

every historical fact of value in connection with the Sheepstealer Campaign, it may be noted that such hesitation was probably prompted by a desire to eliminate himself from the facts recorded. In accordance with this suggestion, I find upon examination of the official report that Colonel Brown has quoted the same with exactness, except in the matter of Bernard's report to Howard, dated August 19th, 1879. From this report Colonel Brown has deleted the following: "Lieutenant W. C. Brown was on foot during the entire skirmish, and was first man to enter the Indian camp." I assume that Colonel Brown's modesty was the motive for this deletion, and have called attention to this fact without consulting him upon the subject. The Indian camp, referred to in Howard's report, was the Sheepstealer camp, first entered by Lieutenant Brown, according to Bernard's report, when Farrow's Scouts, then a part of Bernard's command, were pursuing the Indians down Big Creek toward the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.

ELLA CARTEE REED.

B2

The Sheepstealer Campaign

1879

This material may be
protected by copyright
law (Title 17, U.S. Code)

*In 10th Biennial Report of the
Idaho Historical Society, 1926.*

The Sheepeter Campaign

By COL. W. C. BROWN, U. S. A., *Retired.*



Edward Farrow
U.S.A.

*It was his command which successfully ended
the Sheepeter Campaign.*

Indian hostilities which have received but little attention from historians are those known as the "Sheepeter Campaign" in middle Idaho in 1879—a section at that time unexplored. Recently the War Department has officially recognized this as a campaign and Army Regulations have been amended accordingly.

The writer, then a second lieutenant of the First U. S. Cavalry, was on duty with Lieutenant Farrow's Company of twenty Umatilla Indian Scouts, which, as will be seen below, was an important factor in bringing the campaign to a successful conclusion.

The Sheepeters were a small band of renegade Bannocks, Shoshones, and Weisers, who derived their name from the fact that they subsisted largely on mountain sheep. They were strong, active, and capable of enduring great hardships, but they were not reservation Indians. Their existence had been known since the early 'sixties, at the time of the gold excitement at Florence, Warrens and along the main Salmon River.

After the Bannock War of 1878, the Sheepeters were joined by a few hostiles, who, eluding the U. S. Troops, sought refuge in that region of high timbered mountains. This section, on account of heavy snows, is particularly inaccessible for troops except from about the middle of July to the last of September.

SOURCE RECORDS USED

Before proceeding to describe the military features of the campaign, the writer desires to invite attention and give credit to an entertaining description of it published in the July-August, 1910, issue of *The Journal of the Military Service Institution* by a participant, Major Chas. B. Hardin, U. S. A., Retired, from which extracts have been made. Since then the writer has received considerable data from official War Department records, and diaries kept at the time, notably those of Captains R. F. Bernard and A. G. Forse, First Cavalry, and Mr. Edgar Hoffner, formerly a private in Co. G, First U. S.

Cavalry, who gave such graphic accounts of the hardships of that campaign, from hunger, snow, rain, crossing swollen streams, etc., that copies of them are to be filed with the Idaho Historical Records. What follows is taken from the above sources as well as from my personal diary. Memory of events which have taken place nearly half a century ago is so unreliable that recourse is had to it but seldom.

About May 1st, 1879, Brig. Gen. O. O. Howard, then commanding the Department of the Columbia, with headquarters at Vancouver Barracks, received the following telegram:

"San Francisco, May 1, 1879.

COMMANDING OFFICER, Department Columbia,
Vancouver, W. T.:

Indian Agent at Lemhi states that a murder of five Chinamen in February last in northern Idaho, occurred at Oro Grande (now Casto) on Loon Creek, eighty miles northeast of Boise, and, it is supposed, was done by Indians; probably some of the hostiles of last summer, who have been wintering with the Sheepeaters on the Middle Fork of the Salmon. The Division Commander directs that a detachment be sent out from Boise as soon as the trail can be traveled, and ascertain who the murderers were; and, if Indians, to apprehend them, and bring them into Boise.

(Signed) KELTON, A. A. G.

Pursuant to the above instructions, Capt. Reuben F. Bernard and 2nd Lt. Jno. Pitcher with 56 men of Co. G, First U. S. Cavalry, left Boise Barracks May 31st, 1879. They were to proceed to Challis, and, if information warranted it, were to operate from that point. At the instance of Gen. Howard, there also left Camp Howard (near Grangeville) on June 4th a force of 48 mounted Infantry under Lieuts. Henry Catley, E. K. Webster and W. C. Muhlenberg, consisting of Co. C and a detachment of Co. K, Second U. S. Infantry, with directions to operate toward Challis and form junction with Bernard as soon as practicable. The original objective, Challis, was changed due to subsequent information of the killing (probably in May) of Hugh Johnson and Peter Dorsey at the former's ranch on the South Fork of the Salmon River, southeast of Warrens.

Bernard, being the senior and experienced in Indian campaigning, would command all forces in the field. Catley's first objective was Warrens, and thence northeast to Rains' ranch on the South Fork of the Salmon River. He, like Bernard, had a pack train of six packers, 34 packs, David R. Monroe and

Josh Falkner as guides and scouts, and contract surgeon E. J. Pring as medical officer. Bernard had as guides and scouts Orlando "Rube" Robbins, Johnny Vose, and later John S. Ramey.

INDIAN SCOUTS ENLISTED

In connection with the above, Gen. Howard was authorized to enlist twenty Umatilla Indian Scouts. These were enlisted June 9th at the Umatilla Indian Agency, Oregon, by 2nd Lieut. E. S. Farrow, 21st Inf., and 2nd Lieut. W. C. Brown, First Cavalry, and will be referred to herein as Farrow's Scouts. Attached to the Scout company were seven enlisted men, mounted, and a pack train of about 20 packs and four packers, with John Corliss as chief packer. The scouts were paid for use of but one horse and equipment each, but they brought with them a total of 40 ponies. This command was organized and equipped in time to leave the Agency July 7th, and were instructed to form junction with the other troops as soon as possible. They marched via Brownlee's Ferry, crossing there July 14th, and arrived at upper Payette Lake July 19th.



