



THE GOVERNOR FROM WARREN,
NORMAN B. WILLEY

BY
Sheila D. Reddy



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AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Early one summer morning, I drove through McCall, Idaho, heading for Warren, one of Idaho's earliest mining towns, located in the Payette National Forest. Turning north off Highway 55 onto Warren Wagon Road, I followed the west shore of Payette Lake to the North Fork of the Payette River; then drove around Upper Payette Lake, across Secech Meadow and Steamboat Summit before I reached Warren Creek and the 1860's mining camp. The drive takes about two hours.

Folks were just beginning to stir in Warren when I joined the coffee drinkers around the woodstove at Winter Inn. After the sun had warmed the Inn's porch, I wandered out with my cup to think about the people who had come to Warren after gold was discovered in 1862.

Polly Bemis walked on the street in front of me. She owned a boarding house and Charlie ran a saloon in Warren before the couple moved to a ranch on the Salmon River.

Dr. Ford's cabin would have been easy to find if you needed a physician. In the summer it was surrounded by beautiful flowers. Ford tended his garden and the sick, in Warren's early years.

Another gardener, Ah Toy packed vegetables, strawberries, and cabbages from his terraced gardens near Hay's station above the South Fork of the Salmon River. Seeing him and his horse "Ki-Ti" loaded with "garden truck," coming down the street in the early spring, must have been a shining moment. On his way to town Ah Toy rode by placer diggings where White and Chinese miners were working side-by-side, looking for Warren gold.

Packtrains owned by Leo Hofen, the Patterson Brothers, Grostein & Binnard, and the China packers came into Warren from the north in the early days, hauling supplies over mountain trails. If the winter was long and snow deep, it might have been May or June before passes cleared enough to get pack animals through. Those months when supplies ran low, or were completely out, were a hardship for both Chinese and White miners.

But Warren is a resilient town, living through bad times and good. From the 1860's to the present, Warren continues to be a place where people live and work. Along Warren Creek new homes are being constructed beside cabins built by Warren pioneers.

People proved more fragile. In the hillside cemetery above Warren, sagging picket fences and fading grave markers are reminders of the perils of living in the wilderness. The names of people like Charles Royal (1821-1876), Rube Besse (1816-1898), young Dollie Morris Schieler and her unborn infant (1878-1900), and the Hexter boy, buried in 1887 beside his baby sister, can be found among the aspen and the pines. Many markers have grown dim or disappeared, but the story of Warren remains part of the history of the Territory and the State, thanks to a miner who became one of Idaho's Territorial lawmakers and Idaho's second Governor, the Governor from Warren, Norman B. Willey.

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Born on March 25, 1838, at Guilford, New York, Norman B. Willey was educated at the Delaware Literary Institute in Franklin, New York. In the fall of 1858, Willey then twenty years old, headed west to California to mine gold. For six years, before coming to Idaho Territory in 1864, Willey worked in California's goldfields. Those years changed and forever effected his life, for as long as he lived, Willey was a miner.

THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN IDAHO

In the fall of 1860, after sneaking into Nez Perce country, E.D. Pierce discovered gold on Oro Fino Creek in what would become Idaho (Pierce 1975:81). News of the strike and those that followed were reported in newspapers printed in the older mining camps in California and Oregon. Reading about the huge bonanzas, miners like Willey sold their worked-out claims and booked passage down the Columbia River.

Coming inland, newcomers stopped at Lewiston, or "tent town," at the confluence of the Snake and Clearwater Rivers for news of the latest strike and to get supplies. If they were lucky and had money, they bought or rented a horse, then joined the line of prospectors traveling along Indian trails to the mining camps.

The winter of 1861-62 followed a mild, deceptively lethargic autumn, but just before Christmas temperatures plummeted. Then heavy snows began falling, trapping hundreds of prospectors in mountain camps with few supplies. It was May before pack trains could get through drifts blocking mountain passes. That winter the only food to reach the starving miners was packed in on the backs of men crossing the mountains on snowshoes or skis, at the high cost of 40 cents a pound (Defenbach 1933:274-5).

After the weather warmed and snow packs began melting, rivers raged and flooded. None of this dampened the spirits or the rush of men to the gold fields where water was vital. They dug ditches, re-routing melt water through sluice boxes to wash gold from placer gravels. Claims were bought and sold until all the paying ground was taken. By midsummer, newcomers were prospecting far beyond established camps for richer ground. In the fall of 1862, Jim Warren discovered gold in a valley south of the Salmon River.

WARREN'S DIGGINGS

Warren's Diggings, was located in a green mountain valley, along the banks of Warren Creek. Unlike so many wild gold camps of the 1860's, the population was heavily weighted with steady, veteran California miners, like Norman Willey. In Warren's Diggings, miners were "a different and more stable type, more orderly, industrious and thrifty" (Defenbach 1933:276).

Another early pioneer, John Hailey, wrote of his experience of bringing a saddle train of 16 California miners into Idaho Territory in the Spring of 1863:

I would like to state here that I have traveled and "roughed" it a great deal in this western country with many different men, but these sixteen passengers, who were all

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California miners, were the best all-around traveling companions I ever had. Every man did his part in camp; no grumbling or growling on the road, but on the contrary, all were pleasant and agreeable. They were well informed, intelligent men (Hailey 1910:62).

Men were not the only ones drawn to Warrens. The first woman in the Florence camp in 1862, Mrs. Theodore Schultze, moved the next season, twenty-seven miles south to Warrens, finding it a much better and safer place to live. Later, Mrs. Schultze wrote about the quality and law-abiding temperament of Warren's early population, contrasting it to the wilder, lawless element in Florence (Schultze 1883).

Mrs. Schultze was in a good position to judge for she opened Warren's first boarding house after her move across the river. Although she charged the outrageous price of \$3.00 a meal, she was always busy. On Sundays she remembered serving over 200 meals, working 18 hours a day to keep up with demand. Supplies were in short supply in those early days, but gold dust filled every available vessel (Schultze 1883).

An Oregon miner's recollection's after coming into Idaho Territory were similar to Mrs. Schultze's. He noted:

It was not an uncommon thing to see, on entering a miner's cabin, an eight quart pan filled to the brim with gold dust washed out in two weeks. All manner of vessels such as oyster cans, yeast boxes, and pickle bottles, were in demand in which to store the precious dust (Defenbach 1933:273).

Leo Hofen, owned a grocery store in Warrens from 1865 to 1874. He recalled seeing gold dust stored in old rubber boots, sitting on a cabin shelf (Hofen 1879).

Pioneer writer, W.A. Goulder, in his book Reminiscences, described what travel was like in those early days. One favorite stopping spot in 1864, was located at Cold Springs on the Great Camas Prairie south of Lewiston. Goulder remembered the spot:

Here, there was an abundance of wood, excellent pasturage, with a good running stream of water and fine springs, making it an ideal camping place. Here sometimes could be found encamped, of an evening, a good-sized Indian village, with its white tepees, or lodges, several large pack trains, some freight wagons, and other vehicles (Goulder 1909:325-6).

Traveling to his mining claim at Pierce in the winter of 1864-65, Goulder and an expressman tried to avoid the snow deep on the Prairie. Seeking the shelter of Clearwater Canyon, the two men headed for the trail along the right bank:

We traveled on foot, leading an Indian pony on which were packed our blankets and provisions with the mail and express matter...we went into camp under the bank of the river, where there was a good supply of driftwood, which enabled us

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to build a roaring fire. We fed the pony a few pounds of oats, then hobbled him and let him go among the bunch-grass that grew along the narrow strip of bottom land (Ibid.:365).

On the third day out they were,
...facing a fierce wind through a blinding snowstorm...For miles in places, the trail was a narrow shelf hung on the brow of a nearly perpendicular wall, and of just sufficient width to permit the sure-footed Indian ponies...This trail was almost daily used by the Indians during the season of good weather...Approaching the [Schultze] ferry, we passed a large party of Indian hunters, encamped on a narrow strip of river bottom (ibid.:367)....

At the ferry we found the ferryman and his assistant, of course, besides a goodly number of stalwart miners and adventurers from the mining camps...Some of the miners...concluded to return to Pierce City with us...and the morning found us climbing the long hill toward the tableland. We were far from being a dejected or despondent crowd. The boys struck up,... "Oh! I wish I was in Dixie! That sunny land where I was born in early one Sunday mornin'. Look away down South in Dixie." All joined most heartily in the chorus...It was still snowing heavily, with the thick black clouds seemingly but a little way above our heads (ibid.:368).

On reaching Texas Ranch in the afternoon they found another party of miners. The group stopped and exchanged news until the day was gone. When the party decided to stay the night at Texas Ranch, "we found that the entire floor space of the little cabin was required for the purpose of spreading our blankets."

On the sixth day out of Lewiston, at noon, they reach, "the edge of the big forest, seven miles from Pierce City...It was already growing dark when we reached town, where the bright lights were shining in every window" (Goulder 1909:369).

Goulder noted winter passed in the mining camp at Pierce as it passed in most camps. "Every cabin had its chessboard, pile of old magazines and old newspapers." Goulder vividly remembered how the important historical events of 1865, reached across the nation and touched the lives of every man living in the Territory: While in Lewiston, I had heard something about Sherman "marching through Georgia." Sometime after reaching home the news reached us of the surrender of Lee and the collapse of the Southern Confederacy. Then we heard of the capture of Jeff Davis and his tragic end by being "hanged on a sour apple-tree" (Goulder 1909:373).

...The next news that reached us was to the effect that the Federal Government had sent the United States Marshal to Lewiston with positive orders to remove the archives [papers of the Territorial Government] to Boise [the new Territorial

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Capital] and that said order had been carried out to the letter (ibid.:374)...

I think it was near the close of the month of April in this year, 1865, that we were one forenoon at work in Garibaldi Gulch, helping some of our neighbors clear away rubbish and debris from the site of an old reservoir and assisting to make the needed repairs. While thus engaged, Stephen Waymire ...came upon the scene, bringing us the sad and startling news that President Lincoln had been assassinated. At first, we thought he was joking, but we were soon convinced that his story, astounding and incredible as it seemed, was only too true. The young man's eyes were filled with tears and his whole being seemed crushed under his burden of sorrow. No other word was spoken by any of the company. We silently gathered our tools and we all went mournfully to our cabins... A short repast [meal], with the fewest words possible, was eaten and then all went to town, where we found the only flag in the camp at half-mast with groups of men standing around...The little town had been suddenly changed from a scene of business activity and social gaiety to one of the deepest silence, gloom and sorrow (Goulder 1909:375-6).

Civil War sentiments were reflected at Warren's Camp where miners from the south segregated in a settlement at the mouth of Slaughter Creek, named Richmond. Northern Unionists gathered a mile below, at a settlement they named Washington. Richmond, like the confederacy was to fall, for it was found to be located on rich placer ground, while Washington was just off the strike and lived on to become known as Warren's, later shortened to Warren.

In his History of Idaho County (1879) Leo Hofen reported that the population of Warren swelled to 1,500 in 1865, then dropped to 500 by the late Fall of 1867, and swelled again to 1,200 in 1868 when quartz bearing ores were found. According to Hofen, quartz mining didn't pay, and by the fall of 1872, the population had dropped again to 400. But, after Chinese miners were allowed in Warrens the population jumped again to 1,200.

