

The Story behind “Captain Strong” and Battle Ground WA.

The origin of the City’s name comes from a “battle” that never occurred. Battle Ground owes its name to an encounter between U.S. soldiers stationed at Fort Vancouver and Native Americans who lived in an encampment near the Fort. In 1855, a group of the Indians, led by chief Umtuch, left the encampment and headed for the Cascade Mountains to the east.

U.S. Captain William Strong led a company in pursuit of the group and many believed that there would be a battle between them when they met. Captain Strong and his troops caught up with the Indians near present day of Battle Ground. After lengthy negotiations, the Indians agreed to return to the encampment. There are different versions of what happened next, but Chief Umtuch was killed. The Indians asked that they be given time to bury their slain leader in privacy and according to their traditions.

Captain Strong granted their request; he and his men returned to Fort Vancouver alone. The Indians followed shortly thereafter. Captain Strong was recognized for the return of the group, freely without battle, and the area became known as “Strong’s Battle Ground”.

