

CHAPTER 5
CHIEF PEOPEOMOXMOX
AND THE
THE WHITE FLAG OF TRUCE

(As of April 22, 2011)

December 5, 1855 (Wednesday):

Major Chinn's march to the mouth of the Touchet River:

1: Colonel James Kelly Official Report: "Early on the morning of the 5th, I dispatched Major Chinn with *one hundred and fifty (150) men* to escort the baggage and pack trains to the *mouth of the Touchet*, there to await my return with the remainder of the forces under my command."

2: Colonel James Kelly Official Report: "On the morning of the 5th of December I divided my force, sending Major Chinn with *about one-hundred and twenty-five (125) men* to escort the baggage and pack train to the mouth of the Touchet River."

4: Captain A. V. Wilson (Company A) Account: "Major Chinn, with the balance of the men and baggage, were sent to the *mouth of the Touchet (River)*."

6: Lieutenant Pillow (Company A) Official Report: "Major Chinn, with the pack train and ammunition wagons, to make camp *at or near the mouth of (the) Touchet (River), on the wagon road*."

37: Sergeant A. B. Roberts (Company A) Account: "Major Chinn with the balance of the command and the supply train, was ordered to move up and camp on the Touchet (River) at a point *where the road crosses that stream about 1-1/2 miles from its mouth*."

5: Private Plympton Kelly (Company A) Account: "A cloudy morning. The Companies have selected all their best horses to pursue the enemy. And those men who have not good horses are to guard the baggage train *crossed the Walla Walla River* and directed our course to the Touchet River. As we were descending the hills to the Touchet, we discovered a band of cattle a welcome sight to us for our beef cattle were getting dangerously thin. *The country which we traveled today is broken (and) covered with bunch grass in places and in others with sage and grease wood*. We encamped on the Touchet. Grass plenty such as it is for it is dry. The number of cattle taken today (was) 47 head by the baggage train. It commenced raining about sundown and after dark it snowed. About half past 6 o'clock (PM) an express arrived in camp from Col.

Kelly to Major Chinn calling for 75 men as old Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox had come into the regiment with a white flag accompanied by 40 of his warriors. He wished to have a talk with the Whites and invited Col. Kelly and command to go to his camp. The Colonel thought it proper to surround them with a guard for the night and expects to ask terms of peace that the Indians will not comply with without a fight hence the reason for wanting reinforcements.”

41, 45: Corporal Amos Underwood (Company B) Account: “Part of the command started up the road toward Walla Walla with teams and pack trains.”

3: Private George Washington Miller (Company H) Account: “Major Chinn, with the balance of the forces, about **150 men** and the baggage, were ordered to the **mouth of the Touchet River**, there to await orders from the main army.”

NOTE: *As Major Chinn’s command left their camp on the north side of the Walla Walla River, they again forded it to the south side following the “wagon road” going east. After going about 4 miles, they again forded the river to its north side where present day Nine Mile Canyon enters the Walla Walla River Valley. From here they followed the “wagon road” (present day Highway 12) to a point about 1-1/2 mile above the mouth of the Touchet River where the “wagon road” crossed the river itself. Here Major Chinn’s command camped on the west side of the Touchet River “on the wagon road”. This site is located ¾ mile north of the town of Touchet, Washington on the Touchet North Road from Highway 12. (40)*

December 5, 1855 (Wednesday):

Colonel Kelly's march to the Indian camp north of the mouth of the Touchet River:

1: Colonel James Kelly Official Report: "On the same morning, I marched with about *two hundred (200) men* to a point on the Touchet River about *twelve (12) miles* from its mouth with the view of attacking the Walla Walla Indians who were supposed to be encamped there."

2: Colonel James Kelly Official Report: "With the remainder, I started in a *northeasterly direction* so as to strike the Touchet (River) *about fifteen (15) miles* from its junction with the Walla Walla (River), supposing that Peu-peu-mox-mox and his warriors were encamped on that stream."

4: Captain A. V. Wilson (Company A) Account: "On the morning of the 5th, Col. Kelly took *two hundred (200) of the command* having the best horses and started for the Indian encampment."

6: Lieutenant Charles Pillow (Company A) Official Report: "On the morning of the 5th, Colonel Kelly divided his command, taking about one half of each company with him."

37: Sergeant A. B. Roberts (Company A) Account: "(This) morning...Colonel Kelly, in command, took about *150 men* and officers and started out across the hills and plains to the place where Peopeomoxmox was said to be camped on the Touchet (River), a tributary of the Walla Walla (River). *This camp was about eight (8) miles from its confluence with the Walla Walla River.*"

"Colonel Kelly's command...carried no grub or blankets."

41, 45: Corporal Amos Underwood (Company B) Account: "*About 200 of us* on horseback went across the hills *a little north of east*. We rode until about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, when we saw a big band of Indians coming."

33: Sergeant William G. Haley (Company H) Account: "On the 5th, we struck their trail and followed them on to the Touchet (River), *some 12 miles above its mouth.*"

3: Private George Washington Miller (Company H) Account: "Colonel Kelly, with *200 men*, without baggage or rations, marched to the Touchet (River), *thence up the Touchet to the canyon*, to find out, if possible, the location of the Indians."