Hofen recorded the following early events in Warren: the first sawmills were built in the spring of 1868; the first quartz mill was a five stamp mill powered by water from Slaughter Creek, built by Godfred Gamble; a second five stamp mill, located on Steamboat Creek five miles above Warren, was run by Leland and Gamble; a fifteen stamp steam mill was moved from Florence to the Charity Ledge mine two miles from Warren; in 1873, stockholders purchased the Rescue Ledge, moved in a mill, taking the ore from "chimney" deposits; and arrastras were built by Hutton and Johnson, and by John Bemis, both on Steamboat Creek.

Hofen noted in 1879, that Warren's placer deposits were five times more extensive that those at Florence and Elk City. Placer deposits extended for 16 miles up and down Warren Creek, and were

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from 6 to 20 feet deep; the gold recovered assayed from 12 to 17 dollars per ounce.

In the fourteen years between 1865 and 1879, no fire, according to Hofen, destroyed structures in Warren. In 1869, the county seat was moved from Florence to Warren, and by 1872, a weekly mail run was coming into Warren from Lewiston, replacing the express company's deliveries.

J. M. Hutton (1883) added additional information about early Warren. In 1868, he and Mr. Johnson were in partnership, and worked the Samson mine for two seasons. According to Hutton, the Samson mine, at that time, was the richest in the Warren District, averaging \$25 a ton; but even ore of that paying quality couldn't cover the heavy expenses and make a profit. One after another mines were abandoned. Hutton agrees with Hofen on this point. He also noted the decision allowing Chinese miners to come into Warren.

As Warren's population dwindled in the late 1860's, those who pulled out left behind a landscape scarred and desolate. The remaining miners took a vote, allowing Chinese miners into the camp. Hutton records the date as 1869. According to Hutton, white miners began at once selling their claims to Chinese miners and leaving for the Boise Basin.

NORMAN B. WILLEY (N.B.W. or W.) CORRESPONDENT

Newspaper editors throughout the Territory were continually searching for correspondents to provide news from outlying camps. Mine ownership, production, humor, and local happenings helped to supply information, add color and fill up pages. Norman B. Willey, or N.B.W. as he became known, became one of many who sent in columns. For their trouble, it is possible correspondents received a free subscription, and a bit of notoriety.

For Willey, it was an opportunity to use his creative and literary skills. Later, however, it later became an opportunity to voice his political views. People all over the Territory came to know his name. Subscribers read with interest his columns in all the Territorial newspapers. He wrote about mining and local events in a human and humorous way that everyone could relate to.

Very few photographs of Willey are available. Those that exist appear to have been taken during his term as Governor. They show him as a strong, balding man, with graying hair and pale eyes. In this cover photograph his suit appears old, his shoes well worn; matters insignificant when compared to those of state, no doubt of more importance to him. It's his writings, however, that reveal his true personality; a hardworking man, who was able to understand the beauty around him; a man of humor and economy.

"Friends who knew Willey well, speak of the unusual quality of his voice, comparing it to the rich tones of an organ" (21st. ISH Biennial Report). Willey's family remembered him for his strength and robust physique (Wallace Press Times 11/3/1921).

By 1866, Willey was appointed as Idaho County Superintendent of Schools. In 1872, he was elected to the House of Representa-

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tives from Idaho County, Idaho Territory. But Willey's real legacy, are his writings, where he recorded the day-to-day events of life in a mountain mining town in the 1800's. The following selected articles, written in 1872 by Willey for the Idaho Signal newspaper in Lewiston, Idaho Territory, are unique and revealing, of both the man and the community:

From our Regular Correspondent: LETTER FROM WARRENS
Warrens Diggings, I.T., April 5, 1872 [Apr. 13, 1872 issue]
EDITOR [Idaho] SIGNAL:

There is about three feet of snow on level ground here, yet, but it is very wet. The weather is pronounced fine for the season. Nothing has been done towards placer mining. A few adventurous spirits rally out occasionally with shovels and sound the depths of snow, then retire disconsolately to their cabins. Some drifting has usually been done here in winter, but this season Carver & Co. only have taken out dirt. They would have done much more work, but their ground was too wet to be drifted successfully. The Rescue mill and mine are still working in a moderate way. I hear the following figures stated as the result of the last clean-up, made a few days since: Length of run, 11 days; amount of rock estimated at 110 tons--proceeds. \$1,428. At present the quality of the rock is said to be improving in the eastern part of the mine, but the ledge is so narrow that the comparatively few men at work find it impossible to keep the ten stamps running all the time. N.B.W.

Warrens, I.T., May 11, 1872 [May 18, 1872 issue]
EDITOR IDAHO SIGNAL:

With the approach of Summer the mining interests of the camp are awakening from their sleep of the last six long months duration. Several of the Chinese companies along the creek have been stripping for the last week or ten days, but none, I think, have "washed" any yet. Several companies, not Chinese in their constitution, have also commenced work. Church & Co., near the lower end of the meadows, are ground-sluicing with a good degree of success. Carver & Co. are doing the same thing, and find, though rather late in the day, that even a moderate stream of water helps wonderfully to move a bank of dirt. Brooks & Cronan are preparing timbers with the intention of pushing their drain to the bed-rock this season. This is the heaviest job of the kind undertaken in this camp. All the hydraulic companies are yet making desperate efforts to get water through their ditches.

Several sales of mining ground have taken place lately. The whole claims of Gibbs & Co. were sold to Klippel Bros. and others for \$1,000. A half interest in the ground of Mitchell & Murphy has also been sold for \$600. The particulars of the other sales I am not informed of.

The Rescue mine and mill are silent. John Holman and five

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others formerly employed by this concern, have secured interests in the claims of the Charity ledge, formerly worked by the Pioneer Mill Co. and others, but now owned by, I believe by W.A. Ball, and have been for some time past clearing out and timbering up the old tunnel, and propose extracting rock as soon as the preliminary work is finished. Some who are acquainted with quartz believe this ledge is better than the Rescue, notwithstanding the small net result of much of its rock heretofore worked. Others of the Rescue hands have bought into placer claims or are working for wages.

A project has lately been set on foot in this country to build a wagon-road between this place and Upper Weiser valley, by means of a joint stock company. Subscriptions to the project are liberal. I will keep you posted as the progress of the same in [the] future. N.B.W.

Warrens, I.T., June 8, 1872 [June 15, 1872 issue]

EDITOR IDAHO SIGNAL:

Our principal topic of thought and conversation for the last week has been the unprecedented high water. In the town some damage was done last Saturday and Sunday. Surprise's stable and several small buildings were carried away and others undermined. In Dryer's blacksmith shop the water stood a foot deep and ran boldly from there down the main street. The floors of May's and Hofen's stores were two or three inches above high water mark.

In Smith's gulch a huge bulkhead, containing accumulative tailings of the claims above gave way and the current distributed them over Judge Keep's claim below...The only benefit of the flood that I know of was on Bright & Johnson's claims on Steamboat; they were enabled by judicious application to sluice off a vast amount of tailings in a short time.

Holman & Co. are extracting rock from the Charity ledge, and at the same time building a road and repairing Ball's arrastra. They intend as soon as possible to erect a five stamp battery, the motive power to be applied by the water wheel of the arrastra, which is well adapted to the purpose. Their prospects are very encouraging.

Along Steamboat creek the following placer claims are running with their full force: Bright & Johnson, J.B. Jenkins, Guharette, Ford & Co., and A. Bemis.

The postponement of the election scarcely suits anyone. It keeps expectant candidates in suspense too long...Our sheriff who is a candidate for re-election mounted a new suit of black and boiled shirt just previously, and now looks sour about it. He says they ought to have put it off till Christmas, and then one good drunk would have done for the whole...N.B.W.

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Warrens, I.T., June 19, 1872 [June 22, 1872 issue]

EDITOR IDAHO SIGNAL:

Since my last writing the high waters hereabouts have sub-sided within reasonable bounds and our citizens have resumed their labors.

On the 15th inst. pack-trains arrived bringing much needed supplies. Many articles have become exhausted; even whiskey, that necessity of a miner, was scarce, and only by diluting to the most extreme limit had the foundation been kept up, so when the new supply arrived and Ripson and Auchinvole filled their decanters, the boys become wild with hilarity and pulled hair and pounded noses and ribs to their hearts content. The change was too sudden, but fortunately no serious results have followed.

Mitchell & Co., on the Meadows, have struck a better pay than has been found before in that region for years. They hired several White men and about ten Chinamen, and their ground is about \$10 diggings...C. Bemis & Sanderson have sold out their hydraulic claims and ditches on Poverty Bar... Morris & Kelly are running their claims on Smith's gulch day an night. It will be some weeks before they commence cleaning up anything, as they have to take every advantage of flush of water, but they believe their prospects to be better than last year.

On the South Fork of Salmon all the ranches are smiling and their owners rejoice. Several persons are also engaged on the high bars mining, but there is too much snow in that direction yet for distant prospecting to be undertaken.

Several strangers have arrived from different quarters, and altogether the camp wears perhaps a more flourishing aspect than last year. N.B.W.

Warrens, I.T., July 3, 1872 [July 6, 1872 issue]

EDITOR IDAHO SIGNAL

In active quartz operations there is nothing new here. J.M. Crooks arrived some days since to settle matters connected with the Pioneer Mill, as receiver. The machinery leased and taken from the mill, was returned and the rent paid. It was hoped that some arrangement could be made for its sale, but none were effected.

On the South Fork of the Salmon river several ranches have been taken up of late years that promise well for their owners. Near the forks the Rains Bros. have located and have twenty-five or fifty acres under cultivation.

Next above is S. [Three-Fingered] Smith, with about the same quantity under plow, and further up the river and nearest of all to Warrens, Geo. Woodward and Solon Hall have settled and have made considerable improvements. Several others have made a beginning. All these raise such vegetables as are marketable in the camps near by, without venturing on extensive crops of grain. As they all have good

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facilities for irrigation they have not suffered so much from the drouth as many in other localities.

From Mr. Shumway, who has just arrived from the Payette Diggings, we learn that all the miners are prospering reasonably well, with indications of a supply of water later than usual, and that considerable prospecting is going on in that vicinity. N.B.W.

Warrens, I.T., July 10, 1872 [July 20, 1872 issue]

EDITOR IDAHO SIGNAL:

On the Fourth of July we performed such feats of celebration as might reasonably have been expected of us. The thirteen guns echoed over the hills at sunrise. At noon thirty seven more belched forth their thunders, and at intervals during the afternoon an indefinite number followed, equal to the supposed number of our glorious sisterhood in times to come. In the afternoon, Hon. J.W. Poe delivered an oration...

Among the arrivals this week I observe Mr. C. Walker, Revenue Collector, and A.E. Ishans, from your place. Where the turkey is, &c...

At Miller's Camp men are in high spirits, with every reasonable prospect of doing better than ever before. N.B.W.

