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4-6-1846

### Cyrus Turner – Heirs of. (To accompany bill H.R. no. 196)

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#### Recommended Citation

H.R. Rep. No. 557, 29th Cong., 1st Sess. (1846)

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CYRUS TURNER—HEIRS OF.

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 196.]

APRIL 6, 1846.

Mr. SAWYER, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, made the following

REPORT :

*The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the petition of the heirs and legal representatives of Cyrus Turner, deceased, report :*

The petitioners represent, that in the month of June, 1844, Cyrus Turner, late of Howard county, and State of Missouri, agreeable to a contract entered into between Talton and Cyrus Turner on the one part, and the United States, by Amos J. Bruce, Indian agent, on the other part, started from Grundy county, in said State, with one hundred and four head of beef cattle for the Sioux nation of Indians, on the St. Peter's river ; that on their route to said St. Peter's agency they were robbed of their cattle and horses, and other articles, and that Cyrus Turner, and two others, namely, Lycander Watson and W. M. Watson, lost their lives—one by the hands of the Indians, the other two in making their escape. Your committee are unanimous in the opinion that the statements made in the petition are fully proven by depositions, letters from the governor of Iowa and Amos J. Bruce, Indian agent at St. Peter's, and statements from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

The documents above referred to are hereunto annexed and made part of this report, and a bill herewith reported for the relief of the petitioners.

*To the honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled :*

Your petitioners, the undersigned Talton Turner, surviving partner of Cyrus Turner, deceased, Philip Turner and Sarah Bridges, Elenor Clark and John B. Clark her husband, Edward W. Turner and John H. Turner, Polly Demapsey, Mary Ellen Masters, and Edward W. Masters, the heirs at law and legal representatives of the said Cyrus Turner, deceased, respectfully represent that a contract was made and entered into between Talton Turner and Cyrus Turner, of the county of Howard, and State of Missouri, and the government of the United States, for supplying the Sioux tribe of Indians, on the St. Peter's, with beef ; that, in pursuance of said contract, said Cyrus Turner left the State of Missouri with a drove

of beef cattle, consisting of one hundred and four head, in time to reach their destination at the time agreed upon, viz: the first of August, 1844; that, on their route, it became necessary to deviate from the course generally travelled on such occasions in consequence of the high waters, which, during the spring and summer season, inundated the bottoms and rendered the streams impassable; that, in their route, while endeavoring to head the water-courses, said Cyrus Turner, and those engaged in driving the cattle, were attacked by a wandering tribe of Indians (supposed to be Sioux Indians,) the cattle were dispersed or killed, and three out of four of the persons driving the cattle, viz: said Cyrus Turner, Lycander Watson, and William M. Watson, lost their lives—one of them known to have been murdered, another separated and never heard of, and one drowned in making his escape.

In consideration that the contractors endeavored to perform their contract; that they were defeated by the attack made upon them as above stated, by the enemies of the United States; and because the United States could not in their own territory afford adequate protection to her citizens in the performance of their lawful duties, your petitioners would therefore humbly pray your honorable bodies to authorize, by a law passed for that purpose, to the said contractors, or their legal representatives, compensation for the losses they have sustained in the manner and by the means before detailed; and your petitioners will ever pray, &c.

TALTON TURNER,  
 PHILIP TURNER,  
 SARAH BRIDGES,  
 ELENOR CLARK,  
 JOHN B. CLARK,  
 MARY E. MASTERS,  
 EDWARD W. MASTERS,  
 E. W. TURNER,  
 MARY DEMPSEY,  
 JOHN H. TURNER.

**STATE OF MISSOURI, county of Chariton:**

Notley Bennett, of Grundy county, and State aforesaid, being duly sworn, saith: That he was employed by Cyrus Turner, of Howard county, Missouri, some time about the 1st of July, A. D. 1844, to assist him in driving a lot of beef cattle to Fort Snelling; that about the first or second day of said July they started from Grundy county, Missouri, for their destination, (Fort Snelling;) that Turner had two other hands employed besides this affiant, to wit: Lycander Watson and William Watson, who were brothers, and sons of Colonel Thomas Watson, of Linn county, Missouri. The four persons started with the cattle about the time aforesaid; that they had in the drove, when they started, one hundred and four head of beef cattle, which this affiant thinks would have weighed about six hundred and fifty pounds each, net weight; that the water-courses or streams running through the country over which they had to travel, were unusually high—almost inundating the whole country; that, in consequence of which, and in endeavoring to head as many of them as possible, and cross the others with greater convenience near their heads,

