



An interpretive panel at the Boi Ogoi (also spelled Bia Ogoi) massacre site. Courtesy Darren Parry.

# Voice from the Dust

## A Shoshone Perspective on the Bear River Massacre

*Darren Parry*

### **Editor's Introduction**

Darren Parry is the chairman of the Northwest Band Tribal Council of the Shoshone Nation. On November 8, 2018, at Brigham Young University, he presented this talk for the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies.<sup>1</sup>

He is working to create the Boa Ogoi [Big River] Cultural Interpretive Center, an educational center that will share the story of the Bear River Massacre.<sup>2</sup> On January 29, 1863, the U.S. Army attacked the Shoshone encamped at the Bear River, near present-day Preston, Idaho, and slaughtered 250 to 500 Shoshone people, including women and children. Public reports of this massacre were officially given by the U.S. Army and by Latter-day Saint settlers, but the Shoshone survivors also kept a history.<sup>3</sup> Parry shares that history here.

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1. A video of this lecture is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vg47Ph4LjsI&t=14s>.

2. For more information about the interpretive center, see “Boa Ogoi Cultural Interpretive Center,” <https://boaogoi.org/>; see also “‘Because It’s Sacred Land’: Shoshone Nation Chairman Is ‘on a Mission’ to Share Massacre Site with World,” *Deseret News*, September 9, 2018, <https://www.deseret.com/2018/9/9/20653205/>.

3. The details of this history were told by Sagwitch’s descendants, including Amy Hootchew Timbimboo and Mae Timbimboo Parry, to Scott Christensen, who published the history in his book *Sagwitch: Shoshone Chieftain, Mormon Elder, 1822–1887* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1999).

## The Work of Remembering

Not long after the final shot was heard echoing through the Preston valley and the final breath was taken, the work of remembering began. When the U.S. Army, under the command of Colonel Patrick Edward Connor, massacred a peaceful band of Shoshone Indians on that cold winter morning, they controlled, for a time, what was to be remembered, but not anymore. Have you ever had a memory that sneaks out of your eye and rolls down your cheek? I have these all the time when I think about the massacre at Boa Ogoi.

For thousands of years, our tribal elders would sit down with our young children and tell them stories about their people. The stories were always the same, never a word out of place. It had to be this way. It had to be accurate. Our children needed to hear it as the elders had heard it from their fathers because, as you know, nothing was ever written down. I went through this same process with my grandmother, Mae Timbimboo Parry.<sup>4</sup> She was the most gentle and kind woman that I have ever known. Her black hair and dark skin with deep creases told of a life of a caring, nurturing tribal elder who truly loved her people. She would sit for hours and tell me stories such as “How the Coyote Stole Fire” or “How the Sun Got Its Name,” and then with reverence in her tone she would relate the story of the massacre at Boa Ogoi. There is an old saying that says, “When an old Indian dies, a library burns.” This was never as true as it was about my grandmother. As I grew older and attended school, I developed a great love of history, and then I suddenly realized something: none of the stories that my grandmother told me were in our history books. But how could this be? I had always believed that historical events were an absolute. Events that transpired over time had only one conclusion. As I have gotten older, I have come to realize that history is about perspective. Whose perspective? One day I read a quote attributed to Winston Churchill: history is always written by the victors. I guess that explains why Native American histories were seldom written.

Sagwitch and his band lived like his forefathers had lived for hundreds of years. They were hunters and gatherers, and they traveled with the seasons. He was born in 1822, at the beginning of the fur-trading era, which means he never knew a time in his life without the presence of

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4. See Darren Parry, “Mae Timbimboo Parry, Historian and Matriarch of the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone: What Is Your Story Going to Be?” Better Days 2020, <https://www.utahwomenshistory.org/bios/mae-timbimboo-parry/>. Mae was instrumental in having the Battle of Bear River be renamed the Bear River Massacre in government records.

the white man. The Shoshone referred to themselves as So-So-Goi, which means “people who travel on foot.” They looked upon the earth as not just a place to live but something so special and sacred that we called her Mother. She was the provider of our livelihood.

