

*Editor's Note: Robbie Paul gave UI CALS permission to include this research into her own family history on our online magazine website. We very much appreciate her generosity, and hope you will enjoy learning more about the history of her remarkable Nez Perce heritage.*

## **Native American Boarding School Experience and the Effects on Three Generations of the Nez Perce Jesse Paul Family**

**By Roberta L. (Robbie) Paul**

The oral history of the Nez Perce Paul family is long and full of rich heritage of how as a family we have interaction with the historical events that affect our lives. When the Nez Perce side of my family met Lewis and Clark on September 20, 1805 this historical event changes our way of life forever. It is these changes that cause trauma to my family, but it is also the trauma that has led to looking within ourselves to understand what happened.

It is hard to just look at the boarding school experience as a single event that affected the family, because the dominant culture's action toward the American Indian had many levels of influence. Lewis and Clark's Corp of Discovery brought about many events that led to these changes. Some of these events include fur trading, missionary contacts, treaties and boarding schools. Over the years, the Paul family began to lose knowledge and cultural ways as a result of these interactions. Slickpoo (1973) describes losses similar to those our family experiences:

The teachings of the white man have caused us to forget many things our ancestors knew, especially religious things. The missionaries changed our attitude towards our own culture and daily life. Unless you accepted the white man's ways you were considered a "heathen" and not acceptable as a "progressive" Indian. Some of the Nez Perces became convinced that the white man's way was the only way of life, and that the practice of the native culture became the work of the white man's devil. (pp. 75-76)

This statement still causes me to cringe because of the division that occurred among my people and within my family. The division consisted of either being a Christian or a Heathen. If a family member did not become Christian then you were expected to shun your own brother. Slickpoo (1974) goes on to explain what happens to a culture once it has been stripped from the people.

Material of buckskin and the feathers of the great American eagle became the tools of the devil. Our culture was degraded. We were demoralized by the ministers of Christianity. We were soon taught to forget our native beliefs and to convert to everything white. We can trace back in history of other nations and find that such a practice was nothing new to the white man. A nation broken in spirit and a people torn away from their traditional beliefs are easy prey. They can be convinced to accept the new, foreign culture and life primarily to benefit those who want their land. (p.76)

The above statement reflects what happens to the Paul family. It is from this premise that I will reflect on the historical events that led the Paul family to accept many of the values and ways of the White culture. A question I have struggled with is: How does one go about reclaiming a history that was not valued or deemed worthy of preserving? Through this struggle I have

learned to listen to my inner voice, to find out where I came from, who my ancestors were and how they live today.

Exploring the culture of my people came about from an event in my own life; the crisis of a divorce. This event was an epiphany, or turning point, which caused me to look at my family's cultural history and myself. What follows is the history of Chief Ut-sin-malikin, Wa-tat-ooop-napt-lay-hayne and Ka-kun-nee with descriptions of how the events of their lives affected my father, and eventually me and the rest of my family. The information comes from family stories, interviews with my father, and written resources that document the history of the Nez Perce.

#### Great Great Grandfather Chief Ut-sin-malikin (Treaty)

The life of Ut-sin-malikin is identified as the first cultural wound for the family, because Ut-sin-malikin is the first family member to start seeing the loss of old ways and loss of Nez Perce identity throughout his lifetime. Ut-sin-malikin began his life in the traditional ways as all his people have lived since time immemorial. He is born in 1793 in the Kamiah Valley of Idaho. At the age of 12 years old he has his first encounter with White Europeans. On September 20, 1805 the explorers Lewis and Clark come upon the village where the Nez Perce have camped to gather camas. After this meeting, Ut-sin-malikin goes on with his life and sees the coming of the fur traders. These fur traders interact with the Nez Perce and other tribes in the region during the time period of 1811 to 1840. He begins to see the ways of the Whites by their taking away from the land without replacing.

At the age of 43 years old Ut-sin-malikin meets the first missionaries, Henry Spalding and his wife Eliza, who come to the Nez Perce. Today I wonder what Ut-sin-malikin thought of the Spaldings when they talk of the Great Spirit as being very powerful, but punishing if certain rules are disobeyed. Ut-sin-malikin has to face the question that may have been inside his heart; "Why do I have to change the way I dress, live, or do ceremonies? Why do I have to take an English name that has no meaning?"