38: “The Murder of Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox” (location of camp): Contained in the Oregon Historical Quarterly’s No. 35 (1934) was an article about the murder of Chief Peopeomoxmox. It contained a part describing the location of the chief’s camp on the Touchet River. The T. C. Elliot says: “Before the battle, the Walla Walla Indian camp was on the Touchet River **about eight (8) miles north of its mouth**. On the afternoon of the second day before the fight began, Colonel Kelly, with two or three companies of his regiment, set out to find that camp but was met in the hills west of the river (**On what is now in 1934, locally known as the Johnson Ranch; the Indian camp probably on the Plucker Farm where the river bottom land widens**) by Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox and six Indians bearing a flag of truce.”

ACCOUNT	MILES FROM MOUTH OF TOUCHET RIVER	MILES FURTHER TO INDIAN CAMP
Colonel Kelly #1	12	?
Colonel Kelly #2	15	?
Lieutenant Pillow	?	?
Sergeant A. B. Roberts	8	?
Sergeant William Haley	12	?
Private G. W. Miller	?	?
Unknown to Dryer	?	?
T. C. Elliot	8	?

Colonel Kelly's rendezvous with Walla Walla Chief Peopeomoxmox:

1: Colonel James Kelly Official Report: "When I was near to and making towards the village, Peo-Peo-Mox-Mox, the chief of the tribe, with **six (6)** other Indians, made their appearance under a flag of truce. He stated that he did not wish to fight, that his people did not wish to fight, and that on the following day (December 6, 1855) he would come and have a talk and make a treaty of peace. On consulting with Hon. Nathan Olney, Indian agent, we concluded that this was simply a ruse to gain time for removing his village and preparing for battle. I stated to him that we had come to chastise him for the wrongs he had done to our people, and that we would not defer making an attack on his people unless he and his **five (5) followers** would consent to accompany and remain with us until all difficulties were settled. I told him that he might go away under his flag of truce if he chose, but that if he did so, we would forthwith attack his village. The alternative was distinctly made known to him, and to save his people, he chose to remain with us a hostage for the fulfillment of his promises, as did also those who accompanied him. He at the same time said that on the following day (December 6, 1855) he would accompany us to his village, that he would then assemble his people and make them deliver up all their arms and ammunition, restore the property which had been taken from the white settlers, or pay the full value of that which could not be restored, and that he would furnish fresh horses to remount my command, and cattle to supply them with provisions to enable us to wage war against other hostile tribes who were leagued with him. Having made those promises, we refrained from making the attack, thinking, as we had him in our power, that on the next day (December 6, 1855) his promises would be fulfilled. I also permitted him to send one of the men who accompanied him to his village to appease the tribes of the terms of the expected treaty, so that they might be prepared to fulfill it."

2: Colonel James Kelly Official Report: "*About 2 o'clock in the afternoon*, as we were proceeding towards and within **three (3) miles** of the hostile village, that chieftain, with about seventy (70) or eighty (80) armed warriors, made his appearance approaching toward us. An order was given at once to attack them, but as we moved rapidly up, I observed **six (6) or seven (7) Indians** a short distance in advance of their main body, bearing a white flag. Halting my command, I went where they were in company with Hon. Nathan Olney, Indian agent, the interpreter (John McBean), and three or four others. One of the Indians was the chief Peu-peu-mox-mox, who asked why we had come armed into this country, and was told that we had come to chastise him and his people for the wrongs they had done to the whites. He said he desired peace; that he did not wish to fight, and that he had done us no wrong. I then recapitulated the wrongs of which he had been guilty, telling him that he pillaged and destroyed Fort Walla Walla, seized the United States property left there by Governor Stevens, Pillaged and burned the houses of (Lloyd) Brooks, (George C.) Bumford, and (John F.) Noble and McKay, and drove off the cattle of the settlers in the Walla Walla Valley."

“At first, he denied having done these things, but after some further conversation said those acts were done by his young men, and that he could not restrain them. I told him that we had the evidence of Howlisle Wampoo, a friendly Cayuse chief, that he, Peu-peu-mox-mox, with his own hands had distributed the goods when Fort Walla Walla was pillaged, and that he had laid out a pile of blankets to be given to the Cayuses when they would join him in the war. To this he made no reply, but said he would make his people restore the goods taken by them, so far as they could be restored, and pay for the balance. I stated to him that this would not be sufficient; that, in addition, he should make his people surrender their arms and ammunition, give us cattle for beef, and horses to remount my command, so that we might pursue the other hostile Indians who were leagued with him. To these terms he assented, and said he would come on the morrow and comply with them by delivering up his arms.”

“Being well convinced that he only desired time to remove his people, and that he would not return if permitted to go, I told him that we came to wage war against him and that he could not return, without exposing his villages to an immediate attack, as I had no faith whatever in his promises to come back. I observed to him that if his promises of separation were made in good faith, he could well come and remain with us until they were fulfilled.”

“I then directed the interpreter to state distinctly to him, that he might go away under his flag of truce, if he chose, but that if he did so we would without delay commence an attack upon his villages; that if, on the other hand, he and his six (6) followers would consent to remain and fulfill the terms of his proposed treaty, his tribe would not be molested.”

