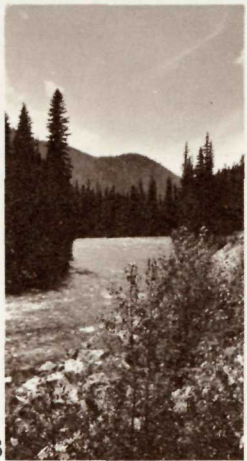
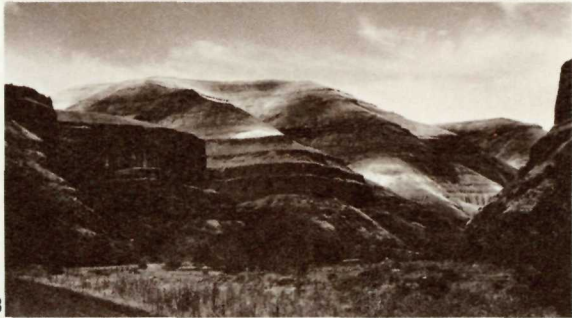




Nez Perce Country

NEZ PERCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK - IDAHO



- 1 ST. JOSEPH'S MISSION, SLICKPOO.
- 2 A STONE CAIRN ON THE LOLO TRAIL.
- 3 ROCKY CANYON, SOUTH OF COTTONWOOD.
- 4 THE STONE ARCH WHICH THE INDIANS CALL ANT AND YELLOW JACKET.
- 5 THE LOCHSA, WHICH LEWIS AND CLARK TRAVELED ALONG.
- 6 THE BEAR WHICH, IN INDIAN LEGEND, WAS TURNED TO STONE.
- 7 THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE IN PIERCE, ERECTED IN 1861-62.

This vast stretch of Nez Perce country is the setting for a new kind of historical park. Scattered over 12,000 square miles of northern Idaho are 22 historic sites (and soon several visitor centers) which preserve and interpret the history and culture of the Nez Perce Indians and of the whites who eventually engulfed them—explorers, fur traders, missionaries, soldiers, settlers, gold miners, loggers, and farmers. A joint venture between the several governments and the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee, private organizations, and generous individuals, this park commemorates an epic chapter in the history of the American Northwest.

Your guide to Nez Perce National Historical Park will be the map on the other side of this folder. The sites are briefly described in the order in which they will be reached if you drive eastward from Lewiston on U.S. 95 and return via Idaho 13 and U.S. 12, with several side trips. Some sites are merely scenic views which recall significant events; others are natural formations which figure in the religion and legends of the Nez Perce. A few consist of historic buildings that are now open to the public.

The sites of this park are presently under a variety of ownerships, and it is the will of Congress that this should continue. The National Park Service will purchase and develop only 1,500 acres of land. Another 1,500 acres will be partially controlled through scenic easements. Much time, money, and effort are needed before Nez Perce National Historical Park offers a fully integrated interpretive program. Still, there is much to see now. For detailed information and assistance, write or call the superintendent at Spalding, Idaho 83551.

Within sight of Lewiston, where the tour begins, are the snow-capped Clearwater Mountains, and far to the east is Lolo Pass which crosses the Bitterroot Mountains at an elevation of nearly 1 mile. It is a region of beguiling landforms—towering mountains, the valleys of farmers, the rolling foothills of sheep ranchers, and wild rivers surging through inhospitable canyons.

Northern Idaho can be pleasantly toured in any season. The roads through the Nez Perce country are open all year, and overnight accommodations and restaurants are readily available. There are numerous campgrounds in Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests, which cover more than half this region. For further information write to Idaho State Chamber of Commerce, Boise, Idaho 83702; for information on camping and recreation activities, write to the supervisors of Clearwater National Forest, Orofino, Idaho 83544, and Nez Perce National Forest, Grangeville, Idaho 83530.

The mountains and rivers, forests and meadows of northern Idaho have changed little under the advance of civilization. A traveler today can still see the country almost as Lewis and Clark described it a century and a half ago and gaze upon scenes and landmarks important to both the Nez Perce and the civilization which superseded them. This tour is intended to make this region and its historical places more accessible and to unfold a background that might easily evade the casual motorist.

