

Lesson 5: Conflict: Nisqually People for Land and Survival Student Information and Graphic Organizer

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Essential Question: *How can two groups have different perspectives on the same event?*

Context: In early October of 1855, on the eastern side of the Cascades, American gold prospectors illegally came into Yakama lands, stole horses, and abused Yakama women. Word came that they had been killed. Indian Agent Andrew Bolen went to investigate but went missing. Instead of speaking to Yakama elders, US soldiers from Ft. Dalles, led by Major Haller in Eastern Washington, went on the attack. Additional soldiers under Capt. Maloney were sent to Ft. Steilacoom to assist them. The Yakama (led by Kamiakin), Klickitat, Cayuse, and Walla Walla (led by Peo-peo-mox-mox) nations defeated the US Army at the Battle of Toppenish.

Criteria: Be able to:

- Examine the text for the best quote or example to prove your point or response.
- Tell primary from secondary sources.
- Summarize and draw conclusions about a chosen battle.
- Discuss opposing viewpoints and analyze different perspectives.

Graphic Organizer 5:

Battles: Individually or with a partner, read about all three battles and respond to the questions who, what, where, how, and why about each one of the battles.

Battles:

- 1st Battle at Connell's Prairie
- Battle of Seattle
- Last Battle at Connell's Prairie

Reading/Journalistic Questions:

What was the event/battle?	
Who was there or involved?	
Where did it take place?	

Why did it happen (purpose or opportunity)?	
How did it happen (briefly describe the battle, including how they fought)?	
What was the outcome?	

Comparing Battles: Use a Venn diagram to document the similarities and differences of the three battles.

Think/Pair/Share: Next, find someone who chose a different battle, compare and contrast the two battles, and discuss share each other’s summaries. When completed, find a different person who chose a different battle than the one you just shared with and repeat the process.

Through Their Eyes: Understanding Perspectives: Using knowledge from previous lessons and evidence from the text, choose one of the battles and write a summary for both perspectives. One summary would explain how a Native American would perceive the battle. Then, a second summary would explain how an American settler would have perceived the same battle.

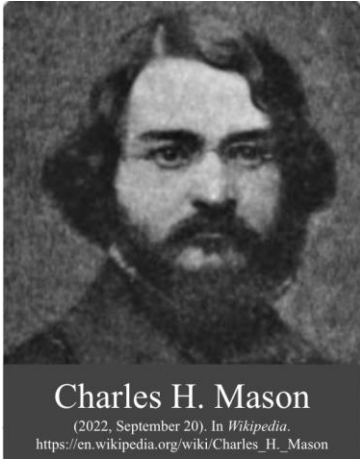
Native American:	Summary #1:
American Settlers:	Summary #2:

Inference/Conclusion: Essential Question: *How can two groups have different perspectives on the same event?*

In at least one paragraph, summarize your overall conclusions about why the Native Americans in Western Washington and the American settlers went to war.

1st Battle of Connell's Prairie

By Abbi Wonacott



By October 1855, South Puget Sound Native Americans were increasingly anxious about being forced to move away from their homelands and sent to the “reserved lands.” Leschi decided to talk with his good friend, James McAllister, an American who could speak Leschi’s language (Lushootseed). Leschi could foresee a conflict and had already begun training his warriors on the prairie near Muck Creek (near present-day Roy). So, Leschi confided to McAllister that there was no alternative available to the Nisqually People but to fight.

As Leschi left, he told McAllister that no harm would come to him, his family, or settlers if they did not join the militia. If they did, he could not keep them safe. “Leschi proposed that this war was with the troops, not the settlers.” Cecelia Carpenter

McAllister did not take Leschi seriously and believed the Nisqually nor any Native American warriors were a threat. Despite what Leschi warned, McAllister wrote to Lt. Governor Mason (Stevens was away conducting other treaty talks) that Leschi was forming an army and getting ready for war.