#### **1836 to 1843: A time for missionaries**

From 1836 to 1843 the time for the missionaries was good. Slickpoo (1973) says of this time: "We were already a very religious people and wanted to learn about the white man's way as well" (p.72). At first many were baptized including Ut-sin-malikin's daughter Wa-hee-loo, who was about two years old. But there were rising questions among the Nez Perce people as to why we had to change our style and way of Nez Perce ceremony. On the one side the missionaries had a belief that to be a "progressive" Indian Christian one had to give up all manner of living Indian ways including the ways of wearing buckskins, living in tipi's, using Indian names, gathering roots, seeking wey-a-kin's (spirit guide) and all traditional ways of worshipping the Tah-mah-ne-wes (Great Spirit Above).

These ways were described by the missionaries as being tools of the devil (Slickpoo, 1973). And if we did not change we were told we would go to a place below, where it was always dark and very hot, a place where there was always fire burning (McWhorter, 1952). When we did accept this new God, we were expected to give up all the old ways. If we did not accept God we were called Heathen (later referred to as the Non-treaty) and made to feel less than whole (Slickpoo, 1973). This is viewed as the beginning of the Nez Perce losing our true identity, our Indianess. Ut-sin-malikin adopts some of the Christian (Treaty Chief) ways, but one that he never adopts is the taking of an English name (Paul, 1994).

#### **Land treaties and Chief Ut-sin-malikin's death**

The settlers keep coming into the Nez Perce territory and they begin to cry to the U.S. Government for protection and rights to the land. This results in the treaties of 1855 and 1863. Ut-sin-malikin signs the treaty of 1855 because it includes almost all of the indigenous lands of the Nez Perce. Soon after this treaty someone discovers gold on the Nez Perce land and the gold seekers violate the treaty of 1855 by moving onto the designated lands of the treaty. The U.S. Government requests treaty negotiations to form another treaty, which led to the treaty of 1863. However this treaty became known as the “sell out” treaty because lands were signed away by the Treaty (Christian) Chiefs without the Non-Treaty (Heathen) Chiefs permission. One of these Non-treaty Chiefs is Chief Joseph. Chief Ut-sin-malikin does sign this treaty, but later began to think that it is wrong to sign away the lands of his fellow brothers (McWhorter, 1952).

In 1868 the Commissioner of Indian Affairs asks the Nez Perce Indian agent to appoint two Treaty Chiefs and two Non-treaty Chiefs to travel back to Washington D.C. to renegotiate the 1863 Treaty. Chief Ut-sin-malikin is one of the four chiefs chosen to travel. He is now age 75 years old and is about to take a trip to see things that he never thought existed. He travels on a steamboat to Portland, then a steam ship to San Francisco, and another to the Isthmus of Panama. They travel across the isthmus by train and he sees jungle for the first time in his life. They travel by steam ship to New York City and finally arrive in Washington D.C. by train on May 12, 1868. (Josephy, 1997).

Upon their arrival meetings are set up with President Andrew Johnson, Secretary of the Interior, and the U.S. Congress. McWhorter (1952) has interviewed Wottolen, a Nez Perce oral historian about this time in Washington D.C.

Nathaniel Taylor or his agent gave Lawyer, Timothy, and Jason whisky. Utsinmaslihkin would not drink. A powerful speaker, he refused to sign the treaty. Talked strongly against some of its wording and for this he was shoved from a high window and killed. This was told by timothy when he returned home. Whites did this bad deed. (p. 113)

Ten days after his arrival in Washington D.C. Chief Ut-sin-malikin dies. *How he dies is still a mystery* [italics added], because among the historians who have written about this they do not agree as to how Ut-sin-malikin dies. So I have included three stories of his death. One story says that: The Treaty Chiefs say that the U.S. Government kills him because he spoke up against the treaty (McWhorter, 1952). The second story says that: The U.S. Government says it was the treaty chiefs who killed him because he spoke against them (Josephy, 1997). The third story says that: There was a man who accompanied the four chiefs on their journey to Washington D.C., and he kept a journal of the events. The journal says that Ut-sin-malikin fell ill soon after crossing the Isthmus of Panama, and upon arrival in Washington D.C. a doctor begins to treat him. A death certificate has been found that says he died of typhoid fever (Josephy, 1997). However, this does not explain why he is found dead on the sidewalk at noontime (McWhorter, 1952). *How did he get there?* [italics added] Ut-sin-malikin is buried in the Congressional Cemetery without honor or ceremony.