To my native people, the mountains, streams, and plains stand forever, and the seasons walk around annually. We traveled to different areas when the game was plentiful and the seeds and berries were abundant. It was a hard way of life; my people were never more than a few days away from starvation. But it was a happy life. Every member of the tribe played an important role in its survival. This family relationship was always sacred.



Mae Timbimboo Parry, tribal historian of the Northwest Band of the Shoshone Nation. Courtesy Darren Parry.

### The Arrival of Pioneers in 1847

In the summer of 1847, Sagwitch received word that a group of white settlers was making its way through Wyoming toward the Salt Lake Valley. On July 31, 1847, Sagwitch and other men greeted Brigham Young and the first group of pioneers. Sagwitch did not meet with the prophet that day because of Young’s illness but instead met with Heber C. Kimball. At the conclusion of their meeting, Heber C. Kimball said, “The land belongs to our father in heaven, and we calculate to plow and plant it; and no man shall have the power to sell his inheritance for he can not remove it; it belongs to the Lord.”<sup>5</sup> Within months, disputes arose between the pioneers and the Shoshone over the land and the payment of rent. Chief Sagwitch’s life was about to get complicated. For years, his only thoughts had been how he was going to feed his fast-growing family and how he could best take care of his small band. Now things were different.

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5. Heber C. Kimball, *Journal History of the Church*, August 1, 1847, 2, quoted in Christensen, *Sagwitch*, 16.

Over the next few years, as more and more Saints arrived, good land became harder to come by.<sup>6</sup> In 1856, the Church sent Peter Maughan and others north to settle the Cache Valley for good. This would have a devastating effect on my people. Not long after, other Saints would arrive to that beautiful valley. In those early days, the Saints referred to Sagwitch and his band as “the friendly ones.” As more people arrived and resources started to become scarce, those early settlers began to describe us as thieves and beggars, which was probably true from their perspective. The irony in this is that the Latter-day Saint people themselves had suffered so much hate and injustice. It is hard for me to believe that they could be guilty of doing the same.

In Salt Lake City, the *Deseret News* reported, “With ordinary good luck, the volunteers will wipe them out. . . . We wish this community rid of all such parties, and if Colonel Connor can be successful in reaching that bastard class of humans, who play with the lives of the peaceable and the law-abiding citizens in this way, we shall be pleased to acknowledge our obligations.”<sup>7</sup> With this development and the use of the California and Oregon trails, which also cut through the heart of Shoshone land, our people would soon have only three options: beg for food, starve, or steal. Here were two different groups of people leading two different lifestyles.

### The Massacre at Boa Ogoi

In early January 1863, the Mormon settlers from Cache Valley and those using the California and Oregon trails made a request to the U.S. Army to put an end to the Indian depredations. Arrest warrants were issued for Chiefs Pocatello, Bear Hunter, and Sagwitch. Colonel Patrick Connor and his command of California volunteers from Camp Douglas in Salt Lake City were mustered into service.<sup>8</sup> A Mormon scout named

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6. Cache Valley, which includes Cache County, Utah, and Franklin County, Idaho, was known to settlers for its rich soil and harsh winters. When the Latter-day Saint settlements in more arid places, such as Tooele County, failed, they turned to Cache Valley. Christensen, *Sagwitch*, 24–25.

7. *Deseret News*, January 28, 1863, reported in B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century One*, 6 vols. (Provo, Utah: Corporation of the President, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1965), 5:35.

8. Colonel Patrick Edward Connor commanded the 3rd California Volunteer Infantry Regiment. He was displeased about “the military appointment that isolated him in the Great Basin. He yearned for the glory and adventure of

Porter Rockwell, who served as a guide, led Colonel Connor and his men just north of Logan, Utah, near Preston, Idaho, where Battle Creek meets Boa Ogoi, or what the white settlers called the Bear River. On the night of January 27, 1863, one of the elders of the tribe, named Tin Dup, foresaw the calamity which was about to take place. In a dream he saw his people being killed by pony soldiers. He told those in his tribe about his dream and told them to move out of the area. Some families believed Tin Dup's dream and moved, thus sparing their lives.

