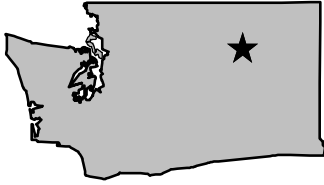


CHAPTER 5 — Colville Reservation, Colville Confederated Tribes



Nespelem, Washington
(Area: 1.4 million acres)

Game: Lacrosse

Lacrosse, North America's oldest game, is a popular game today. The Indians played lacrosse was played for recreation, to settle tribal disputes, and to toughen warriors for battle.

Players held carved wooden rackets about 3 feet long. The racket had a rawhide hoop net, between 4 to 6 inches in diameter, at one end. The ball usually was made of wood or wound buckskin.

Tribal games often involved hundreds of participants who played on massive fields where the distance between goals often ranged from 500 yards to a half-mile.

Mourning Dove (c. 1885-1936, born Christine Quintasket) was a Colville-Okanogan writer and activist who fought for the rights of Native Americans throughout her life. She helped found the Colville Indian Association and was the first woman elected to the Colville Tribal Council.

She is considered to be the first female Native American novelist. Her first book, *Cogewea, the Half Blood: A Depiction of the Great Montana Cattle Range*, was published in 1927. Her second book, *Coyote Stories*, was published in 1933. She wrote traditional stories of her tribe.



History

Numerous tribes of native people lived in the territory of Eastern Washington. When the Colville people began riding horses in the eighteenth century, their territory expanded.

The Colville probably first encountered Europeans before 1800, but there are no records of the contact. In the early 1800s, the tribe began trading furs at the Northwest Company. In 1806, the Lewis and Clark expedition visited the tribe.

In the 1820s, a man named Simpson established a fort at Kettle Falls, Washington, to take advantage of the many different tribes who fished and traded goods in that area. Fort Colville was named after Andrew Wedderburn Colville, who never set foot in the United States, let alone Washington. At Fort Colville, the Indians traded as many as 20,000 beaver, bear, grizzly, and many other pelts. Because of Colville, government officials referred to all Native Americans in this area as Colville.

The Colville had always been enemies of the Yakima tribe and sometimes engaged them in battle, but they generally tended to be peaceful. The Colville chiefs saw little sense in the wars the other tribes waged against the settlers.



Culture

The Colville were nomadic, and as the seasons changed, they followed their sources of food. In the winter, they hunted deer and other large game and had dried salmon. They also hunted small game, which was abundant in the mountains. The Indians would set up camps for fishing and for collecting nuts, roots, and berries.

In the spring, large groups of diverse Indians gathered camas and other roots in the lower valleys. In the summer and fall, many Salish-speaking people caught salmon and other fish in the Columbia River.

Like many tribes who lived in cold climates, the Colville maintained winter and summer homes. Their winter dwellings were almost completely underground. In summer, the Colville lived in cone-shaped homes constructed of pole frames wrapped with mats made from rushes. The Colville constructed sweathouses, structures that were used by men and women for religious rites of purification. The Colville practiced (and still practice) the Seven Drums and the Indian Shaker religions as well as the Indian winter Chinook Dances, the annual spring thanksgiving Root Feasts, and the memorial giveaways in honor of the deceased.



Government

The 3-million-acre Colville Reservation east of the Columbia River was established in 1872 for the Colville and other area tribes. Only 3 months after the reservation was established, the government relocated the Colville to a second reservation west of the Columbia River. The tribes on the new reservation formed the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. Twelve bands compose the Confederated Tribes: the Wenatchee, Nespelem, Moses-Columbia, Methow, Colville, Okanogan, Palus, San Poil, Entiat, Chelan, Nez Perce, and Lake. The second reservation, which is 1.4 million acres, is 100 miles northwest of Spokane, Washington.

A fourteen-member business council elected from the reservation districts of Omak, Nespelem, Keller, and Inchelium governs the Colville Reservation. Members are elected to 2-year terms. The administrative and governmental seat is in Nespelem.