By October 22nd, McAllister's message had reached Mason. Mason invited Leschi to move with his family to Olympia for their safety, allowing Mason to keep an eye on Leschi. After they spoke, Leschi left and went to his Muck Creek farm. He did not trust Mason. Rumors spread quickly that Native Americans were preparing to attack.

Since the U.S. Army had only 350 soldiers in the Northwest and just 25 stationed at Ft. Steilacoom, Congress allowed Lt. Gov. Mason to create the Washington Territorial Militia (the earliest state guard). The militia took orders directly from Governor Stevens and Lt. Governor Mason. In response to McAllister’s letter, Mason authorized Eaton to “put any who resist or use violence to death or send them to Ft. Steilacoom in irons.”

When Mason did not hear from Leschi by October 24, he ordered the newly formed Puget Sound Rangers (militia on horseback) led by Capt. Charles Eaton to arrest Leschi and his brother Quiemuth. Eaton had a force of 19 militiamen, including one of his newest officers, Lt. James McAllister. Riding along with them was retired U.S. Army officer Michael Connell. Riding along with them was a retired U.S. Army officer named Michael Connell. When they arrived at Leschi’s Muck Creek farm, the Militiamen found all the livestock and house intact, and a horse harnessed to a plow was left standing in the field. Leschi, Quiemuth, and their families had made a fast escape. Some believe Leschi’s daughter Kalakala (Eaton's wife) had warned her father.

In addition to retrieving Leschi, Eaton’s mission was to patrol the Cascade passes to prevent any Yakama warriors from coming from Eastern Washington. The next day, Eaton and



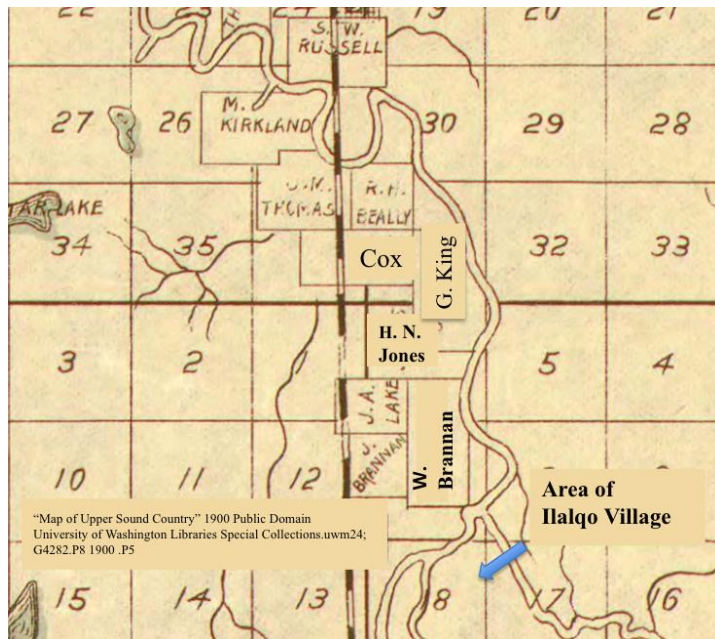
his men crossed the Puyallup River and arrived in Connell's Prairie (named after the recent land claim of Michael Connell near present Bonney Lake near the southeast bottom of Lake Tapps). Eaton and his men decided to make camp while he sent eight men back down to get more supplies.

Leschi, his brother Quiemuth, and their families fled to the White River (also near Connell's Prairie) when they met up with other warriors of the Nisqually and Puyallup led by Quilquilton. Warriors from the Klickitat led by Kanasket and Muckleshoot led by Kitsap and Nelson joined them. For the Muckleshoot, this was their home from the Puyallup River to the area of present-day Bonney Lake, Auburn, and Kent. Neither the Medicine Creek nor Point No Point Treaties reserved any lands for the Muckleshoot.

