

COL. CORNELIUS GILLIAM.—Colonel Gilliam was a native of North Carolina, and was born in 1798. But his recollection of that state in after years was like a dream; for when but a youth he accompanied his parents to Missouri, where he lived for many years. August 31, 1820, he married Miss Mary Crawford of that state. Ten years later he was elected sheriff of Clay county for a term of two years; and at the expiration of that time he joined the Black Hawk war. In 1837 he served as captain of the company which fought all through the Seminole war. About this time trouble arose with the Mormons. The authorities decided to expel them from the state; and for that purpose volunteers were called for. Captain Gilliam came to the front, raised a company and was chosen its captain. He was soon after promoted to a colonelcy for meritorious conduct.

In 1843 he represented Andrew county in the legislature. Religiously he was a free-will Baptist. In 1845 he was ordained to the ministry; and the next year he left for Oregon, arriving in the fall. He first settled in Polk county, but soon removed to Benton county, there remaining until his departure in 1847 to join the then marshaling forces for the Cayuse war; for the Indians threatened death and destruction on every hand. The people were in mortal dread and terror, both for their lives and their property; for many depredations had been committed by the Indians; and in several instances coldblooded, outright murder and atrocious massacres of whole families had occurred. The life and character of Colonel Gilliam is so closely interwoven with the details of this war, and he figures so prominently in it, that the mere mention of his name is sufficient to recall the long, weary marches, the sufferings and privations, and the many hard-fought battles, all encompassed in what is known as the Cayuse war. This biography, without the details of that war, would be incomplete; and a history of the war with Colonel Gilliam omitted would be a story without a hero. They are inseparable.

When the news reached Oregon City about dusk of the 8th of December, 1847, by a messenger from The Dalles, reporting that Doctor Marcus Whitman, his wife, and all connected with him, had been murdered at Waiilatpu, November 26th, by the Cayuse Indians, and calling for protection from The Dalles, the legislature under the Provisional government was in session at that place. The governor took immediate action, and dispatched a messenger to the body. Honorable J. W. Nesmith introduced a resolution which passed, authorizing the organization of a company of volunteers to immediately take possession of The Dalles. That evening a company was recruited, with H. A. J. Lee as captain; and in forty-eight hours afterwards they were well on the way. The ladies of Oregon City took a deep and active interest in the raising of the company. They were headed by Mother Hovel, well known at that place as the moving spirit of everything tending towards peace. They made a neat flag, and provided many delicacies for lunch on the way, and selected Honorable J. W. Nesmith, member from Polk county, to present them to the company. In his presentation speech he did honor to both head and heart, and cheered the boys for the march which was before them. Captain Lee, on behalf of the company, in a neat speech accepted the gift presented by the ladies. It is Oregon City that holds the honor of making the first flag to be borne in the defense of the country on this coast.

The situation at this time was appalling, to say the least. The people were scattered sparsely over the country, with but meager means of defense. They had but few guns and less ammunition, and no means of obtaining either except through the Hudson's Bay Company; and that company was

anxious that the English government should obtain control of the country. It was clear that no help from them would come. With the Indians on the one hand, and the Hudson's Bay Company on the other, the people were hemmed in and almost powerless. But necessity is the mother of invention; and this was another case where the way supplied the means.

The legislature then in session took due notice of the alarming situation. It was rumored that all of the Indians east of the Cascade Mountains had united in one band to totally exterminate or forcibly drive the Americans out of the country; and they were ably generated by the Hudson's Bay Company. Isolated and shut out from the rest of the world, one year at least must intervene before assistance could be obtained from the seat of the home government. The situation was truly appalling. Something had to be done. The legislature wisely determined to wage an aggressive war in the country of the hostile Indians, and that promptly. They authorized the governor to raise a regiment of five hundred men, and elected Cornelius Gilliam, the subject of this sketch, Colonel; James Waters, Lieutenant-Colonel; H. A. J. Lee, Major. The governor issued his proclamation, and sent runners in every direction calling upon the settlers to respond, which they did nobly, contributing largely of their means for the successful prosecution of the war at hand. This was the only means within reach of the Provisional government by which they could carry on the planned campaign.

The young men of the country volunteered to brave all the dangers of the future. Many furnished their own outfits as far as they were able; and, where they were not able, they were furnished by the settlers. The men with families remained at home to protect their wives and little ones. There were perhaps not to exceed fifty men, from first to last, who were heads of families, or who exceeded twenty-five years of age. The material consisted of boys and young men from sixteen to twenty-four years of age,—just the age to follow wherever a brave commander would lead, and ask no questions. They had unbounded confidence in their commander; and their motto was, "If our colonel can stand it we can;" and his was, "To live just as the boys did." If he had an extra blanket, some one of the boys got it. If the boys were without coffee or tea, notwithstanding some of his mess had with their own means provided these delicacies, not one drop could they get him to touch. If they were without bread, no bread would he eat; or if the beefsteak was broiled before the fire on a stick, and cut off with their knives and eaten as it was cooked, you would find him faring just the same. If the meat was pure horsesteak, straight (which was frequent in his excursions) you would find him eating and apparently enjoying it. This is the way he obtained their confidence. Backed by his grit and energy in preventing a combination of those Indians, is it any wonder that he succeeded in conquering them and in bringing about peace within six months?