Warrens, I.T., September, 4, 1872 [Sept. 7, 1872 issue]

EDITOR IDAHO SIGNAL:

Work is now being prosecuted on three of our ledges--the Charity, the Wolverine, and the Rescue, with good prospects of the Keystone starting up soon. At the Rescue they are reorganizing the mill and cleaning out things. "No. 2" left a few days since for Silver City to procure men to work in the mine, there being not more than twenty or thirty unemployed men in camp; but these men, being natives to the manner born, want to see some reasonable prospect of getting their pay before going to work, whereas strangers may not, perhaps, be quite so particular.

Ben Morris and Jim Poe started out the other day into the mountains beyond the Salmon river to recuperate by a couple of weeks' trip, their health and energies exhausted by severe application during court. They were well prepared to make a vigorous retreat in case of an attack by grizzlies or mountain goats, or of those of the masculine gender, and were also well furnished with antidotes against bites of venomous reptiles, which are said to abound in that quarter. They propose to sink a hole or two on the journey in case they find a suitable locality, and on their way back expect to locate a route for the Northern Pacific railroad through Warrens. May success attend their undertaking.

An interest in the Miller's Camp diggings has lately changed hands for \$1,100, I hear, which is certainly cheap...

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The Charity boys start their four-stamp battery next week. A new ledge has lately been discovered on the Washington ridge, about three miles east of town...Some pieces selected of course, but not the choicest, assayed \$170 per ton, about equally divided between gold and silver. N.B.W.

Warrens, I.T., October 23, 1872 [Nov. 2, 1872 issue]

EDITOR IDAHO SIGNAL:

With the approach of cold weather all prospecting parties who have been examining the country eastward and southward of this place have returned. The result of these operations may be briefly summed up--no paying diggings have been found. In the triangular section of country between Warrens, Lemhi, and Loon Creek, however, two basins are known to exist; which contain gold, but whether in paying quantities remains to be demonstrated. The first is nearly in a due east direction from here, and is on a stream which puts into the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. It was visited by a party from here as long ago as '64', and considerable prospecting done then and some since. Just enough gold has been found to induce people to keep on prospecting, but the ground in the principal streams is deep, and where gold ought to exist in quantities no one has reached bed rock. In this neighborhood twenty-two cents to the pan has been obtained. Between the stream in question and the South Fork several very considerable streams put into [the] Salmon River. Big Creek, Marble Creek, Monument Creek and several others, but only trifling prospects are to be found. All the intervening country, as Mr. Poe puts it, "stands on end."

The other place referred to where hotter prospects exists, is on the East Fork of the South Fork, about fifty miles from Warrens. Two moderate sized streams unite to form this branch, along the banks and bars of which all who have visited it, concur in saying that pretty fair rocker diggings exist if it wasn't so far away from anywhere. Quite extensive banks and beds of gravel occur there, which prospect something from the top down and contain quartz boulders with gold visible to the naked eye. The capability of this location to pay wages and upwards, will be very seriously inquired into next season.

At the usual meeting of our County Commissioners last week nothing of special importance occurred. Bills were audited to the amount of \$4,340, which is said to equal two-thirds the entire income of the county for the year. More economy must be exercised somewhere or we will not get out of debt. Politics are looking up as the election approaches. The Republican candidate for Sheriff, W.J. Kelly, has declined the nomination and no person has been substituted by the party. John Feckler of Slate Creek is running as an Independent candidate and will likely receive some support from Republicans. N.B.W.

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Obviously Willey was among the politicians he wrote about, but he did not use his column to publicize his own election. Willey's comments on exercising economy reflect the attitude of the men he joined in the Legislature in Seventh Session in 1872, a session that convened at Boise City on December 2, 1872, and adjourned on January 10, 1873.

Hailey commented that the Seventh Session of the Legislature was the most "careful and considerate" legislative body to ever meet in the Territory. He added, "They did not enact as many laws as did the past sessions, but most, if not all of the laws they made were good and in the interest of economy" (Hailey 1910:173).

One reason for their sense of economic concentration came from Congressional cuts to Territorial office holders. Hailey noted:

Some accounted for the good work they did upon the grounds that Congress had cut their pay, so they had little money to spend outside after paying board bills. They did not visit places of expensive amusements, but attended strictly to the command of their constituents. Their legislation was most all on lines of reducing expenses in Territorial and county governments which lightened the burden of taxation, and seemed to have a good effect on county and Territorial officers...For the first time the people, the legislature and officials seemed to realize the extravagances in Territorial government must stop (Hailey 1910:174).

Even Governor T. W. Bennett's address to the Legislative body reflected this attitude of reform. The glory and boom days of the mining camps had passed and populations decreased. Bennett's speech directed the men toward a more stable economy, saying:

Taxation, at best, is one of the heavy burdens of any people, and when it is laid recklessly, and unreasonably, it becomes almost unbearable, and kindles a spirit of insubordination and distrust. 'Public confidence becomes weak, enterprise dies out, and business stagnates.' And especially is this the case in a Territory like ours, where settlements are sparse and people poor. That representative of the people will do himself honor who labors most assiduously to lighten, as far as possible, the demands on the pockets of the taxpayer...There is always more danger of governing a people too much than too little (Hailey 1910:175).

And so Willey and his constituents stayed in their rooms, and "applied the pruning knife" (Hailey 1910:179) until the session ended in January. An unidentified correspondent from Warren describes Willey's return home along with some local news in the Idaho Signal.

(From an occasional correspondent)
Warrens, Feb. 8, 1873

Our hearts were gladdened yesterday by the arrival of our old friend Hon. N.B. Willey, late of the Idaho Legislature. It must be a relief to him to shake off the burden he has so

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honestly and faithfully borne during the late session. He looks rather weary after his trip over the snow, but will soon recover his lost energies here, where no "vetoes" can cast a gloom over the countenances of honest men.

Theodore Schwartz, our expressman who had his feet badly frozen last trip, is recovering rapidly and will soon be able to resume his trips.

The Rescue and Charity quartz mines are both yielding excellent ore in reasonable quantities. Assays were made this week by Richard Hurley and Leo Hofen, both resulting about the same. The Rescue No.1 yields nearly twenty-five hundred dollars in gold per ton. The Charity pays well. Bloomer and Reilly expect to start their ten stamps on the Charity next week. (signed, W.X.Y.)

On July 12, 1873, the Idaho Signal published a "Certificate of Incorporation" for the Rescue Mine, listing N.B. Willey as a stock-holder and trustee. In a letter from Warren to The Idaho Statesman dated Aug. 20, 1873, Willey wrote:

Mining is usually prosperous. There are no idle men in camp, who are on the work, and Chinamen have been in demand. On week days our streets are solitary and deserted apparently, but business men assure me that trade is by no means dull. The placer claims working are not numerous, but they are paying better than for the three past years.

The Charity mill is running steadily. The rock, as yet taken out of the lower tunnel, has not proved rich, but it pays at least a fair profit. The Rescue company is progressing. Mr. Leland, who is largely interested in it, has been canvassing here and in Florence, until the late session in court, and has secured subscriptions amounting to 1600 shares. He has no doubt of being able to obtain subscriptions enough to make 2000 shares, which will furnish the company with \$7,500 cash to commence operations. Hoisting machinery of only moderate power will be required, as the mine contains but little water and the ledge has pay rock from the start...W.

In a letter to The Idaho Statesman, Willey updated who was mining in Warren and where claims were located:

Warrens, I.T., June 10, 1874 [June 20, 1874 issue]

Editor Statesman: Mining operations throughout the entire Camp may now said to be in full blast. Spring opened about two weeks later than last year, and while the fall of snow had been lighter than common during the later part of Winter, it is nevertheless, going away in such a manner as to do the most good. A brief mention of some of the principal claims and companies may be admissible.

Near the lower end of the meadow the hydraulic claim of Ballow & Co., is running upon their usual good ground. The creek claim of Butler & Co., nearby is working with their

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usual number of hands. A sale of a set of claims has recently been made to a China Company at \$850, which is a bargain to the Mongolians. Osborne & Co., and Willey & Carr, are also working their old claims. Geo. Ribott is preparing his ground for active operations as soon as the water subsides. Next to him the well known claim of Klippel Bros. & Co., is being pushed with their accustomed vigor. Several China Companies are also washing hereabouts. Above town, McGinty is working a considerable force, and between him and Summit Flat there are several companies of White men and a few Chinamen, mostly ground sluicing. In Charity Gulch, Farmer & Large are running a pipe; in Smith's Gulch, four companies are operating--B. Besse, Wm. J. Kelly & Co., H. Savage, and Saux & McLane. In Steamboat, Ford & Co., are washing, perhaps the best appointed claim in Camp. On Thomas Creek, Bright and Floyd are running both hill and creek claim, and in excellent ground. On Mathison's Creek and Huston's Creek a considerable number of Chinamen are at work. On Rabbit Creek, Baker & Co., are running two pipes with excellent prospects. Several other parties are also at work here. This creek is in a slate range and the gold is on the coarse order. It is so far from town--about ten miles northeast--that professional prospectors, those fellows who beckon you slyly around corners and wink mysterious winks at you, could scarcely go there and get back to town the same day, and therefore it has not heretofore received the attention that its merits and deserved. Parties have already started out prospecting to the southward of here, beyond the South Fork; but it is not probable that the snow will yet admit of their prospecting far into that mountainous region. Rumors have been afloat here throughout the Winter of "new diggings" somewhere between here and Lemhi county, but what foundation of fact they have remains to be seen. Grostein's [pack] train with the Rescue hoisting machinery, arrived a few days since. No long delay is now anticipated in starting up the mine. Messrs. Grostein & Binnard succeed Mr. Leo Hofen in merchandising, and Mr. Hofen proposes to open an office for the purchase of gold dust and such other similar businesses as may fall his way. Full stocks of goods are now in Camp, or near at hand, including the inevitable whiskey, and things look rather lively around these evenings, but cash money is of course still scarce. W.

In 1876, Willey updated events at Warrens in letters to The Idaho Statesman:

Warren's, I.T., May 14, 1876 [May 27, 1876 issue]

To a person traveling along [the] Salmon river, evidence of improvement are everywhere discernable. At Slate creek the ranches of Mr. Rhett and Mr. Cone are in fine condition. Mr. Shearer's place, at Shearer's ferry, is especially noticeable. All the fruits, berries, and flowers that can grow

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in this latitude are here in perfection as great care and a thorough knowledge of horticulture can bring them. The fruit crop throughout the country will be large, it being now past the reach of frost.

A wagon road is now being graded down the White Bird hill, which will be a convenience to the inhabitants of that region.

In Warrens, (at the present writing) the snow is nearly gone, and mining operations are fairly under way. Five or six companies are washing and more will be in a few days. At the camp on Prouse [sic, Grouse] creek, twelve miles northwest, however, the snow still lies from five to ten feet deep and it will be some time yet before any mining is done. It is doubtful whether the snow falls as deep as it does here in any mining locality in the Territory.

At the Charity ledge Chas. Johnson has been taking out rock during the winter with a small force of men. It is claimed to be a better grade of rock than any before taken from the ledge ...Very cheering news has been received from Mr. Leland, who went to Boston early in the winter in the interest of the Rescue mining company. It is reported that he has succeeded in organizing a company there with ample capital, who will take hold of several ledges here in dead earnest.