The Muckleshoot People (of the White and Green Rivers) were more traditional. Many times, they used bows and arrows as well as guns. Arrows were faster and more accurate in the rain-soaked skirmishes. The

Muckleshoot People were hospitable when the first American settlers came to the White River area near the large village of Ilalqo. Instead of moving on, the settlers stayed and squatted on their land. Many settlers beat, abused, and enslaved their people. American settler William Brannan dammed the White River's natural course, preventing the salmon from coming to Ilalqo and other villages along the same river system. For almost a year and a half, the tension grew.

"Indians living on the upper reaches of the Green, White, Puyallup, and Nisqually, where the occupants lived in great part by the chase and on the natural



products of the soil, who were wide-awake Indians and where the tribes that went on the warpath." -Ezra Meeker

Back on Connell's Prairie on October 27, Leschi, with other leaders and warriors, hid within the treeline from the rough road, aware that Eaton and his men were pursuing them. Lt. McAllister and Connell, along with two Native men: Clipwalen (adopted son of McAllister) and Stahi (Leschi's brother-in-law), had separated from the group to locate and talk with Leschi.

James McAllister's Granddaughter Cordelia Hawk Putvin recorded this version: "So that evening they started out to find Leschi – grandfather, Lt. Connell, Stoki as guide and Clifwhalen as a servant. The [warriors] had a clever way of laying an ambush. They had two squads of their warriors in the woods beside the trail about a mile and a half apart. So grandfather and his group passed the first squad without any suspicion, only to have the second squad come running out of the woods shooting, and with the first party coming up behind, they hadn't a chance."

As the militia approached, a warrior named Toopapyti aimed and shot. McAllister fell dead from two bullets. The third bullet hit Connell. After hearing the gunshots, Eaton's rangers escaped to an abandoned longhouse.

Stahi left to join Leschi while Clipwalen found Eaton and the rest of the militia at a longhouse. He told of McAllister and Connell's deaths when warriors surrounded the longhouse and attacked. When the fight finally ceased early the following day, Capt. Eaton and his militiamen rode hard to get back to Ft. Steilacoom. The militiamen had one wounded and believed they killed a few warriors; however, they were unsure because the other warriors took the bodies away, as was their tradition with fallen men.

En route to Ft. Steilacoom, the militia encountered U.S. Army soldiers led by Captain Maurice Maloney and Lt. William Slaughter. These soldiers had been rerouted and were also on their way back to the fort. Upon the news of the recent fighting, Capt. Maloney and the rest of the U.S. Army soldiers decided to head west. Still, Maloney asked Militiaman William Tidd to ride ahead and rush some military dispatches (messages) to his commander at Ft. Steilacoom. At that point, the Militiamen parted: Capt. Eaton with his men and Tidd with six men. Militiamen Joseph Miles, Abraham Benton Moses, George Bright, Dr. Matthew Burns, Andrew Bradley, and Antonio Rabbeson decided to go with Tidd.

After traveling about 50 miles, Tidd and the militia arrived at Connell's Prairie. They came across many Native Americans but did not feel any threat. The militiamen signaled they wanted to trade with the Native women for moccasins. They noticed some of the warriors had slowly gone back into the treeline. Tidd and the others felt uneasy after they saw some burnt buildings. They finished the trades and continued towards Ft. Steilacoom down a muddy road.

As the men rode into a large swamp surrounded by thick brush and trees, a volley of musket and rifle fire rang out. Tidd and Bradley were wounded. Joseph Miles fell back off his horse with a neck wound. The others tried to help him, but he told them to go on to escape. Moses was shot through his back but found the strength to stay on his horse. A mile down the road, he realized he could not go on. Moses knew he was dying and asked the others to conceal him in the brush on the road near Finnels' Creek. At the edge of Finnels' Creek, militia and warriors clashed. They fought in close combat, but the Tidd and the others broke through. They returned and found Moses still alive. He, too, begged them to go on without him.

