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In the Senate of the United States. Letter from the Secretary of War, in response to the Senate resolution of June 5, 1894, transmitting a letter from the Acting Adjutant-General, inclosing copies of reports from officers of the Army serving on the frontier, dated in the years 1855 and 1856.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

IN RESPONSE TO

The Senate resolution of June 5, 1894, transmitting a letter from the Acting Adjutant-General, inclosing copies of reports from officers of the Army serving on the frontier, dated in the years 1855 and 1856.

JUNE 13, 1894.—Referred to the Committee on Claims and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, D. C., June 12, 1894.

SIR: In response to a resolution of the Senate dated June 5, 1894, directing the transmission to the Senate of certain copies of official reports made by officers of the Army serving on the frontier between October 2, 1855, and November 3, 1855, I have the honor to invite attention to the letter herewith of the Acting Adjutant-General, dated June 9, 1894, inclosing copies of the communications desired.

Very respectfully,

DANIEL S. LAMONT,
Secretary of War.

The PRESIDENT OF THE U. S. SENATE.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, June 9, 1894.

SIR: I have the honor to return herewith the Senate resolution of the 5th instant, calling for copies of certain official reports, and to transmit copies of the following-described papers:

(1) Letter of Capt. A. J. Smith, dragoons, commanding Fort Lane, Okla., October 2, 1855, to Maj. E. D. Townsend, assistant adjutant-general, Benicia, Cal.

(2) Letter of Capt. Edward H. Fitzgerald, First Dragoons, and brevet major commanding detachment, dated Fort Lane, Oreg., October 2, 1855, to Lieut. N. B. Sweitzer, First Dragoons, post adjutant.

(3) Letter of Capt. A. J. Smith, First Dragoons, commanding Fort Lane, Okla., October 14, 1855, to Maj. E. D. Townsend, assistant adjutant-general, Benicia, Cal.

(4) Letter of Maj. Gen. John E. Wool, commanding Department of the Pacific, dated Benicia, November 3, 1855, to Lieut. Col. L. Thomas, assistant adjutant-general, Army headquarters, New York. (Evidently the letter called for in last paragraph of Senate resolution, as Gen. Wool was not in command of the Department of the Pacific during November 1858.)

(5) Letter of Capt. A. J. Smith, First Dragoons, commanding Fort Lane, Okla., dated February 12, 1856, to Maj. E. D. Townsend, assistant adjutant-general, Benicia, Cal.

(6) Letter of Capt. A. J. Smith, First Dragoons, commanding Fort Lane, Okla., dated February 23, 1856, to Capt. D. B. Jones, assistant adjutant-general, Benicia, Cal.

Very respectfully,

THOMAS M. VINCENT,
Acting Adjutant-General.

The SECRETARY OF WAR.

FORT LANE, OKLA., October 2, 1855.

MAJOR: I regret that I have to report to you the perpetration of another Indian massacre. The particulars, as far as I can get them, are as follows:

On Tuesday afternoon, the 25th of September, a party of 4 men from near the head of this valley were crossing the Siskiyou Mountain with a wagonload of flour, and when near the summit they were fired upon by a party of Indians concealed behind logs near the roadside. Two of the 4 were killed; the other 2 made their escape. Thirteen oxen that were attached to the wagon, out of 7 yoke, were killed on the spot. This unprovoked massacre was undoubtedly perpetrated by the Shasta Indians and probably by the same band that was attacked and driven from the head of the valley about one month since.

On Wednesday morning, the 26th, I ordered Bvt. Maj. Fitzgerald, with Lieut. Allston and a detachment of 36 men, to proceed to the vicinity of the scene of the massacre to get additional information and then pursue the Indians.

Inclosed you will please find Maj. Fitzgerald's report.

Lieut. Sweitzer, with a detachment of 25 men, will leave early to-morrow morning to intercept and pursue the Indians if found on Butte Creek.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. J. SMITH,
Captain Dragoons, Commanding Post.

Maj. E. D. TOWNSEND,
Assistant Adjutant-General, Benicia, Cal.

FORT LANE, OREG., October 2, 1855.

SIR: I have the honor to report that, in accordance with instructions received from Capt. A. J. Smith, First Dragoons, commanding the post, I left here on the afternoon of the 28th of September with a detachment consisting of Lieut. B. Alston and 36 non-commissioned officers and men of C and E companies, First Dragoons, in pursuit of a band of Indians who had killed a white man and boy near the summit of the Siskiyou Mountain, on the road from Jacksonville to Yreka, Cal. Upon my arrival at the Mountain House the next day I found a party of 22 citizens who were preparing to set out after the Indians. They had recently returned from the scene of the catastrophe, which they had examined carefully. They found such indications of the route of the retreating Indians that I was induced to take a direction to the southeast to intersect their trail, which was supposed to go eastwardly.

On the morning of the 28th, about sunrise, upon the summit of Siskiyou, I discovered recent evidences of Indians, which I followed until I struck a branch of the Klamath, where I found two fires which had evidently just been abandoned. The Indians had apparently scattered, but after some delay the trail was discovered, and

we followed it down the stream until some time after noon, when it was again lost in a portion of the country covered with rocks. Small parties were hence detached in every direction, and upon their return at night one of them reported that the trail had been discovered 4 miles up a confluent from the east of the stream, down which we had been progressing, and they had traced it back to near where we then were; we had passed the point where it had turned off.