The greatest eulogy that can be pronounced of either the dead or the living can be said of Colonel

Cornelius Gilliam, when it is declared that he gave his life for the lives of the early settlers of Oregon and Washington, and was one of the few men who saved this grand country from falling into the hands of the English government; and to-day he and his successors in office, and the men under them, who suffered almost every hardship that the mind can conceive in a war of that character, and who fought to a successful issue the greatest Indian war of this coast, are almost forgotten. There is not a decent gravestone to mark the last resting place of the gallant commander. The little flurries of General Howard after Joseph, and the other Indian wars, were but mere child's play compared to it; yet they are all the talk. The few survivors of the early Indian wars have grown gray, old and poor, many being unable to work; yet the state and general government fails or refuses to recognize them or give them a word of cheer. The newspapers report that the general government, through its Honorable Secretary of War, has failed to find any records in reference to it, or that such a war ever occurred. The fact is that the general government did recognize it, and tardily paid the poor soldiers the pittance of soldier's wages,—nothing for their outfit, and about one-half the true value of the supplies furnished by the poor settlers to prosecute the war. There must have been at that time something in the office to show that the service had been rendered and the debt contracted.

On the 8th day of January, 1848, about six weeks after the reception of the news of the massacre of Doctor Whitman and all connected with him, men, women and children, about thirty in number (except one man, his wife and small child, who secreted themselves under the floor of Whitman's residence and there remained until after midnight, when they succeeded in making their escape by hiding in the brush during the day and traveling by night and at last succeeded in reaching the Hudson's Bay Company's fort at Wallula, and several girls who were carried away as captives by the Indians), the command took up the line of march from Portland, the place of rendezvous, to the scene of action, crossing the Columbia river below the mouth of the Sandy to Vancouver, and recrossing again just above the Cascade fall, reaching The Dalles the fifth day after leaving Portland. The supplies followed them up the river in boats, and supplied them at their encampment each evening.

On reaching The Dalles the command went into camp to await their supplies, which had not reached that place. The large number of Indians who usually wintered there had left. The few remaining expressed no desire to be friendly. On the morning of the third day, two of the guards who had been placed around the horses of the command were killed by the Indians, who had decoyed them away from camp by tying a horse to some brush a few hundred yards from where the men were located. Supposing the horse belonged to the command, and that the ropes attached to him had been caught in the brush, they went to release the animal, and were shot and killed in the act. Colonel Gilliam determined at once to chastise them and bring them to terms if possible before leaving for

Walla Walla. He sorely feared the consequences of having an enemy behind as well as one in front of him. These Indians were composed of the Warm Spring and Dalles tribes, numbering several hundred warriors, who were daredevils. He learned that their village was located in a deep cut on the east side of the Des Chutes, opposite what is now known as Warm Spring Reservation. He accordingly, the next morning after the tragedy, with all his available command, proceeded thither. Crossing the Des Chutes near its mouth, after making a forced march, he went into camp late in the evening.

On the next morning he sent Major Lee with a small detachment to ascertain if possible the exact location of the Indians. The Major returned late in the evening, and reported that after traveling several miles he discovered a small number of Indians in front of him, and that he in a friendly manner tried to approach them; but as he advanced they retreated. Thereupon he ordered a charge, but had not gone far before he discovered a large body of Indians in his front. He then ordered a retreat, the Indians pursuing him, and reached the command about eight o'clock p. m., reporting the loss of one man, William D. Stillwell, a private in Captain Thompson's company. This, however, proved a mistake. It appears that in the charge Private Stillwell was in advance, out of hearing distance of the order to retreat; and he did not discover the Indians until his opportunity to retreat was entirely cut off. He saw that his only chance of escape was to press on down the gulch to its mouth, and then leave his horse and take to the rocks along the Des Chutes river, and by that means save his life, which

he did, and reached the command about daylight, having been wounded in the hip by an arrow. He was the same William D. Stillwell who ran the gauntlet when Captain Hembree was killed in the Yakima Indian war of 1855-56, when the Indians were in front, behind and on each side, showering the arrows at him as he ran; but he escaped unhurt.

