaton's band kept up such a constant fire they dared not approach near enough for the purpose, so set fire to a pen filled with wheat, which stood near, greatly helping Eaton by the bright light to see the Indians and take fair aim.

Toward daylight the Indians drew off, taking their dead and wounded, also every horse belonging to Eaton's band. Assuring himself that quiet reigned once more, Eaton ventured forth with his men, crossed the Puyallup, left the main road, climbed a high bluff and made their way through the woods to the Nisqually plains, ten miles distant, thence to Olympia, leaving the bodies of McAllister and Connell where they fell.

On the same day the 28th of October, before sunrise, two Indians came to my house on horses dripping with sweat, and told Mollhigh of the terrible massacre on White river and the fate of McAllister and Connell, which Mollhigh afterward told me when I visited him. Mollhigh's wife and mother were camped near my house, but came at once on hearing of the massacre, and began to weep, and wring their hands, and told me in Chinook to go at once or the Indians would kill me, which I did not understand. Mollhigh's wife told Mrs. Longmire afterward that I was the biggest fool she ever saw.

During this excitement, Mollhigh continued his work, talking to the Indians who were trying to persuade him to go and fight the whites. I noticed their excitement, which was greatly increased, when the thirty braves who had gone to the Bald Hills a few days before, arrived with their squaws, who were crying bitterly, which convinced me the news of the massacre had been sent them, and that I must get ready to leave, as the Indians were already grinding their knives and tomahawks on my grindstone, while they talked wildly and the squaws continued to cry. I fastened my revolver but left my gun in the house while I went after my horse.

While looking for my horse from a high point which commanded a view of the prairie, I heard the sound of horses' feet and stepping behind a tree I saw passing the two Indians who had brought news of the massacre, as I supposed, returning to Puyallup. Not finding my horse, I started home, but stopped at McLean Chambers, who lived where my house now stands, and who had already heard of the massacre. He begged me not to go back to my home, but I had left my gun and felt that I must have it. Finding I would go, he said I must take his horse, which I did, but while we were talking the same Indians I had seen while looking for my horse rode up, talked a few minutes and passed on. I believe I was the man they were hunting.

Shortly, I took McLean's horse and rode quietly home, to find it broken into, everything of value gone, every stitch of my clothing only which I wore, also my gun, which I looked for first on going into the house. Things of no value to the Indians were scattered over the yard, but not an Indian in sight—not even my trusted Mollhigh, who afterwards told me he went only to save my life. He told the Indians Longmire was a "cultus tillicum," and had always been good to the Indians, and not to kill him, but kill the "Tyees," the big men.

They answered his pleadings by saying if he did not come with them and help to fight they would kill him and "Longmire too," but if he would help them they would not kill Longmire. After long persuasion poor Mollhigh yielded, thinking this the only means to save either one of us, and went with the hostiles. He was true to me though, for after the war he came back and lived with me for years, always claiming that he saved my life.

Coming out of my house I looked carefully on all sides, with my revolver drawn, ready to fire at a minute's notice. I mounted my horse, which I put to a lively run, till I reached McLean Chambers, who at once took

him and started for Olympia. The Indians had stolen my last horse, and I must now make my way to Olympia, twenty-five miles, on foot, which was not a pleasant trip alone.

I walked over to Brail's, where T. M. Chambers now lives, to find his house deserted. He had left on first hearing of the massacre. I now concluded to go to Hughes, and get him to go with me, but dark came on, and hearing horses coming I dropped behind a pile of rails, which hid me from view. Soon I heard the peculiar hissing sound like "shee, shee," with which Indians always drive stock, and I knew they were stealing the last horses from the white settlers on the prairies.

Arriving at Hughes' he and his family had taken flight. I hardly knew which way to turn, but finally decided to go to George Edwards, a former employee of the Hudson Bay company, an Englishman who still lives at Yelm station. I thought if he was gone I must take to the woods. Fortunately for me he and his wife, one of the Nisqually tribe, were at home, but thought it unsafe to remain in the house, so we went to the barn and spent the night.

In the morning we started for Olympia, Edwards and I. I rode a horse belonging to the Hudson Bay company, known as old Roosh. Half an hour before our arrival word had reached Olympia from Dr. Tolmie, through Mollhigh's wife, that I was killed by the Indians the evening before. Much to my relief, my family had not heard the news when I arrived at home.

I met Charley Eaton, who was organizing a company of volunteers to go in pursuit of the Indians, bent on killing them all, else bring them to subjection. About sixty-seven men joined him, but on being sworn refused to take the oath, and deserted our ranks till only eighteen or twenty men remained in the company, which was called the Puget Sound Rangers. Charles Eaton was captain, James Tullis first lieutenant. The other officers' names I have forgotten. I

enlisted and we started at once to scour the northeastern part of Thurston county and all of Pierce for hostile Indians and learn where they were collected. For several days not an Indian could be found, most of them having gone to White River to make a grand stand at Connell's prairie, where Qualchin met them with about 300 Klickitats from east of the Cascade mountains. Qualchin was the son of Auhi, chief of the Klickitats, whom he led to battle.

Quiemuth led the Nisquallies, assisted by Leschi, and Kitsap the Puyallups. They were met here by companies commanded by Captians Hennes, Gilmore, Hayes, White and Swindle; also one by Isaac Hayes. These were all volunteer companies. The Indians fought all the morning in ambush, the volunteers failing to draw them out into open battle. In the afternoon the volunteers, finding they could gain nothing by this method of warfare, resorted to strategy.

One company was ordered to lie down on the ground, the rest to flee in confusion. The Indians, looking only at the fleeing volunteers and thinking the day was theirs, rushed madly forward with beating drums and wild war whoops till they came within fifty yards of the prostrate volunteers, who suddenly rose and opened fire, the fleeing volunteers returning, firing as they came.

A panic seized the Indians, who flung their drums and ran wildly, forgetting their dead and wounded, pell mell into the Puyallup river, swam to the other side, the volunteers following to the river bank, killing many as they tried to escape by swimming. Qualchin, not accustomed to fighting in the woods on foot, left for Yakima in disgust. The rest, left without a leader, and much reduced in numbers, scattered in small bands all over the country, stealing, burning houses and barns, killing the settlers and spreading terror everywhere.

The Puget Sound rangers in the meantime were attempting to hunt down fugitive Indians, all to no

purpose, however, for not an Indian could be found. We became convinced they were getting information and assistance from friends, and so reported to Governor Stevens, who ordered the arrest of all persons suspected of rendering them assistance. Arrests were made of all men whom we suspected of harboring Indians. They were taken to Fort Steilacoom and tried, but nothing could be proved against them, so they were released.

After this the volunteers began to find Indians in small bands all over the country, whom they killed or captured wherever found. However, depredations continued, and several more arrests were made, when Governor Stevens proclaimed martial law, to prevent persons suspected of aiding the Indians from returning to their homes, holding them as prisoners at Fort Steilacoom.