“To save his people from attack, he reluctantly consented to remain as a hostage for the fulfillment of his promises, saying that the next morning he would go with us to his village and make all right. He moreover assured me that none of his people would remove during the night. I then placed a guard around him and his six (6) men. At his request, we started to go towards his village to get some beef cattle for food, while his seventy (70) or eighty (80) warriors were marching along with us unmolested. We had gone but **about half a mile (1/2 mile)** when I observed that he was **leading us into a deep and rugged ravine through which the Touchet (River) flowed**, and in which his village was situated.”

“Upon consultation, it was deemed advisable not to venture into the ravine so late in the evening, lest we should be surprised by an ambuscade. I ordered the command to march back about **two (2) miles** to a **more secure and open place**, where we encamped. At night Peu-peu-mox-mox asked permission to send back one of his six men to apprise his people of the terms of the proposed treaty, and that they would be expected to fulfill it. This permission was granted, and one of them left, but did not return, as he promised to do.”

7: Assistant Surgeon J. R. Bates Official Report: “We reached the Touchet River, travelled up it a short distance. A party of sixty (60) or seventy (70) Indians were observed coming towards us. We moved towards them at full speed, found it to be Pee-Pee-Mox-Mox and a party of his warriors, one of whom was carrying a flag of truce. We did not fire upon them, but halted about three hundred yards from them. Colonel Kelly, Mr. Olney, the Indian agent and two or three others (John McBean included), went to the Indians to talk with them. Pee-pee-mox-mox said he did not wish to fight; that his people were not prepared for battle yet, and wished to treat. Colonel Kelly requested him to go and camp with him, and then he would talk with him, as it was near night at this time. Pee-pee-mox-mox objected, and requested the Colonel to go with him to his camp, and he would have a beef killed for us. The Colonel consented, and off we started for the old chief’s camp, expecting to get a good fat bullock for our supper, as we were quite hungry. We had reached near camp when our commanding officer observed that the **Indians were leading us into a deep canyon**, where their men were awaiting our arrival, and could have surrounded us, so that it would have been very difficult for us to make our escape, as they would have outnumbered us. After discovering the trap laid for us, the command turned, and **went down the river**, until a suitable camping place was found, taking Pee-pee-mox-mox and **six or seven of his men** to camp, and taking their arms from them. Pee-pee-mox-mox told the Colonel if he would let him send a man to camp he would fetch a beef. The man was let go for the beef, but did not return.”

8: Captain Alfred V. Wilson (Company A) Official Report: “Colonel Kelly...marched with the...command in search of the camp of Pee-pee-mox-mox. We found his camping place on the Touchet River, but he had left. Colonel Kelly decided to **follow up the stream still further**, had gone but a short distance when we saw Pee-pee-mox-mox in the distance, with about sixty armed Indians, displaying a flag of truce. The command halted, and Pee-pee-mox-mox advanced with **seven (7)** of his warriors. He stated to Colonel Kelly, through an interpreter, that he wished to settle the difficulties without fighting, at the same time acknowledging that he had pillaged and destroyed the property of the white settlers in that valley, and that he had burned and ????? Fort Walla Walla. Colonel Kelly told him that he had come there for the purpose of fighting, and if he did not surrender himself and arms he could leave our command with his white flag. Then he might expect us to fight him. Whereupon he gave himself up, **with seven (7) others**, as prisoners of war.”

4: Captain A. V. Wilson (Company A) Account: “On our arrival at the Indian camp, we found they had fled the night previous. After consultation, the Colonel decided to follow the trail and overtake them. After marching **up the Touchet (River) some two (2) miles further**, we saw forty (40) or fifty (50) Indians approaching. We all expected an engagement, but great was our disappointment on nearer approach to see a white flag. An interview ensued, and it proved to be the notorious Pee-Peu-Mox-Mox, asking for a treaty, and denying that he wished to go to war. He wanted us to go to his camp, and have

a treaty next day. Many of his men opposed it saying they wanted to fight. After becoming satisfied it was not safe to go to the camp of the enemy after dark, we tacked about and found our own encampment. The chief and others accompanying us, which the rest refused to. We spent a supper less and snowy night.”

6: Lieutenant Charles Pillow (Company A) Official Report: “Colonel Kelly moved his command **over the hills** to the camp of Pee-pee-mox-mox. On arriving at the place designated we found they had moved camp, and the only thing left was a few dogs and a wounded horse, that was probably wounded the day before. The command then **moved up the Touchet (River) about two (2) miles**, where there was a halt ordered, and Colonel Kelly conferred with his officers in regard to his movements, and it was decided to move on in pursuit of Mox-mox’s camp. Just as the command was moving there was seen from the hills beyond a number of Indians approaching us at a furious gait, but as soon as they came near enough to be distinctly seen we found them well mounted and armed, and with a flag of truce, which was received as such, and all due respect to the great chief, Pee-pee-mox-mox, was paid. A long talk was had with him, and it was decided that the chief and his attendants should remain in camp with us that night and go to his camp in the morning, and he would have a talk, restore the property stolen from Fort Walla Walla.”

37: Sergeant A. B. Roberts (Company A) Account: “Colonel Kelly’s detachment moved across the hills and struck the Touchet (River) **5 or 6 miles up from the mouth** and we went down to the stream and watered, and returned to the plains and dismounted to let our horses rest and graze a little but did not unsaddle and in a few minutes we saw Indians coming over the hills about a mile away. We remounted and rode out in the direction of the oncoming Indians which we could now see were about equal to us in numbers, about 150.”