In the meantime, a white friend of the Indians from the nearby settlement of Franklin came to the camp and told them that the settlers from the Cache Valley had made plans to get rid of the Northwestern Shoshones and that they had sent an appeal to Colonel Connor to come and settle the Indian affairs once and for all.

Chief Sagwitch, being an early riser, got up as usual on the morning of January 29, 1863. He left his tepee and stood outside surveying the area around the camp. The hills to the east of the camp were covered with a steaming mist. The mist seemed to creep lower down the bluff until Chief Sagwitch realized that the mist was the horses' breath. The soldiers from Camp Douglas near Salt Lake City had arrived. The chief was not surprised. He started calling to the sleeping Indians. They quickly gathered their bows and arrows, tomahawks, and a few rifles. Some of the Indians were so excited that they gathered up whatever was in sight to fight with. Some picked up their woven willow winnow pans and baskets to use them for shields.

Chief Sagwitch shouted to his people not to shoot first. He thought that perhaps this military man was a just and wise man. He told his people to be brave and calm. Many of the Indians ran toward the river and dropped into the snow. They knew that they were not all guilty, but they had no choice but to fight for their lives if attacked. Some dropped into the children's play foxholes that had been dug along the river bank. Never did these grown men realize that they would be using the children's play foxholes to await real military soldiers. Colonel Connor and his men began to fire on the Indians. But what was an arrow compared to the muskets of the army? The Indians were slaughtered like wild rabbits. Indian men, women, children, and babies were slaughtered left and

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leading charges in Virginia and proving himself on the active battlefields of the Civil War." Christensen, *Sagwitch*, 47. Two months later, Connor was advanced to the "rank of brigadier general as a reward for his leadership in the Indian slaughter." Christensen, *Sagwitch*, 59.

right. No butcher could have murdered any better. Most of the action took place along the river and among the willows.

The massacre started early in the morning, according to the Indians, and lasted for hours. The Bear River, which had been frozen solid a few moments earlier, started to flow. The Shoshone people jumped into the river and tried to escape by swimming across the river. The blazing white snow was brilliant red with blood. The willow trees that were used for protection were bent down as if in defeat. The old dry leaves which had been clinging to the willows were flying through the air like whizzing bullets.

Many of our women also jumped into the river with their babies on their backs. Most of them died. One Indian woman named Anzee-Chee was chased by the soldiers. She jumped into the river and went under an overhanging bank. By doing this she was saved. She watched the battle from her hiding place at the same time trying to nurse the shoulder and breast wounds she had received. Anzee-Chee carried the scars from her wounds for the rest of her life. She would often show them to the young Indian children at Washakie<sup>9</sup> as she told of the massacre of their people. She also told of throwing her own small baby into the river, where the child drowned and floated down the river with the other dead bodies.

The Indians who were still alive called to their chief to escape so that he would be saved. Chief Sagwitch escaped with a wound in his hand, after having two horses shot from under him. Another Indian escaped by holding onto the tail of the horse Chief Sagwitch rode across the Bear River.

The cruelest killing was that of Chief Bear Hunter. Perhaps it was the cruelest death in the white-Indian struggle. Knowing that he was one of the chiefs, the soldiers shot Bear Hunter. They whipped him, kicked him, and tried several means of torture on him. Through all of this the old chief did not utter a word, as crying and carrying on was the sign of a coward. Because he would not die or cry out for mercy, the soldiers became very angry. One of the military men took his rifle, stepped to a burning campfire and heated his bayonet until it was glowing red. He then ran the burning hot metal through the chief's head from ear to ear. Chief Bear Hunter went to his maker a man of honor. He left a wife and many children behind.

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9. An Indian settlement was created in 1880 at Washakie, Utah, as a place for Indians to farm and raise livestock.

