

Headquarters,
Fort Churchill, Nev. Ter., January 4, 1865.
Col. R. C. Drum,
Assistant Adjutant-General, San Francisco, Cal.:

Colonel: I have the honor to inclose herewith a communication which I received from R. A. Washington, a young Indian of the Pi-Ute tribe. The letter is of his own composition and penmanship. In 1859 Major Dodge, Indian agent for Nevada Territory, took young R. A. Washington, then only thirteen years old, to Lancaster, Pa., placed him in a school at that place, where he remained for three years, when Mr. Lockhart, the present Indian agent, brought him back to this State.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
CHAS. McDERMIT,
Major, Second California Volunteer Cavalry, Commanding Post.

[Inclosure.]

Fort Churchill, Nev. Ter., *December 22, 1864.*

Maj. C. McDermit,
Second California Volunteer Cavalry, Commanding Post :

Sir : I just returned from Owen's River with Captain Charley, Interpreter George Whem, and two or three other chiefs from Walker River. We did not go on our own will; the chief sent for us. While we were there we had a long conversation with the head chief, and also with the others, before leaving for our homes. They all wished peace with the settlers; not only the settlers, but with all the white people who

may traverse their country, except one tribe and a chief. This small tribe is east of the river, and I think the whites call them Panement Indians. This tribe is bound to be hostile, .and not only the whites, but with the Owen's River Indians, because they do not join with them to carry on hostility. Further, this chief, who is displeased with the whites, is a California Indian (his name is Wa-keen [Joaquin] Jim). He committed some depredation in California, and when he found out the whites were after him he got away and came among the Owen's River Indians to make himself safe. After he got well acquainted with these Indians he encouraged them to make war against the whites before they should concentrate in large numbers. He told them that by so doing they could keep them out with ease; so the Indians took his word and prepared for the war. But when so many of their warriors got killed there by the side of Owen's Lake they kind of weakened. Not only weakened, but got displeased with Wa-keen [Joaquin] Jim, and gave up all hopes for war, for they thought the soldiers were too heavy for them. Ever since this uproar the Indians have been down on him, because many of the Indians got killed that was not guilty of doing anything wrong. So this chief by so doing he got all the Indians down on him. If he had not got them into trouble or incommoded them any way he could have disguised himself. The Indians told us " all we are lacking is an interpreter," because none of them can speak the English language well enough to interpret what the chief wish to communicate to the settlers about his Indians, and to tell them what their wishes are, so the settlers could see that they were for general compromise. Some of the settlers told us the Pi-Utes were coming there to join with the Indians living there

to make war against the settlers. I told them that was not so, for the Pi-Utes know that's an impossibility for them to molest the whites. And, further, I told them the commander of Fort Churchill, who was well acquainted with all of us and nearly the whole nation, and who is thought good deal of by the Indians, could easily tell them whether the Pi-Utes were going there to molest the settlers, for we told him where we was going, so that he could tell where we were. They all requested us to visit them in spring, so that we can tell them what the Indians want and what they wish to tell the whites. If there were an agent and good interpreter there they would have no fusses and no misunderstanding at all. Since we got home we heard they had some trouble down there with the Indians, and I think that was caused by that tribe east of the said river, for when we were coming by they had come in and confiscated several horses, so the owners of the horses tracked them over in their vicinity. Also, they was where they had killed one or two of the horses; so from what I hear these Indians came over to steal some more horses, and before they disturbed the horses they killed couple men. After killing the men they tried to disguise themselves, but the whites caught them and some of the Indians living around and killed them. So by not having any interpreter they could not settle it very well. So just as I have already said, if there was an interpreter and a good respectable man who looks for the interest of natives it would be settled without any difficulty, because not every one is opposed to war—only those hypocrites listens not to what any person tells them. The country we passed through I admired very much, not only just to live in, but for agriculture and to raise cattle and sheep, &c. I saw several little valleys and creeks

cool as ice water. The scenes of the country was a curiosity to me, for I had never traversed that country before, and all the land that's fit for agriculture is well supplied with water, so that it is no trouble to irrigate. So for that reason there ought to be a treaty made with the Indians, and Indian agent stationed there to get the natives to compromise, and instruct them to civilization and quit their barbarous actions and way of their ancestors.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
R. A. WASHINGTON,
Pi-Ute Interpreter.