After three days of freezing rain, the militiamen made it to a fortified camp at a house belonging to a man named Tallentire. The dispatches were sent to Ft. Steilacoom. Eaton and the other militiamen had arrived at the fort on October 29th. A few days later, U.S. Capt. Maloney located the bodies of McAllister, Miles, and Moses and sent their remains back to Ft. Steilacoom. They never found Connell's body.

In late October, after months of continued warnings, many settlers finally left the land claims on the White River. Still, some stayed. On October 28th, after years of abuse, several Muckleshoot People attacked the settlers who refused to leave.

The Nisqually, Muckleshoot, and Puyallup warriors under Leschi, Quiemuth, Kanasket, Nelson, Kitsap, and Quilquilton remained in and around the Green and White River region and, within a few days, would be back in battle with Militia and U.S. soldiers at the Battle of White River.

The conflict was personal for the Nisqually, Puyallup, Muckleshoot, Klickitat, and other Native Americans. It was about their lives and their families' lives. Many were related by marriage or blood. They were uncles, brothers, sons, nephews, and in-laws. Though there is not much written about Native American women: they were there. They were wives, sisters, daughters, aunts, nieces, and in-laws. The women were critical to the support of the warriors to feed, mend, heal, and, most importantly, provide inspiration through drumming and singing.

Battle of the Seattle Settlement: January 26, 1856

By Abbi Wonacott



After the fighting and attacks in October, a Native American man rode through the Puyallup Valley to warn settlers. Within 24 hours, 80 settlers fled to Fort Steilacoom. Other families went to Olympia and the village of Seattle. Eventually, more blockhouses were built all over Pierce, Thurston, and King counties, serving as small fortresses for frightened settlers.

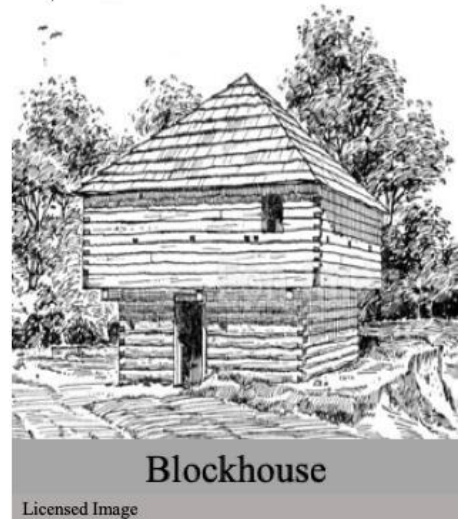
After continued fighting with the

military on the Green and White Rivers, Native warriors decided to move toward Seattle to push settlers further out.

A combined force of 300 Nisqually, Puyallup, Yakama, and other warriors met on the shore of Lake Washington. Whether Leschi was involved in the battle at Seattle is still a question. Leschi was committed to making war on soldiers in combat and not on settlers. One account states that Leschi had sent a Native runner with a message over the Naches Pass to Yakama tribal leader Owhi (Leschi's uncle) requesting his help with this attack. Others say Leschi may have planned and supervised but did not participate in the fighting. His cousin Qualchan volunteered to lead Yakama and other warriors.

The Battle of Seattle started on the 26th of January, 1856. At this time, Seattle was a small village. Alongside the settlers were "friendly" Native Americans who had allied themselves with the settlers. The same "friendly" Natives had warned them of rumors of warriors approaching Seattle.

Unknown to the warriors, 72 of the men who lived in Seattle and the surrounding area were a part of Militia Captain C.C. Hewitt's company but had just been "mustered" out (served their time of enlistment and were done). The U.S. Navy warship *Decatur* was also nearby, loaded with 16 cannons and 90 sailors who had gone ashore. By the morning of the 26th, the sailors were heading back to the *Decatur*. Henry Yesler, a sawmill owner, jumped in his rowboat to warn them that warriors were closing in and gathered in the woods close to Seattle. Sailors blasted a howitzer cannon shot toward the wooded area along a ridge on the far side of a swamp on the southeastern edge. The warriors returned musket and rifle fire. As the intense



fighting began, settlers hurried to two blockhouses for protection. Some warriors swarmed the edge of the settlement, lit fires, and took what supplies and possessions they could.

