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Report from the Secretary of War, in compliance with a resolution of the Senate of the 26th January, 1838, in reference to the number of Greek Indians engaged in hostilities against the United States, during the years 1836 and 1837.

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REPORT

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

IN COMPLIANCE

With a resolution of the Senate of the 26th January, 1838, in reference to the number of Creek Indians engaged in hostilities against the United States, during the years 1836 and 1837.

FEBRUARY 7, 1838.

Read, and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF WAR,
February 6, 1838.

SIR: In reply to the resolution of the Senate of the 26th ultimo, I have the honor to transmit, herewith, reports of the Commanding General of the army, and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, which, with their accompanying documents, embrace the best information possessed by this department in reference to "the number of Creek Indians which, at any time during the years 1836 and 1837, were engaged in hostilities against the United States."

Very respectfully,

Your most obedient servant,

J. R. POINSETT.

Hon. R. M. JOHNSON,
President of the Senate.

HEAD QUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
Washington, February 3, 1838.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit, herewith, the report of the Adjutant General, furnishing so much of the information called for by the resolution of the Senate of the 26th January, as is in the possession of the head quarters of the army.

I have the honor to be, sir,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

A. MACOMB,

Major Gen. Commander-in-Chief.

The honorable J. R. POINSETT,
Secretary of War.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, February 2, 1838.

SIR: In answer to the Senate's resolution of January 26th, calling on the Secretary of War for information "showing the number of Creek Indians which, at any time during the years 1836 and 1837, were engaged in hostilities against the United States," I have to state, that the records of this office do not furnish the precise information called for.

By reference to the correspondence of General Scott and General Jesup, officers who were charged with the suppression of Indian hostilities in Georgia and Alabama, in 1836, it is seen that no precise number has been stated as the strength of the hostile Creeks; but the subjoined extracts from that correspondence will show the estimated strength of those Indians, being all the information, touching the subject matter of inquiry, to be derived from the files of the Adjutant General's office.

I am, sir,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

R. JONES,
Adjutant General.

Major Gen. MACOMB,
General-in-Chief of the Army.

Extract of a letter from General Scott to the Adjutant General, dated Columbus, Georgia, June 2, 1836.

"The strength of the enemy is variously estimated, by well informed persons, from 2,500, to 5,000. Captain Page thinks that there are at least 3,000 hostile warriors."

Extract of a letter from General Scott to Governor Call, dated head quarters, Columbus, June 17, 1836.

"It no doubt will be interesting to you to learn the preparations made, and making to put down the hostile Creek Indians, who are variously estimated at from 3,000 to 5,000 warriors."

Extract of a letter from General Jesup to the Secretary of War, dated head quarters, Tuskegee, July 17, 1836.

"This party (Neo Mico's) increases the number of prisoners to about 2,800."

Extract of a letter from General Jesup to the Secretary of War, dated Fort Mitchell, July 24, 1836.

“There are between 18 and 19,000 of them” (Creek Indians) “to be removed; 4,000 of them are men capable of bearing arms.”

Extract of a letter from General Jesup to the Secretary of War, dated head quarters, Montgomery, September 5, 1836.

“On my way to this place, I passed Wetumpka where there are about 3,000 Indians, who are to cross the Coosa to day, and take up their line of march westward. Hopoethle-Yoholo, whose departure I reported a few days ago, is on his way to the west, with 2,300 of his band. About 4,000 will move in a day or two from Talladega.”

True extracts:

R. JONES,
Adjutant General.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Office Indian Affairs, February 5, 1838.

SIR: A resolution of the Senate, of the 26th of January, 1838, requesting the Secretary of War “to communicate to the Senate such information as may be in his department, showing the number of Creek Indians which, at any time during the year 1836 and 1837, were engaged in hostilities against the United States,” having been referred to this office, I have the honor to submit the following report thereon:

It is obvious that this office can have had no means of ascertaining with any precision the number of Creeks actually engaged in hostilities, or, at any time, committing depredations upon the persons or property of the citizens of the United States. Such information as it possesses is derived, 1st, from the reports of its agents engaged in the execution of the treaty with the Creeks for their removal, during the progress of the war; and 2d, the official documents made upon the close of hostilities and subsequent removal to the west.

Of the first class, I herewith transmit copies and extracts of letters from Capt. John Page, superintendent of Creek removal.

The information in relation to the second class of evidence is comprised in the muster rolls of different parties, despatched to the west after the close of hostilities.

The whole number of Creek Indians emigrated in 1836, was 14,609. Of this number, 2,495 were enrolled and reported to this office as hostile Indians.

The above statement, together with the extracts of correspondence, comprises all the information in this office, supposed to be within the scope of the resolution of the Senate.

Very respectfully,

Your most obedient servant,

C. A. HARRIS,
Commissioner.

Hon. J. R. POINSETT,
Secretary of War.

No. 1.

Extract from a letter of Captain John Page to the Commissary General of Subsistence, dated at Fort Mitchell, Alabama, 27th March, 1836.