### **Great Grandfather, Wa-tat-oop-napt-lah-hayne ( Seven Days Whipping), (Non-Treaty)**

Wa-tat-oop-napt-lah-hayne (Seven Days Whipping) is born about 1846 in the Wallowa Valley of present day Oregon. He lives as all his ancestors have since time immemorial and is close to the age of Chief Joseph and of the same Wallowa Band. He marries Um-al-wat (unknown meaning) and they have six children, one of whom is my grandfather Ka-kun-nee.

Wa-tat-ooop-napt-lah-hayne and Um-al-wat go with Chief Joseph into the Nez Perce War of 1877. The war starts in June of 1877 and the Nez Perce travel over 1500 miles before they are forced to face defeat. They hope to flee to Canada and safety. One battle is a particularly traumatic event in their lives. Here they lose two of their children. The U.S. Cavalry catches up with the Nez Perce near the Big Hole River in Montana.

Orders are given to attack the Nez Perce. At 4:00 AM, August 9, 1877, the soldiers charge the Nez Perce encampment, surprising the sleeping people. The soldiers were ordered to kill not only men but also women and children (McWhorter, 1952). The U.S. Army tore through lodges murdering at will. The killings were brutal with the soldiers bashing in heads and tearing off arms of the women and children. Even though caught off guard, the Nez Perce rallied quickly, fighting the soldiers and capturing the gattling gun. Even in retreat, the Nez Perce protected their elders, women, and children. After the Battle of the Big Hole the people returned to the carnage to bury their dead.

The number lost is between 60 to 90. The Nez Perce War continues until Chief Joseph surrenders on October 6, 1877 at Bear Paws Montana, only 30 miles from the Canadian border (McWhorter, 1983).

Wa-tat-ooop-napt-lah-hayne (Seven Days Whipping) and Um-al-wat survive the war yet are faced with forced exile that causes more trauma in their lives. The Nez Perce are sent to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Here they are placed on the Missouri River bottomland, between a lagoon and the river, the worst possible place that could have been selected. A physician in charge reports these conditions as such, "One half could be said to be sick, and all were affected by the poisonous malaria of the camp" (McWhorter, 1952, p. 529).

They are ordered to leave the swamp and forced to march to Indian Territory in Oklahoma. It is on the trail that Wa-tat-ooop-lah-hayne dies and is buried. Um-al-wat continues with her surviving children. Once they have arrived in Oklahoma she loses three more children to malaria and buries them in a mass grave along with the others who have died.

Um-al-wat is now left with only one surviving child, Ka-Kun-nee or Black Raven. Ka-kun-nee is selected to go to Carlisle Indian Industrial Boarding School in Pennsylvania. It is not known how or why he is selected, but he is one of five Nez Perce children who are sent to Carlisle. I wonder how my great grandmother survives the trauma of losing a husband and five children in less than two years and now has to let go of her only surviving child. To help find answers I looked to another culture that has suffered a similar cultural trauma, that of the holocaust. Victor Frankl, in his book (1959) titled Man's Search for Meaning, says, If you have a 'why' you will survive the 'how'. I apply this to my great grandmother and grandfather. After reading Frankl, I had a dream that helped me understand the 'why' for my great-grandmother. I concluded that she sends him with love. She has just witnessed the effects of war with the U.S. Government; maybe she realizes that to survive he has to learn about white laws and education to help our people.

### **Grandfather, Ka-Kun-nee (Black Raven), Jesse Paul**

Ka-kun-nee is 10 years old when he is sent to Carlisle Indian Industrial School. He arrives February 20, 1880. I often wonder what it is like for him to leave his only surviving relative, his mother, and to be sent so far away not knowing if he would ever see her again. I ask the same question of my grandfather as I did of my great grandmother Um-al-wat, what is his 'why' to survive. Again, a dream helps me to understand the 'how'. I am attending a conference that is dealing with suicide prevention for Indian people; there is a workshop that shows a film

about the beginning of Carlisle Indian Industrial School (Lesiak & Jones, 1991). It depicts what happens to the Indian children upon arrival at the school. Within hours they are stripped of their buckskins, their braids cut off, they are given lye hair shampoos, boys are put into military uniforms, and girls into Victorian dress. This is also the time that their names are changed.