While baking biscuits, Louisa Denny threw some in her apron, grabbed her young daughter, and made a mad dash for safety. Settlers scrambled. One man could not find his pants, wrapped his wife's red dress around his waist, and sprinted to the nearest blockhouse.

The marines emerged from the *Decatur* with weapons drawn. The former militia men grabbed their weapons, and the *Decatur's* (pictured below) cannons were in constant fire. The



warriors kept a steady fire, but bullets were whizzing by settlers and just hitting buildings. Some warriors tried to sneak up to the northern end but were halted and forced back by Lt. Phelps and the marines. Milton Holgate was the first to die from a shot to the head as he reached a doorway during an attempt to charge at the warriors. One of the children, Johnny King (a survivor of the White River), was right by Holgate and saw the horrible, bloody sight. Another settler killed was Robert Wilson, who stepped out from

the doorway of a boarding house to see all the commotion.

In his book *Remembered Drums*, J.A. Eckrom described the fighting:

“Naval Lieutenant Francis Gregory Dallas commanded a body of men in the southwest end of town opposite a swamp that separated them from the Indians. Some of his men were posted by a chicken coop, and others with more accurate rifles fired from a hay loft. Dallas got out in front with a spyglass (telescope), trying to get a better look, and had a bullet pass through a blanket draped between his arm and his heart. Another bullet knocked off the musket of the man next to him.”

At noon, the fighting stopped because of exhaustion. Native warriors retreated into a willow stand on the west shore of Lake Washington. At the same time, settler men loaded women and children onto the *Decatur* and another vessel called the *Brontes*.

When some of the settlers attempted to go back and get some belongings and ammunition, gunshots from warriors blasted down on them. After several hours of exchanged gunfire, the warriors began to fall back and leave Seattle. The settlers believed they left because the howitzers from the *Decatur* proved too much. Others believe that the warriors felt that they had successfully destroyed the village and intimidated the settlers into leaving Seattle. The settlers did leave for a while but later returned. There is debate on how many warriors died in the battle. According to Native Americans, no warriors died. The only casualties were two American men. It seems to be, at best, a draw between the Native Americans and American settlers.

Gov. Stevens had been back in Olympia as of January 19th. After the attack on Seattle, he proclaimed, “Since my arrival on the Sound, Seattle has been attacked, and everything outside

of its line of defenses burned, except a small place named Alki, on the same bay with Seattle. The whole county of King has been devastated.”