On the next morning, as soon as it was light enough to travel, Colonel Gilliam with his command climbed the steep bluff which runs along the whole course of that river, following the Indian trail, and proceeded directly to the point where the Indians were located the day previous. When the command reached that point, they encamped at some mud springs; and the next morning, after moving forward a few miles, they discovered a body of Indians formed in line on the bluff in front and on the opposite side of the deep cut where they were located. When the command reached the ravine that ran through the cut, the Colonel ordered a halt, and ordered his men to fall into line. After viewing the situation (the Indians taunting the command and calling to them to come up, not thinking for a minute that they would attempt to ascend the steep bluff in front to reach them), he saw that the trail turned both up and down the cut, but not across, and that the bluff was too steep and abrupt to ascend with horses.

The troops were in line awaiting orders. Pointing to the Indians, he said: "Boys, we've got to reach those fellows; and we can't reach them with our horses. The only way I see that we can reach

them is on foot and in front of them. Dismount! The captains will detail two men from each mess to take charge of the horses; and the balance will form in line in front." When the line was formed, he said: "Don't get too close together; but keep a space of three or four feet between each of you, and protect yourselves as well as you can by the overhanging rocks. Keep in line, and don't exhaust yourselves. It must be a quarter of a mile from where we stand to where the Indians are. Don't shoot until you reach the top of the bluff, and then give it to them. Forward!" The command proceeded up the bluff amidst a storm of bullets, which as they whistled by, and with the cracking of the Indians' guns, drowned all other noise. The Indians in their excitement overshot, and not a man was wounded until they reached the top of the bluff, when the Indians were quickly put to flight and retreated out of reach of the guns. As they were mounted the command could accomplish nothing more on foot; and the Colonel ordered a halt and directed one of the officers with a small posse of men to find a place by which the horses could be brought up. They soon discovered that the trail at the mouth of the gulch ascended the hill; and the horses were ordered up. During this time the Indians remained in front out of gunshot, silent and sullen, watching their movements. As soon as the horses came up, the command mounted and charged the Indians, who soon scattered and fled.

The Colonel discovered from their movements that their village lay to the east; and he at once started in that direction. After traveling about two miles, they discovered the Indian village on a small creek, and found it had been deserted except by a few old and helpless Indians who could not be taken away. Everything showed that it had been deserted in great haste. Not a tent nor skin home had been removed; and a large amount of their furniture and supplies remained in them. Here that principle which was always prominent in Colonel Gilliam's character, his great sympathy for the fallen, weak and helpless, was tested. A proposition was made to burn the village; but his reply was: "No. I can fight the bucks; but I cannot fight the helpless women and children. It is now winter; and if you burn their village they will likely perish. Let us leave it just as we found it; and it may have a good effect." The troops proceeded a short distance below the village, and camped, tired and hungry. Being out of provisions, the Colonel sent to The Dalles for supplies, meanwhile sending out detachments to find Indians. During this time the troops lived on horsemeat, the first they had eaten. The supplies arrived on the third day; and the command set out for The Dalles, reaching there in two days. As soon as arrangements could be made for the transportation of supplies for the command, the Colonel resumed his march for Walla Walla. Nothing of interest transpired until the morning after leaving the encampment at the Well Springs. They had now reached the country claimed by the hostile Indians, and expected at any time to be engaged in battle with them. The Colonel, before leaving camp, had sent his scouts in front along the road

with instructions to go as far as Butter creek, and to report to him about ten o'clock A. M. A man was seen approaching at a rapid pace along the road, and was recognized as a scout, who came up and reported a large body of Indians in front near where the road turned off. Now with the hostile Indians in battle array, expecting an easy victory, they looked at their own little band, not to exceed three hundred and fifty men, and thought of the consequences if they failed in the struggle before them. It was enough to make the stoutest heart quail. Colonel Gilliam said: "Boys, the murderers of Doctor Whitman are before us with their allies; and behind them on the hill are as many more ready to join them in case the battle goes against us. You know the consequences if we fail; not one of us will be left to tell the tale. And that is not the worst. Every tribe of Indians in the whole country will unite to desolate our homes, and to exterminate and drive all the Americans from this country. *But we are not going to fail.* We are going to whip them and teach them a lesson to-day that they will never forget. Don't shoot until you are ordered. Obey your officers, and quietly wait until you are ordered to begin the battle.

The Indians silently and slowly moved up until they were almost within gunshot; and in a moment, as if by electricity, every horse sprang to almost full speed; and every throat produced such unearthly yells and sounds that it seemed as though the infernal regions had been turned loose. They moved in a circle around the command in regular order, keeping a space of about four feet between their horses, and gradually drawing nearer as they moved nearer around the little army of Whites, until they had entirely encircled it. So regular was the order, and so well had they gauged their speed, that as their line came up they began to form a circle within the outer circle. They had now approached within gunshot; and their leader kept several paces in front of them. Lieutenant Charles McKay said: "Colonel, I know that Indian. He is their great medicine man, and their leader here. He has made those Indians believe we cannot kill him, that our balls cannot harm or penetrate him. Let me shoot him. I believe I can kill him." "Kill him," replied Colonel Gilliam; and at the crack of the gun he fell from his horse; and several Indians sprang forward and carried him away. The fight now became general; and the din of discharging guns, warwhoops of the savages, and crys of defiance from the soldiers, drowned everything else.