“The intervening distance of about **one (1) mile** was nearly a level plain sloping from each party towards the other, and each party came galloping furiously down towards the other, and from the appearance of the Indians, we were going to have a fight here in the open plain.”

“As we neared to about a quarter of a mile of each other, a white flag was unfurled by the Indians. Orders to halt, and the Indians did the same.”

“Some of our officers went forward and met the leading chiefs and found out that it was Peopeomoxmox and several head men with a following of about 120 to 130 hand picked warriors. The Chief assured our officers that he was friendly to the whites, and that he had come out personally to invite us to come to his camp where he had prepared for us a great feast of roast beef.”

“He, (the Chief) told Colonel Kelly and Nathan Olney that it was the Yakamas who had sacked the old Fort and carried off the Hudson’s Bay Company’s goods while they were wearing brand new Hudson’s Bay Company blankets. They turned about and rode back accompanied by the Colonel and his staff followed by our boys intermingled with an equal number of Indians.”

“Over the ridge and a short distance further, we came to a perpendicular rock bluff about 100 feet in height. Looking off from this point you could see before you a beautiful grass plat down at the foot of the rock about ½ mile long and a quarter (mile) wide bordered by large Cottonwood trees, starting as it were from the rocks at the lower end of the valley or plat and leaving room for a trail at the upper end, and a mile above this valley we were told was the Indian camp where a feast was spread for us.”

“Before us was a **broken place in the rock bluff where an Indian could ride his pony down but a white man would surely lead his** (it was noticed that most of the Indians had dropped behind the troops). Nathan Olney informed Colonel Kelly that he did not think it safe to go down into the valley.”

“Colonel Kelly turned around and took the Indians prisoners, only the head chief and 7 or 8 of his leading men were held. **We marched down the bluff about a mile to where gentle and sloping land** permitted us to go down to the river where we found a good place to camp for the night.”

“One of his leading men was released and sent with a special message of peace to his people, that if they would come and talk all would be well, but if not, their chief would be held until satisfaction for the depredations committed. All that night, as the guard stood closely around Peopeomoxmox, he constantly called out for his people to come to him.”

41, 45: Corporal Amos Underwood (Company B) Account: “We rode on until about 3 o’clock in the afternoon, when we saw a big band of Indians coming toward us. They came within 200 or 300 yards of us and stopped. They were carrying a white flag. Some **6 or 8 of them** left the others and came within 100 yards of us, where they halted and called for some of our officers to come to them; they wanted to have a talk. A few officers went and had a handshake with the Indians. The rest of us sat on our horses and while our officers talked with the chief, we would flap our arms and crow and take sight at the Indians with our guns. The Indians did the same.”

“After about an hour he told his men to go home and tell the people we would be there for supper. The old chief and about eight of his men stayed with us and the rest all started off on a keen lope. We then followed and rode on until about sundown, when we could see a lot of Indians on the high points.”

“We were riding along a level bottom and soon arrived at a point where the bluffs came nearly to the creek, and for 2 or 3 miles the trail passed under a high cliff of perpendicular rocks, leaving just room for one horseman on the trail a one time. Across the creek was a thicket of brush, so thick that nothing could get through it. It was a dark evening and spitting snow.”

“Nathan Olney was riding back with the rear guard and when he saw the Commander (Colonel Kelly) and Indians making for the narrow trail, he spurred his horse and galloped to the front. As he passed me I heard him say, ‘What is the matter with those fellows, if they go through that hole there will not be one left to tell the story.’ He had said earlier in the evening that there was something wrong; that the Indians meant to trap us. He had to run his horse about 400 yards before he overtook the head of the column. Arriving there he called a halt, and then the command turned to the right into a bottom and went into camp for the night.”

“By this time it was dark and snowing. Two or three Indians jumped off and ran. Bill Gates, (Company B), fired two shots at them, but in the darkness failed to hit them. We still held old Pepe and about 6 others. We unsaddled and laid down for the night. The Indians were all around us and kept hallooing and talking to their Chief. Nathan Olney hallooted back in their own language and told them to go home and have breakfast ready; that we would be there; that the old Chief had gone to bed and that we did not want to be molested any more. After that all was quiet until morning.”

43: ‘55ER (Company F) Account: “Five of the Indians, “Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox”, “Santiam Jim”, “Stikkeen”, and two others whose names I have forgotten, volunteered to go to our camp, as sort of hostage for the good behavior of the other Indians, until a treaty could be entered into with the whites.”

9: Captain Davis Layton (Company H) Official Report: “Marched over to Touchet River (with Colonel Kelly). Here found his camping place, but he had left. After discussing the propriety of further searching, we decided to ***follow up the stream further***. Had gone a short distance when we saw Pee-pee-mox-mox in the distance, accompanied by about 60 armed Indians, bearing a flag of truce. On approaching him he stated that he did not wish to fight. That he wished to settle the difficulties without fighting, acknowledging that he had pillaged and destroyed the property of the white settlers there in that valley, but was willing to pay for all of it. Colonel Kelly told him that he had come there for the purpose of fighting, and if he did not surrender himself and arms that he could leave our command with his white flag. Then he might expect us to fight him. Where upon he gave himself up with ***six (6) others*** as prisoner of war.”