Where It Started and Ended: Last Battle on Connell's Prairie

By Abbi Wonacott

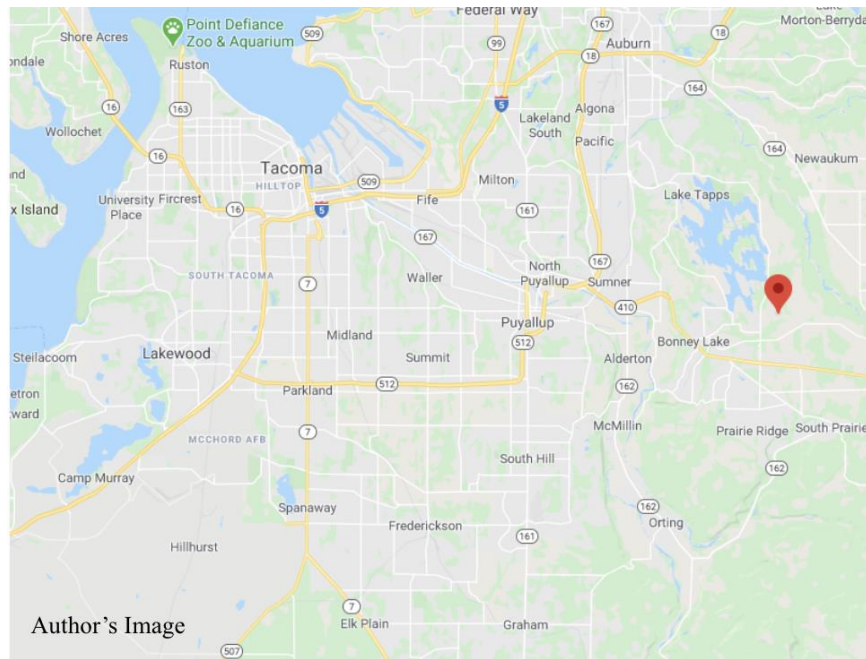
After the Battle of Seattle, fighting continued with the Territorial Militia and the U.S. Army. US Col. Silas Casey arrived with the 9th Infantry on January 30th as reinforcements. His men brutally killed Muckleshoot leader-warrior Kanasket. Some Native Americans sided with Gov. Stevens, especially if he paid for their services. Chief Patkanim and 55 Snoqualmie and Skokomish warriors started their pursuit of Leschi for bounty money (\$20 for each severed head). He located and attacked Leschi's camp, destroyed longhouses, and killed several Native Americans. Leschi and others were able to escape.

Americans had also been killed or attacked. On March 4th, near present-day Spanaway, John Bradley was plowing in his field when his dog barked to alert him of attacking Indians. Bradley and his son got shot, and the family fled to Camp Montgomery. Ex-Hudson's Bay Company employees married Indian women, including many who lived near present-day Mountain Hwy and 360th in Graham.

They were arrested and charged with treason for “aiding the enemy,” meaning helping their friend Leschi.

Leschi felt he still had a fight left in him for his enemies. On a crisp March night of the 9th, Leschi, warriors, and women had concealed themselves among the trees on a sloping hill

overlooking a narrow wagon road on, of all places, Connell's Prairie leading to the White River. He had once again called on his relatives for help. His cousins Qualchan and Lokout were next to him with 50 of the estimated 150-200 warriors, including Eneas and his Muckleshoot warriors. All were waiting to spring into action in a surprise attack the following morning. They planned to cause the militia to go through a narrow path and pick them off one by one.

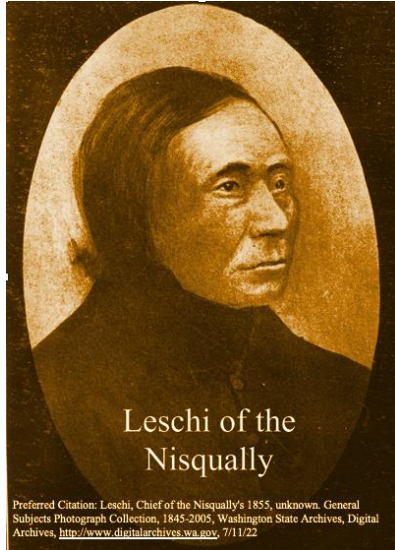


In the morning light of March 10th, the most unlikely men appeared. Capt. Joseph White and his "Pioneer Company " of only a few men walked along the frost-laden road with axes, cross saws, and building tools in one hand and a gun in the other. They were on their way to help engineers build another blockhouse and start preparations for a ferry landing on the White River. Capt. White ordered 1st Lt. Urban Hicks to take a few men and to go out ahead of them to search for any signs of recent "Indian activity." They marched about 200-300 yards when Hicks saw it. "On descending the hill and proceeding a short distance further, we came to an old trail leading directly up the hill, the brow of which was not a hundred yards distant. Here we discovered very fresh moccasin and mule tracks in the frost." He was too far to yell back to Capt. White, so Hicks and another man ran back up the trail and at the rise. He stopped and looked for any moment around him. There was only stillness. As they continued to warn the others, some of the warriors prematurely rose from behind a log. Hicks turned his head and saw the rest of Capt. White's company and shouted out to alarm them. His words barely left his lips when bullets and arrows showered around him. The soldiers dropped their tools and dashed behind trees and logs. One of the men peeked around a tree and was shot but only wounded. The element of surprise was gone with the continuous shooting that gave away the warriors' positions on the hill.