1. COYOTE'S FISHNET,

6.3 miles east of Lewiston on the south side of U.S. 95—12, is a natural formation which to the Nez Percés resembled a fishnet and a bear. They figure prominently in a legend about Coyote, a principal character in their mythology.

2. ANT AND YELLOWJACKET,

9.1 miles east of Lewiston on the north side of U.S. 12, is a rock formation on the hillside that gave rise to another Nez Perce legend. The fighting of Ant and Yellow Jacket so annoyed Coyote that he turned both into stone.

3. SPALDING

is a town on U.S. 95 and 12, about 10 miles east of Lewiston. The Reverend Henry Spalding built his second mission, then called Lapwai, here in 1838. From 1855 to 1884 it was also the site of the old Nez Perce Indian Agency.

4. FORT LAPWAI SITE

is 4 miles south of Spalding on U.S. 95. The fort was established by volunteers in 1862 to prevent clashes between the Indians and the whites on the Nez Perce reservation, and was occupied by the U.S. Army until 1884. A year later the deserted post became the site of the Northern Idaho Indian Agency, which is still active.

5. CRAIG DONATION LAND CLAIM

is about 8 miles south of Spalding on U.S. 95. William Craig, a mountain man, settled here in 1840 on 630 acres given him by the Nez Perce, thus becoming the first permanent settler in Idaho. His grave is in their cemetery at Jacques.

6. ST. JOSEPH'S MISSION

Nine miles south of Spalding is the small village of Jacques. Turn south at Mission Road and drive 4 miles to Slickpoo. This church, the first outpost of Roman Catholic missionary activities among the Nez Percés, was dedicated in 1874. A school founded by the mission is active today.

7. WEISS ROCKSHELTER

is on Grave Creek Road, 8 miles south of Cottonwood. Archeological excavations reveal an almost continuous human occupation from about 5500 B.C. to A.D. 1400 in this cliff recess in Grave Creek Canyon.

8. THE COTTONWOOD SKIRMISHES

took place about 2½ miles southeast of Cottonwood on U.S. 95. During the Nez Perce War of 1877, a small group of volunteers, riding to reinforce a U.S. Army command nearby, was ambushed by the Indians and forced to take refuge on a low ridge until rescued by the Army.

9. CAMAS PRAIRIE

is about 8 miles southwest of Grangeville on U.S. 95. Once a vast sea of blue-flowered camas and grass, this valley was the heart of the Nez Perce country. Here each summer they gathered to dig the camas roots which were an important part of their food supply.

10. WHITE BIRD BATTLEFIELD

is 20 miles southwest of Grangeville, along U.S. 95. On June 17, 1877, among a series of low ridges about 2 miles south of the State marker, the U.S. Army and the Indians clashed in the opening engagement of the Nez Perce War. A third of the troops were killed and the rest fled in panic. But the Indians' glorious victory proved their undoing, for it emboldened them to follow a course of defiance which eventually resulted in the destruction of their power.

11. CLEARWATER BATTLEFIELD

is on Idaho 13, about 7½ miles north of Harpster. Less than a month after the decisive defeat at White Bird Canyon, the U.S. Army again fought the Nez Percés. The battle ended in a draw, but the Nez Percés decided to leave their homeland and move toward Canada.

12. FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (INDIAN)

on U.S. 12 at the edge of Kamiah, about 5 miles north of Kooskia, is the outgrowth of the first mission established among the Nez Percés by the Reverend Henry H. Spalding in 1836. The present church was finished in 1874, and many missionaries and Nez Perce pastors have preached from its pulpit. Lawyer, a famed Nez Perce, is buried in the cemetery.

13. ASA SMITH MISSION

is on U.S. 12, about 1 mile northwest of Kamiah. This pasture is the traditional location of the 1839 mission of Asa and Sarah Smith. When they left 2 years later, all missionary effort on the upper Clearwater ceased for three decades.