3: Private George Washington Miller (Company H) Account: “Colonel Kelly, after reaching the *foot of the canyon*, sent scouts in advance to look for prowling bands of Indians. *After reaching a point where the hills on either side of a deep canyon shut out the surrounding view* the advance guard in approaching the summit espied a party of **six (6) Indians** in their immediate front, advancing toward them. In an instant they were covered by the guns of the guard and ordered to halt, and one in the party, carrying a flag of truce, proved to be Peu Peu Mox Mox (Yellow Bird). A Parley ensued, but it was soon discovered that a large body of Indians were coming from the direction from which the chief had come. A signal was given and the advancing party halted, everyone of whom dismounted and stood by his horse.”

“Then the old chief asked if Nathan Olney, the Indian agent, was with them. Being told he was, he expressed a desire to see him. A messenger was sent back to report what had transpired at the front. The volunteers were halted on the hillside in plain view of the flag of truce, while Colonel Kelly and Agent Olney, with John McBean, interpreter, went forward to meet the great Walla Walla chief. When they met, Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox, in an insolent manner, demanded why an armed force had come to invade his country.”

“Colonel Kelly, answering, said he had come to chastise him and his people for wrongs they had committed. The chief talked about peace negotiations, saying he had committed no wrongs, and that he desired to live in peace with the whites. But Colonel Kelly told him of the pillaging and destroying Fort Walla Walla, the seizing of government property there, the carrying away of the Hudson’s Bay Company’s goods, the burning of the storehouse of Brooks, Noble, and Bumford, and appropriating the goods to their own use.”

“When confronted with these criminal acts he denied having done any of those, but finally admitted they were the acts of his young men whom he could not restrain. When informed that Howlis Wampum, a Cayuse chief, had testified to seeing him distribute the goods to his people with his own hands, and layout a great pile of blankets, as an inducement for the Cayuses to join with him in war against the whites, he made no reply, but finally offered to make his people restore the goods as far as they were able, and make payment for the balance.”

“Colonel Kelly explained to him that this would not be sufficient remuneration, but that his men must come in and give up their arms and ammunition. To this the old chief gave his assent, promising to come in the next day (December 6, 1855) and deliver up their arms and ammunition.”

“But Colonel Kelly believed from his deportment, that he only desired time in which to make ready for battle, therefore he instructed his interpreter to explain to him distinctly that he could take his flag of truce, and go back to his village and get ready for battle, but by doing so doing an attack would be made on his village immediately, while, on the other hand, if he and his associates chose to remain

with the army until the terms of his proposed treaty were fulfilled, his people would not be molested.”

“Thus hard pressed, the haughty old chief consented to remain as a hostage for the fulfillment of his words, assuring Colonel Kelly that none of his people would remove from their camp during the night and that he would have his people cook plenty of food for the soldiers to eat the next morning (December 6, 1855).”

“Colonel Kelly, after marching his force a short distance with Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox, saw he was being **led into the canyon**. Calling a halt, and holding a short consultation with his officers, he **moved back a short distance and camped for the night, without wood, without water and without food**, for the reason that he thought it necessary to be cautious when all the surrounding circumstances went to show there was a probability of his having all his available forces stationed at different positions **in the canyon** to cut off retreat.”

NOTE: Would this be “the canyon” of the Touchet River that Private G. W. Miller is referring to, or an off-shoot canyon of the Touchet River? If they “camped for the night, without wood, without water” tells us that they may have camped on the hills over-looking the “canyon” of the Touchet River where there was “wood and water”. For sure it was on the West side of the Touchet River somewhere, but where?!

“That evening the old chief asked permission to send one of his men that was taken prisoner with him, to his village to apprise his people of the terms of the proposed treaty, and instruct them to fulfill it. Colonel Kelly granted the request, little thinking he would ever come back, and sure enough he did not. The young Nez Perce that was taken prisoner with his understood their language pretty well, and afterwards related that when that wily old serpent instructed his messenger, he told him to tell his women to pack up in haste and go to the mountains.”

“That night the elements spread their fleecy mantel of white over the thin blankets of the volunteers. During the night, the Indians kept shouting messages **from the hill tops** to the prisoners in camp in a language but little used at that time, and not understood by the interpreter.”

NOTE: “From the hill tops”...more than likely from the East side of the Touchet River canyon.

33: Sergeant William G. Haley (Company H) Account: “On the 5th, we struck their trail and followed them on to the Touchet (River), **some 12 miles above its mouth** where we met the bold and proud old chief, Peopeomoxmox and some other Indians with a white flag, but the wa-wa did not suit the Colonel... , and we took the chief and **six (6) others** prisoner and carried them to camp at the mouth of the Touchet.”

35: Private George Hunter Account (Company I) Account: “After going some distance up the stream (Touchet River), the advance scouts (six or eight in number of which I was one), in crossing the spur of a hill over which the trail led, we suddenly met six Indians...(with) a flag of truce. We soon learned that one of them was...Peopeomoxmox. We conducted him and his fellows back till we met Colonel Kelly, who put them under guard and told the chief that we all would go up to his camp (and talk).”

“It was about night-fall as we neared the mouth of the Touchet canyon, **which was about half a mile long, and so narrow at each end that not more than three men could enter it abreast, though the bottom widened out till there was a 100 to 200 yards of prairie between the brush and the perpendicular walls.**”

“Nathan Olney suggested that we not go into the canyon for fear of a trap. We received orders to go back down the stream a short distance to a nice bottom, which afforded a good position for a fight, and camp there.”