Their principal chief, Five Crows, fell mortally wounded early in the action. The loss of their leader threw them into confusion; and the hot and terrible reception they met from the soldiers caused them to fall back out of gunshot. They remained in that position about twenty minutes, when they again attacked the soldiers, this time charging directly upon them; but they were again repulsed, and fell back in utter confusion. The remainder of the day was spent in skirmishing, the Indians changing their tactics. Their object now seemed to be to draw a detachment away from the main body of soldiers, and to cut them off before they could regain a place of safety. They would send out detach-

ments as a decoy to draw out detachments of soldiers against them, when they would retreat, drawing the troops after them, being so posted that a large body of Indians could quickly place themselves between the detachment and the body of the command. Colonel Gilliam at once understood the trick, and determined to gratify them as far as he could with safety. His forces were so small that he was compelled to keep them in striking distance of each other to protect them against the array of Indians. Therefore, in sending out detachments, his instructions were to only go so far; and the officers in command were to watch closely the enemy posted on each side; and, if any attempt was made to cut them off, to at once fall back. He always kept a sufficient force to assist the scouting parties. Sometimes the boys would grow too eager, and forget their instructions and get too far away. Then you would see a race between the Indians and the soldiers, the savages trying to cut them off and the boys trying to reach the command. And so the day passed, the Indians failing in every effort.

About four o'clock in the afternoon, the Indians left; and the command stayed on the ground until morning, providing for the comfort and transportation of the wounded. Those supposed to be mortally or dangerously wounded could not be carried in the wagons; and a blanket was lashed to two tent poles, on which a bed was made; and on the shoulders of the uninjured they were gently carried to Walla Walla. The camp was without both wood and water, except a little in the canteens, which had to be kept for the wounded, among whom was Colonel Waters. Early in the morning the command started, but had traveled only a short distance when they were met by a deputation of Indians bearing a white flag, asking for a suspension of hostilities, and proposing to meet the officers and arrange terms of peace. The commissioners appointed by the governor to treat with the Indians favored the proposition. Colonel Gilliam opposed it, as he believed it a ruse and done solely to secure time to convey their families and property to a place of safety. The commissioners thought the Indians were acting in good faith, and insisted that the proposition be accepted. Colonel Gilliam submitted, the governor having intended him to operate with the commissioners. An agreement was made to meet the next day at the crossing of the Umatilla river. The command pushed on to the crossing and camped. The soldiers were tired and very hungry, not having had anything to eat since leaving their camp at Well Springs about thirty hours before. They remained in camp all next day as agreed; but no Indians came. It was only a stratagem on their part to remove their effects to places of safety.

Colonel Gilliam was very much irritated over it. He saw his whole plans defeated, and the war continued by the governor through his commissioners, one of them being a subordinate officer. He had planned to move to the Umatilla river, go into camp to rest and refresh the soldiers, and at night make a forced march to the Indian village, situated about twenty miles above on the river, surround it and on the dawn of morning demand an unconditional surrender. In all probability he would have succeeded,

and would then and there have ended the war. The mistaken policy of the governor was carried out; and the murderers of Doctor Whitman, who were almost within the grasp of the soldiers, were permitted to escape. On the morning after the delay, he proceeded on his march to Walla Walla. Before traveling far, the road ascended to the high tablelands of that county, from which the foot of the Blue Mountains could be plainly seen; but all along before them was a dense cloud of dust extending for miles along the foot of the mountains. The Colonel knew at once that it was the redskins escaping with their stock; and it was useless to proceed any farther in that direction. He turned across the country to the Walla Walla river a couple of miles below old Fort Wallula and camped.

The command was short of ammunition; and Colonel Gilliam wrote a polite note to McBean, who was in charge of the fort at that time, asking him to furnish, for the use of the soldiers, a stated amount of powder and lead, he having previously learned that there was a large amount in store at that place. The officer returned and reported that the request had been refused. The Colonel declared, "I will go myself," which he did and procured the necessary supplies. Here Sticcus, a noted Cayuse Indian and friend of Doctor Whitman, came to the camp. He came to represent his tribe and ascertain upon what conditions peace could be effected. A council was held, consisting of Colonel Gilliam, the three commissioners appointed by the governor, to wit, General Joel Palmer, Doctor Newell and Major Lee. Sticcus represented to them that his people were very sorry that Doctor Whitman had been killed; that a large number of his people had been sick with the measles, and that many had died; that Joe Lewis, a half-breed among them, had induced the belief that Doctor Whitman had poisoned them, and would poison them all if he was not killed or driven out of the country; that his object was to kill all the Indians and take possession of the country. As proof of his statements he would point to the sick and dead Indians, and also said that McBean, who then had charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's fort at Wallula, had offered Doctor Whitman a large price for his property, but that the Doctor refused to sell at any price, and that

the only way they could get rid of him was to kill him. He gave a history of the trouble from beginning to end, and the causes that brought it about, implicating McBean and others largely in the matter. He said his people were very sorry, but that they had been deceived and lied to until they had killed the best friend they had among the Whites; that they wanted peace, and that he had come to see at what terms they would grant it.