they deviated some considerable distance from the most usual route travelled from Grundy county to Fort Snelling, bearing further west than usual; that, in consequence of which, they struck the St. Peter's river some hundred miles from its mouth; that, a few days after crossing the St. Peter's, and endeavoring to reach the fort, (their destination,) they were attacked by a band of Indians, supposed to be Sioux; that Lycander Watson was shot with a number of musket balls through the head, and died instantly; that the remaining three persons, Cyrus Turner, William Watson, and this affiant, were then taken by a part of the Indians and conducted some three hundred yards from where Lycander Watson was murdered, and made to sit down and smoke with them; that, during this time, the other Indians were in pursuit of the cattle; that, soon after smoking, the Indians handed William Watson one of our whips, and directed him to go towards the cattle, as this affiant supposed, to assist the Indians in stopping the cattle; that three of the Indians started with William Watson, and this affiant has never seen or heard of said William Watson since; that the three Indians who went off with William Watson returned to where said Turner and this affiant were with the other Indians, in about two or three hours from the time they started; that then the Indians gave Turner and this affiant their horses, which they had taken from them, and by signs seemed to direct them to go after the cattle; that then Turner and this affiant went in the direction which the cattle had gone; that they found, after riding some three or four miles, that their horses were entirely broken down and useless, the Indians having been riding them after the cattle some three or four hours, apparently under a hard strain all the time; that, consequently, he (Turner) and this affiant abandoned their horses, thinking they could make better speed without them in escaping from the Indians; that the Indians, on first approaching the four persons who were driving the cattle, took from them their money and the greater portion of their clothes; they took from this affiant seven dollars in cash, and some cash from Turner and the two Watsons—this affiant does not know what amount; that the Indians had killed a considerable number of the beef cattle before starting Turner and this affiant on their horses; that Turner and this affiant travelled on foot some seven or eight days, when, in attempting to swim a small river or creek, Turner was drowned; that this affiant then travelled alone until the fourth day after Turner was drowned, when he fell in with friendly Indians, who took care of him and relieved his necessities as far as they were able; that, after they were attacked by the Indians, and while Turner and this affiant were travelling on foot together, Turner suffered greatly from a severe wound on his head, caused by a blow given him by one of the Indians with a gun. At the time they were attacked by the Indians they had one hundred head of the beef cattle; they had previously killed four head for provisions; and further this affiant saith not.

his  
 NOTLEY × BENNETT.  
 mark.

STATE OF MISSOURI, county of Chariton:

This day personally came Notley Bennett before me, the undersigned, judge of the circuit court for the county aforesaid of the eleventh judicial

circuit for the State of Missouri, and made oath that the facts set forth in the above affidavit are true.

Given under my hand this 12th day of February A. D. 1845.

JAMES A. CLARK.

STATE OF MISSOURI, *county of Chariton :*

Thomas Watson, of Linn county, and State aforesaid, being duly sworn, saith, that some time in the month of June, A. D. 1844, he was employed by Cyrus Turner, to assist him (Turner) in purchasing and collecting beef cattle, for the purpose of fulfilling a contract which he (Turner) said he had made for furnishing beef for the Sioux nation of Indians, on the St. Peter's river; that he, Watson, did assist said Turner in purchasing and collecting about one hundred and four head of beef cattle; that said Turner started with the drove from the county of Grundy, and State aforesaid, about the first day of July, A. D. 1844; that said cattle would have weighed, on an average, about six hundred and fifty pounds each, net weight; that said Turner had in his employ in the purchasing and collecting said drove of cattle, three hands, two besides this affiant, for the term of about one month previous to his starting with said drove for St. Peter's; that said Turner was to pay to each hand thus employed thirty dollars per month; that said Turner employed three hands to assist him in driving said cattle to St. Peter's, to wit: Lycander C. Watson, William M. Watson, and a Mr. Bennett; said Turner was to pay the said two hands, the Messrs. Watsons, thirty dollars per month each, for the time they might be necessarily detained from home on said trip. This affiant does not know what were the terms of the contract between Turner and Bennett. That the said above-named three hands started with the drove about the first day of July, as above stated, in company with said Turner, since which time this affiant has not seen either of them except Mr. Bennett; that when they started they were all four on horseback; this affiant knew three of the horses, which were worth about one hundred dollars each, including the saddles and bridles—the other horse (rode by Mr. Bennett) this affiant was not acquainted with, it looked to be a good horse; that the outfit for the trip, provided by said Turner, including camp equipage, provisions, &c., was worth about fifty dollars; this affiant does not know precisely what amount they cost said Turner; that said Turner had with him, when he started, a surveyor's compass, which was worth about sixty dollars; that said Turner had with him, when he started, some money—this affiant does not know the precise amount, but thinks it between one hundred and one hundred and fifty dollars; that the two Watsons had about fifteen dollars between them; that the two hands, Lycander C. Watson and William M. Watson, were the sons of this affiant. Further this affiant saith not.

