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BIO
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1877

The Widows Story

In a recent interview with the widow of Leschi, who ~~then was young~~ I learned more of the particulars of their flight and the part she took in the events following their escape from the Eaton Rangers, the force acting Governor Mason had sent to apprehend Leschi.

"We left home at night but did not go far" she said, "only to Aubry's place" (Aubry Dean about five miles distant) "and camped in a small clump of timber near the house. Next day we went to ^{Tenacant} ~~Tenacant~~ prairie," (Connell's) "but did not stop and went right on over to Greene River where we afterwards camped so long. I didn't know there was to be war. Leschi never told me anything about it. There were only five of us, three men and two women, that traveled together

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The men sat up and talked nearly all night but I didn't pay much attention to what they were saying. If I had known there was to be war I wouldn't have gone. I didn't know anything about there being war until I heard the guns a few days after we went away from home?

"Did Leschi ever tell you there would be war?" I asked.

"No, Leschi never told me anything only small talk" (Gultis wawa) "He never told me anything about his business. I was young ^{was a} I ^{was a} big fool for marrying him" (hisas pilton) "He was old enough to be my father."

"Then why did you marry him?" ~~asked~~.

"Oh well, Leschi was always making me presents, and he always dressed well and combed his hair nice and was almost as white as a Boston man; and then he was rich and had lots of horses and like a fool I married him."

"Well, was he ugly to you or cross?"

"Oh no, ^(with emphasis) not that. I never saw him angry in my life and he never spoke an angry word to me and always let me have all the nice clothes I wanted, but somehow he didn't seem to want to stay at home much and didn't talk to me much".

"How did he get the money to buy you the nice clothes and make you presents?"

"Well, he would take a horse to the Fort and sell it and bring home a lot of things. ³ We always lived well."

In answer to further inquiries she said, "Leschi never worked much. He was nearly always on horse back unless we were away hunting and as soon as we would get home he would go away again and often stay away all night."

"Tell us about your hunting trips, will you please?"

"We used to go away up the river" (Nisqually) "nearly to where the snow laid on the ground, not quite to it though. We would take horses with us and stay sometimes half a month and Leschi would kill lots of game, all we could pack out."

"One time when we were way up in the mountains and out of water Leschi went way down into a deep place where we could hear the water running; ever so far down. While Leschi was down there he found gold and brought some of it up with him and showed it to me but I didn't think much about it then and I know I could not find the place again and that is the reason I have always refused to try though some Bostonians have offered me money if I would tell them where the place was."

I had heard of this find of gold before, but Leschi in his life time never would divulge the secret as to the location- only

said he found it in the mountains.

"How many horses do you think Leschi had when the war broke out Mary?"

"Well, I have no idea. I never counted them and Leschi never told me. There was a whole field full of them, I know, that I have seen at one time." I should judge from the manner of expressing herself there were from one to two hundred head- certainly not less than ^a ~~one~~ hundred.

I questioned her closely about whether Leschi signed the treaty but she said she did not know.

"There were a great many about where Stevens and Simmons tent stood and I didn't go there much and didn't know much about

what they were doing. Leschi told Simmons he did not want land on the bay and said he wanted his own hunting ground. Simmons told the Indians they would get a hat full of money but when the talk was done they only got a few yards of calico and some "black strap" (black molasses) and not much of that."

Mary's description of her former husband differs somewhat from my recollection, caused doubtless in a measure from the different conditions under which I last saw him and remember him best.

When I saw him last, he had just been captured after his long siege (in the war) of constant activity and scant food for over a year, which had visibly changed his appearance. He was then on

trial for his life and I was one of the jurors facing him. I shall never forget his searching eyes as he glanced over the jury with seeming contentment as he knew several of them. His hair at that time was long and countenance haggard, nevertheless the glow on his cheeks showed he was in good health. Mary said "Leschi was white for an Indian and wore his hair short and combed back like a white man. He was round faced with a flush color on his cheeks which showed good health. He was a very strong man and seemed never to get tired." She said, while visibly affected at the revival of old memories "but was always cheerful and good natured but he didn't talk much."

As she talked her manner showed she had been possessed of a burning jealousy that had left its lasting impress upon her and that had it not been for Leschi's former wife, (then living) she would have been happier then than now with her present husband, a white man, to whom she has been married a great many years.

Mary said the report that Leschi had killed his own child to escape discovery from the noise he made was not true as they had no children with them. The little boy he thought so much of remained with its mother, Leschi's first wife, who did not go to the war.