The commissioners told him that they could have peace by surrendering the murderers of Doctor Whitman. Sticcus told them that the Indians would surrender all of the murderers except Tom Ineea and three others. Colonel Gilliam proposed that if they would bring Joe Lewis, the half-breed, to them, they would release three of the assassins; but the commissioners objected to this, and told Sticcus that his people must surrender all the murderers before they would be permitted to live in peace in their country; but that, if they would surrender them, they might all return and be friends.

This message Sticcus promised to carry to his people, and also to use his influence to induce them to comply with the terms. To Colonel Gilliam's question as to where his people were at that time, he replied that they were at the mouth of the Tukanon on Snake river, stopping with the Palouse Indians. Thus ended the first and only conference which the commissioners held with the Cayuse Indians. They were now whipped, and were fugitives fleeing for their lives. Owing to their wealth and influence with other Indian tribes of that country, they had yet a hope of uniting the other tribes in their behalf, and thus secure their assistance against the Americans (the Bostons as they called them).

The Cayuses were less in numbers than any of the other tribes; but they were much more intelligent and much wealthier. A number of them owned from one to three or four thousand horses each. They had been under the care and personal instruction of Doctor Whitman, who had taught them the value of property and many of the arts of civilization. A number of them had small farms and houses to live in, and raised a large proportion of their support. They had intermarried largely with the Nez Perces and Walla Wallas, hence their hope of inducing these tribes to co-operate with and assist them. They were loath to surrender the murderers of Doctor Whitman, as some of them were their leading and most influential men.

The next morning after Sticcus left the soldiers' camp to go to his people, Colonel Gilliam ordered camp to be raised, and proceed to Whitman's Station. Here they beheld nothing but desolation and ruin, which was heartrending. The comfortable home and quarters provided by Doctor Whitman for himself, and the worn and weary immigrants and the helpless orphans whose parents had sickened and died by the way, had all been destroyed by the hand of ruthless and brutal savages, who had wreaked their vengeance first upon himself and his estimable wife, and then on the innocent victims whom he was feeding and sheltering. The Doctor and all who perished with him were buried in one grave, *i. e.*, a trench about seven feet square, and sufficiently deep to hold all the bodies. Into this the bodies of men, women and children were thrown until it was filled to within a foot of the surface, when a little earth was thrown over them. When the command reached the spot, they found large holes which had been dug by wolves and other animals, and a portion of the remains of the dead dragged out and devoured. The bones were found and replaced in the grave, the holes filled, and the whole inclosed and covered so it could not be again disturbed. Most of the hair from the head of Mrs. Whitman was found some three or four hundred yards from the grave, where it had been taken by wolves or Indian dogs. The hair was carefully gathered up by the soldiers and taken with them to their respective homes as mementoes of a noble and beautiful woman. The hair was well known, as it was of a beautiful golden color and very fine, and had been seen by many of them adorning the head of that beautiful and accomplished woman as she was

assisting her husband in relieving the sick and distressed immigrants, gathering up the orphans and taking them to her own home.

Doctor Whitman was killed while butchering a beef. The Indians came to his place as they often did, seemingly friendly; and, without any warning to him or his assistants, shot them down. Mrs. Whitman heard the firing, and ran out of the house. She threw up her hands and cried: "Oh, I knew it! I told him they would kill him. Joe Lewis came here on purpose to incite and influence them to kill him. I tried to get him to leave; but he always told me to hope for the better, that he would rather die than desert what he believed to be his post of duty." After accomplishing their object at the corral, they went to the house, where all those who had not been killed had collected, and fired into the windows, wounding Mrs. Whitman. Several of the immigrants who were stopping there, some of whom were employed by the Doctor, had succeeded in reaching the house. The cowardly Indians were afraid to attack the inmates of the house by entering. They called to Mrs. Whitman and told her that, if she and those with her would come out of the house, they should not be hurt, but that all should be sent to Fort Wallula and be unmolested. The inmates of the house saw no means of escape, and determined to trust the Indians. They all came out; and as soon as the Indians could get between them and the house they were all shot down, except nine girls whom they took captive to become the slaves and wives of these savage murderers of their parents and friends.