14. LEWIS AND CLARK LONG CAMP

is on U.S. 12, about 1½ miles north of the highway bridge at Kamiah. The sawmill on the north bank of the Clearwater occupies the site of Lewis and Clark's month-long encampment during the spring of 1806 on their homeward journey.

15. WEIPPE PRAIRIE

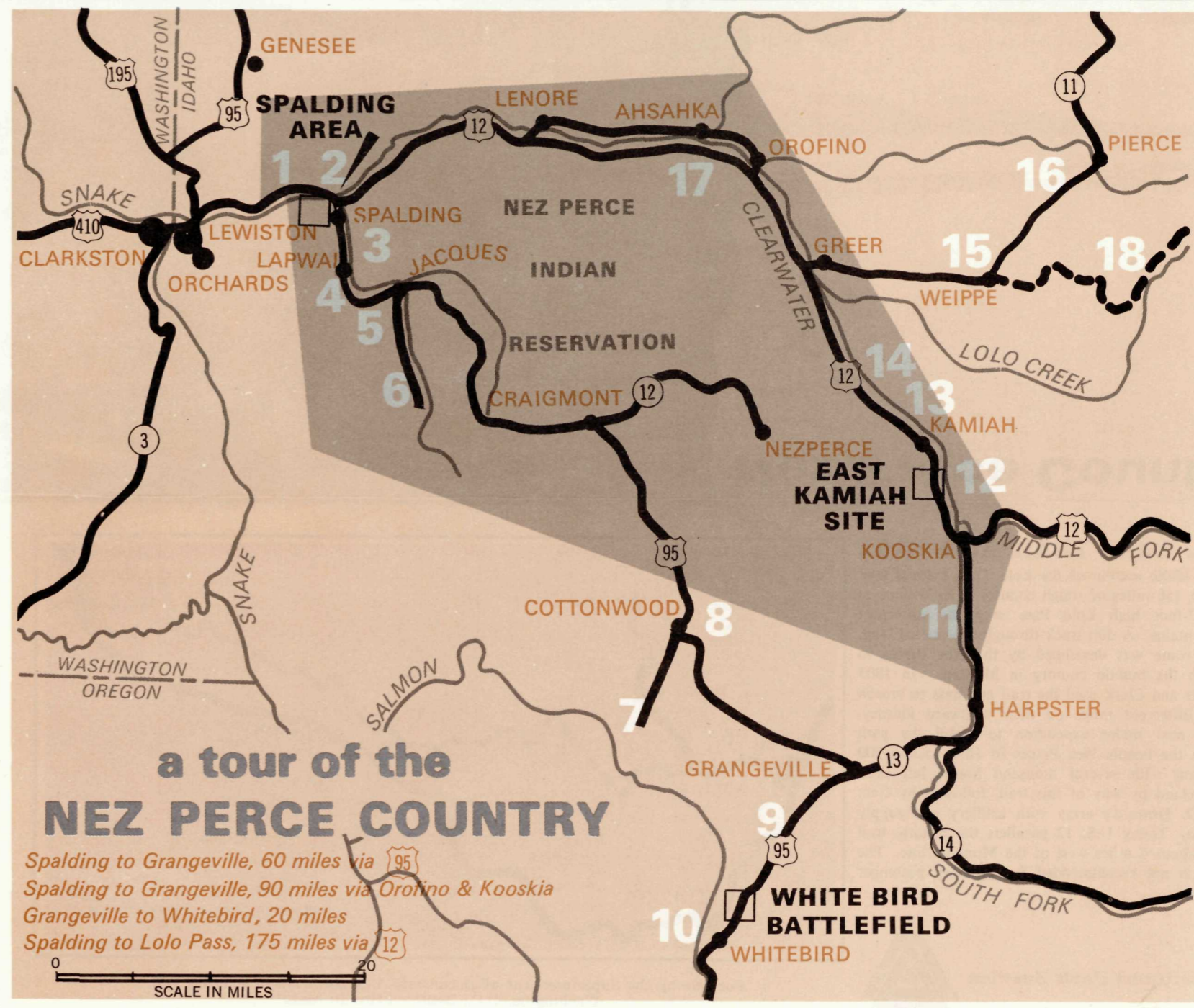
is 18 miles west of U.S. 12, on Idaho 11. For untold generations of Nez Percés this has been a favorite place to gather camas roots. When Lewis and Clark descended the Bitterroots on their way west in September 1805, they had their first encounter with the Nez Percés on this prairie.

