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Suppressing Indian hostilities in Utah. Letter from the Secretary of War transmitting report of expenses for suppressing Indian hostilities in Utah

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SUPPRESSING INDIAN HOSTILITIES IN UTAH.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR

TRANSMITTING

Report of expenses for suppressing Indian hostilities in Utah.

MARCH 26, 1869.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

APRIL 5, 1869.—Reported back, committee discharged, and referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.

JANUARY 20, 1870.—Ordered to be printed and recommitted to the Committee on Military Affairs.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *March 25, 1869.*

The Secretary of War has the honor to submit to the House of Representatives the accompanying communication from the adjutant general of the Territory of Utah, inclosing a statement of the expenses incurred by the Territory in the suppression of Indian hostilities during the years 1865, 1866, and 1867.

JNO. A. RAWLINS,
Secretary of War.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, UTAH TERRITORY,
Salt Lake City, February 9, 1869.

I have the honor herewith to forward to you the accounts of expenses incurred by the Territory of Utah in the suppression of Indian hostilities in said Territory during the years 1865, 1866, and 1867.

The seat of this war has been chiefly in San Pete, Sevier, and Pi-Ute Counties, and it may be necessary to give a brief description of that part of the Territory to enable you to more readily understand the situation of those inhabitants, and the necessity that existed for a strong military force constantly in the field during the season of hostilities.

San Pete Valley is one hundred and twenty miles south of this city, and extends southward some sixty miles, and is from five to fifteen miles wide, surrounded by lofty and rugged mountains, from which streams of water flow down into the valley at intervals of from six to ten miles. On these streams, and near the base of the mountains, the settlements and towns are mostly located. There are in this valley, which was first

settled in 1849, nine large and, until the war, flourishing settlements, viz.: Fountaingreen, Moroni, Coalville, Fairview, Mount Pleasant, Springtown, Fort Ephraim, Manti, and Fort Gunnison, each with a population of from five hundred to two thousand inhabitants. The San Pete River runs through the valley from north to south, and empties into the Sevier River below Fort Gunnison. Near this point Sevier County joins San Pete and extends directly south some sixty miles up the Sevier Valley. In Sevier County there was, when the war commenced, four thriving settlements, viz., Selina, Glenwood, Richfield, and Alma, with a population of about fifteen hundred. Pi-Ute County lies directly south of Sevier. In these, as in San Pete County, the settlements are located on the streams near the base of the mountains, which are high and very rugged.

The war commenced on the tenth day of April, 1865, when a band of San Pete Utes, led by Black Hawk, killed Peter Ludwickson near Manti, San Pete County, and on the following day, Barney Ward and Mr. Lambson, near Selina, Sevier County, and drove off a large herd of stock up the adjoining cañon. A company of cavalry was immediately mustered into service, gave them chase, and when about ten miles up the cañon received a deadly fire from the Indians from behind the rocks in an almost impregnable position. From the high and rugged mountains on both sides they could not be flanked. Two of our men were instantly killed and two wounded, and the company was obliged to fall back, until on the arrival of additional forces they again started in pursuit, and traveling one hundred miles over an extremely rugged country, overtook them near Fish Lake, gave them battle, killing and wounding several of the Indians, but the stock had been driven on towards the Elk Mountains and could not be recovered. The war had now commenced, and all overtures of peace were peremptorily refused by the Indians. His excellency J. D. Doty, then governor of the Territory, and Colonel O. H. Irish, then superintendent of Indian Affairs, were applied to for aid. The superintendent requested the military authorities at Camp Douglas, in this city, to send a sufficient force to protect the settlers and to arrest the offending Indians. This was declined. See annual report of O. H. Irish, superintendent of Indian Affairs, Utah Territory, Sept. 9, 1865, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C., published in the "Report of the Secretary of the Interior," 1865-'66, page 314, of which the following is an extract:

"During the past year the Indians have been peaceful, with the exception of the difficulties with a band of outlaws in San Pete Valley, mentioned in my letter of the 28th of April last. At that time I requested the military authorities to send a sufficient force to protect the settlers and to arrest the offending Indians. This was refused, and the settlers were left to take care of themselves. They organized a force of about eighty men and drove the Indians back to Grand River, killing about one-third of the number of those who were engaged in committing the depredations."