Colonel Gilliam resolved to make the station his headquarters. He arranged and prepared the adobe house, formerly used by Doctor Whitman, to serve as a hospital for the sick and wounded, and arranged his camp so as to ward off any attack that might be made by the enemy. After being in camp several days, a delegation of Nez Perces visited the camp, headed by the father of Ellis, their principal chief. Craig, an American trapper, who had married a Nez Perce woman, came with them. He was a shrewd and sensible man; and he with Ellis prevented the tribe from joining the Cayuses in a war against the Whites, whom they claimed to always have been friends to; and they pledged their word not to join the Cayuses, and said that they would not harbor the murderers of Doctor Whitman nor permit them to pass through their country. After remaining at the camp for several days, they returned to their own country. The commissioners, after meeting with the Nez Perce delegation, saw that their work was done, and left under an escort furnished by Colonel Gilliam for The Dalles. Major Lee resigned and accompanied them; and Magone was elected to fill his place.

There was a general feeling of satisfaction with the entire command when they left. Not that the officers or soldiers had anything personal against them; but they realized that their mission had been worse than a failure. The authority for peace or war should have been left entirely in the hands of the commanding officer. If he was competent to command in war, and had studied thoroughly the situation, as every successful commander must, he

is certainly better qualified to arrange terms of peace than others who knew but little about the condition of affairs. The governor, no doubt, thought he was doing for the best in appointing the commissioners; but it was a great mistake, and a source of annoyance and confusion from the time they reached the command until their departure. It was also at times a source of keen humiliation to the commanding officer, as one of his subordinate officers was also a commissioner, and in a certain sense his superior. General Palmer, a man of much more ability than either or both of his colleagues, felt that the appointment of commissioners was a grave mistake; and as soon as he could, with credit to himself, he broke up the commission and returned home. He learned while in the field the needs of the little army; and, as chief quartermaster and commissary, he worked with untiring zeal and energy to furnish the troops with the needed supplies, and by his personal efforts succeeded. The country owed more to him than to any other man or men for the successful prosecution and termination of that war; and he should be held in grateful remembrance for his services in the early settlement of this country.

Colonel Gilliam learned that the murderers of Doctor Whitman were still camped with the Palouse Indians at the mouth of the Takanon; and he resolved, if possible, to surprise and capture them at that place. He accordingly selected about two hundred of his best mounted men, and proceeded without delay to that point. After crossing the Touchet, and reaching the divide that separates the waters of that stream from the Tukanon, he ordered a halt at about two o'clock in the afternoon. He remained there until after dark, when he raised camp and proceeded with all possible dispatch to the Tukanon, and down it to the Indian camp, determined to reach there before daylight. He sent Morge, his guide and interpreter, with Jacob Rhi-nearson ahead of the command with instructions to examine the defiles and narrow passes along the trail, and that if anything occurred to report to him without delay.

When the command were nearing the Indian camp, one of the soldiers of Company A, contrary to orders and without the knowledge of the officers, stole on in advance of the command and scouts, and fired into a bunch of willows, supposing it to be an Indian wigwam. When the Colonel heard the report of the gun, he ordered a halt and sent out a reconnoitering party, who soon returned and reported as above stated. The Colonel was informed by the guide that they were but a short distance from the Indian camp; and, believing they had heard the report, he feared they would lay in ambush for the soldiers, as the trail ran along near the stream, the banks of which were steep and thickly set with brush, and the valley narrow. He therefore ordered the men to dismount and remain until daylight. At dawn they were ordered forward, and had proceeded but a short distance when they saw the Indian camp only about half a mile away down the river. The Indians had discovered the approaching troops; and the murderers again escaped, fleeing to the hills and across Snake river. The soldiers went quickly forward to the Indian camp, and found

the men all gone except a few who claimed to be Palouses and friends, and protested that the Cayuses were not there, having left some weeks before, going to the Bitter Root country.

The Colonel ordered a portion of the troops to go down the stream to its mouth, and then up the Snake river to where the main Indian trail crossed that stream; while he and the rest of the command proceeded directly on the trail to the same point. On reaching the top of the hill that overlooked the river, he saw a large number of the Indians on the opposite side; for they had succeeded in crossing, and were beyond reach of the troops. The disobedience of one man had defeated the accomplishment of his plans; and a large river lay between him and the enemy, with no means of crossing it. He accordingly ordered the command to retrace their steps to headquarters, then known as Fort Waters, directing that about five hundred head of horses that were grazing near by be driven with them. The fort was named by the Colonel in honor of the Lieutenant-Colonel.