W. F. Bernard
Brevet Colonel, U. S. A.
Captain First Cavalry, Comd'g Co. G

At this date it may be remarked that Catley had, after repeated efforts—June 16th, when he found a mile of snow five to eight feet deep and returned—and again June 26th when he was again turned back by deep snows, finally succeeded in getting through. He crossed the South Fork of the Salmon River, leaving Rains' Ranch July 17th, and July 19th was two marches east of there, about the head of Chamberlain Creek.



W. H. Brown
1st U.S. Cavalry.

Farrow's Assistant Throughout His Campaign

Bernard encountered almost insuperable difficulties in traveling through snow, and in crossing swollen streams and rugged mountains. He lost many mules laden with rations, and was at times thirty-six to seventy-two hours without food. He scouted the country northeast as far as Myers Cove on Camas Creek, along the middle fork of Salmon and the Loon Creek country (see map), was now heading slightly west of north,

and July 19th camped on Deer Creek, fifteen miles south of Warm Lake. All these commands were hunting for Indians, whose whereabouts, still undiscovered, were probably along Big Creek, between what is now known as Vinegar Hill and Soldier Bar. Neither command was in communication with either of the others.

RUMORS OF HOSTILES

At this point Farrow got reports of signs of hostiles in the Crooked River country, north of Brownlee's Ferry and in the southern part of the Seven Devils Mountains. He then retraced his steps to Calvin R. White's ranch. White was the first settler in Little Salmon Meadows, now known as New Meadows; was the postmaster there and carried the mail on the route to Warrens. In addition to serving as guide for us in 1879, it is understood that he performed similar services for United States Troops in 1877 and 1878.

Sergt. Shaplish with several scouts was sent to return through Council Valley to Crooked River to investigate reports. Lieut. Brown with three scouts was sent down Payette (or Long) Valley as far as the Falls (Cascade), Pearsall's Diggin's and up Deep Creek on a similar mission.

Farrow on July 23d sent Bernard a dispatch stating that he had turned his command about and was now heading for Crooked River, in belief that the Indians were there. On July 27th from camp at Crooked River he sent a dispatch to the Assistant Adjutant General at Vancouver Barracks stating:

The hostile Indians, over 100 strong, are near the mouth of Crooked River. They have crossed most of their stock to the Oregon side of the river. * * *

The reports of the Crooked River reconnaissance being such as to apparently justify our proceeding there, we went west to near Snake River and found there two men who reported having seen no Indians for a month. This unfortunate march over exceedingly rough country was very exhausting on both men and animals, and, according to Howard's report, caused Bernard, who had heard of Farrow's move when at Warrens on July 31st, to go some seventy miles out of his way. Farrow then marched southeast to Long Valley to investigate indications of hostiles reported there. During this time several extensive side scouts were made. By July 31st we had arrived and

camped on Gold Fork, where in 1878, when commanding Co. L, First Cavalry, the writer formed part of the command of Capt. W. F. Drum, Second Infantry, then operating against Bannocks. On August 3rd Farrow camped at Warm Springs at the Falls of the North Fork of the Payette River. We learned that Bernard camped August 2nd at the Fishery north of Lower Payette Lake, and was headed south. August 4th we received, through courier from Bernard, our first reliable information of Catley's defeat and the whereabouts of the hostiles.

Bernard took action promptly, sending word for the post surgeon at Boise Barracks to meet him on the South Fork of Salmon River, and for supplies to be sent to the mouth of Loon Creek on the Middle Fork. August 6th Bernard and Farrow joined forces at Warm Springs, near the Falls of the North Fork of the Payette River, and under Bernard's command started northeast to the South Fork of Salmon River and down same to Johnson's Ranch, arriving there August 10th after an exceedingly rough trip, having to cut their way through fallen timber with axes and losing in one day alone eight pack mules, killed by falling over precipices.

LIEUT. CATLEY'S DISASTER

We return now to Catley's operations. Leaving Rains' Ranch July 17th, he followed the trail shown on the map and camped at the caves on the night of July 28th. We now quote from Bernard's report sent August 5th, from Lake Creek in Long Valley:



CAPTAIN ALBERT G. FORSE
Commanding Co. D, First U. S. Cav.,
in Sheepher Campaign
Killed in action on San Juan Hill,
Battle of Santiago, July 1st, 1898.

I have just received a dispatch from Catley, showing that the Indians attacked and defeated his command on the 29th ultimo; his loss being two wounded, and all his provisions, greater portion of his baggage, and twenty-three pack-mules. The force of Indians not large, though well posted at the mouth of Big Creek, a stream that flows from the west, emptying into the Middle Salmon thirty miles below the mouth of Loon Creek. I will get Farrow and go down South Salmon, to a point where I ordered Catley to meet me, when we will cross over to the Indian position.

With a view of giving some idea of the skirmish which Capt. Bernard denominates a defeat, I will insert a few extracts from Lieut. Catley's report of August 2nd:

Having marched into the Big Creek country (Big Creek is a large tributary of the Middle Fork of the Salmon River), I found fresh Indian signs, which led me down Big Creek through a deep and rocky canyon, and the signs becoming fresher, I was obliged to follow their trail (which I believe to be the only way through that country), or give up the pursuit.

The result was that on the 29th day of July my command struck an ambuscade, from which, after determining that it was impossible to do anything, the Indians being lodged in a point of rocks across the creek, where they had so fortified themselves that their exact location could not be discovered, I ordered a retreat. The first intimation I had of their presence was a few words spoken by one of their number, which was immediately followed by a volley. Two men, Privates Doyle, 2nd, and Holm, of Company C, 2nd Infantry, were seriously wounded, but gotten out from under fire and carried about two miles back up the creek, to a point which I selected as one that could be held, where I met the pack-train coming down the creek.