At daylight the next morning the command was on the trail, which was pursued until noon, when the valley became almost a canyon, with very rocky and precipitous sides and entirely impracticable for horses. From this point I sent 18 volunteers who had accompanied me, and who left their horses at this point, to follow up the Indians until night in order that we might ascertain if their position was such that it was accessible from any other direction. They continued in pursuit for 10 miles over what they represent to be the most impracticable country which they had ever seen, over the summit of the Siskiyou Mountains again, and on to the waters of Bute Creek, which run into Rogue River.

As the Indians were unapproachable from my position, and as they were evidently aware of our pursuit, and as they were much more accessible from Rogue River Valley, I returned to the post and reported these facts. I arrived on the 1st instant. I received much valuable assistance from the volunteers who accompanied me and their commander, Capt. Thomas Smith.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

EDWD. H. FITZGERALD,

Captain First Dragoons and Brevet Major, Commanding Detachment.

Lieut. N. B. SWEITZER,

First Dragoons, Post Adjutant.

FORT LANE, OKLA., October 14, 1855.

MAJOR: I have the honor to report the following facts for the further information of the commanding general:

During the summer and fall ill-disposed whites have been threatening the Indians that belong to this reserve to commence a war of extermination upon them this fall, and many Indians have questioned me on the subject and wanted to know what they had done to incur the displeasure of the whites. I have invariably told them to pay no attention to what such men would tell them, that they were bad men, and would not carry their threats into execution; but when the simultaneous attack was made on three camps on the morning of the 8th the Indians must have been convinced, in their own minds, that it was the intention of the whites to make good their threats.

As soon as the Indians (old John's band) on the lower part of the reserve, and George's band (then encamped on a creek near Mr. Wagner's house) heard of the massacre that had been committed by the whites in the vicinity of this post, they commenced killing unsuspecting whites, burning houses, and destroying everything that lay in their course. On Tuesday morning the 9th, they killed 9 men, 3 women, and burned their houses, in one of which the wife and daughter of the proprietor perished in the flames.

The Indian agent and myself were on the reserve in council with chiefs Sam and Elijah, when an Indian runner arrived bringing the news of the outbreak below.

Immediately on my return I ordered Bvt. Maj. Fitzgerald with 50 men of his company to proceed in haste to the scene of the calamity, to protect the settlers and punish the murderers when found.

As the Major approached Mr. Wagoner's house (in which the wife and daughter perished) he discovered several Indians mounted, whom he pursued and succeeded in killing 5 of them.

All we can do yet for a few days, will be to furnish protection to the settlers most exposed, or until they can arm themselves and get together for mutual protection. There are but few arms of any description in the hands of the settlers, and I shall have to provide them with such of my old musketoons as I can spare.

A large majority of the Indians are well armed with good rifles, of different descriptions, procured through their squaws, from a reckless class of whites that infest this region.

On the 11th instant I sent Lieut. Sweitzer with a detachment of my company to escort the train of arms and ammunition supposed to be on its way up from Crescent City; he met the train at Deer Creek, and has just arrived with it at this post. The accouterments did not come; also 1 box of arms. Chiefs Sam, Elijah, and Sambo, with upwards of 300 their men, women, and children, are now at this post under our

protection, and will take no part in the war. Chiefs John, Limpy, and George, with all their people, are proscribed. I inclose you a rough sketch of the seat of war; you see we have a very mountainous country to operate in.

I am sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. J. SMITH,

Captain First Dragoons, Commanding Post.

Maj. E. D. TOWNSEND,

Assistant Adjutant-General, Benicia, Cal.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE PACIFIC,
Benicia, November 3, 1855.

SIR: I have the honor to report that since my last letter the Indian troubles in this Department have very much increased. In Rogue River Valley the threats of the whites to commence a war of extermination against the friendly Indians on the reserve and in the vicinity of Fort Lane have been put into execution despite the efforts of the officers of that post to prevent it. Capt. Smith reports that a party of whites who had organized themselves into a company with the avowed purpose of assisting the regular troops in pursuing and chastising the Shasta Indians for recent murders attacked, the 8th ultimo, two camps of friendly Indians in the immediate vicinity of the reserve and killed 25 (4 very old men, 4 young men, and 17 squaws and children). Exasperated by these brutal outrages, some of the Indians on the reserve and in the valley, heretofore friendly, proceeded to murder the whites indiscriminately, burning their houses, and destroying everything in their way.

Capt. Smith immediately sent a detachment under Maj. Fitzgerald to the scene of the outrages for the protection of the settlers and to punish the murderers.

The troops are now actively employed in trying to suppress the troubles, but with what prospect of success, while there is an Indian left for whites to destroy, may be easily conjectured.

