



# NEWS



## From the Nez Perce National Historic Trail

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## **Key Figure in 1877 Events Subject of Ft. Missoula Presentation**

**MISSOULA, MT** – On the evening of July 25, 2012, at 7 p.m., visitors are encouraged to join the Nez Perce National Historic Trail, Rocky Mountain Museum of Military History (RMMM), and the Nez Perce Trail Foundation (NPTF) for a presentation on the life of 1st Lieutenant Charles Erskine Scott (C.E.S) Wood. The presentation will be held on the front lawn of the RMMM at Fort Missoula in Missoula, MT.

1st Lieutenant C.E.S Wood served as the Aid De Camp to General Oliver Otis Howard during the 1877 war and flight of the non-treaty Nez Perce, 135 years ago. Wood is credited with recording Chief Joseph's words at the Bear Paw Battle in north central Montana in October of 1877. However, this is only one small story in the life of a fascinating man who during a dark chapter in American history was one officer who rejected the fundamental assumption of American civilization's superiority. This presentation will open the window on the life and times of this fascinating figure in American history, who was a soldier, attorney, community advocate, author, and poet.

Wood will be portrayed by Jim Zimmerman, a lifetime member of the NPTF. Zimmerman is a graduate of Morehead State University and served with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Vietnam. He served in the Kentucky General Assembly for 10 years. His interest in the Nez Perce began in the early 1970's when he became associated with the Appaloosa Horse Club.

For thousands of years prior to the events of 1877 the Nez Perce were considered to be one of the friendliest native cultures in western North America, even providing valuable assistance to Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery. The Nez Perce traded and lived in peace with European settlers for more than 60 years. The Nez Perce were considered to be among the richest Indians in America because of the massive number of quality horses they possessed. In May 1877, General Oliver O. Howard met the non-treaty Nez Perce chiefs at Fort Lapwai, Idaho. Years of high-handedness and mistreatment and the prospect of losing their Wallowa homeland provoked several young warriors to vengeance. The Nez Perce flight began June 15, 1877, and intensified on June 17 after they defeated a cavalry force at the Battle of White Bird Canyon.

In 1986 Congress enacted legislation that established the Nez Perce National Historic Trail which follows the 1,170 mile route of the 1877 war and flight of the Nez Perce.

2012 marks the 135th year since the 1877 war and flight. The staff of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail in conjunction with a number of partners are hosting a website providing information about this and other events happening during the next several months to commemorate the events of 1877. We encourage people to learn more about the culture of the Nez Perce people and the significant historic events associated with the National Historic Trail.



**Note: Photo available upon request**