THOMAS WATSON.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, the undersigned, judge of the eleventh judicial circuit of the State of Missouri, this sixth day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty-five.

JAMES A. CLARK,

*Judge of the eleventh Judicial Circuit, Missouri.*



*Indian outrages.*—The following letter furnishes an authentic account of outrages committed by a band of Sioux Indians on a party of American citizens, of which we had some particulars a few days since :

“TRAVERSE DES SIOUX, August 26, 1844.

“DEAR SIR: It becomes my duty to inform you that on Saturday evening I was sent for by Sleepy-Eyes, a Dacotah chief, whose camp is now at Swan lake, about twenty miles distant from this place, to see an American, who had come to them in very distressed circumstances. I found the young man reduced to the shadow of a man by famine, and brought him home with me this morning. His name, he says, is Nolley Bennett. Some eight weeks, or more, since, he says, he and two other young men started with a Mr. Turner, of Glasgow, Missouri, to assist in bringing a drove of 104 cattle to the garrison, of which you have the command. He says they crossed the St. Peter’s river, between this and Petit Rochelle, thinking it to be Turkey river, and pursued a northwest course until thirteen days ago, when they were met by a party of Dacotah Indians, who, it seems, were out on a war expedition, from lake Traverse. The result of this meeting was, that they took from them their horses, guns, money, and clothing, to shirt and drawers, vest and hat; killed one and beat the remainder. They killed also a number of the cattle—Bennett thinks nine—the remainder were scattered abroad. Indians then mounted the horses of their prisoners and slain, and, taking one of the young men, went to bring back the cattle, but they did not succeed—the young man being permitted to make his escape. They then sent the said Bennett and Turner, on horseback, after the cattle, who soon left their horses as unable to travel, and made their escape by the way which they had gone. Bennett says he travelled with Turner four days, when they came to a stream which was too deep to wade; they were both then weak, having had nothing to eat for three days; Turner could not swim—Bennett attempted to swim with him on his back, but could not succeed, and Turner, the owner of the cattle, was drowned—Bennett came out alive. Two evenings before this, he had seen the cattle not far from the trail made when going, evidently coming this way. This was two days after they made their escape from the Indians. Turner was drowned four days after that event. After he left Turner, Bennett travelled five or six days, and then came in sight of the Indian lodges of Sleepy-Eyes and others. He hesitated whether to go to them or not, but concluded it was only death; if he went not, he must shortly die of famine; and if he went, he supposed they would kill him. He chose the latter. But they received and treated him after the manner of the good Samaritan of the great Teacher. They did only what was their duty to do; but gold medals have been, latterly, given by the Queen of England, in circumstances where they were not more deserved than in the present.

“But what will the United States government do with Indians who commit such outrages? They say they thought they were Red river people. But they could not have had any conviction of that kind. Bennett says they were with them probably as much as three hours before they killed the man. In the meantime they were told by signs and a map of the country, where they were from, and where they had wished to go.

“It seems to me that the garrison, which is kept up at no small expense

to government, ought to be able to do something in this case, which will have a tendency to protect life and property in future. As it regards the cattle, your connexion with them is only a pecuniary affair, and perhaps, none at all. I think, however, that they will be within fifty miles of this place in a few days, and might, in that case, be secured with a little trouble.

Yours, truly.

"We learn that instructions were sent from here on the 5th inst., for the dragoons from Fort Atkinson, and the infantry from Fort Snelling, to march into the country of the Sissitons, to apprehend the murderers."