The mail service on both the Weiser and Lewiston routes from this place has been perfectly satisfactory for a long time. Not a variation from schedule time has occurred during the winter, which is saying a good deal for a country of eternal snows and mountains like this. W.

Warrens, Idaho Co., I.T., July 12, 1876 (Aug. 19 issue)

Mining matters in this part of the country continue much the same as in former years. Some claims are worked out and others are being opened...There are rather more Chinamen at work now than at any former time. I learn that the claim of Sam Large is paying extremely well, so that he expects to clear several thousand dollars this season. On Grouse Creek, 12 miles northwest from Warrens, some gold-bearing ground was discovered last fall, of which mention was made in the Statesman, but owing to the short supply of water the creek has not turned out what was expected of it....

In the forenoon of Sunday, Aug. 6th, subterranean rumblings were generally observed throughout this section, followed by slight tremors of an earthquake. The shock seemed slight, however, to those accustomed to California earthquakes. On the following Tuesday the wind sprung up from the direction of old Boreas, and during the night four inches of new snow fell, an unprecedented occurrence for this time of year [July], and all owing to that d--d earthquake, the miners say.

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In quartz, very little is doing. Chas. Johnson is crushing the rock he took out of the Charity ledge last winter slowly in his arrastra, but the Rescue mine still continues silent... W.

For the most part, the years between 1873 and 1877 appear to have slipped quietly by. Hailey writes of that period, "For the four years between 1873 and 1877, we can say but little, as there was no great improvements made and nothing of a startling nature took place" (Hailey 1910: 195). Beneath that quiet under-current, however, trouble was brewing.

In the Spring of 1877, the non-treaty Nez Perce were gathering at Tolo Lake near Grangeville, after agreeing to be removed to the reservation at Lapwai, when a group of young warriors turned to the warpath, killing several settlers in the Salmon River Country. Their actions effectively thrust all the non-treaty bands into the Nez Perce War. Idaho Statesman editor, Milton Kelly, reported:

On the first news of the Indian war and massacre of the citizens along the Salmon river, together with the statement of General Howard that the hostiles would make for the Weiser valley, we knew that those citizens were defenseless and most exposed of any of the settlements in Southern Idaho, and asked the Governor for arms and ammunition, where we promised to go in person and place in the hands of the citizens in the shortest possible time for their protection. Governor Brayman promptly responded to our request and gave us twenty-five needle guns, five pistols and one thousand rounds of ammunition. Major Collins detailed Corporal John W. Simmons to accompany us, and the Northwestern Stage Co. furnished transportation to the mouth of the Weiser, seventy miles. A.M. Simmons took us five miles to Mr. Jefferys, and Mr. Jefferys furnished a team for the balance of the trip and twelve mounted citizens received guns and followed us to Salubria, in the Upper Weiser Valley--one hundred and ten miles from Boise City--which we reached in twenty-six hours after leaving, or twenty-eight hours after the first news reached here [Boise]. No one along the road had heard the news, until we reached Salubria. Solon Hall's mail carrier had arrived that morning from Warrens and brought the news of the massacre to Indian valley and the Upper Weiser valley, though not fully credited until confirmed by the dispatch of General Howard and Indian Agent Monteith, which we carried with us (June 26, 1877).

Newspapers continued to follow the trail of the Nez Perce out of Idaho, to their capture at Bear Paw, near the Canadian border on October 5, 1877. From Warren, Willey wrote the following assessment of General Howard and the effects of war on the mining community:

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November 20, 1877 [December 8, 1877 issue, Idaho Statesman]
Now that the Indian war has passed away from us to the eastward, and has been dissipated like a thunder cloud, we breathe freer, though not without some apprehensions for the future. The injury to the material prosperity of North Idaho has been very great; its traces will remain for the next generation. The campaign might have been better conducted. The almost unanimous opinion among those who live about the seat of war in Idaho, and have witnessed its operations, is that the commanding officer [O.O. Howard] is a very pleasant and amiable gentleman, undoubtedly a good military man, according to the doctrines of West Point, but no Indian fighter. Scores of facts are related which have established this belief...The time is almost certain to come--we hope it may be very remote---when a war will occur with the Spokanes and other allied tribes. The same causes which produced the Nez Perce War are also at work in that quarter. Should such a war occur, we hope that a man more capable of comprehending the state of the case than Gen. Howard, may be placed at the head of affairs.

The only direct damage done to Warrens mining district by the war was the loss of about one-fourth of the best mining season. But the indirect damage, by high freight, has been considerable. At the outset all the pack-trains in the country went into the services of the Government. We were but poorly supplied with merchandise at best. A few very small trains kept running during the summer, but nothing near enough to supply the demand. In October, M. Storms chartered an Indian train of fifty packs to bring him flour from Mt. Idaho [near Grangeville] at eight cents freight. This trip gave them all the money they wanted and they refused to come again. Ten cents was offered by others, but no transportation could be had and about two hundred Chinamen and considerable many white men at once left camp. At present writing, a train of sixty packs, belonging to Grostein & Binnard, is on the way from Lewiston with freight, at twelve cents, which, if it arrives, will keep the camp from starvation.

The winter is setting in unusually stormy and severe, and the weather prophets predict a tightner...N.B.W.

The Idaho Statesman editor, Milton Kelly often interviewed visitors coming into Boise to get news of the folks living in the northern communities. In the May 30, 1878 issue, he noted:

Solon Hall of Indian valley and Thos. Clay of Warrens, have been in town for two or three days. From Mr. Clay we learn that a Boston company will probably open up some of the rich quartz veins of Warrens this summer. Our old friend W.J. Kelly is running a successful blacksmith shop in Warrens. He has also some good placer claims along the Salmon river.

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N.B. Willey, well known here as the ablest representative ever sent to the legislature from Idaho county, is also engaged in mining.

1878 brought another Indian uprising to Idaho Territory, the Bannock War. In a letter to The Idaho Statesman, Willey reviews mining and the local situation:

Warrens, I.T., May 17, 1878 [June 1, 1878 issue]

The season for placer mining opened in this camp much earlier than usual. Many claims commenced work in March, but the extreme cold and stormy weather since has interfered with steady work. The outlook is favorable. There will be more money taken out than usual. Not that there are any bonanzas being struck, but work is better organized in every direction. A small force of men have been engaged taking rock out from the Rescue mine throughout the winter, until the melting snow made the mine very wet...a five stamp steam mill is now running on the ore...The rock is undoubtedly of good paying quality, though not so rich as the chimney worked several years since. This mine is understood to be leased to a company of capitalists residing mostly in Boston, who intend working the mine in better shape. The chimney above referred to was exhausted above the level where the main tunnel strikes the ledge, and most of the good rock taken out for about 53 feet below, as deep as it could be kept dry by hand. The rock here paid from forty to sixty dollars per ton. One of their agents, Mr. Dickinson, is now here and has opened an assay office. Mr. True was here in March, and is now understood to be on his way to San Francisco to procure requisite machinery...There is still a scarcity of supplies, as only one [pack] train has arrived here. Very great preparations have been made throughout North Idaho for furnishing Government supplies and transportation, and if an Indian war could be instigated in any direction no train would ever arrive in any mining camp at all. Quite likely a number of parties will be seriously disappointed in this matter.

Our fellow citizens who have been absent during the winter on business, or visiting friends in different parts of the continent have mostly returned. Among others E.L. Root, who brings a young and accomplished wife which will be a great acquisition to the society of the camp...N.B.W.

In 1879, Willey's name appears again on the legislative roster. He was elected from Idaho County to the Legislative Council. According Hailey, the legislature was again economical, not making "any unnecessary appropriations" (1909:257). Among the acts passed was one creating Washington County from parts of Ada and Idaho counties.

Republicans were the majority party in the Legislative Council in 1879, and members of the Council elected Willey, a Republican,

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that body. It appears he served well, for at the end of the session, The Idaho Statesman wrote this critique:

Hon. N.B. Willey, late President of the Legislative Council, left here on Sunday evening's stage, en route to his home at Warrens, Idaho County. He will go by stage to Weiser Bridge and thence accompany the mail overland to Warrens by way of Indian Valley and Little Salmon Meadows. The first portion of this route will be made on horseback and the remainder, about four days journey on snow shoes.

As presiding officer of the Council, Mr. Willey enjoyed in the fullest measure the respect and esteem of his fellow members. He was always at his post, always attentive, ready and clear, just and impartial in his rulings. In no single case was there an appeal taken from his rulings, and at the close of the session the members of the Council testified their appreciation and satisfaction in a manner at once unanimous and cordial. This was Willey's second term in the Legislature and he has now fairly earned the reputation which he enjoys of being one of the ablest and most faithful among the representative men of Idaho. During his sojourn at the Capital he made many warm friends who will be pleased to see him again in the place which he has filled with so much credit to himself and his constituents (March 18, 1879 issue).

Willey apparently stopped in Indian Valley for a few days after leaving Boise. In correspondence to The Idaho Statesman he describes the Weiser River communities:

Hall's Ranch, Indian Valley, Washington Co. March 25, 1879.

Ed. Statesman.--A pleasant ride of fifteen hours from your city [Boise] upon the Umatilla stage brings us within limits of this latest of our new counties at Weiser Bridge. From the bridge the Indian Valley stage line, run weekly by Solon Hall, takes us by two days easy staging to this place. The winter has not been unusually severe throughout this country and there has been no loss of stock. Even here some farmers have not fed a mouthful of hay. Here and there a farmer throughout the entire Weiser valley has commenced plowing and were it not for the incessant rains farming operations would be briskly going forward. The snow however lies deep upon the range between the Weiser and Snake rivers and also at the mica mine of Judge Curtis and beyond. The population of this country has increased about fifty per cent in the last two years and during the coming summer as during the last, a great many families will make it their permanent home. There is considerable desirable land yet vacant on Mann's creek and a large body in the Middle valley, but in the Upper valley and Indian valley the best locations adjoining the creek are all taken and the intervals are rocky and fit only for grazing. Above, that is to the northward of Indian valley, the stream divides into

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numerous branches, each having its narrow strip of the very best of land. This part of the valley is about thirty miles in length and there are yet but a few settlers, not more than a dozen in all, and there are still some choice locations to be made...A new road is much needed to connect Indian valley with Boise City by way of Emmetsville and a movement is on foot for that purpose... N.B.W. (April 1, 1879 issue).

A few days later The Idaho Statesman carried another letter from Hall's Ranch in Indian Valley, in which Willey tried to correct a rumor regarding a slaughter of thirty-five Weiser Indians. Willey had no sympathy for the Indians and corrects that number to a mere "nine or ten." Although eastern sentiments had begun to take a broader look at the Indian question, nerves in the western Territories were still too raw. Willey's vehement attitude, as expressed in the following letter, was prevalent and pervasive. Events just beginning to materialize were about to fuel another Indian War; the last between the Indians and Whites in Idaho Territory.

March 30, 1879 [April 8, 1879 issue]

Editor Statesman.--An article originating in an obscure sheet in north Idaho, relating to the slaughter of thirty-five Indians, has gone the rounds of the leading journals of the United States and has caused some annoyance to the "Weiser people," the scene of the alleged exploit, not on account of its truth, but because it is wholly imaginary. None of the "Weiser people" have, unfortunately, been able to kill a single Indian since the trouble last summer.