Here I camped, and the next morning, putting the wounded men upon hand litters, I moved up a ridge which I thought would lead me into the mountains somewhere near the route I had traveled to Big Creek.

In this I was mistaken. It proved to be an impracticable route, and, being encumbered by the wounded men, I was unable to take and hold the points ahead of me, although the Indians were endeavoring to reach them first. They secured a high rocky point ahead of me, and I fell back to a similar point, the wounded and the pack-train arriving there at the same time. There were then Indians ahead and behind. I ordered the pack-train unloaded, and the men to take such cover as they could find in the rocks and behind the cargo, and hold the position if the Indians attempted to approach.

The Indians, seeing this determination, set the base of the mountain



ORLANDO (RUBE) ROBBINS
Chief of Scouts

on fire. The wind was high, and the terrible roaring of smoke and flame seemed to approach us from every direction.

First Sergeant John A. Sullivan, Company C, Second Infantry, then took a party of men and worked bravely and hard to get a space burned off around us large enough to prevent the fire from reaching our position. This effort, and the fact that the wind seemed to shift just as we were in the greatest danger, alone saved the command.

That night, after the moon had got down, we moved down the side of the mountain, which was so precipitous that it was impossible to bring more than a very small portion of our baggage with us. Officers and men threw away the greater part of their effects, and I ordered most of the public property abandoned, so that the train might be as lightly loaded as possible with what was absolutely necessary. Some of this was lost in descending the mountain by rolling and straying of the mules. At daylight we were ascending a ridge running parallel to the one we left, and which was found a fair route.

As I had not a sufficient command to establish and hold a camp to take care of my wounded men, and being crippled in every way by the loss of supplies, animals, equipage and clothing, I took up my march for Camp Howard, to which point it will be necessary to return and refit, if the command is to keep the field.

I shall order the purchase of sufficient rations at Warrens to last to Camp Howard, and continue my march in that direction as rapidly as the jaded animals and men can travel; at present both are exhausted from fatigue. No ammunition fell into the hands of the Indians. I think they got Private Doyle's rifle.

THE RETREAT ARRESTED

This rear movement of Lieutenant Catley was promptly arrested by an officer sent from Lapwai by Colonel Wheaton, the instant the report of this defeat and run was made known to him. Very promptly, also, Captain Forse, First Cavalry, with twenty-five men of his company, was dispatched to reinforce and turn him toward, and not from, this small body of Indians.

The following dispatch will indicate my action under the circumstances of these reports:

Vancouver Barracks, August 24, 1879.

CAPTAIN MCKEEVER,
Commanding Camp Howard
(By mail from Lewiston):
Department Commander directs you send the following to Bernard.
(Signed) SLADEN, *Aide*.

"CAPTAIN BERNARD,
In the Field:
"Guard has been sent to Warrens. Indians have been encouraged by apparent misconduct of Catley. Possibly he may redeem himself under your eye; but his precipitate retreat before inferior numbers is astounding. Sorry for Farrow's unavoidable mistake. Think he will aid you materially. Must leave details to your discretion. Those Indians must be defeated, or trouble will extend.

"(Signed)

HOWARD,
"Commanding."

In this engagement the hostiles fired about fifty shots at a range of less than 150 yards, wounding two men and killing a horse at the first fire. There were a few return shots fired. The strength of the enemy (by count) was given at from ten to twenty-seven.

ANALYSIS OF THE DEFEAT

The writer, on August 18th, visited and examined the hostile position on the south bank of Big Creek and at an elevation considerably above the trail, which was on the opposite (north) bank. The hostiles had built a wall of loose rock, where they were perfectly protected and could fire through loopholes in the wall. The narrow trail ran along a ledge one hundred feet or more above the creek, which here runs through a canyon with walls perhaps five hundred feet high, and impracticable except along the trail; retreat could be made only by men turning about individually, which was done, and made in such haste that the two wounded men were left behind. Men were subsequently sent to bring them to the command, which had retreated (unpursued) about two miles up the creek to a flat, where it camped for the night.

July 30. In continuing the retreat (one and a half to two miles) to what was afterwards known as "Vinegar Hill," there were about fifteen shots fired at the command, with no result save wounding a mule. Vinegar Hill was so called as, there being no water, the men slaked their thirst by sips of vinegar. July 31st, 2 A. M., continuing the retreat, as the bell of the pack train was muffled, eleven mules were soon lost that night, mainly by straying. They marched that day to Cold Meadows, estimated at thirty miles. On August 1st they broke camp at 2 A. M. and camped within eight miles of the South Fork of the Salmon River at Tip Top. They arrived at Warm Springs (12 miles west of Warrens) August 5th.

If this little history is to be of value it must be *complete*; this seems the appropriate place to record the fact that Lieut. Catley was, for his conduct on this expedition, tried by a General Courtmartial, found guilty of misbehavior in the presence of the enemy, and sentenced to be dismissed from the service. The sentence was, however, on the recommendation of the Judge Advocate General, set aside by the President. See G. C. M. O. No. 33, May 12, 1880.

Let us digress for a moment to refer to this little campaign from the viewpoint of the Sheepstealer Indians, with whom history should deal fairly.

They had been in this unexplored and almost inaccessible region for generations, with apparently no hostility to the Whites, and they might be there now but for the fact that in an evil day they were joined by a few refugees from the Bannock War of 1878, and it seems probable that the murders of the Chinamen at Oro Grande (Casto) and Johnson and Dorsey on the South Fork of the Salmon in May were instigated by these new additions to the small tribe.

The real Sheepstealers, the old residents, resented Catley's invasion. He was trespassing on *their* country—theirs and their ancestors before them from time immemorial. They fought to repel the invader—and who would not?

The attack on Rains' was the legitimate sequel to Catley's defeat at Vinegar Hill. The Indians followed him up, found the isolated ranch unprotected, and attacked it accordingly.