I, Notley Bennett, of Grundy county, Missouri, do hereby certify that I hired myself to Cyrus Turner, of Howard county, Missouri, on the 7th day of July last, to assist him in carrying a drove of cattle to St. Peter's or Fort Snelling, on the Mississippi river, for the Sioux Indians. The drove of cattle were purchased by Mr. Turner, in Grundy county, Missouri. He started with one hundred and four head of cattle, from Grundy county, and I suppose they would average between six and seven hundred pounds. The company had frequent conversations in relation to the probable average of the drove, and we all supposed they would average between six and seven hundred pounds. The printed statement herewith attached is substantially true, and is made part of this certificate. It was my express understanding from Mr. Turner, that the cattle were for the Sioux Indians at Fort Snelling, and that the cattle were to be delivered to Col. Bruce, who, I understand, is the agent of the Sioux Indians.

Given under my hand this 25th day of September, 1844.

NOTLEY <sup>his</sup> + BENNETT.  
mark.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 25th day of September, 1844.

JAS. M. SEXTON, J. P.

Articles of agreement, made and concluded the first day of June, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and forty-four, by and between Amos J. Bruce, Indian agent, for and on behalf of the United States, of the first part, and Talton and Cyrus Turner, of Howard county, and State of Missouri, of the second part, witnesseth:

1st. That the said Talton and Cyrus Turner, of the second part, for and in consideration of the stipulations hereinafter mentioned, promise, agree, and bind themselves by these presents, to furnish and deliver to the said party of the first part, at the St. Peter's agency, on the upper Mississippi, one hundred head of beef cattle, sound, and in good condition, for the use of the Sioux Indians, between this date and the first day of August next ensuing; the weight of said cattle, on the hoof, to be determined by appraisers who shall be mutually chosen by the above named parties, and the expenses of said appraisement to be borne by the party of the second part.

2d. That the said Amos J. Bruce, Indian agent, of the first part, for and on behalf of the United States, promises and agrees to pay to the said

Talton and Cyrus Turner, of the second part, at the rate of two dollars and ninety cents (\$2 90) per hundred pounds for said cattle, on their, the said party of the second part, fully complying with the first article of this agreement. The payment to be made either at St. Louis or at St. Peter's, at the option of the party of the first part.

In testimony whereof, the parties have hereunto affixed their hands and seals the day and year first above written.

Witness.

(Done in triplicate.)

AMOS J. BRUCE, *U. S. Indian Agent.* [SEAL.]

TALTON & CYRUS TURNER. [SEAL.]

OFFICE SUPERINTENDENT INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*St. Louis, June 10, 1844.*

SIR: Mr. Jas. Glasgow has this moment handed me a packet from you, containing the contracts and bonds forwarded for signature under cover of mine of the 1st instant. I regret to find an irregularity in the signature to the contracts, which makes it necessary to return them for correction. You will perceive that the contracts run in the name of Talton & Cyrus Turner, conformably to the bid; of course, it becomes necessary that both should sign them. Will you be pleased to have Mr. Cyrus Turner sign opposite the third seal, and to have his signature witnessed? The bonds are correct, with the exception that your name has not been witnessed. I have attested the signature of the Messrs. Glasgow. Will you do me the favor to have yours witnessed above my name? I regret to give you so much trouble, but you will see that it is unavoidable. Be pleased to send down the papers now enclosed as soon as practicable.

With great respect, I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN HAVERTY,  
*Clerk Indian Office.*

TALTON TURNER, Esq.,  
*Glasgow, Mo.*

OFFICE SUPERINTENDENT INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*St. Louis, July 15, 1844.*

A triplicate of the contract, for the delivery of beef cattle at St. Peter's, has just been returned to me by Major Bruce, and which, for your satisfaction, I herewith enclose, in order that you may sign it, and retain it for your own use.

With regard to your request, that Major B. should not be too exacting as to the time of delivery, he says: "You may say to the contractor, if you see him, that if the cattle arrive near the time, I shall not be very particular as to the very letter of the bond."

With great respect, I am, gentlemen, your most obedient servant,

JOHN HAVERTY,  
*Clerk Indian Office.*

MESSRS. TALTON & CYRUS TURNER,  
*Glasgow, Mo.*



WAR DEPARTMENT,  
Office of Indian Affairs, December 17, 1845.