It will be remembered that Col. Drumm's forces, last October, drove a remnant of the hostile Indians out of Long Valley toward the South Fork of the Salmon, and it is presumed that they continued their course by way of Bear Valley to the Middle Fork of Salmon river where they have been camped, ever since, and have committed the depredations lately reported at Loon Creek. A few, however, mostly well-known on the Payette and Weiser, either staid [sic] behind or came back early in the winter. These as they appeared were quietly, but unceremoniously disposed of by ones and twos as they came, by settlers of Squaw Creek and the Payette in the neighborhood of Horseshoe Bend. Among them were Chuck and Bannack Jim, two notorious rascals, who would have been killed years ago had not almost criminal forbearance for the sake of peace prevailed on the part of the settlers. Either nine or ten have been given their quietus. The people are sorry they could not have killed more. They would cheerfully gratify the "Fearful Revenge" portrayed by the Eastern journal and would run the risk of the "Horrible Barbarity" described by others, if they could thereby rid the country of the whole thirty-five fiends and as many more as possible. Settlers in a frontier country like this, who are

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brought face to face with the savage reality have no time to waste upon the sickening sentimentalities that now and then appear in the Eastern press. But they do not want credit for any greater service to humanity than they have actually preformed. N.B.W.

As Willey made his way north to Warrens he described the country he was passing through and its settlers, for The Idaho Statesman (May 3, 1879 issue). His first letter comes from Little Salmon Valley (Meadows):

April 10, 1879, Editor Statesman.--The mail route which extends from Indian valley to Warrens, after leaving the former place, generally follows the valley of the Weiser river quite to its source, a distance of about 40 miles. Council valley, where there is a post office, is a level and apparently fertile enlargement of the main valley, 15 miles north of Indian valley. Hornet creek, a large branch of the Weiser, comes in here from the west. A large number of excellent locations of land may be made on this creek, as well as along the main Weiser, and its numerous other smaller branches hereabout. Timber for all purpose is plenty on the hills nearby, and water, if it should prove to be necessary for irrigation, is handy everywhere.

About 8 miles above Council valley post office the wagon road practically ends. Mr. [Cal] White, the mail contractor, has located a trail along the stream some 12 miles through the canyon to where the country again becomes open, but the ancient trail and the one latterly most traveled goes over the mountains west of the river. Last summer troops in their hunt for Indians, took their wagons over the mountains over this route, under Mr. White's guidance into the Little Salmon valley and brought them safely away again. This road, such as it was, runs in and out among the gulches and descended to the Weiser again at Fort Price. A little grading for a mile or so will make this a pretty fair road, and the required work will doubtless be done the coming summer. From Fort Price there is a good natural road for about 8 miles into Little Salmon valley.

This valley, I venture to say, is one of the prettiest tracts of agricultural land yet unsettled that can be found within the limits of the United States. It is an open prairie some ten miles long by three miles wide, affords excellent grass without sage-brush and at least three-fourths of it awaits but the plow of the husbandman to yield the most bountiful crops. Little Salmon, a branch of Salmon river, runs northward through it, and streams large and small come in from the hills on each side. A large portion of the surrounding hilly country is heavily covered with pine, spruce and tamarack, but there is very good summer range for stock outside the valley. The land is not yet surveyed. The standard meridian runs some six or eight miles west, and a

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persistent, and it is to be hoped successful effort will be made by present settlers and those contemplating settlement, to have a couple of townships surveyed the coming summer. Surely their claims ought not to be disregarded, so long as the authorities are surveying tracts of land in the canyon of the Salmon river, where almost no one but miners and few of them are ever likely to reside. This valley is reported to be 400 feet higher than Indian valley, and the same distance lower than Long valley of the Payette, which lies eight miles east, but I am not informed as to what means were used to determine these figures. Snow fell here about 18 inches in depth the past winter, but at present the ground is nearly bare and plowing will soon commence. Wild geese, swans, ducks, and cranes abound and just now make the air vocal with their discord--not music. All those birds stay here throughout the summer; make their nests and raise their young. Wild geese are especially numerous. Their nests, in early summer, may be found here and there among the willows along the streams and sometimes in low trees and even on large rocks remote from water. Their eggs are prime eating before the process of incubation has proceeded too far. If the nests are at all disturbed or the eggs handled, the bird abandons the place. Salmon do not come up into the valley, the rapids and falls below apparently prevent them, but trout are very abundant. Towards the northern end of the valley is a hot spring. I have not seen it, but am told that a large volume of hot water flows out of the ground, sufficient to keep the stream open in winter for a mile or two below.

Mr. Cal White commenced work here on the first of June. He built a fine double house, fenced and broke about ten acres and, as late as it was, raised a splendid crop of wheat and barley, with some potatoes and other vegetables. His wife, the only woman in the valley, with their seven children, lived here during the entire Indian troubles of last summer, not wholly unconcerned it is true, but still boldly and courageously, and fortunately without molestation. Other settlers permanently established here with stock, &c., about them are Messrs. Jennings, Jolly, Cooper, Williams, and Smith. More families are expected within the coming summer, and there could hardly be a more suitable place for a desirable colony from the States.

Of course the fact of their being such a valley here is no new thing; it is on the direct road from Lewiston to Boise Basin, and hundreds, perhaps thousands passed through in the early days. The Goose Creek House at the foot of the mountain, a mile from White's was a noted hostelry, and abounded in good cheer in those days, and here some of the earliest political conventions of the Territory were held. But it has not been inhabited permanently for many years and it is now a ruin. People in those times said that the valley

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was too high and too cold for farming; that frost occurred every morning; that ice would form upon standing water every clear night in August. But the experience of those who have stopped here the last two years show these statements to be altogether incorrect. No better crops were raised than those of Mr. White last year. Everything that was planted came to maturity untouched by frost. It is undeniable however, that frosts may be expected here later in the spring and earlier in the fall than in many other farming districts, but it is a question whether many parts of Idaho are not a little too hot and dry for advantageous farming without expensive irrigation. N.B.W.

Warrens, I.T., April 15, 1879.--Leaving Cal White's hospitable mansion at daybreak, Thomas Clay, the mail carrier and myself struck out boldly for the Payette Lake, 8 miles east. Glancing in at once famous Goose Creek House, we found the only occupants, a gray owl, moralizing upon its departed grandeur. A couple miles up the mountain the snow grew deep and thence forward snow shoes were our only practical means of locomotion. The trail just skirts the northern end of Long Valley, which stretches way southward farther than the eye can reach. It is a splendid looking prairie country from five to eight miles wide, but it is not yet proven that it is not too elevated for the usual cereals to come to maturity. A short distance back in the hills on the east side of it are the mining camps of Lake City, Copelands, &c., and a dozen or more men make good wages there during the summer.

The lake is still frozen, but the last rains have raised its surface so as to leave a rim of open water. Once upon the ice however, we had about 10 miles of fine traveling up the lake. In every direction there is now a bleak wilderness of snowy mountains, utterly barren and desolate, but in summer there is as pleasant and romantic scenery here as any in Idaho. The northern half of the lake is rock-bound and very deep, the lower portion has many shelving beaches. The shores are everywhere of granite, but in the center are two islands of basalt, suggesting the cone of a crater of a long extinct volcano.

This is the home of the redbfish. The Salmon swarm up the Payette as far as the lake in vast numbers, but do not pass it--the redbfish are scarcely seen below it. They spawn in August and September along the sandy shores of the lake and up all the creeks of any size that flow into it, and have been and may yet be taken in large quantities. Other varieties of fish are also very plenty. Those who have occasion to pass over the lake when the first sheet of ice forms in winter tell of marvelous tales of the abundance of piscatorial life visited in the clear and silent depths--one gazes through a window, as it were, into another world. At the head of the lake, the mail carrier has a comfortable cabin

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where he stops over night. Then another days tramp of 16 miles up stream brings us to a similar lodging place at the Little Lake. Here the snow has increased to 7 feet in depth. All this region is now completely silent, but in summer it is great game country.

The bears and eagles live upon the redfish and the deer and elk (some of these are huge fellows) upon the very luxuriant grass, and in early winter, some very fine pine martins and fishers may be taken, but now they are all gone away. There is not even a rabbit track to be seen. In the mountains between this valley and the South Fork of the Salmon river the white mountain sheep are said to dwell, but I have yet to meet the individual who had killed or even seen one. Shreds of what is claimed to be their white wool, however, are often found.

From the Little Lake the route winds over the mountains, crossing the divide that separates the waters flowing into the Payette from those flowing into the Salmon River, about 17 miles, to the Warm Springs on the principal road from Warrens to Florence. Here mine host Burgdorf never fails to furnish the weary traveler a square meal and we find ourselves in the presence of a man who can mix a cocktail to some purpose.

Another day's snowshoeing of 20 miles brought us to Warrens, where you must either stay or turn about and go back again. There is no place to go unless you strike out into unknown mountains.

The snow in Warren's basin is nearly gone, and placer mining has commenced. There has been nothing doing in quartz the past winter. An old pioneer of this camp, Chas. McKay, was found dead lately near his cabin on the South Fork of the Salmon, 14 miles east of here, under circumstances which indicated that his clothes caught fire while in bed, and that in making for the river nearby or returning from it, he fell and died. N.B.W.

Although Willey alluded earlier to Indian problems on Loon Creek, he could not have foreseen that the Sheepeater Campaign of 1879, was about to take place on his very doorstep. As the local correspondent, and as one who participated in many events, Willey's eye-witness reporting to The Idaho Statesman editor provided stirring and human accounts of Idaho's last Indian war:

Warrens, I.T., May 25, 1879 [June 7, 1879 issue]

Editor Statesman.--Our camp is laboring under some degree of excitement by reason of renewed Indian depredations in this vicinity. On the South Fork of Salmon river, twelve miles south of Warrens, there lived an old resident of this country, named Hugh Johnson. He had a small ranch, raised vegetables, kept horses, &c. There are a few others living thereabouts, miners and farmers, but communication was not very frequent since high water commenced, his place being on

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the east side of the river. He was not seen for some time and a few who passed his house supposed he was away at work on his irrigation ditch. Finally, during the last week a few neighbors visited his house and found it in confusion with no sign of having been occupied for a long time. A further search resulted in finding his dead body, and that of another man named Pete Dorsey, who was temporarily stopping with him, in a ravine near the river. They had been shot apparently while at work in the field near the house and carried or dragged away to avoid observation. They were not scalped or otherwise mutilated. It was evidently the work of Indians as their moccasin tracks were everywhere visible in and around the house and in the plowed field, and also on the trail by which they came and went. They took away three horses, also blankets, flour and provisions, and two good guns and several hundred cartridges. It was a small party--three or perhaps four. The ranch is situated at the mouth of a creek called Elk Creek. At its head, some twelve miles from the river, is a pass and another large stream, called Big Creek, which flows eastward, and is supposed to empty into the Middle Fork of Salmon below Loon Creek. It is by this route that the marauders came and returned. The snow was and is yet deep on the mountains, but this year it is unusually solid, and at that time men, and even horses, could pass over without difficulty. Those who live on the South Fork in that vicinity have all moved into town, and night before last, and yesterday morning signal fires and smokes were reported to have been seen on the mountain on that side, that on the east side of the river, showing that the Indians were returning, probably in larger force. It does not seem likely that they will attack any settlement of any size. This object would seem to be to cut off stragglers and remote miners and ranchers to gain means for immediate subsistence. No pack-trains have yet arrived her and grub is scarce, and there is yet no feed for stock away from the immediate vicinity of Salmon river, so that nothing by way of pursuit can be attempted yet, but the knowledge that they have been and probably are still near us is rather disquieting. The deed was done between the 19th and 23rd of April, and the Indians took unusual pains to cover up their work by fastening up the door of the cabin, taking a circuitous route, carrying the bodies away and concealing them &c., so as to elude observations and avoid alarm. N.B.W.

