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Presents and provisions for Indians. Letter from the Secretary of War, relative to the purchase of presents and provisions for Indians during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1871.

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PRESENTS AND PROVISIONS FOR INDIANS.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

RELATIVE TO

The purchase of presents and provisions for Indians during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1871.

FEBRUARY 13, 1872.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *February 9, 1872.*

The Secretary of War has the honor to transmit to the House of Representatives, in response to a request of the Committee on Appropriations for a statement of expenditures by the War Department for the purchase of presents and provisions for Indians during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1871, a report of the Commissary General of Subsistence embodying the desired information.

WM. W. BELKNAP,
Secretary of War.

OFFICE COMMISSARY GENERAL OF SUBSISTENCE,
Washington City, February 8, 1872.

SIR: In reply to the request, addressed to the honorable Secretary of War, of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives of February 8, 1872, for "a detailed statement of expenditures made by the War Department for purchase of presents and provisions to Indians, for which purpose a deficiency estimate has been furnished," inclosed with which is an estimate from the Interior Department of \$282,893 69, (Ex. Doc. No. 49, second session Forty-second Congress, House of Representatives,) I have the honor to refer to the following extract from my annual report of October 17, 1871, as embracing the detailed statement required:

Under the provisions of section 16, act of June 30, 1834, and paragraph 1202, Revised Regulations for the Army, 1863, subsistence stores, valued at \$85,337 04, have been issued to Indians of the various tribes visiting the military posts on the frontier or

in their respective nations. Issues have also been made to Indians, under proper instructions and to meet special emergencies, as follows :

At Fort Defiance, New Mexico, valued at.....	\$41,744 49
At Livingston, Texas, valued at.....	813 29
At Fort Stevenson, Dakota Territory, valued at.....	5,461 58
Cheyenne Agency, Dakota Territory, valued at.....	115 00
At Forts Laramie and Fetterman, Wyoming Territory, valued at.....	150,261 16
At Fort Rice, Dakota Territory, valued at.....	5,105 51
At Fort Buford, Dakota Territory, valued at.....	3 44
At Fort Shaw, Montana Territory, valued at.....	73 80
Making	203,578 27

Of which amount the following has been refunded to the appropriations for Army subsistence :

For issues at Cheyenne Agency, Dakota Territory.....	\$115 00
For issues at Livingston, Texas.....	813 29
For issues at Fort Stevenson, Dakota Territory.....	5,093 33
	6,021 62

Recapitulation.

Total issued per first paragraph quoted.....	\$85,337 04
Total issued per second paragraph quoted.....	203,578 27
	288,915 31
Deduct amount refunded.....	6,021 62
	282,893 69

All the above was for "provisions;" none being for "presents."

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. B. EATON,

Commissary General of Subsistence.

The Hon. the SECRETARY OF WAR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, D. C., January 9, 1872.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a communication, dated the 3d instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and accompanying estimate of appropriation required "to reimburse the appropriation for subsisting the Army with the value of rations issued by officers of the Army for subsisting Indians during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1871," amounting to \$282,893 69.

The attention of Congress is respectfully invited to the subject.

Very respectfully your obedient servant,

C. DELANO,
Secretary.

Hon. JAMES G. BLAINE,
Speaker House of Representatives.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., January 3, 1872.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, by reference from the Department, of a letter from the honorable Secretary of War of the 18th November last, requesting that, in the estimate for the subsistence of Indians, to be submitted to Congress at its present session, provision be made for reimbursing the appropriation for subsisting the Army with the value of rations issued by officers of the Army to Indians

during the last fiscal year amounting, it appears, to \$288,915 31, of which \$6,021 62 is stated to have been refunded, leaving a balance due of \$282,893 69.

I have no doubt of the correctness of the above statement, and am well aware that emergencies too frequently arise when subsistence stores provided for the Army have to be resorted to in feeding Indians. When such subsistence is supplied at the request of this Bureau, and there are funds at the disposal of the Department applicable in payment, restitution is invariably made; but as the greater portion of the issues above referred to were made at the discretion and under the exclusive control of the officers of the Army, and are of a magnitude to preclude the possibility of reimbursement from appropriations on hand for the Indian service, I respectfully suggest that, in accordance with the request of the honorable Secretary of War, an application be made to Congress for an appropriation of \$282,893 69, to make good to the Subsistence Department of the Army the cost of rations thus issued.

The honorable Secretary's letter on this subject is herewith returned.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

F. A. WALKER.
Commissioner.

Hon. C. DELANO,
Secretary of the Interior.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington City, November 18, 1871.

To the honorable the Secretary of the Interior :

SIR: Under the provisions of the act of Congress of June 30, 1834, (section 16,) and Army Regulations, and also under special instructions to meet certain emergencies, the Subsistence Department of the Army has, during the past fiscal year, issued to Indians of the various tribes visiting the military posts on the frontier, or in their respective nations, &c., subsistence stores to the value of \$288,915 31, of which amount but \$6,021 62 has been refunded to the subsistence appropriation.

As it is probable that during the present fiscal year the demands upon this appropriation for supplies for Indians will fully aggregate, if not exceed, this amount, and as the Subsistence Department, which undoubtedly affords the most ready and economical agency at the command of the Government for the subsistence of the Indians, especially in those instances where their imperious wants and necessities arise with so much suddenness as to preclude the possibility of relieving them by any other means, should not be burdened with the great expense of feeding them without adequate provision being made therefor, or for proper remuneration, I respectfully request that, in the estimates for the subsistence of Indians to be submitted to Congress at its next session, you will insert a provision for an appropriation for such an amount as will reimburse the present subsistence appropriation and prevent the Indians from becoming a tax upon it.

Very respectfully your obedient servant,

WM. W. BELKNAP,
Secretary of War.

Estimate of appropriation required for the Indian service to make up deficiencies for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1872.

For this amount to reimburse the appropriation for subsisting the Army with the value of rations issued by officers of the Army for subsisting Indians during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1871..... \$282, 893 69