Luther Standing Bear describes his experience:

Although we were yet wearing our Indian clothes...one day when we came to school there was a lot of writing on one of the blackboards. We did not know what it meant, but our interpreter came into the room and said "Do you see all these marks on the blackboard? Well, each word is a white man's name. They are going to give each one of you one of these names by which you will hereafter be known." None of the names were read or explained to us, so of course we did not know the sound or meaning of any of them. (Witmer, 1993, p. 22)

Thus, Ka-kun-nee (Black Raven) becomes Jesse Paul. They are also assigned roommates from different tribes, so that they are not permitted to speak their language (Witmer, 2000). These children are forced to change; all outward appearance of Indian identity is stripped away. They are put into a structured style of academic learning and Christian religious education. The children are torn from a warm secure family life and forced into a strict discipline in the non-nurturing environment of a military boarding school. Immediately after the film was over, I rush out of the room in tears. I felt like I have been hit in the stomach and the wind has been knocked out of me.

That night I lay in a fetal position on the couch looking at the picture of my grandfather in his military uniform that was taken after he has been stripped of his Indian identity. I never fully realized what had happened to him, I have known that he goes to Carlisle, but looking at this picture, I make a connection of head and heart. The feelings that I felt that night were sadness, abandonment, fear, loneliness and anger. I am sure that these were the same feelings that my grandfather had upon his arrival.

As I lay there looking at this picture, I took another look. I notice that he has his right hand inside the uniform and I ask myself "Grandfather why do your hand inside that uniform?" That night in a dream I hear my grandfather say to me "You may cut my hair, and take my buckskins, and make me look like a white man, but you will never get all of me, you will never get all of my Indianess." I believe that he is holding onto a medicine bag and somehow he does hold onto his language, because eight years later when he leaves Carlisle he still speaks his Nez Perce (Paul, 1994). During the eight years that Ka-kun-nee (Black Raven) lives at Carlisle I believe he learns all that he can of the White man's world.

### **Carlisle Indian Industrial School**

Captain Richard Pratt is the founder of Carlisle Indian Industrial School. At a Baptist convention in 1883; Pratt expressed his belief that the American Indian could become civilized; "In Indian civilization I am a Baptist, because I believe in immersing the Indian in our civilization and when we get them under holding them there until they are thoroughly soaked" (Pratt, 1964, p. 335). The soaking process could not be accomplished on a reservation.

In Pratt's mind, Carlisle was only a first step. "He would establish enough Carlisle's away from the reservation and its influences to accommodate all the Indian children of the United States, and from these prep schools in civilization feed them into the public schools and thus into the mainstream of American life" (Pratt, 1964, p. xv.). He wanted to do away with the

reservation system. He very much wanted the American Indian to succeed and become equal, in fact he was considered by many to be an advocate for the Indian. However, his thinking was that the Indian has to change and be rid of their culture to become equal. He truly believed that he was helping the Indian. It is this belief that he goes to Washington D.C. to advocate for funding for Carlisle.

Pratt does gain approval, and on “September 6, 1879 was ordered by the War Department to report to the Secretary of the Interior for Indian educational duty and then to proceed to Dakota and Indian Territory to recruit Sioux students for the new school” (Witmer, 2000, p. 12). There was distrust from both the Indian and the Whites, the Indian did not trust that the White man could do any good for their people, and many Whites believed that the Indian could not be educated and to invest in such education would be a waste of money. Pratt had to prove to both groups that his idea of immersion education was the only way for the Indian to enter society.

It was with this type of thinking and belief structure that my grandfather enters Carlisle. One of the educational situations that my grandfather participated in was what Pratt referred to as “The Outing.” Pratt believed in this statement, “The contact of people is the best of all education” (p. 194). Part of President Grant’s Peace Policy was based on the thinking that the Indians should become farmers. Pratt urged that the students visit the area farms and work with the farmer to gain knowledge for managing their own farms when they left the school. From Ka-kun-nee’s (Jesse Paul) record shows that he had two outings during his stay at Carlisle.

His first outing began April 16, 1884, and he is sent to the family of Abdon Longshore of Doluighton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania and returns September 6, 1886. He goes on a second outing on March 22, 1887 to September 13, 1887. According to Witmer (2000), “The policy for each boy and girl was that they were paid for his or her services while on the ‘Outing’ and the money was deposited in an interest bearing bank account by the school, and turned over to the student when he or she graduated or returned home” (p. 36). When Jesse Paul returns from his last outing he attends school for ten months and then is discharged on July 6, 1888. I am assuming that the wages that he earned was sent with him upon his release.