O. H. IRISH,
Superintendent, &c.

May 26.—The Indians killed John Given, wife, and four children, near Thistle Valley, San Pete County, and Mr. Neilson, near North Bend, in the same county, and on the 29th, David M. Jones, near the same settlement, and drove off a large herd of horses and cattle. In consequence of these renewed outrages other companies of cavalry were mustered into service, and all the stock in those counties, which

had up to that time ranged in the valleys and sides of the mountains, were gathered up and herded in the vicinity of the settlements by the inhabitants.

Notwithstanding every precaution and effort made by the militia and the settlers, in consequence of the rugged nature of the country and the situation of the settlements, it was impossible to prevent the enemy making an occasional raid on a settlement or some herd of stock, as they would come down from the mountains in force and return in an hour to an almost impregnable position in the cañon or some previously unknown mountain pass.

For the better protection of the settlements all of the able-bodied men in those counties were mustered into service as home guards, and performed duty in this capacity, but no returns of this service are included in these accounts.

The war continued, the Indians gaining accessions to their ranks, and having, during the summer, massacred between thirty and forty men, women and children. The last raid in 1865 was on Fort Ephraim, San Pete County, in the month of October, when five men and two women were killed, and two men wounded, and two hundred head of stock taken. Many battles were fought during the summer and some forty of Black Hawk's warriors killed.

On the approach of winter the Indians withdrew to the Colorado River, living on the plunder of the past summer, their success having furnished them with horses to mount all who would join their ranks, and plenty of beef to feed them—strong inducements to Indians. Nothing reliable was heard of the enemy for some time, but it was rumored that they were daily increasing in numbers and making preparations for another campaign so soon as the melting of the snow in the mountains would permit.

Early in the month of February, 1866, their intentions were defined by making a raid on a small settlement in Kane County, southern Utah, killing Dr. Whitmore and a young man by the name of McIntyre, and driving off a large flock of sheep, some horses and cattle, and in a few days making another raid on Berryville, in the same county, killing two men and one woman, and taking some horses and cattle; and as the snow disappeared from the mountains north, so they continued to advance on the settlements in force, having been joined by a number of the Navajos and a band of Elk Mountain Utes. The war, which at its commencement looked small, began to assume alarming proportions, and as the settlers had to rely on the militia of the Territory, Lieutenant General Daniel H. Wells ordered all the able-bodied men that could be spared from San Pete, Sevier, and Pi-Ute counties to be immediately mustered into service as cavalry or infantry, and organized for defense. Before the organization was completely effected, another raid was made on Marysvale, Pi-Ute County, April 2d; two men were killed and a band of horses captured. Their next raid was on Selina, Sevier County, April 20th. Here two men were killed and two hundred head of cattle and horses taken. See letters of Colonel F. H. Head, superintendent of Indian affairs Utah Territory, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C., published in "Indian Affairs, 1866," on pages 128, 130, of which the following is extracted:

"UTAH SUPERINTENDENCY,

"*Great Salt Lake City, April 30, 1866.*

"SIR: Black Hawk, a somewhat prominent chief of the Utah Indians, has been engaged for more than a year past in active hostilities

against the settlements in the southern portion of this Territory. His band consisted at first of but forty-four men, who were mostly outlaws and desperate characters from his own and other tribes. During the summer and autumn of 1865 he made several successful forays upon the weak and unprotected settlements in San Pete and Sevier Counties, killed in all thirty-two whites, and drove away to the mountains upwards of two thousand cattle and horses.

"Forty of his warriors were killed by the settlers in repelling his different attacks. His success in stealing, however, enabled him to feed abundantly and mount all Indians who joined him, and the prestige acquired by his raids was such that his numbers were constantly on the increase, despite his occasional losses of men. He spent the winter near where the Grand and Green Rivers unite to form the Colorado. On the 20th instant he again commenced his depredations by making an attack upon Salina, a small settlement in Sevier County. He succeeded in driving to the mountains about two hundred cattle, killing two men who were guarding them, and compelling the abandonment of the settlement.

"His band, from what I consider entirely reliable information, now numbers about one hundred warriors, one-half of whom are Navajos from New Mexico.