17: Captain Narcisse Cornoyer (Company K) Account: “The captain, with two or three men, (including George Hunter), was a long way in advance, when, reaching a point on the river **where the hills on either side of a deep valley shut out the surrounding view**, he determined to ascend one of them and take observations.”

“**In doing so, as he approached the summit**, there suddenly appeared several Indians in his immediate front, advancing from the opposite side of the crest. In an instant the Captain’s gun was leveled upon the one in advance, but, before he could fire, a flag of truce was discovered in the hand of the savage; and the Captain’s companions cried out, “Don’t shoot!, Don’t shoot!...It is Peu-peu-mox-mox!”

“A parley followed; but, while it was going on the Captain discovered a band of about 10 Indians on horseback, following in the direction from which the chief had come. His gun again covered Peu-peu-mox-mox, who was told that if his followers advanced nearer, his own life would pay the forfeit; and, at a signal accompanied by a peculiar cry, the advancing party halted as if by magic, every one of whom dismounted and stood by his horse.”

“The Chief asked if Nathan Olney, the Indian agent, was with the soldiers; and on being told that he was, expressed a desire to see him. He stated he wanted no fighting; that he had determined at first to make war on the whites, but, after reflection, had concluded that it was not policy for his people to do so; that he was willing to make all amends that lay in his power for what his tribe had done; and was anxious to secure a permanent peace. The Captain sent one of his men back to report what was transpiring in front, asking Colonel Kelly to come with Nathan Olney, and meet the flag of truce party.”

“Accordingly, the volunteers (Kelly and the main command) were halted in plain sight of the little squad on the hill, while the parties indicated (Kelly and Olney), with John McBean for interpreter, went forward to meet the redoubtable Chief.”

As the conference commenced “The main body of Indians and volunteers approached the central group until all were together, the soldiers surrounding the flag party with the main force of the Indians on the outside. Finally the entire body moved on towards the Indian village, until it was discovered ***that the trail they were following passed through a dangerous canyon, when another halt was made.***”

“A portion of the troops had already ***entered the canyon***, among whom was Captain Cornoyer, who, on turning back to learn what caused the delay, found that fears were entertained by some of the officers that treachery was intended by Peu-peu-mox-mox.” ***(Colonel Kelly had thought that a trap was being laid for the volunteers, so it was deemed advisable not to venture into the ravine or canyon so late in the evening);***

“Captain Cornoyer, Captain Bennett, and others were of a different opinion; they said that treachery on his part would cost him his life...and that there would be no danger. “Let us go to their village tonight”, the Captain’s said, “and the peace he promises will be a certainty, for we will have them all in our power.” ***(The advise was not taken so they turned around for the night);***

NOTE: Here, apparently, a different of opinion was ascertained by all involved. Some of the volunteers wanted to go to the village that night, but others were not so sure which proved to be the right move by the volunteers to return back and camp. As it was learned later by the young Nez Perce boy, who was also held hostage by the volunteers, that instead of sending word to his people to make a treaty of peace, the Chief had sent an order to them to remove their women and children and prepare for battle.

“An Indian appeared on an adjacent hill who desired to talk with the chief, but would not come in; and Captain Cornoyer went out to talk with him accompanied by several, among them was John McBean, the interpreter. The interview was unsatisfactory, as the Indian seemed only desirous of being heard by the captive chief, and talked in a very loud voice. What he said was not made clear to the Captain and his associates and, concluding that all was not right, they took the loud-voiced messenger back with them as a prisoner into camp. At different times in the night, Indians came around upon the hills and shouted communications to the chief informing him that his people were becoming frightened for their own safety and his.”

NOTES

In reviewing the Muster Rolls for the 1st Regiment Oregon Mounted Volunteers, the spellings of certain participants may have been spelled wrong in the above narratives.

ABOVE NARRATIVES	MUSTER ROLLS	CORRECT NAME
Narcisse Cornoyer (Co. K)	Narcipe Connoyer	
Bennett (Co. F)	Bennet/Burnet	

KELLY'S MARCH TO THE TOUCHET RIVER

NOTE: *Just where did Colonel Kelly strike the Touchet River? When he left their camp on the Walla Walla River, he states "With the remainder, I started in a northeasterly direction so as to strike the Touchet (River) about fifteen (15) miles from its junction with the Walla Walla (River), supposing that Peu-peu-mox-mox and his warriors were encamped on that stream." First of all, was he following the Indian Trail used by Lewis and Clark in 1806 to the Touchet River or was he following the Indian Trail of the previous day to the Touchet River? He is not sure about the miles traveled as he says "about fifteen miles". If he followed the Indian Trail used by Lewis and Clark in 1806, it would of put the command about where Bass Bridge is today on the Touchet North Road 13 miles north of Touchet, Washington.*

If they followed the previous days trail, it would have put them on the east side of Nine Mile Canyon overlooking the Touchet River Valley on its west side in the vicinity of the Johnson Ranch (Dodd Ranch) of 1934 as suggested in (34).

QUESTIONS ABOUT STATEMENTS MADE BY THE OMV's TO THINK ABOUT:

1. What direction did Colonel Kelly and the OMV's take when they left the Walla Walla River? What did the "land" look like?:

2: Colonel James Kelly Official Report: "With the remainder, I started in a *northeasterly direction*..."