The Indian camp was vanishing right before Chief Sagwitch's eyes. Later that afternoon the field of massacre was silent, except for the cries from the wounded soldiers being carried away. The Shoshone people who had escaped watched as the wagons left the camp. As they drove off, the wagon wheels made a very mournful sound as they squeaked along the snow.

By nightfall, the Indians who had escaped were cold, wet, and hungry. There was no food to be found, for the soldiers had done a good job of scattering their food on the ground and setting fire to it. All of the tepees were burnt to the ground except one. The lone standing tepee looked as if it was made of net. This was the tepee of Chief Sagwitch and his family. After the soldiers had left, Sagwitch made his way to his tepee. He opened the flap and found his wife lying there, dead. Beside her was his infant daughter, still alive. Sagwitch ordered some others who had come with him to take the baby girl from her mother, put her into her cradleboard, and hang her on a branch of a nearby tree. He hoped that a kindhearted settler from nearby Franklin would pick up the infant girl and raise her. He knew that without nourishment from her mother the baby girl would die anyway. That young girl was picked up by a family from Franklin and was raised as Jane Hull.

The surviving Indians could not believe what had just taken place. Sagwitch was a very stunned and shocked man, stricken and sad at heart. He stood idly and mournfully gazed at the scene. He was remembering that just the day before their camp had been a happy place. He remembered the many seasons the Northwestern Shoshones had spent in and around Battle Creek on the Bear River.

At this time, Chief Sagwitch realized that there were two different worlds in which people live. One group was greedy and wanted everything. The other group wanted only to live and travel around their land as they had done for centuries before. One group made their wishes and dreams come true by making themselves the conqueror, at the expense of a defenseless people who wanted only to be left alone.<sup>10</sup>

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10. Sagwich said, "The white man is roaming all over my country and killing my game. Still I make no objection to his doing so, and all I want is to be let alone, with the privilege of making a small farm for the benefit of my people, and to be allowed to live on it in peace. I have not gone into the white man's country and intruded on him, and I do not think it is fair for him to come into mine and drive me from my own lands without any cause, and I ask the government to take the matter in hand and reinstate me and mine on our own

As news of the massacre began reaching those living in Logan and Wellsville, some of the feelings from the local Saints began to emerge. Mary Ann Weston Maughan, wife of Peter Maughan, wrote that the residents of Cache Valley regarded Connor's efforts as "an imposition of providence in their behalf" and commented that the Indians had caused so much trouble that 'patience had ceased to be a virtue.'<sup>11</sup> Henry Ballard, bishop of a Logan ward, said, "This put a quietus upon the Indians, the Lord raised up this foe [in Colonel Connor] to punish them without us having to do it. We had bore a great deal from them and still had been feeding them, yet some of the wicked spirits amongst them would stir up trouble against us."<sup>12</sup> George L. Farrell, secretary of a Logan ward, recorded in the official minutes, "We, the people of Cache Valley, looked upon the movement of Colonel Connor as an intervention of the Almighty, as the Indians had been a source of great annoyance to us for a long time."<sup>13</sup> And finally Bishop Peter Maughan, the Church authority in the Cache Valley, in a letter to Brigham Young dated February 4, soberly tabulated the number of Indians killed at the massacre and then added, "I feel my skirts clear of their blood. They rejected the way of life and salvation which had been pointed out to them from time to time . . . and thus have perished relying on their own strength and wisdom."<sup>14</sup> It may seem naive to expect the Saints in the outer reaches of this country to adhere to the policy preached by Brigham Young himself, that it is easier to feed the Indians than to fight them. So how did the people from Cache Valley come to terms with this tragic event, and how did they tell the story?

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lands, that we may live there in peace and friendship with all men." Sagwitch, August 31, 1875, quoted in Christensen, *Sagwitch*, 103.

11. Joel Edward Ricks, "Memories of Early Days in Logan and Cache County," March 29, 1924, Special Collections, Merrill Library, Utah State University, Logan, quoted in Christensen, *Sagwitch*, 58.