The command had not proceeded far when the Indians recrossed the river, collected all their available forces, numbering about five hundred men, and attacked the soldiers. The attack was made about twelve o'clock; and a running fire was kept up during the day until dark, when the troops reached a deep ravine thickly set with brush, where they were so arranged as to protect themselves and horses. The horses belonging to the Indians were ordered turned loose, the Colonel preferring to lose the horses rather than some of the soldiers, which he saw was inevitable if he attempted to guard the horses. There the troops remained until morning, every man on guard. The fight was kept up at intervals through the night and until noon the next day. Just before reaching the Touchet the Indians all at once stopped firing and disappeared. They were noticed however to proceed rapidly in front of the command. Mingo, the pilot, informed Colonel Gilliam that where the trail crossed the Touchet the stream was shaped like a horseshoe with the hills pointing clear down to the stream on each side; that the stream was thickly set with brush, the trail crossing in the center of the horseshoe; that the Indians no doubt were making for the points at the crossing to cut off the troops when they attempted to cross.

As soon as the Colonel learned the situation, he ordered the companies on the right and left to proceed with all possible dispatch and take possession of the points on each side of the ford. The troops on the left flank reached the point first, and drove the Indians back on the right. The Indians succeeded in reaching the brush, and had to be driven from their cover before the command could cross the stream. The Colonel ordered Major Magone to take the troops on the right, and to charge the brush and dislodge the Indians, which he did after killing several of them. Here the Indians ceased fighting, and left the command after twenty-four hours constant engagement. The troops had now been forty-eight hours without food or sleep. None had been killed; but a number had been wounded. Some had been mortally wounded, and a number so badly that they could not ride on horseback but had to be

carried on litters on the shoulders of their comrades.

The soldiers rested a short time and then proceeded on their march to Fort Waters. After traveling a few miles, on account of the fatigue and the suffering of the wounded, Colonel Gillman thought it advisable to camp and rest until the next morning. Here the boys rested and refreshed themselves as best they could on horsemeat, the most of them being without anything else. The next day about noon they reached Fort Waters after an absence of about eighty hours, having during that time eaten only three meals, two of which were composed of horsemeat, and had had only one night's sleep. Twenty-four continuous hours of the time had been spent in a forced march to reach the enemy; and the twenty-four immediately following were spent in fighting amid the din of musketry and the demoniac yells of the savages. When the soldiers reached the fort they had not to exceed a dozen rounds of ammunition left, many of the guns being empty, as they had nothing to load them with; and the men were weak and exhausted. Colonel Gilliam now saw that to reach the enemy he must cross Snake river, and that to attempt it and maintain his base of supplies would be hazardous in the extreme.

The Indians in the late fight had in many respects a great advantage. The command was compelled to act on the defensive throughout the entire battle, except in one instance,—at the crossing of the Touchet. The Colonel was somewhat apprehensive as to the effect on the surrounding tribes. He determined, in view of all the facts, to call for two hundred more men, and to secure and have them in the field as soon as possible. He also determined to see the governor in person, and accordingly started with the detachment of troops that had been ordered to The Dalles for the supplies which were at that place awaiting an escort to protect them in their transportation to Fort Waters.

On the way down, when the troops were going into camp at Well Springs, the Colonel was accidentally killed by one of the teamsters. He usually attended to his horse himself; and the rope used in staking out the animal was always removed when on the march and put in the rear end of one of the wagons. That evening as usual he went to get the rope, and found it mixed up with other things and somewhat difficult to extricate. The teamster saw his dilemma, and in attempting to assist him a loaded gun, with the cleaning rod in the barrel, put there contrary to orders, was discharged; and the rod struck the Colonel in the forehead, penetrated his head to the skull on the opposite side, breaking off about six inches from his head. The shock threw him full length on his back, with his arms thrown out, his eyes closed, looking as natural as life but for the rod protruding from his head. Death had been instantaneous, and without the appearance of the contraction of a muscle. Death came in the noon of his manhood, with a bright future before him. Generous to a fault, quick to arrive at conclusions, and as quick to execute them, he was a born leader. His impulsive nature savored largely of humanity; and he could not bear to see man nor beast cruelly treated if it were in his power to prevent it. He was not schooled in the

arts and science obtained from colleges; but he was learned in the school of practical knowledge.