"In view of these circumstances, and for the purpose of preventing accessions to the ranks of the hostile Indians, I have, after consultation with Governor Durkee, desired Colonel Potter, commanding the United States troops in this district, to send two or three companies of soldiers to that portion of the Territory to protect the settlements and repel further attacks. Colonel Potter has telegraphed to General Dodge for instructions in reference to my application. I should be much pleased to have an expression of your views as to the policy to be pursued in this matter.

"Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

"F. H. HEAD,
"Superintendent.

"Hon. D. N. COOLEY,
"Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
"Washington, D. C."

And under date of 21st June, 1866, in a similar communication, he states, (see page 130 of said published report):

"I advised you in my communication of the 30th April that I had applied to the military authorities to send two or three companies of troops to protect the settlers in those portions of the Territory most exposed to Indian raids, and that Colonel Potter, commanding at this point, had telegraphed for instructions. A copy of the response to such communication is herewith inclosed.

"The morning of my departure, (from Uinta,) I was informed by Tabby, the head chief, that when he received notice of my arrival in the valley, himself and all his warriors were on their way to join the hostile Indians in the southern portion of the Territory, in their war upon the settlements. He also informed me that Black Hawk, having secured a number of recruits among the Elk Mountain Utes to swell his force to three hundred warriors, was then setting out from the Elk Mountain country to attack the weaker settlements in San Pete County.

"On reaching this city on my return from Uinta, I communicated the facts in my possession relative to Black Hawk, to Governor Durkee. General Wells, one of the principal militia officers, after consulting with

the governor, has raised two or three companies of militia, and proceeded to the threatened locality to protect the settlers from the expected attack.

"F. H. HEAD,
"Superintendent."

"FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS, May 2, 1866.

"General Pope telegraphs that the superintendent of Indian affairs will have to depend for the present on the militia to compel the Indians to behave at Selina.

"By command of Major General Dodge,

"SAMUEL C. MACKKEY,
"Acting Assistant Adjutant General.

"Colonel CARROLL H. POTTER,

"Commanding District of Utah."

Accordingly, steps were immediately taken to place all the settlements south and east of Salt Lake City in a better state for defense, and troops were mustered into service from Salt Lake and other counties, and despatched to the scene of hostilities. The weaker settlements in Summit, Wasatch, San Pete, Sevier, Pi-Ute, Beaver, Iron, Kane and Washington, were abandoned and removed to the stronger. Substantial forts were built, and all the stock in the above named counties was gathered up and guarded. Overtures of peace were made by the settlers whenever opportunity offered, but were defiantly refused by the Indians; and on the 11th day of June Lieutenant General D. H. Wells started from Salt Lake City, and on the 14th arrived at Fort Gunnison, San Pete County, and took command in person, remaining in San Pete, Sevier and Pi-Ute counties three months. Notwithstanding every precaution, and the energy and faithfulness of the militia troops in service, such was the extent and mountainous character of the country, that the enemy, lying secreted, would occasionally succeed in making a dash on some weak point and capturing a herd of stock. Thus it continued through the summer, while all that part of the Territory for three hundred miles in extent was paralyzed, but more particularly was it the case in San Pete, Sevier and Pi-Ute counties. No improvements were made. The saw-mills in the cañons were silent, and in many cases were burnt up or otherwise destroyed by the Indians. Very little grain was raised in consequence of the number of men in the service in those counties. During the summer about twenty persons were massacred, and a very large amount of stock was taken, and many flourishing settlements were broken up and abandoned. Several skirmishes occurred through the summer, in which between thirty and forty of the Indians were killed and wounded. The Indians again drawing off for winter quarters, on the 1st day of November, the last of the militia troops were mustered out.

Peace again reigned for a short time. The mountains and passes were again blocked with snow, and the inhabitants had a short interval to prepare for winter.

Nothing of importance was heard from the Indians until early in January, 1867, when they commenced the war for another year by making a raid on Pine Valley, Washington County, the extreme southern part of the Territory, capturing a band of horses. Captain Andrews, with a company of calvary, followed them, recovered most of the horses and killed seven Indians. All was quiet again till March, when another raid was made on Richfield, Sevier County. Here they killed one man, one woman, and a young girl fourteen years of age. The killing of the

females was accompanied with great atrocity. Reliable information was received that they were still determined on war, and troops were again mustered into service in San Pete, Sevier and Pi-Ute counties, also one company of cavalry and one of infantry in Salt Lake and Utah Counties. With the aid of these two companies, in addition to the forces raised in those three counties, further depredations were prevented until the 2d of June, when Major Vance and Sergeant Houtz were waylaid and killed at Twelve Mile Creek, San Pete County; and on the 12th they made a raid on Beaver, Beaver County, capturing a large herd of stock. This county is west of Pi-Ute County.