12. Henry Ballard, "Private Journal, 1852–1904," Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, quoted in Christensen, *Sagwitch*, 58.

13. "The Military History of Cache County," *Tullidge's Quarterly Magazine* 2, no. 1 (April 1882): 536–37, quoted in Christensen, *Sagwitch*, 58; see also Edward W. Tullidge, *Tullidge's Histories*, vol. 2 (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor, 1889), 356.

14. Peter Maughan to Brigham Young, February 4, 1863, Brigham Young Office Files, 1832–1878, General Correspondence, Incoming, 1840–1877, CR 1234 1, Church History Library, quoted in Christensen, *Sagwitch*, 58.

## Markers and Memory

Just north of Preston, Idaho, today you will find an old monument, just off Highway 91, close to the massacre site. This monument was erected in 1932 by the people of Franklin County. It was meant to tell the history of the events of that fateful day. This was a celebrated event. The whole community came together to tell their story, their histories. What the monument really accomplished was that it gave people a reason to forget. A monument strips us of our obligation to find out for ourselves what actually took place, and it tells us how the past is to be remembered.

Humans have great memories for what they want to remember. In commemorating “the battle,” you forget the uglier parts and focus on the heroism of both soldier and Saint. That is the message of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers plaque that exists there today, and that narrative now becomes the story. It is not a story about my people. It becomes a story about the brave soldiers and the Saints who took care of them. In constructing the monument, you firm up memory and you create history.

The plaque reads:

The Battle of Bear River was fought in this vicinity January 29, 1863. Col P. E. Connor, leading 300 California Volunteers from Camp Douglas, Utah, against Bannock and Shoshone Indians guilty of hostile attacks on emigrants and settlers, engaged about 500 Indians of whom 250 to 300 were killed or incapacitated, including about 90 combatant women and children. 14 soldiers were killed, 4 officers and 49 men wounded, of whom 1 officer and 7 men died later. 79 were severely frozen. Chiefs Bear Hunter, Sagwitch, and Lehi were reported killed. 175 horses and much stolen property were recovered. 70 lodges were burned. — Franklin County Chapter, Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, Cache Valley Council, Boy Scouts of America and Utah Pioneer Trails and Landmarks Association.

A plaque added in 1953 reads, “Pioneer Women: Attacks by the Indians on the peaceful inhabitants in this vicinity led to the final battle here January 29, 1863. The conflict occurred in deep snow and bitter cold. Scores of wounded and frozen soldiers were taken from the battlefield to the Latter Day Saint community of Franklin. Here pioneer women, trained through trials and necessity of frontier living, accepted the responsibility of caring for the wounded until they could be removed to Camp Douglas, Utah. Two Indian women and their children, found alive after the encounter, were given homes in Franklin. — Franklin County.”

Is this really what happened? The problem with this narrative for me is that it gives us only one point of view or one generation's perspective, sixty-nine years removed from the actual event. It is like a view from a window that has been carefully placed to exclude a whole quadrant of a beautiful landscape. You get to see only what they want you to see. The plaques also reinforce the view that Indians were savages and even went so far as to label our women and children as enemy combatants. Such words reinforce the view that violence on the frontier was a necessity for the survival of Mormon communities and show what the consequences were when both groups tried to share the same space.

But what if a plaque had been written from the perspective of the Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation? Would it read the same way? Maybe it would have said this: "The massacre of the Northwestern Shoshone Nation occurred in this vicinity on January 29, 1863. Colonel Patrick E. Connor and his California Volunteers from Camp Douglas, Utah, attacked a sleeping Indian village in the early morning hours of the day. The soldiers shot, raped, bludgeoned, and bayoneted several hundred men, women, and children to their death. The Indians fought back with the limited weapons available to them but the band was all but annihilated."

Which version of the Bear River Massacre is correct? The answer will lie in your perspective.