Willey kept The Idaho Statesman informed as troops were sent to the area and the events of the war:

June 15, 1879 [June 28, 1879 issue]

Editor the Statesman:-The Indian situation is not materially different in these parts. On Wednesday of last week, Lieut. Catley arrived here from Mount Idaho [near Grangeville] with two companies of infantry mounted on Indian ponies.

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They were accompanied by their own, that is, the Government train of 20 mules, and a train of 30 ponies belonging to other parties. The next morning they advanced to the South Fork and camped on a bar two miles above Small's ranch. The next forenoon James Rains, who lives near the mouth of the South Fork, 18 miles northeast from here, came into town with his family and reported that his stock had been driven off and that signal fires were visible, and smoke, undoubtedly from camp fires at a point called Red Bar, 12 miles above his place on the main [Salmon] river. Various other indications [such] as trees freshly peeled, etc., were seen but no Indians. He was sufficiently alarmed, however, and moved into town. Lieut. Catley was at once notified and this morning broke camp at Small's and returned to this place, and is tonight camped about 4 miles out on the road towards Rain's.

The trail along the South Fork is difficult. By coming this way the distance is much increased, but the road is fair, except about 300 to 400 yards of deep snow. The incessant daily rains and snow squalls embarrass very much military operations of every kind.

The country is getting tolerably bare of snow and it is evident that Indian runners and scouts are passing backwards and forwards, though none have been seen. N.B.W.

Aug. 1, 1879 [August 9, 1879 issue]

Editor Statesman: Col. Bernard's command arrived at [Pony] Smead's Ranch on the South Fork of Salmon, 12 miles from here, day before yesterday. [Scout Orlando] Robbins and Ramey came into town for letters and dispatches and returned same day. Col. Bernard at once broke camp and passed through here yesterday, taking the road to Weiser. It is his express intention to reach Little Salmon today, which is a tremendous drive. It is understood that Lieut. Farrow has located a band of Indians somewhere over that way. A messenger from him met Col. Bernard today, and he forwarded the dispatch to Lieut. Catley. The messenger stopped here, and Geo. Riebold proceeded immediately on Catley's trail. He (Catley) left Rains (at the mouth of the South Fork) over two weeks ago and is supposed to have gone up the main river or on to Big Creek, a branch of the East Fork. It is supposed his orders are to return, unless he has found Indians.

Col. Bernard found no Indians on his trip over from Cape Horn, but found a fresh camping place 6 or 8 miles above the mouth of the East Fork, where two or three Indians had stopped a few hours before his arrival. It is commonly thought that the Indians have abandoned the mountains and are making across the Payette to the Snake river. Distinct moccasin tracks have been seen within a few miles of Warrens, but of only one Indian, evidently as scout. N.B.W.

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Warrens, I.T., Aug. 9, 1879 [August 16, 1879 issue]

Editor Statesman: Since writing you last week Lt. Catley's column arrived here on his return from Big Creek. Nothing of consequence occurred to them after they left Rains till the 28th. Proceeding down Big Creek they came suddenly upon an abandoned Indian camp, and found a loose horse. There was some tobacco left, various articles of China apparel and some things thought to have belonged to Bobtail [Hugh] Johnson. Of course there could be no doubt where all these things came from. On the 28th, while passing along a sharp bend of the stream, suddenly they were saluted by a yell followed by a volley from the Indians posted above them on each side among the rocks. They retired out of that kind of trap speedily. Two men were severely wounded. The pack train was some distance behind. Closing up with it they retreated along a bare ridge where they were compelled to camp without water [Vinegar Hill]. A shot now and then showed the Indians around them but at a somewhat respectful distance. The guns of the troops were evidently too skillfully used to suit them. They fired the country all around this ridge but the fire did no damage. During the night the loads were lightened up, the bells muffled and towards morning they set out on their return. The mules not hearing the accustomed bell made for the nearest water, and at daylight about a dozen were missing, and could not be collected. In two days the column arrived at Rain's [Ranch].

Col. Bernard was at the time on the South Fork within three days march of the scene of the affair, but knowing nothing of Catley's whereabouts struck out for the Weiser on the report of Indians there. He is now swinging again around the circle, and the forces are expected to form a junction at [Solon] Hall's old bridge on the South Fork about the 13th.

About the number of hostiles Indians nothing certain is known. But few were seen and those were rather sparing of their ammunition. Whatever else they may have picked up from Catley's retreat they at any rate got no more cartridges.

There are rumors said to be derived from Indian sources that White Bird is back there [Lapwai] with some veterans from Sitting Bull, also that there is a reinforcement from Ten Doy's band, but this is all conjecture. The country in there is excessively rough, and it seems that as much of it as possible is being burned over so that military operations will be even more difficult, but they can and probably will be driven out this fall. N.B.W.

Warrens, I.T., Aug. 16, 1879 [August 26, 1879 issue]

Editor Statesman: Col. Bernard made the circuit from this place to the Payette Lakes, thence down Long Valley some distance, thence across the mountains to the South Fork, thence down that stream to Smead's Ranch and arrived there

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five days ago. Some delays at that point was unavoidable for supply trains to arrive and to replace worn out horses. Col. Bernard was joined there by Lieut. Catley's command; and day before yesterday by Capt. Force's company of twenty-four cavalrymen from Walla Walla. The entire outfit broke camp at daylight day before yesterday morning and started up Elk Creek, intending to camp near the Summit, sixteen miles from the river.

A small stream leads from the Summit down to Big Creek and the distance is not four day's march to the scene of Lieut. Catley's affair with the Indians. Col. O. Robbins, Chief of Scouts, reached Col. Bernard's camp the evening before the start, having ridden from Boise City, its is said, in three days...N.B.W

Warrens, I.T., Aug. 22, 1879 [Sept. 2, 1879 issue]

Editor Statesman: On last Sunday news reached this place that James P. Rains, whose farm is on the South Fork, twenty miles northeast of here, had been killed by Indians the evening before. Lieut. Catley's force crossed the South Fork at this point going and returning from Big Creek, when he fell back behind Warrens about three weeks ago. Rains, being the most exposed settler, brought his family, consisting of his wife, two children and his wife's sister, Miss Pauline Weber, into town for safety. Early last week he returned to put up his hay crop, taking with him Jas. Edwards and Harry Serrin, and was joined by his brother-in-law, Albert Weber. The weather was intensely hot, and the haymaking was soon completed. No sign of Indians had been seen. Saturday evening, about 7 o'clock, Rains, Serrin and Edwards while working at the hay-press, heard a shot at the house about 200 yards distant, where Weber was getting supper. Then two shots were fired at them from a ridge separating the meadow from the river, at point blank range, not sixty yards distant. They ran towards the house. Then three more shots were fired from a fence nearer the house, and Rains fell shot, probably through the body. The others gained the cover of some brush along a creek and reached the mountains; their retreat to the house being cut off. Rains rose, went some distance and was shot again, shattering his thigh, and finally crawled along and reached the house. He bled profusely, never spoke, and died about 10 o'clock.

The shot [heard earlier] at the house was by an Indian firing at Weber from the corner of the cellar. A splinter from the bullet apparently perforated his clothes, merely abrading the skin of his shoulder. Evidently the enemy's best shots were not in the field. Weber seized a gun and fired at one of the Indians who was shooting at the men in the field, but probably without effect. The Indians then kept a respectful distance from the house as long as Weber staid [sic]. After dark, at a signal from a round mountain

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near by, the Indians fired the stacks, out-buildings and country around in eight places at once. Weber's stay became precarious. After Rains was dead he crawled out through the least exposed window, and taking his Henry rifle, gained the cover of a friendly fence and escaped to the mountains.

Edwards and Serrin reached Warrens the next forenoon and Weber later. Immediately a party of fifteen of us well equipped were in the saddle. We took the road to Frank Smith's place, which is further up the [South Fork of the Salmon] river and nearer Warrens.

As we filed down a long ridge jetting out towards the river, suddenly a signal of smoke shot up on the mountain, two or three mile to the left of us, floated away and disappeared. To the eastward mountains, at or beyond Big Creek where Col. Bernard has gone, were a sheet of smoke and vast columns of it rose here and there showing that the Indians were burning over as much of the country as possible.

Smith's ranch had not been visited. His family was already in town. In the morning we climbed over the mountains to Rain's place, the route down the river being passable only to birds and fishes. Reached Rains' at noon. The wind blew a gale, and the flames leaped up the mountains on both sides of the river, licking up the dry grass and bushes, the rocks and burning logs rolled down, and altogether it was a scene of destruction as one may hope rarely to witness.

Everything about the premises that would burn was consumed. We gathered the calcined bones of our late fellow citizen, dug a grave in the field and buried them with reverent hands.

Before burning the house the Indians evidently entered it, taking two Winchester rifles, with from forty to fifty cartridges, and leaving an old gun and taking such other plunder as they desired. They took eight good horses from the pasture and forded the river, striking northeasterly up the main Salmon. There was nothing to indicate their number, but it was not large, Weber saw only two.

The property destroyed and taken away was of considerable value, from \$3000 to \$5000. There can be little doubt that the marauders followed Lieut. Catley's trail back from Big Creek....It is understood that Col. Bernard's firm opinion is that a winter campaign only will exterminate them. Their runners are continually passing to and fro through the country. Moccasin trails are often seen. A messenger was dispatched to overtake Col. Bernard and we look for his return tomorrow. N.B.W.

Warrens, I.T., Sept. 5, 1879 [Sept. 16, 1879 issue]

Editor Statesman; We have had no news from Col. Bernard or the lower part of Big Creek during the week. Lieut. Farrow is camped at Smead's ranch and is making every effort to get his men remounted. His Indians [Umatilla Scouts] have

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the true aboriginal liking for whiskey, but are otherwise docile and tolerably effective. Capt. Force is at the Rains' place near the mouth of the South Fork and is also waiting for supplies. Capt. McKeever pushed on down Big Creek the fore part of the week, and nothing has been heard from him for the last five days. This delay in getting supplies to the different commands has caused the loss of precious time. The Umatilla Indians think the hostiles are more numerous than has been commonly supposed. They recaptured the mules lost in Catley's retreat, and other stock. The campaign is likely to extend into the winter. N.B.W.