16. PIERCE

is 12 miles northeast of Weippe on Idaho 11. The first significant gold discovery in Idaho was made here in 1860 by a prospecting party headed by E. D. Pierce. This event started the gold rush which led to a white invasion of Nez Perce lands and, within 3 years, the creation of Idaho Territory.

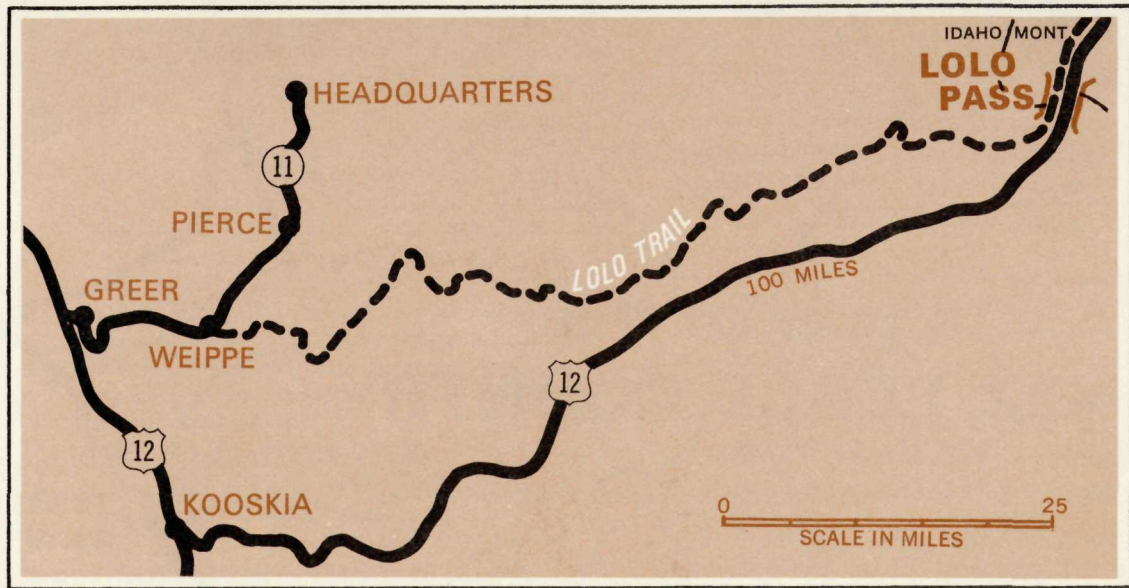
17. LEWIS AND CLARK CANOE CAMP

is about 5 miles west of Orofino in Canoe Camp State Park on U.S. 12. In the autumn of 1805 Lewis and Clark camped here on their westward journey to the Pacific. After building dugout canoes, caching supplies, and turning over their horses to the care of the Nez Percés, they proceeded on by water.



18. LOLO TRAIL AND PASS

The Idaho section of the Lolo Trail extends over some 150 miles of rough country from Weippe to 5,187-foot high Lolo Pass over the Bitterroot Mountains. A dim track through a primeval land, this route was developed by the Nez Perces to reach the buffalo country in Montana. In 1805 Lewis and Clark used the trail and pass to breach the Bitterroot range on their westward journey. The next major expedition to travel the path were the hostile Nez Perces in 1877. Some 700 Indians with several thousand horses left their homeland by way of this trail, followed by Gen. O. O. Howard's army with artillery and supply trains. Today U.S. 12 parallels the historic trail for about 4 miles west of the Montana line. The rest is not recommended for ordinary passenger vehicles.



National Park Service



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