After the above mistakes and false movements, the several detachments formed junction and pushed toward the Indians, a few of whom had left their stronghold, and, probably following up Catley, burned James Rains' Ranch, killing the owner August 16th, and wounding Albert Webber. James Edwards and Harry Serren (known as "Lemhi") escaped, carrying the news to Warrens.

Pursuant to instructions, Catley now marched to the mouth of Elk Creek, joining Bernard August 11th.



CHARLIE SHAPLISH
(or Whirlwind)
Umatilla Scout

We now come to the *Second Stage*.

Bernard, Catley and Farrow were at or near the mouth of Elk Creek, where Surgeon T. E. Wilcox and four men, after a hard trip from Boise Barracks, joined them on the 13th, picking up en route a pack mule loaded with 2,000 rounds of ammunition, which Bernard had lost on the 10th. August 13th the scouts started up Elk Creek followed by the remainder of the command. On the 14th the latter, camped on the head of Elk Creek, where Capt. A. G. Forse, First Cavalry, and Lieut. Abner Haines, Second Infantry, with 23 men of Co. D, First Cavalry, from Camp Howard, joined him. Through Catley's experience it was now known that the enemy was located on Big Creek, somewhere near Vinegar Hill. The command reached the headwaters of Big Creek (probably near the present site of Edwardsburg) August 15th.

Farrow's Scouts proceeded about a march ahead of the main command as an advance guard. There was a dim Indian trail down this creek over which two horsemen had evidently passed about the previous February. The creek runs in a deep canon its entire length. Frequently it was necessary to march for one or two hundred yards in the bed of the stream, three feet or more in depth, covered with boulders, during which the hoofs of the scout ponies, which were unshod, became soft and soon wore down to the quick. This more than anything else used up our mounts so that before the end of the campaign we were obliged to abandon or shoot twenty of our forty ponies. About every five miles a little clear space with a few abandoned wickiups and a supply of winter fuel would be found and occasional relatively fresh Indian signs, which became more plentiful as we proceeded down the canyon.

August 17th. The scouts reached and camped two miles



YA-TIN-OW-ITZ
War Chief of the Cayuses

below the place where Catley's trail came down from the north to Big Creek. As we were apparently getting near the hostiles, Lieut. Brown with five scouts started out at 4:20 P. M. down toward the site of Catley's engagement. They reached the caves about four miles after leaving camp and proceeded about three miles farther, finding salmon traps and plenty of fresh signs. By this time it was very dark and they bivouacked on the trail.

CONTACT SECURED

This advance scouting party started at 2:45 A. M. August 18th, and soon came to where Catley had been ambushed. A few hundred yards below here halt was made in a clear space in the canyon so narrow and with vertical cliffs towering above so precipitously that the sun set at two P. M. Here the main scout command came up and Lieut. Brown and a couple of scouts reconnoitered about a mile farther. A fresh sign was discovered below here, which caused ten of our scouts to start out August 19th at 2:30 A. M., proceeding only three miles when fired on from the rocks by ten or fifteen dismounted hostiles. On the fire being returned, the enemy ran up a side canyon, pursued by our scouts. Meanwhile Scout Spelia galloped back to camp, yelling: "Heap fight; heap Bannock!" Word was passed on back to Bernard, who, in view of the critical situation, had been closing up and was only two or three miles in the rear. The scouts saddled up and we hurried down the creek in single file as fast as the rough nature of the country permitted. We met our nine scouts where the action had commenced. They had sustained no casualties, except the loss of a horse. Half a mile farther hostiles were seen on the hills ahead, so we kept on for several miles and then climbed to a plateau, several acres in extent, with excellent grazing and a good spring. There were ten wickiups here which had been abandoned the day before. This place is now known as Soldier Bar (see map). In the rocks above the scouts found a number of caches with loot galore, including much which the Sheepeaters had taken at Vinegar Hill after Catley's retreat. The main command soon arrived, having crossed the stream about a dozen times en route, in places three or four feet deep. They camped at Soldier Bar, destroying the Indian village, while Farrow (minus his pack train) turned south up the

mountain on the trail of the hostiles, finding more caches containing welcome food supplies. The hostiles were evidently lightening up to facilitate their escape. Subsequently, the whole hostile outfit were seen hurrying away about a mile distant. Had our ponies been fresh, we might have captured them, but we were about "all in" and bivouacked that night near the summit above the snow line by a snow bank. Turning our ponies loose to graze, they naturally wandered off during the night.

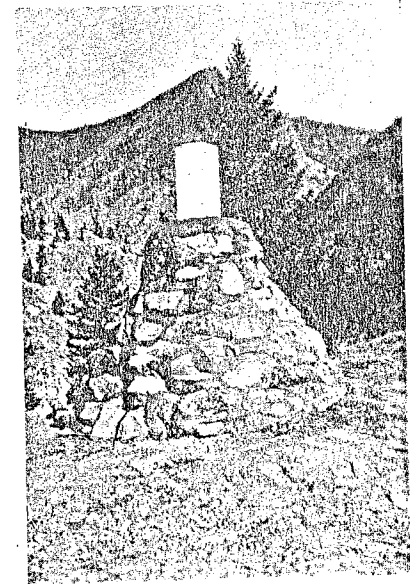
PRIVATE HARRY EAGAN SHOT

August 20. Bernard, from Soldier Bar, ordered Catley back to Smead's Ranch for supplies, while he and Forse followed Farrow, leaving all the trains to pack up and follow their respective commands; the latter were several miles from camp, and trains ready to follow them, when suddenly attacked by about fifteen hostiles who had crept down in the rocks above them. The train guards, though taken by surprise, soon repulsed the attack, though Private Harry Eagan, Co. C, Second Infantry, was shot through both thighs, necessitating amputation. He died under the operation, and was buried on the spot. The War Department and his old regiment have (1925) erected a modest monument to mark his grave and the site of the engagement, at which a couple of animals were also killed and several wounded.