The curriculum at Carlisle was flexible, training each student according to his or her own ability. The training eventually carried students through a tenth-grade level and included instruction in English, Chemistry, Physics, Government, Geography, History, Advanced Mathematics, and Biology. Due to the fixed requirements, it was ten years before the first graduation ceremony in 1889. None of the original students were in this honored class. Industrial Certificates were awarded to those who gained proficiency in a trade to provide recognition for those who did not graduate (Witmer, 2000, p. 29). This would have included my grandfather Ka-kun-nee.

### **Life after Carlisle**

Jesse Paul returns to the Nez Perce Reservation during the month of July 1888. He is reunited with his mother, Um-al-wat, who is now using the English name Phoebe Lowery. She has remarried and lives near Lapwai, Idaho. I can only imagine what that reunion was like, maybe tears of happiness, hugs and looking over each other to be sure that each is in good health. What is known about the family at this time is that they are attending the Indian Presbyterian Churches. Great grandmother Phoebe attends the Spalding Presbyterian Church. Jesse begins work for the tribal agency as a log scaler. Just prior to Jesse’s return to the reservation there is yet another policy being implemented by the U.S. Government. The new policy is the Dawes

Allotment Act that became law February 8, 1887.

Under this act, the president could, whenever he saw fit, divide up a reservation, and give each member of the tribe on that reservation a certain number of acres depending on the status and age of the individual. For example, each head of family was to be given 160 acres; each single person over eighteen and all orphans' eighty acres, and every person under eighteen and single was to be given forty acres. (Slickpoo, 1973, p. 219)

Slickpoo (1973) goes on to say, "It is obvious that this act was designed to force us to give up what was left of our traditional way of life. By dividing up the communal lands, attempting to break up tribal relations, and forcing everyone to speak English, this legislation was aimed at stopping us from being Indian" (p. 223).

The president does order the Nez Perce Reservation to begin allotting the lands in 1889. A Miss Alice Fletcher, an anthropologist from Harvard University, begins the task of surveying the Nez Perce lands and begins the task of allotting land (Slickpoo, 1973). It took four years for the allotment process. During this time Jesse meets and marries Lydia Conditt. Together they each receive 160 acres for a total of 320 acres. Jesse also helps with the surveying of the lands and he chooses the acreage that is now referred to as the Paul Ranch. It is here that they begin to raise a family.

My father Titus Paul tells this about his parents beginning efforts, "They start out with a tent near a creek on the ranch property, they carve out a ranch and begin farming the land. A hundred acres is turned into farmland for planting wheat. They also raise cows, horses, ducks, turkeys, and chickens. We have about a dozen horses to help run the plows. We have a three-bottom plow, which required five horses to pull, and a one-bottom plow, which required three horses to pull (T. Paul, personal communication, October 2, 2001).

### **Father, Koo-ya-mah (Mountain Loin), Titus J. Paul**

My father Titus J. Paul is the seventh child of Jesse and Lydia. Titus is assigned chores as soon as he is able to handle the responsibility. His earliest recollection was feeding the chickens, ducks, and turkeys. As with all the previous children Titus is born in a tipi under a ponderosa pine tree. This is at his grandparent's farm in Kamiah Valley. His grandmother Jane (daughter of Chief Ut-sin-malikin) helps with the delivery.

As father is growing up, he is taught to speak Nez Perce as well as English. He says of his parents "they were pretty strict, had to do everything just so, so, but that was all right didn't hurt a thing" (T. Paul, personal communication, October 7, 2001). His mother, Lydia taught the children quite a bit, and enforced the behavior that she and her husband expected of their children. "We had rules, keep our rooms clean, ourselves clean, no fighting among our selves, and treat everybody nice. We had to be that way" (T. Paul, personal communication, October 17, 2001). I asked what happened when the rules got broken, Dad replies "That didn't happen very often, but we would get a switch across the behind. We conducted ourselves in a polite manner saying please and thank-you."

The Jesse Paul family practiced devotions every evening. They sang hymns accompanied on the piano by Ester, who learned to play at Chemawa Indian Boarding School. According to an article in the Saturday Evening Post, May 31, 1924, the Paul family is described as a "Progressive Indian family." The article is titled, "Our American Indians" by Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior. Within the article Mr. Work reports that the Indian is not progressing

as fast as the government would like, but states this about the Paul family from the Nez Perce Reservation.