Captain Maxon, being the senior officer, at once took command and ordered camp to be raised, and to proceed without delay to The Dalles, in order to send the body of Colonel Gilliam to his family, and to report to the governor. This report embraced in full the views of Colonel Gilliam. Here the famous Indian chief, Kamiakin, met the command, and stated in council that he had learned that Colonel Gilliam was on his way to this place, and that he determined to meet him, as he wanted a talk with him. He expressed much sorrow at the Colonel's death, and stated to Captain Maxon that he and his people were friends of the Americans; that he would not harbor nor aid the murderers of Doctor Whitman in any way, and that they should not pass through nor remain in his country. He made a sensible speech, which was reported to the governor and published in the *Spectator*, a paper published in Oregon City. He concluded his remarks by asking for a few plows, stating that his people had no means of cultivating the ground. There was at The Dalles a lot of plows sent out by the board of missions for the Warm Spring and Dalles Indians which had not been distributed; and these Captain Maxon gave to Kamiakin, which greatly pleased him. He was a remarkable Indian both physically and intellectually,—a veritable giant, being over six feet in height and likewise proportioned. His appearance indicated that he had the strength of four or five ordinary men, and was very intelligent for an Indian. He was the Tecumseh of the coast; and had he attempted then, as he did afterwards, to unite the Indians against the Whites, the result would have been the massacre and depopulation of the entire country.

By return messenger Captain Maxon received instructions from the governor that he had issued a call for four companies of troops, and that they would be equipped and sent out with all possible haste, and directing him to proceed with the supplies to the main command and report to Lieutenant-Colonel Waters, commanding, together with letters of instructions sent through him to the colonel commanding. The Captain had everything in readiness, and, as soon as he received the instructions, proceeded without delay to Fort Waters, reaching that place in good time, without any casualties. He reported the death of Colonel Gilliam, which they had not heard, and presented the lieutenant-colonel the letters of instructions from the governor. Colonel Waters was directed to remain at the fort until the recruits came up, when other instructions would be given. They were under the command of Major Lee, who had been commissioned colonel. The old regiment, as soon as they learned the fact, were indignant over the appointment of Lee, and were loud in their denunciation because of the injustice done Colonel Waters, who was a faithful and efficient officer. Lee had been on the ground but a few hours before he saw that it would not do for him to assume command; and that his only way out was to throw the blame of his appointment on the governor, and resign his commission as colonel of the regiment, which he did. Colonel Waters immediately called the regi-

ment together to know whom they desired should command them, when they elected him without a dissenting voice. Lee was elected lieutenant-colonel; and preparations were immediately made for an advance movement.

Colonel Lee was directed to take three companies and proceed to Spaulding's mission on Clearwater, and to ascertain if possible the location of the murderers, and, if any information could be obtained by him, to report to Waters by messenger; if not, to cross Snake river at that point and proceed down it to Red Wolf crossing, where the main command would meet him. Colonel Waters proceeded directly to the mouth of the Palouse river, and crossing Snake river traveled up the Palouse a few miles and camped. He remained in camp for a few days, sending scouting parties in various directions; but they returned and reported that there were no Indians in that part of the country. He then proceeded up Snake river to Red Wolf crossing, and remained there awaiting the arrival of Lee. When he arrived he reported that the murderers had all gone to the Bitter Root country. While at this point a messenger came from Walker and Eells, asking that an escort be sent to accompany them out of the country from Fort Colville. Major Magone was directed to take sixty men and go to the mission known as the Spokane House, located among the Spokane Indians, from there send a messenger to them at Colville, and return to the escort at that point. This he did; and they were safely conveyed by the Major to The Dalles. When Colonel Waters learned that the murderers of Doctor Whitman had escaped and left the country, he saw that his work was done, and that the only course to pursue was to return to Fort Waters, leave a company of soldiers there, order the remainder to The Dalles, report to the governor and await his action.

The governor ordered the regiment home, and disbanded it. This ended a war fraught with difficulties and dangers on every hand. The little colony of two or three thousand souls were isolated from the home government, with no probability of assistance from that source before it would be too late. Headed by Colonel Gilliam in the field, and General Palmer at home as commissary and quartermaster, was fought to a successful issue the great Indian war of this coast,—a war, in view of all the circumstances and difficulties which attended it, with no parallel in all the Indian wars of the country. There are many incidents connected with the war which are not here given; and no dates were preserved of the events. There were none killed on the battlefield; but some of the wounded, which numbered thirty or forty, died of their wounds afterwards.

After Colonel Gilliam was killed, the copies of his reports, letters and various correspondence and instructions from the governor and adjutant-general, being somewhat bulky and troublesome to carry, were carefully sealed and left with the quartermaster at The Dalles, he promising to keep them safely, and to deliver them to no person without an order. When they were called for the package was found broken open, and everything of interest taken out by some unknown person or persons; and the quartermaster could not or would not give any information on the subject. It was then as it is now. Two parties were aspiring to the management and control of the affairs of the colony. The party in power were jealous and afraid of the growing popularity of Colonel Gilliam, and sought if possible to check it. The opposite party thought to get control through the Colonel's influence; and many of the letters to him above-mentioned referred to these facts; and some of them were rich and racy. After his death they determined to get possession of these letters; and, learning by inquiry that they had been left at The Dalles, the representatives of one of the parties either purloined them or induced the quartermaster to give them up.

{History of the Pacific Northwest – Oregon and Washington, Volume 2 p. 335-343}