The little monument shown here in the cut consists of a five-foot pile of boulders, set in cement and surmounted by a soldier's headstone, bearing the inscription:

HARRY EAGAN

Private Co. C, Second Inf.
Killed in action here during an attack by Sheepeater Indians on rear guards and pack trains of Co.'s C, 2nd Inf., and G and D, 1st Cavalry
August 20, 1879



It is probably more remote from civilization, even today, than any similar monument in the United States.

The headstone was transported from the nearest railroad station, McCall, on Payette Lake, some 70 miles by wagon, and then nearly 40 miles by pack mule, to its destination at Soldier Bar.

The firing brought all commands, except Farrow, back to Soldier Bar, where they remained until August 21st, when they resumed the marches ordered for the 20th; Catley, arriving at Smead's ranch on the 25th and remaining there until the 30th. We now return to Farrow, whose scouts, in hunting for their ponies the next day (20th) found twenty-nine horses and mules abandoned by the hostiles. Shaplish and a few scouts located the hostile camp at daybreak and fired a few shots at them as they fled. One of them threw away a bundle as he escaped, which proved to be the blouse with shoulder straps of one of Catley's lieutenants—Webster. Several caches were found with saddles and a much-needed one hundred pounds of flour.

August 21. The scouts got their pack train this morning (civilian scouts, Robbins and John S. Ramey), brought Farrow news of yesterday's attack on the pack trains. Bernard overtook Farrow, but his animals are fast giving out—lost seven today. A few hostiles seen by Bernard today, as yesterday, but they keep at a respectful distance.

August 22. Command marched only seven (or less) miles, scouts in the lead, toward Middle Fork of Salmon River. A few hostiles seen, but only one near enough to get a shot at him. Snow and rain today. Three more horses shot by Bernard to prevent their falling into hands of the enemy.

RATIONS RUNNING LOW

August 23. Marched eight miles (or less) over an old trail down a long bunch grass slope to the Middle Fork, where we found an old winter camp of six lodges. This is just above what we then regarded as an impassable canyon. Bernard and Forse were now practically out of rations. Farrow had possibly enough for five days, except no bacon, which the scouts partly made up by fishing.

August 24. This is the last we are destined to hear of the

hostiles for several weeks. Bernard, Forse, and Farrow's commands were all so short of supplies and their animals so near the point of collapse that it now becomes a question of getting to rations. Bernard and Forse leave this date for Loon Creek, where Lieutenant Patten had been ordered to meet them with rations from Boise, but for some unknown reason was turned off to Warm Lake and did not reach Bernard until the 31st. By the night of the 25th they arrived five miles north of the mouth of Loon Creek, losing six animals en route, only to learn that rations had not arrived; therefore Forse, on August 26th, marches back down the Middle Fork, arriving above Impassable Canyon just as the last of Farrow's men are taking the back trail. Bernard, as will be seen later, reached his home station (Boise Barracks) September 8th. Forse had a veritable starvation march back to Rains' Ranch, following about a day behind Farrow, over to Soldier Bar and part of the way up Big Creek, where he fortunately shot a few salmon. A day or two later he met McKeever and Catley with rations for him, and arrived at Rains' Ranch September 3d, returning to Camp Howard September 13-21. On August 26th, Capt. McKeever, with fifteen mounted men of Co. K, Second Infantry, left Camp Howard with rations, met Catley at Smead's Ranch August 30th, and assumed command; started up Elk and over onto and down Big Creek, meeting Farrow on the 31st, and Forse a day or two later. He reached the Caves September 4, Rains' Ranch the 10th, and Camp Howard a week or more later. Lieut. Farrow on his return march to Smead's Ranch lost twelve animals en route and, but for captured animals, and picking up an occasional abandoned horse, would have had men dismounted. He was fortunate, on August 27th, to secure from hostile caches 100 pounds of flour, 30 pounds of bacon, and some dried salmon. On the 30th three scouts failed to get into camp. The 31st only seven or eight scouts arrived. They, however, joined the following day. September 1st Farrow arrived at Smead's.

Turning now to the official reports, General Howard states that Bernard reports from Loon Creek dated August 26th:

"Since my dispatch of the 19th and 20th (Aug.), Lieut. Farrow with his scouts has captured 35 head of stock from the hostiles, and caused them to abandon all their baggage. They escaped down the Middle Salmon

TENTH BIENNIAL REPORT

canyon, abandoning everything. The command then turned south for a few miles, when they struck the Middle Salmon, just above what is called the Impassable Canyon. Here I left Lieutenant Farrow, with his scouts, to look after the Indians, while I, with my company, and Captain Forse's 24 men, started to the mouth of Loon Creek, twenty miles distant, to meet the supply-train.

"I then ordered Captain Forse to return to Farrow's camp, when he would assume command of Catley's and Farrow's command, and follow the Indians' trail, if possible, as long as his rations would allow him to do so.

"Captain Forse's command consists of 103 persons, (including Catley and Farrow) packers and all, and has now about eighteen days' provisions, that is, if the train from Camp Howard reaches them.

"The hostiles do not exceed thirty warriors, and, in my opinion, are short of that number. They are now destitute of everything and are believed by the scouts to be going toward Lemhi. The country they were in when we left the trail was so rough animals could not be got through it at all. All our stock, except Captain Forse's horses and Farrow's captured stock, are exhausted. Many horses and mules have given out and been shot, and, unless we have rest and forage all will soon give out."

EXHAUSTED CONDITION OF CAPTAIN BERNARD'S STOCK

Five days later Bernard says:

"The condition of my stock is such that few would be left at the close of the 22 days. It is my opinion that it will be both economy and for the interest of the service for this command to go to Boise and refit for the purpose of remaining in the Indian country as long as the Indians do. * * * A small force of troops should remain near Warrens' until a properly organized force can be sent against the Indians. * * * The stock of my command is much weaker than I thought they were when I last reported. Will remain in this vicinity until I get an answer."