"I have the honor to report to you that I attended a meeting of the chiefs of this (Creek) nation on the 18th instant, and made all the inquiries about the number of Indians that have gone from this nation to the Seminoles, and from what information I can get, the number is very small. The chiefs will not admit that there are even twenty absent. I have made inquiries from different sources, and I am of the opinion that when the war is terminated, it will be known there is not one hundred Creeks among them."

No. 2.

Extract of a letter from Captain John Page to the Commissary General of Subsistence, dated at Fort Mitchell, May 8th, 1836.

"I stated to you I would communicate the talk I had with the Upper Creeks. I will do so by next mail. They are disgusted with the investigation, and say they will not wait any longer than it will take to settle their debts. There is from five to eight thousand ready to be off, were it not for this investigation, which, I think, cannot be closed in six months. The Upper Creeks say they have adopted a plan of their own in regard to the disputed lands, and will be off in a month. By to-morrow's mail I will detail to you their plans. Those Upper chiefs said they had rather hear any word mentioned than investigation. The Upper Creeks are determined to be off: they are at this time sufficiently friendly, but the Lower Creeks, as I have heretofore reported, are hostile, and must be treated as such: the war-whoop has been sounded among them."

No. 3.

Extract of a letter from Captain John Page to the Commissary General of Subsistence, dated at Fort Mitchell, Alabama, May 16, 1836.

"There has been one scalp taken since the war-whoop was sounded. It is a rule among them, that scalping is prohibited, unless the majority of the tribe is hostile. This will prove the hostile party are in the minority at present, and I think it will remain so, as I have sent runners in every direction with a strong talk."

No. 4.

Extracts of a letter from Captain John Page to the Commissary General of Subsistence, dated at Fort Mitchell, Alabama, 29th May, 1836.

"I have endeavored to watch the movements of the Indians for the last ten days. I have sent several runners to reconnoitre; by so doing, ascer-

tained all their movements. There are three parties, one headed by Ne-ha-mico; one by Ne-he-Mathla, and the other by Jim Henry. The latter party have been endeavoring to cross the Chattahoochee river to get to Florida; they have got a number of stage horses, mules, and negroes. I sent two expresses to General Lowe, commanding the militia at Columbus; (informing him) the intention of these people to cross and make off; he said he would keep a look out, but I discovered he did nothing to prevent them. I then went in person myself, and requested him to start five or six hundred militia to guard the river from this to Irwinton; he said he would, but because it rained they did not start. He is not fit for an officer; and I told him it would be an everlasting disgrace upon him, if he did permit them to cross. Fortunately; it has rained every day for the last eight days, and raised the river so they cannot get over at present. This is the only thing that prevented these people from crossing. General McDougald has arrived and assumed the command; he will start the troops at once.

"My object is to keep these rascals hemmed in till General Jesup arrives. If he was here at this time; I could get on my horse, and in two hours' time show the camps of all the hostile Indians, and call forth by name every leader. Jim Henry is very uneasy; is the reason he wants to make off. Ne-ha-mico sent from his camp seven stage horses. This is paramount to a back out."

"I sent to Ne-he-Mathla, the other day, to try and find out what his strength was; but he is too great a General for me; no information could be gained. His men are too well drilled to communicate any thing."

"Opoth-le-yohola, the chief of the Upper Creeks, took a decisive stand against the war, as also his people. He killed one chief, and put in irons thirteen more; for showing a hostile disposition; this put a check to many other Indians, who came disposed, with little encouragement, to join the hostile party."

No. 5.

Extract from a letter of Captain John Page to the Commissary General of Subsistence, dated at Fort Mitchell, June —, 1836.

"Since my last communication, the hostile parties of Indians have mostly broken up; and scattered. Some have come in here, say twelve or fifteen hundred men, women, and children, and many have surrendered themselves at Tallassee and other points, and a great many are wandering about, afraid to come in. There will be no more fighting. The whoop may meet some of these wandering parties and fire on them; but the object of these Indians will be to keep out of their way."

No. 6.

Extract of a letter from Captain John Page to the Commissary General of Subsistence, dated at Fort Mitchell, 2d July, 1836.

"I have the honor to report to you that about 1,600 hostile Indians, men, women, and children, have been enrolled and started this day. Jim Henry has surrendered, about 20 miles from this. I have started some persons on to enrol his party. There are several hundred of them, men, women, and children, but I cannot state the number. At Tuskegee, there will be probably enough more to make 3,000 or more. I shall also despatch the whole of them immediately. Others are coming in constantly. The contractors took them yesterday, and were all prepared. The balance that come in after this, I shall confine, and take them in the same manner. General Jesup directed them to take water at Montgomery, Alabama, which is an excellent place. It is very slow moving them in irons, chained together, and Montgomery is the nearest point we could take water. I have notified the contractors to be prepared to move off other parties as soon as they can be collected. I am anxious to close this business, and shall exert myself to do so. A great many Indians are identified and delivered over to the civil authority. Crowds of people are flocking, some to get their horses, some their negroes, and others their guns that were taken by the Indians, when their plantations were plundered."