SIR: The petition and accompanying papers, left by you at this office, having reference to the claim of Talton Turner and others for remuneration for cattle destroyed and dispersed, and money and clothing taken by a band of Sioux Indians, in the summer of 1844, I have the honor, herewith, to return.

Along with them I likewise transmit copies of the reports of his excellency John Chambers, late governor and superintendent of Indian affairs of Iowa, dated 3d September and 30th November, 1844, with copies of their enclosures; and, also, the copy of a letter from James Glasgow, esq., of the 19th September, as they all have an important bearing upon the subject.

I doubt not but that Congress will find in the facts and circumstances detailed in this case grounds sufficient to justify it in extending the relief sought for by the claimants.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

W. MEDILL.

Hon. S. PRICE,  
House of Representatives, Washington.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, BURLINGTON, IOWA,  
September 3, 1844.

SIR: I send you enclosed a letter from Colonel A. J. Bruce, United States Indian agent at St. Peter's, dated 30th ultimo, together with the copies therein referred to of letters from the reverend S. R. Riggs, a missionary at Traverse des Sioux, giving an account of a murder and outrage committed by a party of Sioux upon some white men driving cattle to St. Peter's under a contract with Colonel Bruce. This murder and outrage ought to have been promptly looked into, and the offenders taken into custody by the military.

Lieutenant Colonel Wilson's requisition for the dragoons was very proper, for it would have been useless to attempt to arrest them with infantry. Colonel Bruce delivered me these papers yesterday, on his way to St. Louis, and informed me that he was the bearer of Colonel Wilson's letter to Colonel Davenport, commanding at Fort Crawford, requesting the aid of the dragoons from Fort Atkinson, and that Colonel Davenport had thought proper to refer the subject to the commanding officer of the military district at St. Louis; and that he (Colonel Bruce) was the bearer of his letter to Colonel Kearney. This delay will probably defeat all hope of getting hold of the offenders. I would have requested Major Dearborn, commanding at Fort Atkinson, to send a detachment to the aid of Colonel Wilson; but as Colonel Davenport has, on a former occasion, chosen to countermand the movement of troops acting under my requisition, made under the instructions of the department, without, as far as I am informed, the slightest disapprobation of his superiors, I shall with great reluctance make any requisition upon any portion of his command; and especially as I am not disposed, (even if it were practicable,)

to comply with his demand that, in calling for his co-operation, I shall refer him to the particular law under which I make the requisition.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN CHAMBERS.

T. HARTLEY CRAWFORD, Esq.,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington.*

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE, BURLINGTON, IOWA,  
November 30, 1844.

SIR: I send you enclosed a copy of a letter just received from Colonel Bruce, Indian agent at St. Peter's, reporting the return of the expedition sent in pursuit of the Sisseton Sioux who robbed and murdered a white man last summer. I deem it unnecessary to send a copy of the notes of Lieutenant Selden, mentioned by Colonel Bruce, as they contain nothing but a diary of the movements, encampments, &c., of the detachment, and I presume Colonel Wilson has made a full report to the War Department.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN CHAMBERS.

T. HARTLEY CRAWFORD, Esq.,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington.*

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ST. PETER'S AGENCY, IOWA TERRITORY,  
November 2, 1844.

SIR: I have the honor to report that the expedition under the command of Lieut. Col. Wilson, of the 1st infantry, has safely returned to their post, after accomplishing the object of their march. The chiefs having surrendered four prisoners and promised to bring down and deliver the others in the spring, (the cause of their not being given up with the others is that they had gone towards the Missouri river after the buffalo,) the colonel thinks that the chiefs will certainly bring down the three they promised to deliver to him in the spring. Colonel Wilson speaks in high praise of the conduct of the chiefs and principal men of the upper Sioux that he met with, they having complied with every requisition that the colonel made.

I fully concur in opinion with the colonel that the expedition to the upper country will have a decidedly good effect upon the conduct of the Indians in that part of the Territory. They have long expressed the opinion that troops could not be sent to their country; they now know that they can, and that in a short time. The Indians did not expect to see troops up before next spring, and were consequently much astonished to see them there this fall.