I had already signified to Captain Bernard that he could best judge of the situation from the field, and also, to distribute his command to their proper posts, when the object of the expedition had been accomplished.

CAPTAIN BERNARD'S COMMAND AUTHORIZED TO RETURN

Fearing, after his last dispatch, from the impassable nature of the country, and on account of the weak condition of the animals, that I might endanger great loss and cause useless expenditure by an attempt to follow the few scattered Indians further, I sent the following telegram:

"Vancouver Barracks, September 2, 1879.

"CAPTAIN BERNARD,

Care of Commanding Officer, Boise Barracks.

"Dispatch of August 31 received. If, in your judgment, you have accomplished all you can, you will return with your company to Boise. Instruct Farrow to proceed to Lapwai and report. Send Forse, Catley and McKeever to Camp Howard; Forse leaving a small guard of mounted men at Warrens. Pitcher can forward his field-notes as soon as possible.

(Signed)

"HOWARD,
"Commanding Department."

RESULTS

The expedition has not accomplished what was expected by myself, or demanded by your instructions, still it has revealed a country hitherto quite unknown, and opened the way for more intelligent action in the future.

Lieutenant Catley appears to be much to blame for his timid action and hasty retreat for more than a hundred miles. He will be given an opportunity to make full explanation.

Acting on the above authority Bernard returned to his home station, Boise Barracks, on September 8th. He had been out since May 31, marched 1,168 miles, mostly over unexplored mountains, losing 45 pack mules and 18 horses, enduring hardships from snow and hunger seldom met with, even in those days. Surely no troop could have done more, and few as much.

FURTHER NEWS FROM BERNARD

After the foregoing was written, a missing dispatch from Captain Bernard has since come to hand via Fort Lapwai. From it I make several extracts which show more effective work than previous reports gave me reason to anticipate.

"Camp on Big Creek, ninety miles from Warrens, I. T., Aug. 19, 1879.

"While the scouts were marching along the trail the Indians fired upon them from the top of a rocky ridge; the scouts returned the fire, charged across the ridge, drove them from their position, and pushed them down the canyon to their camp, which they found deserted. They left much of their provisions, clothing, cooking utensils, skins, etc. They passed over a high, rocky mountain, going southeast, and have set fire to the country in our front and rear. Farrow and his scouts are now on their trail. They have done splendid service. * * * The country is very rough, probably the roughest in the United States.

"The Indians have but little stock; much of the property taken from Lieutenant Catley's command was found in the Indians' camp. Lieutenants Farrow and Brown deserve the greatest credit for the bravery and energy displayed since under my command. Their scouts, also, did splendidly. The entire command was kept close to the scouts during the chase. * * *

Captain Forse's 24 men and Farrow's scouts will follow the Indians' trail as long as it continues toward Loon Creek, when we will go to the mouth of that stream and get supplies, then will again take up the trail, wherever it may go. * * *

"Farrow has just sent a report that the Indians are in full retreat, abandoning property all along the trail! * * *

"August 20, 1879. Just after the commands had moved out of camp this morning, and just as the pack train was moving out, the Indians fired on the rear-guard and pack train from the rocks close by. * * *

"The Indians were soon dislodged and driven away after the commands returned. The Indians did not exceed ten or fifteen. * * *"

UMATILLA INDIAN SCOUTS ACHIEVE SUCCESS

Farrow now determined to make a final effort to strike the hostiles another blow, though the taking of an "account of stock" at this time would not appear encouraging. Half of our cayuse ponies were gone. We had, it is true, captured some stock and picked up a number of abandoned animals on our return from Middle Fork, but these, almost without exception, were "played out" stock, and not dependable for hard

work. Lieut. Farrow had an abundance of initiative, was very energetic, resourceful and not deterred, though both the country and strength of the enemy were unknown. The scouts deserve more than passing notice. Sergt. Ya-tin-ow-itiz was the war chief of the Cayuses and son-in-law of chief Howlish Wampo, who owned several thousand cayuse ponies. Ya-tin-ow-itiz therefore started for the campaign with five selected ponies. Sergt. Shaplish (Whirlwind) spoke a little English, was of the Fenimore Cooper type, and as handsome a warrior as ever wore moccasins. Whenever there was a difficult piece

of scouting to be done, Shaplish was usually selected to do it. Corporal Wa-tis-kow-kow's knowledge of Shoshone enabled him to assist materially at the surrender of Tamanmo, or War Jack, in which he took risks which should have won him a decoration. Lack of space prevents individual mention of others here. The Indian is more expert at hunting and fishing than the white man, an important consideration when the regular rations run short, which was frequently our misfortune. Only Henry Campo, Te-low-kike (or Captain Sumpkin) and Twa-ka-kite still survive.



WAT-IS-KOW-KOW
Umatilla Scout
Who, though unarmed, aided in bringing in hostile Chief Tamanmo (fully armed).

Lieut. Brown was sent September 2nd to Camp Howard on a hurried mission, making a ride of about sixty-two miles in one day with dispatches and charged with securing supplies, and, if possible, mounts to continue operations. The best that could be done in that line was to charter Benson's pack train. Horses were promised from Fort Walla Walla, but they never came. On September 12th Farrow planned to go in for a week or more with ten of the best scouts and best horses, and a couple of packs. This plan, however, was wisely subsequently changed to leave two soldiers and three scouts at Smith's on the South Fork in charge of the weaker animals, so that we had really a strength of 23 men, including packers.