 No. 7.

Extracts of a letter from Captain John Page to the Commissary General of Subsistence, dated Fort Mitchell, 26th July, 1836.

"A report came yesterday there had been another battle with the Indians, about 25 miles below here, on the Georgia side of the river; three of the Georgia troops were killed, and seventeen wounded. Seven Indians were killed, which were found, (says the official report.)

"This party, I am sure, was headed by Nulth-cap-Tuskenugga. After I left here with the hostile Indians for Montgomery, thirty-one of this chief's warriors gave themselves up to me on the road, and they reported to me the old chief was determined to cross the river and go to Florida. At that time he had but about 30 or 40 warriors with him, but there was a considerable number of Ufawla Indians that joined him. I presume, as I am sure, they fled to the Cowiga, where the old chief was with his people.

"The number of Indians I will not pretend to say."

 No. 8.

Extract of a letter from Captain John Page to the Commissary General of Subsistence, dated at Wetumpka, Alabama, 6th August, 1836.

"I have the honor to report that, on the 30th of last month, I turned over to the contractors a party of Indians, headed by Opoeth-le-Yoholo,

and in charge of Lieutenant Batman. The muster roll calls for 2,700 Indians, and they started on the 1st instant.

"Another party, headed by William McGilbray, turned over to the contractors on the 25th ultimo, have started this day, in charge of Lieutenant Scriberis, and consists of about 3,000 Indians.

"Lieutenant Deas has charge of the Talladega district; and, from his last report, about 3,800 were turned over to the contractors yesterday, and are also to be started this day."

No. 9.

Extract of a letter from Capt. John Page to the Commissary General of Subsistence, dated at Tuskegee, Ala., August 13, 1836.

"I have the honor to enclose, herewith, a muster roll of a party of hostile Indians, shipped to their new country in charge of an agent. These Indians were taken prisoners after the party turned over to the contractors had started, and General Jesup directed me to send them off immediately."

No. 10.

FORT MITCHELL, ALABAMA,

November 6, 1836.

SIR: I have the honor to forward, this day, muster rolls, numbered from 1 to 6, of Creek Indians, removed by the Alabama and Georgia Emigrating Company, to Arkansas. These muster rolls will not correspond with the rolls now in possession of the officers superintending the different parties. There were were a great many hostile Indians joined their parties, after they had been on the road several days. I directed them to add them to their rolls as they joined.

Very respectfully,

JOHN PAGE,

Captain, and Supt. Creek Removal.

Brig. Gen. GEORGE GIBSON,
Com. Gen. Subsistence, Washington.

No. 11.

FORT MITCHELL, ALABAMA,

January 15, 1837.

SIR: I have the honor herewith to enclose proceedings of two meetings held by the settlers of the Creek nation. Previous to these meetings, I had taken all the necessary measures in my power for their protection. I dispatched part of the small force I had at this post, and located them at the spot where the depredation was committed. Since which time I have

mustered into service a volunteer company of mounted men, commanded by Capt. Benjamin Young, and stationed near Echo-hadja's camp. I am hourly expecting another company of mounted volunteers, if they can be raised, from Irwinton. I shall station them near the Hatchachubba swamp. All appears to be quiet, and the people satisfied with the measures I have taken for their safety; they have all returned to their plantations again. Nothing has occurred since my last communication to you on the subject of Indian hostilities.

From the best information I can obtain, I think the Indians that committed the late depredations are a small party returned from Florida; having gone there, and found nothing but hard fighting and starvation, returned again. A black woman, who was sick at the time at Dr. Battle's plantation, was visited by the Indians, and, not able to make her retreat, she stated two Indians came to the hut she was lying in, and took fire out to burn the dwelling-house. They looked her in the face and laughed, but did not speak. One by the name of Euche Charley, and the other Lane John. These were the names they were known by; she knew them well, having seen them almost every day for two years, previous to the hostilities. I have always supposed these Indians had gone to Florida; the friendly Indians were of the same opinion; they have never been seen in the friendly camps. If this statement can be relied on, it is evident they have returned from Florida, or remained in the swamps with a determination never to surrender. A gentleman a few days since informed me he saw two Indians this side of Flint river, coming this way, with packs, and both armed; he can be relied on. He furthermore states, he saw two small Indian trails coming in direction of the Creek nation, and that it was not more than two or three days since they had passed. My object in being so minute is to do away the suspicion that rests upon the friendly Indians, and that the *guilty* may be punished.

The friendly Indians have tendered their services to the volunteer companies, to scour the swamps, and kill all that are found out of the friendly camps. Their services will be accepted, and every exertion used to apprehend them.

With respect,

I have the honor to be,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN PAGE,

Captain, and Superintendent Creeks.

C. A. HARRIS, Esq.,

Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington city.