I send you the notes of Lieutenant Selden, taken during the journey up and back to this place, which will give you much information as to the route pursued, and the nature and difficulties experienced by the troops on the route. The prisoners made their escape from the party on their way down, on the night of the 18th of October, while encamped at Beaver river.

The cattle, I am sorry to say, will, I fear, prove a total loss, as not one

has been recovered, and but a very few have been seen by any white person, and they were so wild that they could not be approached nearer than a half mile.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
 AMOS J. BRUCE,  
*U. S. Indian Agent.*

His Excellency JOHN CHAMBERS,  
*Supt. Indian Affairs, Burlington, Iowa.*

ST. PETER'S AGENCY, IOWA TERRITORY,  
 August 30, 1814.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith two communications from the Rev. S. R. Riggs, a missionary of Traverse des Sioux, giving a detail of the murder of one, and the brutal treatment of other, American citizens, who were engaged in bringing a drove of cattle to this agency for the use of the Sioux Indians, under a contract with me for the delivery of one hundred head of cattle on or before the 1st day of August. It seems that they lost their way, and crossed the St. Peter's river about one hundred and twenty or thirty miles above this place, mistaking it for Turkey river.

On the receipt of Mr. Riggs's letter I made a requisition on the commanding officer for a force sufficient to arrest and bring down to this place the perpetrators of the outrage. Colonel Wilson, who is in command, deeming the force that could be dispatched with safety too small, has called on the colonel of the regiment to dispatch the company of dragoons stationed at Fort Atkinson to this place, where they will be joined by one or more companies of infantry, with sufficient rations and means of transportation as will enable them to make a successful demand of the party, and either arrest them or punish the guilty, if they should refuse to surrender. The letter of Mr. Riggs to the commanding officer gives in detail all the information received.

Upon the receipt of Mr. Riggs's letter to me, I made arrangements and shall dispatch four competent men to try and secure the cattle remaining, and bring them to this place. The party will leave in a few hours for Traverse des Sioux, and I hope they will be able to secure the greater part of the cattle, and gain some intelligence of the young man that is still missing.

The party of Sioux who committed the outrage were from lake Traverse, and only a short time previous had been attacked by a party of half-breeds from Red river, and had eight killed and two taken prisoners, which they no doubt will offer as an excuse for the outrage on the Americans.

I have the honor to be your excellency's most obedient servant,  
 AMOS J. BRUCE,  
*U. S. Indian Agent.*

His Excellency Gov. JOHN CHAMBERS,  
*Supt. Indian Affairs, Burlington, Iowa.*

TRAVERSE DES SIOUX, August 26, 1844.

DEAR SIR: It becomes my duty to inform you that on Saturday evening I was sent for by Sleepy Eyes, a Dacotah chief, whose camp is now at Swan lake, about 20 miles distant from this place, to see an American who came to them in very distressed circumstances. I found the young man reduced to the shadow of a man by famine, and brought him home with me this morning. His name, he says, is Notley Bennett; some 8 weeks or more since he says he and two other young men started with a Mr. Turner, of Glasgow, Missouri, to assist in bringing a drove of 104 cattle to the garrison of which you have the command. He says they crossed the St. Peter's river between this and Petit Rochelle, thinking it to be Turkey river, and pursued a northwest course until 13 days ago, when they were met by a party of Dacotah Indians, who, it seems, were out on a war expedition, from lake Traverse. The result of their meeting was, that they took from them their horses and guns, and money and clothing to shirt and drawers, vest and hat, killed one and beat the remainder; they killed, also, a number of the cattle, Bennett thinks nine; the remainder were scattered abroad. The Indians then mounted the horses of their prisoners and slain, and, taking one of the young men, went to bring back the cattle, but did not succeed—the young man being permitted to make his escape. They then sent said Bennett and Turner, on horseback, after the cattle, who soon left their horses as unable to travel, and made their escape by the way which they had gone. Bennett says he travelled with Turner four days, when they came to a stream which was too deep to wade. They were both then weak, having had nothing to eat for three days. Turner could not swim. Bennett attempted to swim with him on his back, but could not succeed; consequently Turner, the owner of the cattle, was drowned. Bennett came out alive. Two evenings before this, he had seen the cattle not far from the trail they made when going, evidently coming this way; this was two days after they made their escape from the Indians. Turner was drowned four days after that event. After he left Turner, Bennett travelled five or six days, and then came in sight of the Indian lodges of Sleepy Eyes and others; he hesitated whether to go to them or not, but concluded it was only death. If he went not he must shortly die of famine, and if he went he supposed they would kill him. He chose the latter. But they received him and treated him after the manner of the good Samaritan of the great Teacher. They did but their duty; but gold medals have been lately given by the Queen of England in circumstances where they were not more deserved than in the present.