INDIANS LOCATED AGAIN

On September 17th we left Rains' Ranch, following Catley's original trail until the afternoon of the 20th, when we left it, striking out east and north for the section south of Salmon and west of the Middle Fork. Fortune smiled on us, for, before noon the next day we came on a party of two squaws, a papoose and two boys about eight and seventeen years old. We took them in, except the older boy, who, though hotly pursued, made his escape. Farrow made a short stop, while I took ten scouts and, going forward, soon struck fresh signs in shape of two

SURVIVING SCOUTS



TE-LOW-KIKE
or Captain Sumpkin
Cayuse Indian

TWA-KA-KITE
Charley Tokalin
Walla Walla Tribe



JOE OR HENRY CAMPO
Surviving Scout

recently occupied camps and the trail of a hunting party of about eight men (four of them mounted) heading north. Farrow with the remainder of the command overtook us at sundown, just as we arrived at the north edge of the general plateau, overlooking the main Salmon, apparently about ten miles distant. About dark, leaving here our packs and horses, and each taking a blanket or overcoat, we started on the trail afoot, losing it, as I had predicted, after going about two miles. We then made for a ridge about half a mile distant, and, on reaching it, heard a dog bark about three-quarters of a mile distant. Scouts were sent out to more definitely locate the camp, while we waited, suffering considerably from the cold.

Starting again about 1:30 A. M., Farrow and I each took half our force and made our way stealthily to the camp, surrounding it at daylight. As we gradually closed in we could see four horses and the place where the camp *ought* to be, but no fires—the Sheepeaters had escaped! The hostiles, realizing that the barking of the dog had revealed to us their whereabouts, had put out their fire, left four of their horses, stabbing one in the shoulder with a butcher knife, leaving the knife in, so the horse had to be shot. They had here about six hundred pounds of meat, partly cured. Our pack train and “prisoners,” some four miles distant, were sent for. We spent the remainder of the day alternately sleeping and feasting on venison and elk meat. Shaplish was sent out with a white flag and with one of the squaws to induce the hostiles to come in for a parley. Peo and To-it-akas found the trail of several horse and foot tracks leading east. About two miles from camp the dog, whose barking had revealed to us their camp, was found hanged directly over the trail, where we would be sure to see it. The dog had paid the supreme penalty for his watchfulness and for giving the alarm! It is possible, too, that the boy who had escaped may have reached the camp and warned them.

TAMANMO SURRENDERS

On September 23rd we started out on the trail, which took us in a complete circle to a fine meadow on our trail of the 21st. Here we made a base camp about 8 miles west of Middle Fork, started civilian scout Bright and Private Smith to Warrens with dispatches and for flour and fifteen horses. After dark, leaving campfires burning brightly to indicate presence of the full command, Farrow and myself with sixteen of the command, taking with us the squaw who had the papoose, started again on the trail. The following day we camped in a gulch now marked on maps as Papoose Gulch, so called because the papoose of the squaw whom we sent out to bring in her people, retaining the papoose to insure her return, kept the entire camp awake with its wailing. We discovered en-route a lake to the north of us. Two camps, each several days old and each containing four to six lodges, were found. The squaw failed to get us in touch with her people, and we returned to our base camp on the 25th. About two hours after we re-

turned we were startled by a loud yell in the timber half a mile from camp, and soon we discovered a hostile who evidently wanted to parley. Lieutenant Brown and Wah-tis-kow-kow left camp and approached him, but he moved, so that they, in following his movements, were soon out of sight of camp. When within one hundred yards it was discovered that he had a rifle, and he was warned that as we were unarmed he must drop it. He then asked who Lieut. Brown was, and Watis-kow-kow replied that he was the Tenas Tyhee (“Little Chief”). Our scouts subsequently said that had the reply been “Hyas Tyhee” (Head Chief) he would have shot us, as he might easily have done, and made his escape. However, he left his Henry rifle, approached, shook hands, and was brought into camp to Farrow. During the parley in camp we discovered at his back a revolver which he had failed to leave with the rifle. There he said his name was Tamanmo (or War Jack), part Bannock and part Nez Perce, and successor to Chief Eagle Eye. He said that he was at the Malheur Agency when the Bannock War broke out and, not being able to get back to Fort Hall, had participated in the outbreak and subsequently joined his friends here. He was tired of fighting and wanted to quit. He had crept down in the bushes last night close to our camp, and so learned that our Indians were Cayuses; said that he and four others had planned to steal some of our horses tonight, therefore we should guard them well. Farrow told him to go out and bring in his people, that it must be an unconditional surrender, that no one not guilty of murder would be harmed. Tamanmo wanted a fresh horse, saying he had two “played out” horses hid near by in the timber. He was given one, and when his two jaded horses were driven in, either better than the one he got, we knew he would “play fair.”

INFORMATION DEVELOPS RAPIDLY

Tamanmo said that part of the hostiles were at the mouth of Big Creek, and that he would either have them in or come himself tomorrow. Kept white flag out today and put on a strong guard at night. September 26. Remained in camp. Tamanmo with a Weiser named Buoyer came in under white flag for a talk. Tamanmo, who has only been here about a year, is not well conversant with the country and had not suc-

ceeded in finding his people; says there are nine men with their families near here who belong here and know the country. The mother of the children whom we got on the 21st is Buoyer's squaw. Another party, consisting of twelve men, women and children, are scattered through the country near here, and all are to be hunted up. Buoyer went out again, leaving his gun in camp.

Courier David R. Munroe left for Warrens with dispatches for General Howard, stating Indians were suing for peace, and, if we failed to collect them all, we would start in again.

September 27. In camp. Considerable rain today. White flag still out. Command placed on half rations pending receipt of supplies from Warrens. September 28. Still in camp. Rain, sleet and hard snowstorm. Night cold and hard on animals. September 29. Still in camp. Snow melting off slowly. Later learned that Capt. Winters, First Cavalry, had left Camp Howard via Elk City for Mallard Bar, on account of report of fifteen Indians seen near there.

September 30. Marched twenty miles (or less) camping where Lieut. Brown left Farrow to go scouting in advance on the 21st. Buoyer came in.