The subjects of a special report are a full-blood Nez Perce Indian and his wife. The husband is fifty-one years of age and attended Carlisle. "Soon after their marriage," the inspector reports, "they moved on to his allotment, located on the border of a high prairie and over 20 miles distant from their nearest Indian neighbor. That was 23 years ago. For two years they lived in a tent, not being able to build a house. The first years were ones of hardship and sacrifice, but they never gave up. Today they have a good seven-room house located on 250 acres of good land, with electric lights, telephone, piano, books, typewriter, bath and almost all the modern conveniences. They have fee patents to their allotments which they still own and to which they have added many good acres by purchase. They have 100 acres in wheat, 10 horses, 20 cattle, 3 milk cows, good cellar full of home-canned fruit, a fine new car, a \$5500 mortgage on a white neighbors farm, \$2700 in Victory and Liberty Bonds, \$3600 in bank and \$3000 loaned out to various white neighbors. They have nine children, all educated in public school. They are consistent Christians and there is not a white family in their county more highly regarded or respected." (p. 29)

The Paul family is held up to be an example of how an Indian family should be. I believe that this is a big load for a family to carry. There are several other facts that were not mentioned in this article. Jesse Paul and family travel to Meadow Creek to attend the Indian Presbyterian Churches. Jesse also helps establish the Tal Maks Indian Presbyterian summer camp meetings. My father remembers these camp meetings as being times of gathering together with other Nez Perce families. Each family has a spot where they have either built a cooking shack or some type of permanent building. These spots to this day belong to the same family members who first began this camp. The Paul family-cooking shack is still standing and used often by Paul family members. There is an unwritten rule; no one else is allowed to take over the spot that is not a family member. (T. Paul, personal communication, October 17, 2001)

Jesse Paul also helps form the first Nez Perce tribal government. He is the first Vice-President. This first form of government evolved into a well organized and nationally recognized governing unit (Slickpoo, 1973). This is the beginning of the Nez Perce Tribe becoming self governing but it is many more years before there is no longer a Superintendent at the Lapwai Agency.

It is from this family beginning that my father Titus J. Paul is sent to a boarding school in Oklahoma. The thinking of the time is still that Indian children should attend boarding schools. The older Paul children have attended various Indian boarding schools in the west, but the time has now come for father, because the one room school only went to the eighth grade. This is how Dad describes how it was determined where he should go: "One evening at the dinner table Dad [Jesse] was going around the table asking us where we would like to go to school. As we went around the table Bessie is the first to say she wants to go to Chemawa, where mom has gone, the same with Alta. Ester has already attended Chemawa, and when my turn came, I said, "As far away as you can get me (he chuckles)" (T. Paul, personal communication, October 2, 2001). This turns out to be Chilocco Indian School in Oklahoma.

Dad leaves for Chilocco in the fall of 1922 at the age of 15. I asked him if he was afraid when he left. His reply was, "No, I was a rascal that way, I liked to see different things, I was

never home sick.” He describes his leaving by taking the ferry on the Snake River to Reparia, Washington, then takes a train to Pendleton where he changes trains to Cheyenne, then to Newton, Kansas, and finally to Chilocco. He recalls being greeted at the train station and taken to what he refers to as Home 1 for large boys (T. Paul, personal communication, October 2, 2001). “Each Home had a disciplinarian (which is what they were called then) who explained the rules and regulations” (Lomawaima, 1994, p. 45). Father describes this meeting as being told by the disciplinarian: “There is no foolishness, do everything just so, so, such as keep your room clean, keep your self clean, and no speaking of your Native language. They were pretty strict. And we were given regular army uniforms and were expected to wear them on Sundays” (T. Paul, personal communication, October 17, 2001).

Father remains at Chilocco for five years and returns home twice during the summer months. When asked if he wrote letters home or received letters from home stated that he didn’t write much and didn’t receive many letters from home. However, during his second year at Chilocco he receives a letter informing him of the deaths of three siblings who died within 24 hours of each other. The dates of their deaths are November 28 and 29 of 1923. This was yet another traumatic event for my grandfather to experience.

### **How does Grandfather endure so much pain?**

Grandfather over his lifetime has endured so much pain; I have wondered again how is it that he continues to go on. Within six months, he loses another daughter and his wife Lydia. My grandmother dies from not managing her diabetes, but mostly from a broken heart of losing so many children. About a year after the deaths of the three children grandfather suffers what I call a break down and is not expected to live.