August 14. They made a raid on Springtown, San Pete County, killing two men, wounding another, and capturing a band of horses. Colonel R. N. Allred, with a company of cavalry, chased and gave them battle, recovering some of the horses.

September 18. Another raid was made on Beaver, Beaver County, and two hundred head of horses and cattle were taken.

This was the last raid of the season, as, through the activity of the militia troops, the depredations were less frequent and not so extensive as previously.

Great praise is accorded to the superintendent of Indian affairs, Colonel F. H. Head, for his untiring exertions with the Indians to promote peace. He finally succeeded in obtaining an interview with Black Hawk, and obtained his promise that he would refrain from further depredations on the whites, and that he would use his influence to have the war entirely stopped. He expressed a fear, however, that some of the outlaws would continue depredations, which has been the case, as several raids have been made since this interview, but it is generally believed that Black Hawk has kept his promise.

In the spring of 1868, these renegades attacked a company of whites while camped on the Sevier River, killed two men and wounded one. During the summer they made several raids on stock in San Pete Valley; and in November attacked a party of emigrants in southern Utah and took a large band of horses and mules. Some active service was performed during the summer and autumn of 1868, but as the returns have not been received at this office they are not included in the accompanying accounts, which amount in the aggregate, for the three years, 1865, 1866, 1867, as per recapitulation sheet herewith forwarded, to the sum of one million one hundred and twenty-one thousand and thirty-seven dollars and thirty-eight cents, (\$1,121,037 38.)

In conclusion, I beg leave to respectfully refer you to a memorial of the legislature of this Territory, approved by his excellency Charles Durkee, governor, of which the following is a copy:

MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS PRAYING FOR AN APPROPRIATION TO DEFRAY THE EXPENSES OF THE LATE INDIAN WAR IN UTAH TERRITORY.

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

GENTLEMEN: Your memorialists, the governor and legislative assembly of the Territory of Utah, would most respectfully represent to your honorable body that, for the last three years, we have had a vexatious Indian war on our hands, the seat of which has been in Sevier, Pi-Ute, and San Pete Counties, extending more or less to the counties of Wasatch, Utah, Millard, Beaver, Iron, Washington, and Kane, rendering a strong military force constantly necessary in the field. Colonel Irish, former superintendent of Indian affairs, called on General Connor to protect the settlements of this Territory from Indian depredations; the general replied that if those depredations were committed upon any settlements remote from the mail line he could not do it. Colonel Head, present superintendent of Indian affairs, called on Colonel Potter to protect the

settlements of this Territory where Indian hostilities existed. Colonel Potter sent east for instructions in the case, and received answer from General Sherman that we must rely on the militia of the Territory. During this war Sevier and Pi-Ute Counties were abandoned by six extensive and flourishing settlements, it being considered impracticable to defend them there. Their removal was effected at the loss of nearly all they had, their stock and teams being mostly stolen and driven away by the Indians, and they were removed by the citizens of San Pete County. Likewise four settlements on the borders of San-Pete County were broken up and removed at much expense and loss. Also fifteen settlements in Iron, Kane, and Washington Counties, besides two or three small settlements in Wasatch County. In this war we have furnished our own soldiers, arms, ammunition, transportation, cavalry horses, and supplies for the years 1865, 1866, and 1867. We have borne a heavy burden, and we ask for compensation and aid, as most of our citizens at and near the seat of this war have become greatly reduced and impoverished thereby, and likewise the other settlements that have had to remove are more or less so. We, therefore, ask your honorable body to appropriate \$1,500,000 to compensate the citizens for their service, transportation, and supplies in suppressing Indian hostilities in the Territory of Utah during the years before named, or so much thereof as will cover these expenses, as per vouchers and testimonies now in the adjutant general's office, which will accompany this memorial, or follow it at an early day, and your memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Approved February 21, 1868.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Your obedient servant,

H. B. CLAWSON,
Adjutant General Utah Territory.

Hon. JNO. M. SCHOFIELD,
Secretary of War, Washington City, D. C.

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