41: Corporal Amos Underwood (Company B) Account: "went across *the hills a little north of east*."

6: Lieutenant Charles Pillow (Company A) Official Report: "Colonel Kelly moved his command *over the hills* to the camp of Pee-pee-mox-mox."

37: Sergeant A. B. Roberts (Company A) Account: "Colonel Kelly's detachment moved *across the hills* and struck the Touchet..."

37: Sergeant A. B. Roberts (Company A) Account: "(This) morning...Colonel Kelly, in command, took about *150 men* and officers and started out across *the hills and plains*..."

2. How many miles from the mouth of the Touchet River were stated by the OMV's:

1: Colonel James Kelly Official Report: "to a point on the Touchet River *about twelve (12) miles* from its mouth"

2: Colonel James Kelly Official Report: "to strike the Touchet (River) *about fifteen (15) miles* from its junction with the Walla Walla (River)"

33: Sergeant William G. Haley (Company H) Account: "we struck their trail and followed them to the Touchet (River), *some twelve (12) miles* above its mouth"

37: Sergeant A. B. Roberts (Company A) Account: "Colonel Kelly's detachment moved *across the hills* and struck the Touchet (River) *5 or 6 miles up from the mouth...*"

3. How many miles was the "camp" from the mouth of the Touchet River as stated by the OMV's?:

37: Sergeant A. B. Roberts (Company A) Account: "*This camp was about eight (8) miles from its confluence with the Walla Walla River.*"

38: "The Murder of Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox" (location of camp): "Before the battle, the Walla Walla Indian camp was on the Touchet River *about eight (8) miles north of its mouth. (On what is now in 1934, locally known as the Johnson Ranch; the Indian camp probably on the Plucker Farm where the river bottom land widens).*"

4. When (time) and where did Colonel Kelly meet Chief Peopeomoxmox?

2: Colonel James Kelly Official Report: "*About 2 o'clock in the afternoon*, as we were proceeding towards and within *three (3) miles* of the hostile village, that chieftain, with about seventy (70) or eighty (80) armed warriors, made his appearance approaching toward us."

4: Captain A. V. Wilson (Company A) Account: "*On our arrival at the Indian camp, we found they had fled the night previous.* After consultation, the Colonel decided to follow the trail and overtake them. After marching *up the Touchet (River) some two*

(2) miles further, we saw forty (40) or fifty (50) Indians approaching.”

7: Assistant Surgeon J. R. Bates Official Report: “We reached the Touchet River, **travelled up it a short distance**. A party of sixty (60) or seventy (70) Indians were observed coming towards us.”

8: Captain Alfred V. Wilson (Company A) Official Report: “Colonel Kelly...marched with the...command in search of the camp of Pee-pee-mox-mox. **We found his camping place on the Touchet River, but he had left**. Colonel Kelly decided to **follow up the stream still further**, had gone but a short distance when we saw Pee-pee-mox-mox in the distance, with about sixty armed Indians, displaying a flag of truce.”

6: Lieutenant Charles Pillow (Company A) Official Report: “On arriving at the place designated we found they had **moved camp**,...The command then **moved up the Touchet (River) about two (2) miles**, where there was a halt ordered,...Just as the command was moving there was seen **from the hills beyond** a number of Indians approaching us at a furious gait,”

37: Sergeant A. B. Roberts (Company A) Account: “...we **went down to the stream** and watered, and **returned to the plains** and dismounted to let our horses rest and graze a little but did not unsaddle and in a few minutes we saw Indians coming over the hills about a mile away...”

“The intervening distance of about **one (1) mile** was **nearly a level plain sloping from each party towards the other**, and each party came galloping furiously down towards the other, and from the appearance of the Indians, we were going to have a fight here in the open plain.”

3: Private George Washington Miller (Company H) Account: “Colonel Kelly, after reaching the **foot of the canyon**, sent scouts in advance to look for prowling bands of Indians. **After reaching a point where the hills on either side of a deep canyon shut out the surrounding view** the advance guard in approaching the summit espied a party of **six (6) Indians** in their immediate front, advancing toward them.”

17: Captain Narcisse Cornoyer (Company K) Account: “The captain, with two or three men, (including George Hunter), was a long way in advance, when, reaching a point on the river **where the hills on either side of a deep valley shut out the surrounding view**, he determined to ascend one of them and take observations.”

“In doing so, as he approached the summit, there suddenly appeared several Indians in his immediate front, advancing from the opposite side of the crest.”

41: Corporal Amos Underwood (Company B) Account: “We rode until **about 3 o’clock in the afternoon**, when we saw a big band of Indians coming.”

35: Private George Hunter Account (Company I) Account: “After going some distance up the stream (Touchet River), the advance scouts (six or eight in number of which I was one), **in crossing the spur of a hill over which the trail led**, we suddenly met six Indians...”

5. How many “camps” were viewed by Colonel Kelly’s command before reaching the “main” camp of the Walla Walla’s?

4: Captain A. V. Wilson (Company A) Account: **“On our arrival at the Indian camp, we found they had fled the night previous.** After consultation, the Colonel decided to follow the trail and overtake them. After marching **up the Touchet (River) some two (2) miles further ...**

8: Captain Alfred V. Wilson (Company A) Official Report: “Colonel Kelly...marched with the...command in search of the camp of Pee-pee-mox-mox. **We found his camping place on the Touchet River, but he had left...** Colonel Kelly decided to **follow up the stream still further.**”

6: Lieutenant Charles Pillow (Company A) Official Report: “On arriving at the place designated we found they had **moved camp**,... The command then **moved up the Touchet (River) about two (2) miles**, where there was a halt ordered.”