My brother and I have found records of this time in his life that gave us a new understanding of what happened to him and how he somehow goes on. I am including letters from Superintendent Lipps of the Lapwai Agency to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles H. Burke informing him about grandfather’s illness. (Appendix A)  
A second letter is from Charles H. Burke that was sent to my grandfather while he is in the hospital. (Appendix B)

My grandfather receives Commissioners Burke’s letter at White’s Hospital, in Lewiston, Idaho on January 31, 1925. Within this letter are words of encouragement and I am sure that these words comforted my grandfather. It is not known how long he was in the hospital, but we have since found out that on February 20, 1925 another son dies. Feelings of sorrow overwhelm me when I think of this time in grandfather’s life. I have asked this question many times, “Why did you go on living grandfather?”

I have come to believe that he has a deep spiritual strength that calls to him to go on living, to care for his three surviving sons, one of which is my father Titus. I believe that this same deep spiritual strength calls to me on the night that I try to take my life. This spirit says, “Life is worth living.” Grandfather does go on living, but he never returns to the ranch house. He goes and lives in Kamiah, Idaho. He remarries and has one more daughter.

We have been told that he is not as full of life as before the illness, and he dies at the age of 65 on March 2, 1936. He is buried in Kamiah, Idaho next to the children and wife that he has lost earlier. There is a photo taken of him about a year before his death and in the picture he looks much older than his age, I can’t help but think that the effects of trauma that he experienced in his lifetime affected his physical body. But there is something more I have learned from writing his story, this is a man that has survived war, endured boarding schools,

loved his family, lost loved ones, has a deep spiritual faith, is respected by all who he worked with, and has touched me deeply. His spirit is alive within me. His story deserves to be told with respect and honor, and I hope that I have done this.

Father was not able to return home for the funerals of his siblings or his mother. He returns the summer of 1925. This is one of the few times that the remaining young Paul boys are together after the loss of all their siblings and mother.

Soon after his arrival at Chilocco father is given the job of chauffeur. I ask how is it that they let such a young man have so much responsibility.

I knew how to drive, I was a good driver, and they trusted me. I knew that I had to keep their trust and I kept it. I drove a 16-passenger bus and a model T sedan. I was the sports team bus driver and would take them to their games. The teams of Chilocco had to play Junior Colleges because the high schools wouldn't play them on account that they were too good of athletes. These teams would even out play the Junior college teams. I also drove the 'Big Shots' around when they came from Washington D.C. I mostly took the single women teachers to town every Saturday afternoon. They would shop or do their errands and I would go play pool or see a movie. I had some money because I worked in the school store that sold candy and bakery goods. I got about 50 cents to a \$1.00 for each night I worked. (T. Paul, personal communication, October 17, 2001)

Father's report card shows that he took the following classes while at Chilocco; English, U.S. History, Ancient History, American History, Civics, Rural Economics, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Bookkeeping, Chemistry, Physics, General Exercise, Botany, Horticulture, Types and Breeds, Stock Judging and Trades. The trades that Dad took were auto mechanics and agriculture. This is quite an impressive curriculum and Dad says of this education that: "It was very good and I have used it all my life. The teachers were all there to help you succeed and if you needed help they would help" (T. Paul, personal communication, October 17, 2001).

### **Daughter, Tew-le-kit-we-son-my (Woman of the Forest), Roberta L. Paul**

Father has very fond memories of his time at Chilocco. He tries to attend the All Class Chilocco Reunions, and he is often the oldest in attendance. The most recent reunion that he attends is June of 1999. At this time he receives the honor of being inducted into the Chilocco Indian School Hall of Fame.

Three of his children, four grandchildren and his wife are in attendance when he receives this honor. I can still remember the feelings of pride that I held for my father on this day. There was a moment when he gets to the podium that he gives a speech. This is the first time that I have ever heard my father talk to a large crowd, there are 400 in attendance, tears come to my eyes, and he is calm and accepts the honor with dignity. He has this to say, "I have always done the best that I could, if I didn't understand it I would study it and figure it out.

I learned a great deal from the teachers of Chilocco and to them I give respect"(T. Paul, personal communication, June 15, 1999). There is much more that he speaks, but it is those words that have stuck with me. I have heard those words spoken before about my father from friends and family members who shared a story with me when I was at a point in my life on not wanting to go on, because of the divorce and low self-esteem of being Indian.