FIFTY-ONE PRISONERS

October 1, marched five miles and camped where we halted on 21st ult., where the creek turns to the east. Snow last night and rain nearly all day today. Tamanmo with another Indian (Weiser) came in this morning ahead of four lodges, consisting of eight men and twenty-four squaws and papooses (nearly all Sheepeaters), and doing justice to the occasion by liberal use of feathers and paint. A few still are out. Farrow is to wait a few days for Buoyer to bring them in. The muster roll reports thirty-nine surrendered up to this date. Later surrenders increased this to fifty-one, of whom fifteen may be classed as warriors. Their arms October 1st consisted of two Henry carbines, one Sharp's carbine, one Springfield carbine, calibre .45; one Springfield breech-loading rifle, calibre .50; two muzzle-loading rifles, and one double-barrelled shot gun. The aggressive part of the campaign being at an end, Farrow thought best to send Lieut. Brown to Warrens in advance of the main party, carrying dispatches and arranging for rations

and forage. The command was nearly out of rations, moreover it was incumbent on us now to feed the prisoners. Capt. Forse and Lieut. Muhlenberg, with twenty-four men, had left camp Howard the previous day (September 30) with rations which reached Warrens about October 6th or 7th. The matter of supply, etc., rendered it advisable that the prisoners be taken back via Camp Howard, Forts Lapwai and Walla Walla, and Umatilla Agency. They arrived at the latter place in due time. Farrow and his scouts were justly given an enthusiastic reception by the Indians, as well as by the citizens of the nearby town of Pendleton. The scouts were furloughed from November 6th until December 9th, their date of discharge, while the prisoners were taken by Lieut. Farrow to Vancouver Barracks, and, the following year they were sent to the Fort Hall, Idaho, Reservation.

DISCOURAGING DIFFICULTIES

Meanwhile Lieut. Brown received orders from Farrow to return to the Umatilla Agency via Indian and Council Valleys, proceeding to the Crooked River country en route, and to make a careful observation of the country thereabouts, reporting as to recent signs of Indians; also to permit citizens desirous of accompanying him to search for lost or stolen stock. Lieut. Brown left with three of the scouts and five of the detachment October 7th via Payette Lakes and Little Salmon Meadows, stopping at Groscluse Ranch on Cottonwood Creek. There were no civilians who cared to go to Crooked River after horse thieves, but it was Lieut. Brown's duty to go as far toward Crooked River as was physically possible in order to observe and report. This could be done with a single orderly as well as though escorted by the entire detachment, as the probabilities of finding anything were very remote. Taking, therefore, Private Ward, he left October 11th, marched eighteen miles up Hornet Creek the 12th, and the next day made fifteen miles, when the depth of snow became so great that the trail could no longer be followed, so he turned back five miles and camped, returning on the 13th. It had started to rain, which soon turned to snow, shortly after their departure on the 11th. They had no transportation and came near perishing. It was the hardest trip of the entire summer.

Homeward march was then resumed and Umatilla Agency reached October 22, 1879.

The Department Commander's appreciation of the services of the Scouts was shown in the following Appendix to his annual report:

(TELEGRAM)

Vancouver Barracks, Wash., Oct. 9, 1879.

ADJUTANT GENERAL,
Military Division Pacific,
Presidio, San Francisco.

My Annual Report indicated a failure in the main object of the expedition against the Sheepeaters and renegades located between the Little Salmon and Snake Rivers.

Now it is reversed, and the expedition has handsomely been completed by Lieutenant Farrow and his scouts having defeated the Indians in two skirmishes, capturing their camp, with stores and stock. He has finally forced the entire band to surrender, and will deliver them as prisoners of war at this post.

Lieutenants Farrow, 21st Infantry, and W. C. Brown, 1st Cavalry, with their seven enlisted men, citizen employes, and Indian scouts, deserve special mention for gallantry, energy, and perseverance, resulting in success. There is not a rougher or more difficult country for campaigning in America. Please add this to my report.

HOWARD,
Commanding Department.

Lieuts. Farrow and Brown were each subsequently awarded (February 27, 1890) the brevet of First Lieutenants for this service.

GUIDES, COURIERS AND PACKERS PRAISED

Any narrative of mountain campaigning such as this would be incomplete without reference to the splendid services of the civilian guides, couriers and packers, not only in this but in the two previous campaigns of 1877 and 1878, whose work calls for physical qualities and endurance of the highest order. Guides and couriers are daily called upon to take their lives in their hands in the performance of their duties and it is unfortunate that our pension laws make no provisions for any of the above three classes. When away from the command their food and bedding must be carried on the saddle; and their movements are necessarily largely restricted to trails which hostiles can easily watch, and where with safety to themselves they can lie in ambush. In operations on the plains these men usually travel by night, something ordinarily impracticable in a little known mountainous section. The packer must habit-

ually be up long before daylight, pack his mules with ropes stiff with frost, and it is worthy of note here that in Bernard's command Hoffner's diary mentions no less than thirty-seven of the marching days in this (midsummer) campaign when they were obliged to contend with snow, occasionally freshly fallen, but usually old drifts twenty to thirty feet deep.

The pack train necessarily occupies so much space in the column that as a rule it "trusts to luck" that it may not be attacked, for the few men who can be spared for a guard could offer but little resistance to a determined assault by hostiles eager to secure the rich plunder carried by every military train. In our little commands that summer, as well as in the Indian campaigns of 1877 and 1878, the work and risks were such that the writer feels that the State of Idaho should hold in grateful remembrance the services of such men as Orlando ("Rube") Robbins, John S. Ramey, Geo. Shearer, Bright, Josh Falkner, Calvin R. White, Levi A. White, David R. Monroe, Johnny Vose, the Parker Brothers, J. W. Redington, Jake Barnes, John Corliss, Alexander Foster, Harry Serren (Lemhi), and Uncle Dave ("Cougar") Lewis, who still lives in Big Creek, only a mile or two above the scene of the fight of August 20th, 1879, and others whose names we cannot now recall.