The events that took place on that cold January morning in 1863 have long been forgotten by most. Maybe guilt or remorse has silenced all of those who one day may have wanted to know the truth. I hope a new generation of people will have a desire to listen and to learn—not because we are looking to have things made right but because those who sacrificed so much have a God-given right to be heard. Their voices speak to us from the dust.

If you are there at just the right time in the evening, you can sit and hear the cries of our little ones calling for their mothers. Your senses tell you that you are among the spirits of more than four hundred children of that Great Spirit who created us all. You don't have to see things as they were to know that a terrible injustice had taken place. You can feel it. Someone once said, "If my pen might have the gift of tears, I would write a book and call it *The Indian*, and I would make the whole world weep." Only the most brazen soul could fail to weep when contemplating the fall of this people.



Darren Parry stands before the monument erected in 1932 at the massacre site.  
Courtesy Darren Parry.

## The Northwest Band of Shoshone after the Massacre

For the next ten years, Sagwitch and those who had survived continued to scratch out an existence. Their way of life had been drastically altered by the coming of the Mormon pioneers.

But all of that changed in the winter of 1873. Native American leaders began to have dreams and other spiritual manifestations. One night, Chief Sagwitch was visited in a dream by three men who told him of the existence of a god who existed among the Mormon people. He was told that the Mormon god was the only true god, and he must send for men who would tell them what they must do. The next day, Sagwitch traveled to Ogden, Utah, to meet with his friend George Washington Hill. Hill had served a mission to the Lemhi Shoshone, in central Idaho, some seventeen years earlier and was skilled with the language. Hill told Sagwitch that there was order in the Lord's church and that he was no longer called to be a missionary. This same exchange took place for the next two days.



Sagwitch. Courtesy Darren Parry.

A week later, George Washington Hill was called to the office of Brigham Young, who told Hill that he had a great burden upon his shoulders, and it was now about to be Hill's. The prophet then called him to once again be a missionary to the Shoshone people. As Hill arrived home that evening, there sitting on his porch was Chief Sagwitch. He told the old chief that he was once again given the power to preach and that he would now come and teach them the gospel of Jesus

Christ. He told Sagwitch to give him a few weeks to get his affairs in order and he would then come. Little did they both realize that it would be much sooner than that. Just one week later, Hill, who was a night watchman at the Ogden train station, reported to work as usual. Upon arriving to work, he was notified that there would be no train from Evanston that night because of a derailment. With no work that night, he decided to hop on a freighter and head toward Corrine, Utah.

After arriving in Corrine and waiting until dawn, he headed out on foot to find Sagwitch and his band. Just outside of town, he passed a young Shoshone on horseback, who told him that he was going to town to buy some food for a big celebration. As George continued further, he passed a second brave doing the same thing. After journeying about another ten miles, he saw in the distance a man on a horse who was leading another horse. As he got closer, he could tell it was Sagwitch. As they met, Sagwitch said that he was coming to pick up his friend, who was sure to be tired. George must have looked puzzled and told Sagwitch that he had not told anyone he was coming that day. It was then that Chief Sagwitch said to his friend, "I had a dream last night, and the Great Spirit told me that you were coming today." You see, the Great Spirit has always spoken to my people in dreams, from the time of Father Lehi and Nephi to the present day. After what Brother Hill described as the "best breakfast that a man could ever have," he commenced with teaching them about the Creation, the stories about prophets, and a modern-day prophet the Lord had raised up in our time. The very next day, George Washington Hill baptized 102 Shoshone Indians in the Bear River near Honeyville, Utah—the same Bear River where, ten years earlier, Sagwitch had witnessed almost the entire destruction of his people.

### **The Northwest Band Today**

Our conversion into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is now the story. It serves as a backdrop of who we are today and how that differentiates us from other tribes. Accepting an organized religion taught us principles of hard work and success. We were taught to farm, work hard, pay our taxes, and contribute to society. It made us better equipped to handle a changing world. Assimilation kept us off the government-sponsored reservations, where alcoholism, unemployment, drug abuse, and suicide run three to four times the national average. We have 559 members today. Our tribal office is located in Brigham City, Utah. We provide members with housing options, health care, and education. The vast majority of us live along the Wasatch Front.<sup>15</sup> We are your neighbors. We are active participants in our communities.