It was a pathetic story Mary told of the breakup at the end of the war. The Indians were scattered, Leschi had gone over the mountains, and she with Mrs. Quiemuth and another Indian woman were

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left in hiding alone in the mountains. As near as I could gather her narrative, these three withdrew far up White River into the mountains and traveled along near the head waters of the three rivers, White, Puyallup and Nisqually Rivers, hunting grounds of the Nisqually, where they fell in with ^{My} ~~Yelm~~ ^{Jim} and obtained food after three days without anything to eat. "Oh dear me" she exclaimed "what a time." Sure enough, what a time.

+ Yelm Jim,

OFFICE SUPERINTENDENT INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Olympia, W. T., May 31, 1856.

The excerpt below is from a letter written by Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens. In this letter, he describes his thoughts on Leschi and the progress of the Indian Wars.

As you read it, consider the following things:

- Who was Isaac Stevens? What did he do for a living? How might this have affected what he thought about Leschi and other Native American leaders?
- As you read, try to figure out if Stevens liked Leschi. Why or why not do you think he did?
- Based on this reading, what kind of a person do you think Leschi was? Do you agree or disagree with what Stevens has to say?

Leschi, the leader of the hostiles on the Sound, was familiarly known to most of our citizens; had in part adopted the habits and usages of civilized life, was a good farmer, an expert hunter, and believed to be an honest man.

Nelson, the monster who perpetrated the massacre on White river, was in like manner treated and respected by the inhabitants of the county of King.

The other leaders were held in similar trust. I have never heard of any charge that they had been maltreated by the settlers. I know they were treated with consideration and respect.

Recollect, Leschi lived within three hours' ride of Olympia, and two hours of Steilacoom; that he frequently visited both places; and Nelson was a welcome and frequent visitor to the town of Seattle, and so with the other leaders. Conceive, therefore, of the consternation of this whole community, when the Indians, believed to be the most reliable, in direct violation of their solemn word, commenced the war by the massacre of an entire settlement.

McAlister and Edgar were betrayed and shot by their own guides. McAlister went with his neighbor Stahi to see Leschi, believing that their old friendship of ten years could be appealed to to induce Leschi to continue friendly. Stahi treacherously betrayed and shot him on the road, and joined the enemy.

Were it necessary, I could give many cases. Moses and Miles, returning from the east of the mountains with several other gentlemen, passed through the camp of Leschi, on White river, believing them to

be friends. They met as such, shaking hands and exchanging friendly greetings; but as soon as their backs were turned the Indians fired upon them, and Moses and Miles, prominent citizens, the first the inspector of customs at Nisqually, the latter a lawyer of Olympia, and one of the colonels of the territorial militia, were the first martyrs of the war. Fortunately, though the Indians on the Sound outnumbered the whites nearly two to one, we have a law-abiding population, and we had a superintendent, Governor Mason, and an agent equal to the emergency.

Would it have been surprising if in the universal alarm, for all the Indians began to show unequivocal signs of hostility, the inhabitants had sought safety in the indiscriminate massacre of all Indians? Could it, even under the circumstances, have brought upon them the imputation of cruelty? I shall not answer these questions, but I put them as the most significant method of presenting the case.

The people took no such course. They sustained the course of Governor Mason and agent M. F. Simmons, in protecting all Indians not actually in the hostile ranks; and through difficulties and discouragements of the darkest character the Indians, four thousand in number, were moved from the war ground on the Sound to reservations, where they have since remained. Not an Indian was killed or molested except in battle.



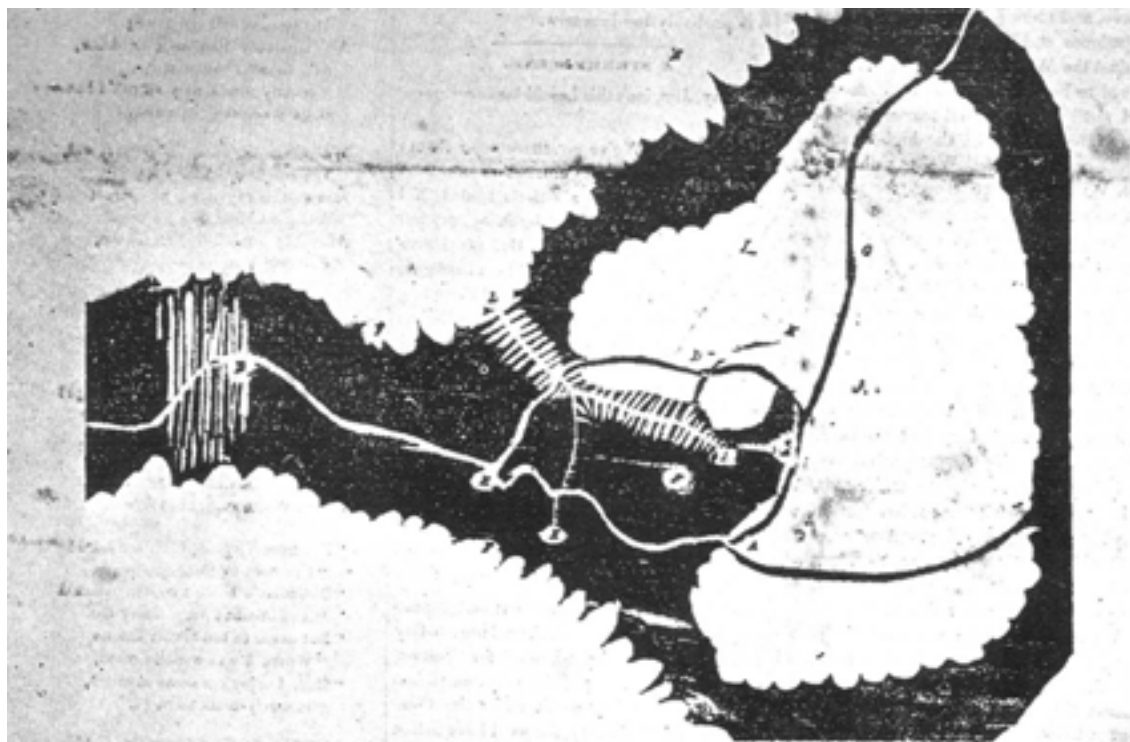
TRUTH TELLER.