This story is a turning point of how I view my father and the world that I have grown up in. The example that he sets in this story is how I try to live life today. The setting of the story is

World War II. My father wants to serve in the services, but is deemed too old, so he goes to Bremerton, Washington where they have the shipyards. At first he is doing whatever they assign him to do, but one day he asks if he can learn welding. The foreman in charge says if you take the time to take the lessons and pass the certification go ahead. My father asks around for where the classes are and he signs up. He passes the exam and now goes back to the foreman to ask for a welding job.

The foreman gives him the job of welding in the mine detectors to the bottom of the ship. To do this job he must lay flat on his back and weld carefully. To weld too fast would cause a sloppy job and not a good secure fastening of the mine detector. It is while my father is lying on his back that the Captain of the ship walks by and sees my father and says to himself, "That Indian he is loafing. I am going to report him to the foreman." The foreman comes to the place where my father is working and reports to my father that the Captain has complained about him loafing. My father motions to the foreman to come see his work. The welds are perfect and the foreman says, "Forget I ever said anything."

So now the foreman gives my father a job of welding the armor around the control room of the ship. They are in pairs. Time is of the essence. We are at war. One pair is on one side of the control room and my father's team in on the other. Again the Captain of the ship comes by and sees this one team welding very fast, and he goes to my father's side and sees that they are not welding as fast. So he says to himself, "That Indian he is loafing again. I am going to complain to the foreman." The foreman comes and says to my Father, "The Captain is complaining that you are loafing." My father motions to the foreman to come to the side that finished welding first and pulls on the door handle and the door doesn't open. Then he goes to the other side where he has welded and pulls on the door handle and the door opens.

### **What is the moral of this story?**

When I first heard this story my first thought was "Haste makes waste." But as I began to look deeper I could see, feel, and understand something about my father that I was missing in my own life, that of living life true to self. My father did not live up to the expectation of what the Captain expected of an Indian. This Captain expected Indians to be lazy and thought that they did not do things in a timely manner.

These are stereotypes that are projected by another. My father exhibited behaviors that were true for him. It is true in Nez Perce culture you do things in time, which can be perceived as not getting things done in a timely manner, but my father showed by example that haste makes waste. And when done right the first time they don't have to be done again.

He also never quit. He always keeps on going and doing. He always did the best that he could, and if he didn't understand a problem he would study the situation and try again. I have since learned that my father went on to become highly skilled and was sought out to figure out hard welding problems. He figured out how to weld in the *Big Guns* [italics added] on the battleships.

### **Living down the stereotypes**

From this story about my father I began to realize that I had denied my Indianess because I had tried to live down the stereotypes that others had placed on us. This story showed me that I am not what others perceive me to be. I am what I perceive about myself. I have begun to reflect on how my father has always had a goal. In this story it was the goal of becoming a welder. Over his lifetime he has had several goals. At the age of 65 he started to golf; at the age of 72 he rode his

first bicycle; at the age of 82 he went swimming in the Pacific Ocean; at the age of 85 he rock n' rolls at his granddaughters wedding; and at the age of 87 he became serious about golf. His goal today at the age of 94 is to win the gold medal in the Senior Olympics; he already has won the Bronze and the Silver.

### **Leadership of Ancestors**

The Leadership of the ancestors that have gone before me and the continued leadership of my father and mother have helped me to write this story. My ancestors have truly sacrificed so that I may live today. It is now nearly two hundred years from the first contact with Lewis and Clark and it has only been within the last 12 years that our family has been able to look back and gain perspective. It has been by gathering the pieces of information and putting the story together that has helped with the healing process.

My grandfather sacrificed himself for his children, grandchildren and those that would come after. He learned so that I may understand what his father and mother did not understand with the signing of the treaties. The attempt of the U.S. Government to take away the Indianess of my family has not been successful. But the process of taking away the Indianess was painful and it is from this pain that we as a family have begun to heal and reclaim the oral traditions, naming ceremonies, pipe ceremonies and the wearing of regalia again.

What did happen was the loss of speaking the Nez Perce language fluently. This is the one regret that my father has of attending the boarding school. "I lost my language, I don't understand much anymore and I would like to relearn the language" (T. Paul, personal communication, October 17, 2001). This too is my wish and one of my goals is to learn and speak Nez Perce fluently, for in knowing your language you know your culture fully.

The story of the Paul family will never be finished, because we are a living history. We have just begun to understand the effects of the historical events that affected our family. We are healing, we are telling the story, and we are remembering the past, to live in the present, so that we can walk into the future.

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