The editor of The Idaho Statesman summarized a late report from Willey in the September 30, 1879 issue, saying:

After going to press we received a letter from Hon. N.B. Willey, which we are unable to print in full; but in substance it states as follows: That all the troops have been withdrawn from the Salmon river country except Lieut. Farrow with his ten soldiers and twenty Umatilla Scouts...Farrow has gone to Chamberlain Basin to hunt for indians. This is on a stream that empties into the Main Salmon between the Middle and South Forks, and where the Indians make winter quarters.

Warrens, I.T., Sept. 26, 1879 [October 7, 1879 issue]

Editor Statesman; Bright and Private Smith arrived here this evening from Lieut. Farrow's command in the mountains between Big Creek and Main Salmon, as couriers going to camp Howard. From them we learn that a desperate fight occurred there five days since between his forces and the hostiles. They found the Indians in one of their wooded and difficult haunts about 12 miles from the Middle Fork and charged and routed them. One of the hostiles was killed and two squaws and a boy were captured. None of Farrow's force was injured. They followed their trail over to the Big Creek side of the mountain and came in sight of their camp fire in the night. At day-break they charged, but the hostiles had fled. They captured some horses and destroyed a quantity of dried elk meat. Some of Rains stock was found, one stabbed out of pure devilishness apparently. They were following them about there when Bright left four days since. They were in great need of a surgeon and some additional supplies. Bright and Smith were met by some Indians a few hours out and had to return, but a large escort of the Umatillas piloted them through.

It is conceded on all hands that the hostiles are more numerous than was at one time supposed, and they are in all probability increasing. Bright says they found trails coming in from all directions. Only a few miles beyond Rains ranch they found where a small party had come in, but they did not meet them. The successes of the Sheepeaters this summer have

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evidently encouraged the restless spirits of the surrounding bands and reservations to join them; but if Farrow's force was sufficient, a change would come over the spirit of their dream. N.B.W.

As winter deepened, more Indian camps and supplies were destroyed by Farrow and his men. On October 1, 1879, Farrow and his men captured fifty-one Indians; Sheepeaters, Weisers, Bannocks and one Nez Perce/Bannock. The captives were taken by Farrow to the Vancouver Barracks in Washington, effectively ending the Sheepeater Campaign of 1879.

After three successive years of war the citizens of the Territory must have gratefully returned to a quieter existence. By 1881, Willey was again writing a column, describing mining and local happenings in Warrens for Aaron F. Parker, the editor of The Nez Perce News in Lewiston:

Warrens, I.T., June 29, 1881 [July 14, 1881 issue]

Ed. News: Up to the present time the season has been exceptionally favorable for mining operations. Most of the placer claims that are in a condition for working are in the hands of Chinamen. They make trade good and put a large amount of money in circulation. It is usual to decry Chinamen, making it appear that they are an injury to the country, but in this camp they bought large tracts of mining ground and paid large sums of money for claims that white men had tested thoroughly and could not make running expenses out of at the current rate of wages, indeed, at any rate, of wages that white men are likely to work for soon. They have not yet bought any new ground this year, though there are several sets of claims open for their inspection.

Holidays among the miners are not very common; when they do arrive we make the most of them, the Fourth of July for instance. On the present...occasion we have arranged for the customary dance for the benefit of our numerous representatives of the fair sex, as well as our selves, likewise the reading of the Declaration and the usual oration. A committee of distinguished citizens, in order to vary monotony of the usual proceedings have engaged literary and other talents...An essay on cosmogony [the theory of the origin of the Universe]...A foot race against time by Prof. Jas. Edwards. (Betting is already lively.) Selected readings on virtue and chastity (from the Teller), very choice, by Prof. V. Hexter. It will be seen that the program promises attractions of unusual interest. We expect a large concourse of citizens from our own and adjoining mining districts. N.B.W.

Willey's own interest in mining, however, was described by Parker after a trip to Warrens in late July of 1881. Parker's editorial appeared in the August 11, 1881 issue of The Nez Perce News. The following excerpts mention Willey:

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...The most promising quartz lead in camp is the W.B. Knott [mine], the property of Hon. N.B. Willey. The ledge is on the summit of the divide west. The waters of Steamboat and Warrens creek are favorably situated for working and developed by an audit tunnel that revealed a large body of ore along the line of the ledge; the ore taken from the stope in this mine is very rich...Willey has also a five stamp quartz mill that crushes custom rock at the low rate of \$3.50 per ton; this mill will shortly start up and run all winter on the large dump from the W.B. Knott.

On October 6, 1881, Parker again mentions Willey:

Mr. W.J. Kelly arrived here from Warrens last Saturday and gave us a pleasant call. From him we learn that N.B. Willey has a larger staff of men employed in developing and stoping ore from the Wm. B. Knott mine, and that the quartz from this valuable property is as rich as ever. The quartz mill will shortly start up for a winter run on the Wm. B. Knott, the Charity and the President's ore dumps. The latest quartz discovery in the camp is that of a large ledge made by Mr. Kelly and Chas. Johnson in Smith's Gulch, a mile from town that prospects way up; we saw boulders of float quartz from that ledge weighing half a ton during our visit last summer. The quartz is rich in free gold and is of a different character to any in the camp, being of a rich cream-like color, and free milling (The Nez Perce News).

Another Warrens correspondent to Parker's paper, identified only as C.W.C., provided details about Willey and the camp:

...The mining season here is fast drawing to a close; there has been from two to four inches of snow in and around camp for the last ten days. The Chinese are still working their claims on the Meadows below town, and probably will continue to do so to some extent for the next three or four weeks. The quartz miners are hauling their last run of ore to the mills; N.B. Willey has out 50 tons that he expects to put through his mill before it freezes up, which will probably average the best for that amount of ore that has ever been taken from the Wm. B. Knott mine...The ranchers in this vicinity are straining every nerve to get their vegetables into camp in time to supply the miners for the winter; in fact, all hands hereabouts, seem to labor under the impression that the sooner they are comfortably fixed for the winter, the better it will be for them (The Nez Perce News, Oct. 27, 1881).

Harsh mountain winters were always a threat, and in 1883 cold and snow reached depths and heights unknown before to the residents of Warrens. A correspondent to The Tri-Weekly Statesman, on march 18, 1883, identified as "Q. Drill" laced information about Willey with news about the weather:

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Mining in the three camps in the three camps holds its own, while here in Warrens quartz is decidedly on the improve. Geo. Riebold & Co., are working the Charity mine and taking out some high grade rock. Hon. N.B. Willey is working the old Knott mine, which is rapidly developing into a first-class property. The two tunnels have been run on the ledge at a depth of fifty and one hundred feet respectively, from the surface, and aggregating over six hundred feet in length. A shaft is now being sunk to connect the upper with the lower level. When this is completed there will be at least one thousand tons of good milling rock open for stoping...The snow fall at the Knott mine up to date has been seventeen feet, while we have had two cold waves so far during the winter--the first at New Year's, when the mercury went to thirty-two below zero, and the second on the 18th and 19th when it went to forty-four below and kept going until quicksilver placed for a test in a cup congealed. With such an admirable climate and isolated the way we are from the balance of the wicked world, there is perhaps no good reason why we should not be both virtuous and happy.

While working the Knott Mine Willey continued writing columns for local papers, often combining local news with his political views. He critiqued legislative sessions, pointing out the effects of laws passed and those vetoed on mining communities.

When Aaron Parker made a trip into Warrens in August of 1885, he stopped by the Knott to pay Willey a visit:

Warrens, I.T., Aug. 5th, 1885 [August 20, 1885 issue]

The morning after our arrival we started out to visit the "Knott" mine and mill, owned by Hon. N.B. Willey. The mill is situated on Steamboat creek three miles from town, the distance from the mine is two miles. The mill has five stamps with a crushing capacity of six tons every 24 hours. The tailings are run through an arrastra in connection with the mill, and this old fashioned contrivance succeeds in saving all of the precious metal that escapes the mill plates. Mr. Willey was hitching up his team to haul rock from the mine at the time of our arrival and we accompanied him up the gulch. The mine is located at the head of a transverse gulch putting into Steamboat creek and is favorably situated for working. The levels have been run along the line of the ledge and the stops are a labyrinth of passages overhead where the ore has been extracted. The ledge varies in width from ten inches to three feet, with granite walls, and mills from \$20 per ton upwards. A vast amount of time, labor, and money have been expended in developing the property, and the prospects in sight are encouraging enough to justify the running of third level 600 feet from the surface, which will be started this winter. Mr. Willey also has it in contemplation to remove the mill to the vicinity of the mine on the site of the old "Hi-Jacet" mill. There are

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about 200 tons of rock on the dump, and the mill works it when roasted to 90 per cent of the gold it contains. The "Knott" mine is the best and most promising quartz property in northern Idaho (The Nez Perce News).

As the 1880's moved towards the end of the decade, questions concerning the route the northern extension of the railroad drew comments from Willey in Aaron Parker's "new" newspaper, the Idaho County Free Press, recently moved to Grangeville, Idaho from Lewiston.

In the July 2, 1886 issue, Parker noted, "We cordially welcome "N.B.W." to the columns of the FREE PRESS, and hope to hear from him early and often. He is a scholar and a gentleman, and expresses himself with terseness and force of a man who has the courage of his convictions."

Willey did not disappoint Parker in his column, carried just below Parker's:

...Warrens has little of local interest to note, mining matters are not materially different from other years, though there have been some failures of mining claims that exercise a temporarily depressing influence. Some other mines, however, are perhaps paying better than usual. We are taking a lively interest in the nearer railroad facilities. It cannot be stated as a positive fact, but as more than a probability the O.S.L. [Oregon Short Line Railroad] will build up the Weiser and down Little Salmon. Then if a practicable route can be found they will cross the [Camas] Prairie, and go down [the] Clearwater. If not, they will build down [the] Salmon river and the Snake to Lewiston. Not only are parties of surveyors in the field but there is a certain stir among the insiders indicating that plans are matured... Even if it does not come nearer than White Bird or Rocky Canyon it furnishes an outlet for all the prairie can produce at remunerative rates... A railroad helps a country. There was a time when Boise City could have secured a railroad, but a narrow-minded spirit prevailed, and she was left out in the cold to grow up at her leisure. However, there is no danger that Idaho or Nez Perce counties will follow in her footsteps. They appreciate the situation too keenly.
N.B.W.

In his columns to the Idaho County Free Press during 1886 from Warrens, Willey noted the development of mining in Yellow Pine Basin, the discovery of the Alton District thirty miles east of Warren, and the 500 miners working the Long Valley diggings. In the September 24, 1886 issue, Willey noted, "The China claims are doing reasonably well. The company, that lately purchased the Brooks claim have struck into fairly good ground and are brightening up in consequence."

In the March 4, 1887 issue of the Idaho County Free Press Willey evaluated the Warrens District, listing the values of the Chinese and White mines and companies:

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WARREN DISTRICT: This district is situated on the south side of the Salmon river and comprises the area drained by Warrens creek and its tributaries. Situated at an elevation of 6,200 to 7,000 feet above sea level, the winters are severe and much snow falls, but the district is well watered during mining season. As usual, the placer mining is mostly in the hands of Chinamen. Nine companies have acquired by purchase about two miles of the bed of the principal creek. They keep about 800 men at work for about seven months of the year. The production is reported as follows:

Fow Wing Co.....	\$ 5,500
Fook Sing Co.....	31,000
Lin Wa.....	17,700
Hung Wa.....	7,000
Wing Wa.....	3,000
Shun Lee.....	21,500
Sing Wa.....	<u>11,000</u>
TOTAL	\$ 96,700

In addition to this, small companies and single Chinamen have produced \$12,500.