DEVOTED TO THE DISSEMINATION OF TRUTH, AND SUPPRESSION OF HUMBUG.

EDITED BY ANN ONYMOUS

Steilacoom, W. T., February 3, 1858.

VOL. NO. 000.



Plan of Tenalcut or Connell's Prairie,
Surveyed by Lieut. Kautz, Dr. Tolmie,
& W. Tidd

- A Point where Leschi was left by the express party.
- B Swamp where Moses was shot.
- C Military Road. Route pursued by express party; distance 68 chains.
- D Route supposed to have been taken by Leschi; distance 104 ½ chains.
- E Junction of the two roads; distance 33 and 49 ½ chains. From C to swamp 85 chains.
- F Dense forest; much undergrowth and fallen timber.
- G Trail to Muckleshute
- H Connell's house.
- I Williamson's house.
- J. Block-house.
- K. Springs.
- L. Swamp and ravine. M. north.

The express party came upon the trail from the east. Met Leschi and other Indians at A, left there and rode rapidly to B, where they were fired upon, and Moses was mortally wounded. Rabbeson testified that he saw Leschi at both places. None of the others of the party saw him. There were six others besides Rabbeson. This occurred on the 30th of Oct. 1855.

A Card.

I believe it to be the duty of every honorable man who knows that a wrong has been done to any individual or set of individuals, not to keep silent, but to throw in his contribution to the cause of justice, and the exposure of error. I do not wish to be understood, however, as at all addressing that part of the community who only float up to the surface like scum, in times of public excitement, and are only heard in turbulent harangues and vile denunciations. With such I have no affinities; but there are gentlemen in Washington Territory, whose esteem I value highly, and whose friendship I am proud of; and to them I would say, that the grounds on which the resolutions of the late meetings, at Steilacoom and Olympia, condemnatory of the officers of the army, as having endeavored to defeat the execution of the law in the case of Leschi are based, I know to be as imaginary as they are unjust. To charge such men as Col. Casey, Lieut. Kautz, and Lieut. McKibbin, with disgraceful acts, is to place a stain on human nature itself, a blot on all worth and honor. My own name has not been mentioned in

the proceedings of the different meetings, but as I can not hold a middle course where my brother officers are assailed unjustly, I shall feel proud, if in future proceedings, my name may be mentioned with theirs. [name illegible]

A Card.

The *virtuous indignation* of the people of Thurston and Pierce appears to have been thoroughly aroused against the officers of the army stationed at Fort Steilacoom, with but one signalized exception. Although not having been particularly mentioned so far, in any of the *mass meetings*, except to have been the subject of billingsgate and vituperation from one or more of that class of *valiant* individuals who never have been known to express such opinions face to face with the persons mentioned in their vulgar tirade; still, I cannot in justice to myself, and in accordance with my position as executive officer on the 22d January, 1858, allow any impression or assertion, that my action was actuated by the same sense of duty as that of my brother officers, to pass unobserved.

The orders given to me by the commanding officer. (Col. Casey) were, to deliver the prisoner, Leschi, to the sheriff upon presentation of the proper warrant; no such authority was presented, from the fact of the sheriff having been arrested, which came to my knowledge about 12 ½ P. M. As to the suspicion that Col. Casey had arrested the sheriff and confined him in the guard house, I think the cross-questioning by the Secretary of the Territory, of myself, should have been sufficient.

