

I Will Fight No More Forever

Introduction: Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce (1840?-1904) was known to his people as "Thunder Traveling to the Loftier Mountain Heights." He led his people in an attempt to resist the takeover of their lands in the Oregon Territory by white settlers. In 1877, the Nez Perce were ordered to move to a reservation in Idaho. Chief Joseph agreed at first. But after members of his tribe killed a group of settlers, he tried to flee to Canada with his followers, traveling over 1500 miles through Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana. Along the way they fought several battles with the pursuing U.S. Army. Chief Joseph spoke these words when they finally surrendered on October 5th, 1877..

I am tired of fighting.

Our chiefs are killed.

Looking Glass is dead.

Toohulhulsote is dead.

The old men are all dead.

They who led the young men are dead.

It is cold and we have no blankets.

The little children are freezing to death.

My people, some of them, have run away to the hills and have no blankets, no food. No one know where they are; perhaps they are freezing to death.

I want to have time to look for my children and see how many of them I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead.

Hear me, my chiefs, I am tired.

My heart is sad and sick.

From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever.