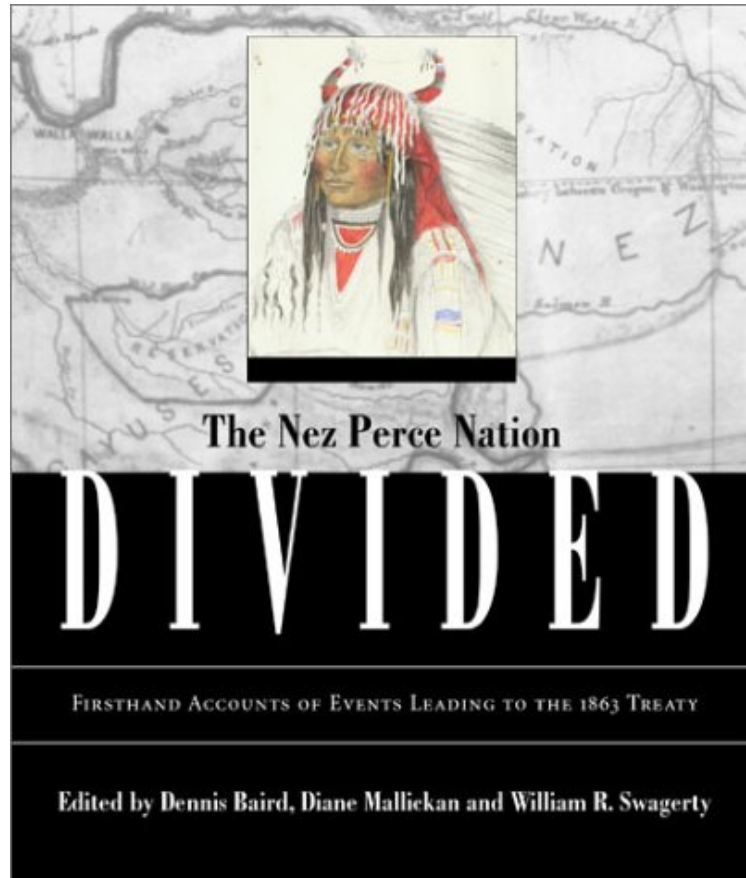


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## Nez Perce Nation Divided (Voices from Nez Perce Country)

*Dennis Baird*

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**Dennis Baird : Nez Perce Nation Divided (Voices from Nez Perce Country)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Nez Perce Nation Divided (Voices from Nez Perce Country):

The Nez Perce and their Sahaptian kin once lived in a vast but loosely described territory stretching from the Bitterroot Mountains in the east to the desert of what is now Washington and Oregon in the west. In 1805 the tribe welcomed the Lewis and Clark expedition, who remarked on their intelligence, hospitality, and the natural abundance of their land. A peaceful coexistence with the few white explorers, trappers, and missionaries abruptly ended in 1860 when the discovery of gold precipitated a rush of thousands to north central Idaho. Somewhat crazed by the dreams of instant wealth, the adventurers took little heed that they were invading the Indians' land and breaking U.S. treaties. Among the accounts is a rare Nez Perce description by Sam Lott (Many Wounds) of the 1862 murder of two Nez Perce by white miners. Dennis Baird and his colleagues scoured the country and collected the existing firsthand accounts of that time of very rapid change. White officials, officers, missionaries, and journalists were lucid, compassionate, and

surprisingly in favor of the Nez Perce. However, the prevailing national attitude toward Indians supported the wholesale "taking" of Indian land, which led to the disastrous Nez Perce Treaty of 1863 and greatly downsized their reservation.