It has been suggested, I understand, by some far-sighted "wise acres" that the "Officer of the day" secreted himself for the purpose of avoiding the process of delivering the prisoner to the sheriff. Supposing this absurd suspicion to be true; it was certainly well-known to any sensible individual, and there were certain persons present who are quite conversant with military customs, that the prisoner would have been quite as promptly delivered up to the proper authorities, upon application to the

commanding officer, as he would have been to the "Officer of the day."

My object in presenting this card to the public, is to publish the fact that I have acted as all officers of this post have done, (*who have been annihilated by effigies and terrible resolutions, to send them out of the country and deprive them of their commissions,*) feel as they do, perfectly conscious of having done right.

ARTHUR SHAAF.
2d Lieut. 4th Infantry, U. S. A.

To the Citizens of Washington Territory:

Considering the unpleasant situation in which I have been placed by the action of a public meeting held at Steilacoom on the 2d of January, and by a series of resolutions passed by a meeting held at Olympia on the 26th January, I have thought proper, in this manner, to address the public.

The proceedings of both the meetings alluded to, which were formed and carried through by men laboring under a wild frenzy of excitement, contain nothing more than hasty assertions—natural, and becoming those who act without reflection—controlled by misguided passion.

I consider myself, under the above circumstances, justified in making a plain and unequivocal denial of having had any knowledge whatever, of the intention of my arrest previous to the time the writ was served upon me by the deputy United States Marshal.

My own conscience assures me, that as an officer of Justice, I have done nothing that was not in consonance with prudence, and in strict conformity with that respect which should be shown to the law by every good and honest citizen.

When those who have taken part in the passing resolutions, rash and ungenerous in their nature, produce argument or proof in place of assertions, I am prepared to meet them on any and every point—confident that I shall be able to show to the world that I have committed no act unworthy myself as a man, or my duty as a public officer.

GEORGE WILLIAMS,
Sheriff, Pierce County.

Had a plain statement of Facts and a smaller exercise of imagination, been made by the parties who drew up the resolutions adopted by the recent meetings at Steilacoom and Olympia, relative to the case of Leschi, there would have existed no necessity for the undersigned to vindicate himself from the false charges made against his conduct as U. S. Commissioner. In times of popular excitement, much injustice is apt to be done to individuals, and although a cooler temper will undoubtedly ensue, and many regrets be made by those who are most savage in their demonstrations; still, the undersigned thinks that he has not the right altogether, to remain quiet; but that he owes a duty to himself, his friends and to society, to state plain and honest Truth.

On the morning of the 22d of January, an affidavit was made before me by an Indian, to the effect, that Mr. Williams, who resides near Fort Steilacoom, had on a certain occasion sold a quantity of whisky to an Indian. As I am the U. S. Commissioner it was my duty to immediately issue a warrant for the arrest of said Williams, which I accordingly did. It was served upon him by Mr. Kautz, a citizen of this Territory, whom I appointed acting U. S. Marshal. At any other time than the 22d of January, Mr. Williams might have been arrested for selling liquor to Indians without a single shriek on the part of the public, or a solitary howl from the crowd that went to Fort Steilacoom to see Leschi hanged. But on this day justice was to be set aside; a man charged with the misdemeanor of selling liquor to Indians was to escape without punishment, because forsooth, that man happened to be a sheriff—an officer, who according to the law books of the Olympian and Steilacoom reformers, can only be arrested on certain days of the year. If I know my duty at all, I always endeavor to do it well and promptly, and in issuing a warrant for the immediate arrest of Mr. Williams, was simply carrying out what I was sworn to do in my official capacity.

But the cry is that there was a *plot*—a secret caucus it is said, was held, (nobody knows where,) by a set of persons, (nobody knows who,) to do something, (nobody knows what) which would result in saving Leschi from the gallows. Now, if there was a plot I certainly am the victim, and if the carrying out of the law, in the case of Leschi was prevented, it certainly is the fault of the law itself, which does not ordain that sheriffs cannot be arrested for selling liquor to Indians. The shallowness of reasoning, and the vividness of imagination brought to bear in blaming me for exercising for a legitimate purpose, the powers vested in me by the law, are truly extraordinary. It was a matter of indifference to me whether Leschi was hanged or no, and I leave it to my friends to declare whether I ever expressed an opinion about the propriety of hanging him. It is sometimes the lot of honorable men who do their duty to be abused, and I cannot expect to be free from the common chances of life; but I do enter my protest against being included in any plot. I know that the good sense of the community will finally uphold my official acts, whatever their results may be. My motto in life has always been to do my duty and leave the consequences to take care of themselves.

J. M. BACHELDER,
U. S. Commissioner 2d Jud. Dist.