The gunshots alerted Capt. Benjamin Hennes and other militia soldiers at camp less than a mile away. They had already suited up to scout the area and came running to the aid of Capt. White's company. On arrival, 10-12 soldiers snuck behind the warriors and began to open fire. There was blinding smoke as the warriors and soldiers in the thick of battle shot at any enemy they saw. However, 60 warriors crawled toward Hicks and his men. Militiamen spotted them and opened fire. Hicks and his men took a chance to gain higher ground and rejoin the rest of White's company. Leschi and Qualchan thought the soldiers were retreating and sent warriors bursting out into the open and giving chase. The soldiers shot them down. The warriors and militia strained to outflank each other, desperately trying to get around and surround the other. Lt. Martin, Lt. Van Ogle, and Capt. Robeson charged in with their reinforcements and pushed the warriors back. The volley of gunfire and arrows flying went on for two hours. Lt. Van Ogle sighted a warrior he knew, took aim, shot, and watched him fumble down. That warrior survived and, after the war, went to work for Van Ogle. No longer were the militia soldiers inept at fighting. They had become professional fighters. Then, the militia organized a charge at the warriors: Capt. Rabbeson to the left, Swindall to the center as Capt. White and Capt. Hennes held their ground and did not allow the warriors to advance. A.J. Eckrom wrote, "The Indians were arranged in a crescent along a low hill, and Rabbeson's men splashed and mucked their way through a swamp to strike the Indians' left flank (side), while Swindall's men exploded against their left. The Indians fell back, were chased, and fell back some more." Hennes and White were still in the center, trying to push forward. Native women were in the midst, beating hand drums and singing to give courage to the warriors. A few of the militia gunned down these unarmed women to silence them. Hicks, under Capt. White stated, "About fifty yards distance

from the open space through which we ran with our wounded was a line of quaking aspens, the twigs, and leaves of which fell in a shower, as if being stripped by invisible hands, cut by bullets and arrows fired at us.”

All was silent by 3:00 pm. Some militia pursued Leschi and the other warriors but only found rope, clothing, blood trails, and two dead. Soldiers searched the field for souvenirs of the battle. Van Ogle came upon a single drum. No doubt it was out of pure survival to leave such a sacred item. As Eckrom wrote, “The drum was silent, its war functions completed.”



Later that night, Qualchan spoke, "Today's fight has convinced me that you cannot cope with the whites. I noticed reinforcements constantly arriving in the camp of the enemy, and these will continue, whereas you have the greater portion of your fighting men



Author's Photo

now on the ground. I advise you to move all your people at once to the Yakima valley." By morning, the Yakama warriors trekked through heavy snow to Yakama country. It was treacherous. They lost many loved ones who died trying to cross the Cascades. Qualchan was heartsick and confided to Eneas, "The suffering of these people, caused by the whites, has determined me never to surrender or quit fighting them so long as I live."

It was Leschi's last fight. The U.S. Army considered the fighting west of the Cascades was over and concentrated in the east in a conflict that would not end until 1858. That did not stop Gov. Stevens from sending Territorial Militia to fan out across King, Pierce, and Thurston counties exacting punishment and death upon any Native Americans they could find. Territorial soldiers searched and killed small groups of Muckleshoot, Puyallup, and Nisqually People throughout three counties. By late March, Capt. H.J.G. Maxon and Territorial militiamen hunted down a group of old men, women, and children hiding where the Mashel River meets the Nisqually River. It became known as the Mashel Massacre.