9: Captain Davis Layton (Company H) Official Report: “Marched over to Touchet River (with Colonel Kelly). Here found his camping place, **but he had left.** After discussing the propriety of further searching, we decided to **follow up the stream further.**”

6. Route which Peopeomoxmox led the volunteers to his camp after being captured on December 5, 1855 and the OMV's camp that night:

2: Colonel James Kelly Official Report: "To save his people from attack, he reluctantly consented to remain as a hostage for the fulfillment of his promises, saying that the next morning he would go with us to his village and make all right. he moreover assured me that none of his people would remove during the night. I then placed a guard around him and his six (6) men. At his request, we started to go towards his village to get some beef cattle for food, while his seventy (70) or eighty (80) warriors were marching along with us unmolested. We had gone but **about half a mile (1/2 mile)** when I observed that he was **leading us into a deep and rugged ravine through which the Touchet (River) flowed**, and in which his village was situated."

"Upon consultation, it was deemed advisable not to venture into the ravine so late in the evening, lest we should be surprised by an ambushade. I ordered the command to march back about **two (2) miles** to a **more secure and open place**, where we encamped."

7: Assistant Surgeon J. R. Bates Official Report: "Pee-pee-moxmox objected, and requested the Colonel to go with him to his camp, and he would have a beef killed for us. The Colonel consented, and off we started for the old chief's camp, expecting to get a good fat bullock for our supper, as we were quite hungry. We had reached near camp when our commanding officer observed that the **Indians were leading us into a deep canyon**, where their men were awaiting our arrival, and could have surrounded us, so that it would have been very difficult for us to make our escape, as they would have outnumbered us..."

"After discovering the trap laid for us, the command turned, and **went down the river**, until a suitable camping place was found..."

37: Sergeant A. B. Roberts (Company A) Account: "**Over the ridge and a short distance further, we came to a perpendicular rock bluff about 100 feet in height. Looking off from this point you could see before you a beautiful grass plat down at the foot of the rock about 1/2 mile long and a quarter (mile) wide bordered by large Cottonwood trees, starting as it were from the rocks at the lower end of the valley or plat and leaving room for a trail at the upper end, and a mile above this valley we were told was the Indian camp where a feast was spread for us.**"

“Before us was a ***broken place in the rock bluff where an Indian could ride his pony down but a white man would surely lead his*** (it was noticed that most of the Indians had dropped behind the troops). Nathan Olney informed Colonel Kelly that he did not think it safe to go down into the valley.”

“Colonel Kelly turned around and took the Indians prisoners, only the head chief and 7 or 8 of his leading men were held. ***We marched down the bluff about a mile to where gentle and sloping land*** permitted us to go down to the river where we found a good place to camp for the night.”

41, 45: Corporal Amos Underwood (Company B) Account: “***We were riding along a level bottom and soon arrived at a point where the bluffs came nearly to the creek, and for 2 or 3 miles the trail passed under a high cliff of perpendicular rocks, leaving just room for one horseman on the trail a one time. Across the creek was a thicket of brush, so thick that nothing could get through it.*** It was a dark evening and spitting snow.”

3: Private George Washington Miller (Company H) Account: “Colonel Kelly, after marching his force a short distance with Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox, saw he was being ***led into the canyon***. Calling a halt, and holding a short consultation with his officers, he ***moved back a short distance and camped for the night, without wood, without water and without food...***”

35: Private George Hunter Account (Company I) Account: “It was about night-fall as we neared the mouth of the Touchet canyon, ***which was about half a mile long, and so narrow at each end that not more than three men could enter it abreast, though the bottom widened out till there was a 100 to 200 yards of prairie between the brush and the perpendicular walls.***”

“Nathan Olney suggested that we not go into the canyon for fear of a trap. We received orders to ***go back down the stream a short distance to a nice bottom, which afforded a good position for a fight, and camp there.***”

17: Captain Narcisse Cornoyer (Company K) Account: “Finally the entire body moved on towards the Indian village, until it was discovered ***that the trail they were following passed through a dangerous canyon, when another halt was made.***”

“A portion of the troops had already **entered the canyon**, among whom was Captain Cornoyer, who, on turning back to learn what caused the delay, found that fears were entertained by some of the officers that treachery was intended by Peu-peu-mox-mox.” **(Colonel Kelly had thought that a trap was being laid for the volunteers, so it was deemed advisable not to venture into the ravine or canyon so late in the evening).**

7. Indians shouting messages to Chief Peopeomoxmox:

3: Private George Washington Miller (Company H) Account: “That night the elements spread their fleecy mantel of white over the thin blankets of the volunteers. During the night, the Indians kept shouting messages **from the hill tops** to the prisoners in camp in a language but little used at that time, and not understood by the interpreter.”

17: Captain Narcisse Cornoyer (Company K) Account: “At different times in the night, Indians came around **upon the hills** and shouted communications to the chief informing him that his people were becoming frightened for their own safety and his.”

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Data 8 and 9 are almost identical reports!

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