The leading claims worked principally by the hydraulic process are Ballow & Malloney, Devine & Orcutt, O.M. McGinty, A Floyd, W. Gallagher, Bohndel & Co., J. Sinclair, Geo. Brown & Co., with some smaller ones have produced in the aggregate \$26,800.

The following quartz mines have produced these amounts, partly estimated and partly reported:

Little Giant.....	\$ 3,300
Knott.....	2,000
Bulldog (silver)..	523
Greenhorn.....	1,250
Keystone.....	1,570
Miscellaneous.....	<u>1,000</u>
TOTAL.....	\$ 9,643

In May of 1887, Willey up-dated news from Warrens:

April 20, 1887 [May 6, 1887 issue]

Ed. PRESS: We still revel amidst mountains of beautiful snow. Some China companies, however, are about to commence work. The prospects of camp for the season are as good as usual. The Chinamen all have their claims in good shape for working, which is important because they do, really, nearly all the work that is done in camp, and put in circulation most of the money. I do not know that anyone is likely to be injured by the inevitable high water. The hydraulic mines of Ballow and Maloney and Bob Devine, are looking after their ditches, and getting a good ready. The companies at work on the South Fork, Orcutt & Brown, Peterson, Ned Kerwin, and others have been at work for some time. The quartz mines are now idle as water is beginning to come on. The Little Giant

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mine is in rich ore in the lower level and never looked better.

The prospects in the Alton District are encouraging. L.M. Johnson came in the other day from Weiser by way of the Little Salmon over the snow. He will proceed to his mines as soon as possible. He and Mr. Hoyt and other owners have a group of mines bonded to St. Louis parties for \$100,000. There is talk of bonding the "Beck" mine for the same sum, whereat Dr. Ford wears a smiling countenance. Johnson reports that the railroad surveyors are now in the Middle Valley locating the route. The impression prevails over there that work will be commenced and the road in operation to the Seven Devils region before another winter.

The 27 lb. trout are now coming out with neatness and dispatch...I see some worthy citizens are worried about our county debt. And further on we learn that there is talk of bonding it and paying interest on the interest. What is the world coming to? N.B.W. (Idaho County Free Press)

In the December 16, 1887 issue of his newspaper, Parker carried the report of the death of the Hexter child:

Little Sidney, only son of Mr. and Mrs. V. Hexter, died at this place [Warrens] December 5, and was buried today. The nature of his very brief illness was not fully understood by any one here--and before medical aid could reach here from the outside, notwithstanding all that loving hearts and hands could do, a chair is vacant and a home made desolate. Hon. N.B. Willey officiated at the last sad obsequies, and though the day was a wild and angry one, the whole population turned out en masse and followed the little boy to his final resting place, beside his infant sister on the hill.

In one of his last columns in the Idaho County Free Press, Willey told the story of the discovery of a new vein and mine.

Warrens, I.T., May 30, 1888 [June 8 issue]

EDITOR PRESS: Luther Johnson now of this place, is an experienced and successful prospector, and a well-known developer of mines in seven counties. Last Saturday, while climbing a hillside in pursuit of indications, he found his course obstructed by a section of a fallen tree. If he had stepped over it and gone along, gold would not have become the cheap and plentiful metal it is soon likely to be, the "Mayflower" mine, of Warrens, would not have been discovered, and this article would not have been written. But he passed around it and observed a stone in that soil that looked like quartz. He broke it and it proved to be ore. In a few minutes he uncovered the vein whence it came, and there proved to be a seam of gold ore of extraordinary richness. It has been traced a hundred feet in one direction, and a considerable distance the other. The rich seam is from two to six inches in thickness, carrying some silver mineral, but mostly gold.

THE GOVERNOR FROM WARREN, NORMAN B. WILLEY

Your correspondent could not hazard a guess to its value. He has not handled any such ore! It is quite out of his range, but good judges think it is around a dollar a pound. The locators are L.M. Johnson, Mr. King, and the young Sammy Smith. The same parties have also made some very promising developments on the "Orphan Girl," formerly the Emerald... It is not certain whether any work will be done on the Weiser wagon road this season or not. N.B.W.

The last Territorial Legislature (fifteenth session) convened at Boise on December 10, 1888, and adjourned on February 7, 1889. On July 3, 1890, the Territory of Idaho was admitted into the Union as a State. George L. Shoup served as Idaho's last Territorial Governor, and the first Governor of the new State of Idaho.

Willey and Shoup had served together during the 1879 Legislature when Willey had been elected President of the Legislative Council. During his term as Idaho's last Territorial Governor (1889-1890), Shoup appointed Willey as one of three Commissioners to build the new wagon road between Mount Idaho [Grangeville] and Salmon Meadows [New Meadows].

In the July 25, 1890 issue of The Idaho County Free Press Willey described the route. In a lengthy column, he noted a pretty fair wagon road already existed between Salmon Meadows and Wagon Bay on Big Payette Lake. From Wagon Bay north, the road, according to Willey, would follow along the western shore of the Payette Lake to Upper Payette Lake; then climb from Squaw Meadows to the summit dividing the waters between the Payette and Salmon Rivers; then follow along the valley of Secech Creek to the Warm Springs [Burgdorf]. From Warm Springs the road turned north up Lake Creek, then follow the existing trail to Shearer's Ferry and the Salmon River at the mouth of French Creek. From Florence the road held to the old Melnor Trail into Mt. Idaho.

Willey was working on the mountain road in 1890, when word reached him that he had been elected Lieutenant Governor, and Shoup, Governor.

Willey left the mountains and hurried to Boise. The Idaho Daily Statesman took note of his arrival:

Hon. Norman B. Willey, Idaho's Lieutenant Governor-elect, arrived here from the line of the new wagon road yesterday. Governor Willey looks the impersonation of robust manhood and good health and will be ready and thoroughly equipped every way for the arduous duties of his position as soon as the Legislature convenes (Nov. 8, 1890).

The Idaho Daily Statesman while reporting on the Legislature wrote, "In the Senate as Lieutenant Governor, Willey is already the duly qualified presiding officer, he will call that body to order..." (December 7, 1890). Two days later the newspaper featured Willey as the subject of an editorial:

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LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR WILLEY

The presence of Lieut. Governor Willey in the Senate Chambers yesterday, when he took the place which the Constitution of the State of Idaho assigns him as presiding officer of the Senate, was a forcible and pleasant reminder to old timers of the days when he occupied a similar position as President of the Territorial Legislative Council, being chosen to that position by the unanimous votes of his fellow members of the Council. This time, Governor Willey has a much larger constituency, having been chosen to his present high and responsible position by a vote of the people of the New State of Idaho at the recent election of State officers, when he was elected by the largest majority of any candidate on the State ticket. He has already proved himself equal to any emergency that can arise in the line of his duties as a presiding officer; not only by his thorough knowledge of parliamentary law and his familiarity with all the usages of deliberative bodies, but also by his able and patriotic course on all occasions and by his patient, gentlemanly and courteous bearing at all times.

Idaho has been fortunate in many things, but in none more so than in the choice that has been made of a citizen so eminently qualified for the very important position to which Governor Willey has been called (The Idaho Daily Statesman, December 9, 1890).

The session had hardly begun when the Legislature elected Shoup to the United States Senate, making Willey Idaho's second governor. The Idaho Daily Statesman carried the story, dated Dec. 20, 1890:

Hon. Norman B. Willey was immediately sworn as Governor by Secretary Pinkham. Senator Shoup will instruct the new Governor in the routine of the office today and turn over all the official papers. Senator Shoup expects to start for Washington about Tuesday of next week.

Willey was suddenly thrust from building a mountain road to governing a new state. He immediately found himself in a political quagmire centering around the legislative selection of Senators to Congress. It was an issue finally solved with the election of Senators by popular vote of the people.

A more serious issue faced Willey and his administration in 1892 when a labor dispute between miners and management erupted in the Idaho panhandle. As the price of lead and silver dropped mines closed, agreeing to re-open only if miners would accept a cut in wages. The miners refused, and the union struck. When management brought in non-union workers the situation grew serious and the mine workers rioted. When a mill was dynamited Willey declared martial law and Federal troops were called in. It would be the early 1900's before the mining issue in North Idaho was completely resolved (IHS pamphlet #400, 1993).

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Willey's administration floundered in the transitional period of adjustment between the old territorial government and the development of a new state government. During this unsettled time Idaho lawmakers adopted the Australian ballot system; a state seal was chosen; taverns were licensed; May 1st was selected as Arbor Day; Canyon County was created; a prohibition against killing moose was adopted; appropriations were made to care for the deaf and blind; buildings at the Blackfoot Mental Hospital were refurbished; and \$20,000 was appropriated for the Idaho Exposition at the World's Fair in Chicago.

Willey would have accepted the nomination to run as the next Republican candidate for governor, however, Senator Wm. J. McConnell was seen as a stronger political candidate and elected.

Willey left the Governor's office in January of 1893, returning to Warren. A brother, Simeon Willey, also from New York state, had joined Norman in Warren in the 1880's. The two men remained in Warren until circumstances intervened.

The years of 1892 and 1893 were a time of financial depression. Added to the economic pressures, record deep snows fell in Idaho in the winter of 1893-94. Willey was apparently effected. When a job superintending a mine in Blue Canyon, California, was offered, he accepted, leaving Warren forever.

CONCLUSION

Willey was about 55 years of age when he returned to California. In 1913, word reached Idaho friends that he was destitute, partially blind, and having to accept state assistance. The Idaho Legislature appropriated \$1,200, to be paid at \$50.00 per month as a pension for his earlier services. When the appropriation ran out, no further action was taken, and contact with Willey was lost, until notice was received of his death in 1921.

Idaho newspapers, some of the same papers that had carried his columns, carried his obituary. The Wallace Press Times ran the following headline and story:

POOR HOUSE FINAL HOME FOR N.B. WILLEY

Topeka, Kansas, Nov. 2 [1921]--Relatives announced here today that they had identified a man who died at the county poor farm here on October 20, as Norman B. Willey, who at one time was the Governor of Idaho.

The identification was made by J.A. Black of Dover, a small town southwest of Topeka.

Willey, according to Black's statement was a miner in Idaho until elected Lieutenant Governor in 1890. The Governor soon after resigned to accept a federal position and Willey filled out the term. Later he went to California where he owned a mine and was engaged in business until three years ago when his health failed and he came to Dover to live with his sister. After her death he was taken to the county poor farm.

In his early life, Willey was noted for his physique, but after his illness he became blind and deaf.

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Photo: Norman B. Willey and Staff

Seated: E.J. Curtis, Adjutant General
Governor Willey

Gen. James F. Curtis, Inspector Gen. Id. Nat. Guard

Standing: J.F. Torrance
Bert Capwell
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