There are twenty-eight of our children attending universities around the country this semester. We as a tribe realize that education is the key

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15. The Wasatch Front extends roughly from Brigham City to Nephi, Utah, and is home to most of the population of Utah.

to our future. Our younger generations are now coming back to serve our people. Our chief financial officer, for example, has bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting and worked at PricewaterhouseCoopers in Boston for five years before returning home to serve his people. We have three tribal-owned companies, which help us to help our people. They also help us raise money to acquire more of the massacre site and build an interpretive center so we can protect those people who have gone before.

There is an old saying that many of you have heard: Give a man a fish, and you'll feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you'll feed him for a lifetime. Sagwitch made the decision years ago to teach his people to fish.

Being a Native American, for my people, is not an entitlement program. We have chosen a different path. We as a tribe have chosen to control our own destiny and create our own histories.

We remember and honor the past because it allows us to succeed in the future. Someone once said, "Never let your past negative experiences harm your future. Your past cannot be altered, and your future doesn't deserve the punishment." We are grateful that past negative experiences didn't alter Sagwitch's future because it would have altered ours.

The most successful Native Americans today are those who can best balance *culture and change*. We honor our culture and honor those who have gone before. They are important to us. We honor them and their traditions, but we realize that we live in an ever-changing world, and we are preparing ourselves and our youth to change and succeed with it.

### Lessons from the Massacre

The massacre at Boa Ogoi has taught me many lessons over the years.

It has taught me that bad things happen to people; how we respond to those events will determine our character and make us who we are.

It has taught me to offer unconditional forgiveness but to never forget.

It has taught me that ordinary people can effect real change. My grandmother Mae refused to accept the narrative on the plaque erected by well-meaning people in 1932, and, as a result, we now have a voice.

It has taught me that everyone has a story worthy of being told. What is your story? It is equally important.

It has taught me that as we preserve history, it is important that all views are represented and respected. The Shoshone narrative that we have today came from my grandmother, which originated from Chief

Sagwitch and his family's accounts. I am sensitive to the fact that this does not represent the families of Bear Hunter, Soquitch, Pocatello, and other Shoshone leaders. Their stories are equally important, and I am sorry that some of those stories may be lost forever.

And it has also taught me that the souls of my ancestors peer out from behind my mask of skin, and through my memories they live again. I hope we never forget where we came from.

May I close with the words of historian David Lewis, professor emeritus at Utah State University:

Ultimately the story of Bear River is their story, and in some ways we need to respect the story that they want told, as well as recognize our role in that story. History doesn't always affirm us. Sometimes history challenges us to think about an uglier past that we'd rather not have. And that's really the power and the benefit of history. It connects us to the past. It connects us to our humanity and inhumanity. And it offers us a way to move forward, especially in a circumstance like this, with the Shoshones together, moving forward in a story that connects us, not in the prettiest of ways, but to move forward to a new relationship that is a twenty-first-century relationship based on respect—respect for the truth and what happened in that past moment. That is where you get the possibility for reconciliation.<sup>16</sup>

Thank you, Redd Center, for giving my people a voice and allowing me to tell our story.

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Darren Parry is the chairman of the Northwest Band Tribal Council of the Shoshone Nation. He serves on the board of directors for the American West Heritage Center in Wellsville, Utah; the Utah State Museum board; and the advisory board of the Huntsman Cancer Institute. In 2017, he received an Esto Perpetua Award for preservation and promotion of history in Idaho. He attended the University of Utah and Weber State College and received a bachelor's degree in secondary education with an emphasis in history.

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16. David R. Lewis, interview in *Bear River*, directed by Phillip Schoen, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=knXZSi5sU9E&list=FLSwsqUzRbe1km9l2lvYbAIA&index=13>, minute 19.54.