But what will the United States government do with Indians who commit such outrages? They say they thought they were Red river people; but they could not have had any conviction of that kind. Bennett says they were with them probably as much as three hours before they killed the man. In the meantime they were told by signs and a map of the country where they were from, and where they wished to go. It seems to me that the garrison, which is kept up at no small expense to government, ought to be able to do something in this case which will have a tendency to preserve life and property in future.

As regards the cattle, your connexion with them is only a pecuniary affair, and perhaps none at all. I think, however, that they will be within

50 miles of this place in a few days, and might in that case be secured with a little trouble.

Yours, truly,

S. R. RIGGS.

To the COMMANDING OFFICER, *Fort Snelling, St. Peter's.*

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TRAVERSE DES SIOUX, *August 26, 1844.*

DEAR SIR: You will probably hear that the Lake Traverse Indians killed one, and brutally treated the remainder of the men who were taking cattle to the garrison at Fort Snelling. I have written a pretty full account of this sad affair, as related by the only survivor, probably, to the commanding officer of the garrison; to which I refer you for the particulars, as I write now in haste. The young man is now with us, where he will remain until able to proceed further.

I think Istarba, ("Sleepy Eyes,") and his party, who are now out at Swan lake, on account of the kindness with which they received and treated this famished young man, ought to receive some presents from the government.

In reference to the party committing these outrages, I hope your course will be directed by wisdom. Something ought to be done to make life and property more secure.

Yours, truly,

S. R. RIGGS.

Col. A. J. BRUCE,  
*Indian agent, St. Peter's.*

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ST. LOUIS, *September 19, 1844.*

SIR: Some time last spring, proposals were invited by Major Bruce for furnishing beef, (alive,) at some of the stations designated by him, for Indian subsistence, &c. I, acting as the agent of Talton Turner and Cyrus Turner, took the contract for them, and subsequently became their security. They purchased the cattle, and on their way out were met by a party of Sioux, and one of their men killed; the others stripped nearly naked and whipped severely, (as reported.) Cyrus Turner was afterwards drowned in crossing a stream. Bennett, one of the men, and the only one who has been able to get into the garrison, was much reduced by starvation before he got in; the Indians having robbed them of every thing they had except their shirts and drawers. The Indians killed part of the cattle, and dispersed the balance, and we are in hopes Major Bruce may have been able to obtain a part of them again, as we are informed he had sent out men to try and get them.

Mr. Talton Turner is now, and has been confined to his bed for several years, and is unable, himself, to give any assistance in this business, and hopes that the department will not require a fulfilment of his contract, or a forfeiture of his bond, under the above circumstances.

Will you be so kind as to lay this matter before the honorable Secretary



of War for his consideration, and advise me of the result at your earliest convenience?

Very respectfully,

JAMES GLASGOW.

T. HARTLEY CRAWFORD, Esq.

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WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Office Indian Affairs, January 22, 1846.*

SIR: Your letter of the 18th instant, enclosing the papers in the case of Cyrus Turner and others, for cattle taken and dispersed by a band of Sioux Indians, has been received, and, in answer to your inquiries, I have the honor to state—for the information of the Committee on Indian Affairs—that this office possesses no other evidence, in reference to the exertions made for the recovery of the lost property, than what is contained in the letters of the Indian agent, Colonel Bruce, copies of which are found among the papers submitted; that the band of Sioux who committed the outrage are called the North Sissetons or Lake Traverse Indians, and that they are not entitled to participate in any of the benefits of the annuities secured to, what is commonly termed, the "Sioux of Mississippi," or Medawahkanton band. They follow the chase for a subsistence, and roam over the country on the Chippewa border on Red river of the north and its tributaries, and are at peace with the United States.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

W. MEDILL.

Hon. WILLIAM SAWYER,

*Of the Committee Indian Affairs, H. R.*

The papers enclosed by you are herewith returned.