In Washington Territory there appears to be an extensive combination of hostile tribes, which a check unfortunately given to Bvt. Maj. Haller with a small command may possibly cause to extend to yet other tribes. The Yakinas, Walla Wallas, Klikitats, Des Chutes, and Cayuses are doubtless in arms. They have been excited by fears at seeing their country rapidly filling up with settlers and miners lest their fate shall be like that of the California Indians, and hope to exterminate the whites at a blow.

Bvt. Maj. Haller marched from Fort Dalles with 100 men the 3rd of October in pursuit of some hostile Indians. He seems to have been drawn into a sort of ambush for on the 6th he found himself surrounded in a position without wood or water, and was compelled to return to The Dalles, reaching there the 10th after much hard fighting. The loss is reported to be 3 enlisted men killed, 19 wounded, and 2 died of wounds. One mountain howitzer was cached and abandoned, the carriage being broken and the mules having given out. About 30 pack animals were also lost. Maj. Rains had gone to The Dalles, whither he had ordered all the troops at Stellacoom and Fort Vancouver. I have ordered, in addition to Capt. Ord's company, already arrived in Oregon, the company at the Presidio, except a guard of 12 men, to preserve the reservation from the eager hands of squatters, and a company from Fort Humboldt; also the company of infantry at Fort Reading to relieve Fitzgerald's company, First Dragoons, at Fort Lane, the latter company to push on as fast as possible to The Dalles.

Ample stores and ammunition have been forwarded, and I leave in the steamer of the 6th instant for the scene of war at The Dalles, where I shall be able more clearly to explain to you the position of affairs. It will not be safe to move any of the troops from their present positions, but I shall endeavor to avoid the necessity of recognizing volunteers in the United States service.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN E. WOOL,
Major-General.

P. S.—We require more troops in this department, at least one regiment.

JOHN E. WOOL,
Major-General.

Lieut. Col. L. THOMAS,

Assistant Adjutant-General, Army Headquarters, New York.

[Indorsement.]

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
New York, December 1, 1855.

The general in chief directs me to forward this dispatch for the information of the War Department, and to say that he proposes to send the Ninth Infantry from Fort Monroe to reinforce Gen. Wool's command (Department of the Pacific).

Very respectfully,

IRWIN McDOWELL,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.

S. COOPER,
Adjutant-General.

ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE, December 3, 1855.

The Ninth Infantry will be dispatched with the least delay by the isthmus route, to reinforce the command of the Department of Pacific.

JEFFN. DAVIS,
Secretary of War.

DECEMBER 3, 1855.

FORT LANE, OKLA., February 12, 1856.

MAJOR: I have the honor to report that early in January I endeavored to open a communication with the hostile Indians to ascertain, if practicable, their strength and situation, but was twice foiled by the runners being driven back. On the 28th I sent 2 Indians with an escort of 12 men under Lieut. Hazen, who conducted them to Grave Creek hills, where he met a large party of hostile Indians. My runners (friendly Indians) succeeded in making their way to them and accompanied the party to the meadows, the position occupied by them since November last. The boys have just returned, and report the Indians number about 300. They have built several stone and log houses and are anxious, with a few exceptions, to carry on the war. Their position is the best that could have been selected and their defenses strong; all well armed.

The Indian agent has decided to remove the friendly Indians now at this post to the new or Coast Reserve at once and requests a large escort to conduct them through the big canyon about 80 miles north of this post. As it is quite probable from what we learn the hostile Indians will waylay the road through the Grave Creek Hills. I have requested Capt. Judah to send me, if practicable, 50 men from his post to form a part of the escort. I will send Lieut. Hazen and 20 men of Company D, Fourth Infantry, as directed in your previous instructions, to continue with them to the reserve and remain until further orders. The friendly Indians number about 400, 81 men and the remainder women and children.

I was informed by Capt. Jones, Fourth Infantry, that it was the intention of the commanding general to send one additional company of infantry to this post, and supposing that Capt. Jones would also join, I thought, previous to this, that it would be a sufficient force; but recent information in relation to the accumulating strength and determination of the Indians to carry on the war, convinces me that an addition of two or three companies will be necessary. I therefore respectfully request that the commanding general will order that additional force to this valley.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. J. SMITH,

Captain First Dragoons, Commanding Post.

Maj. E. D. TOWNSEND,

Assistant Adjutant-General, Benicia, Cal.

In haste. I will write you by the regular express.

FORT LANE, OKLA., February 23, 1856.

CAPTAIN: I have the honor to report that Indian Chief Sam, with all his people, numbering about 400, left this post yesterday and encamped near the Indian agent's, 3 miles west of this, in order to make additional preparations prior to a final start for the new or coast reservation. The Indians are all well pleased and anxious to move, and will be able to get off as early as Monday next.

Lieut. Hazen, with 1 sergeant, 1 corporal, and 18 privates of Company D, Fourth Infantry, is to be the through escort, and is supplied with commissary stores to include the last of April.

I have directed him to report by letter to the commanding officer at Fort Vancouver as soon as he gets through the big canyon, and make his requisitions on that post for such additional supplies as he may need, with the request that they may be forwarded to Dayton, or where the Indians are to leave the military road, if he is to remain with his command for any length of time on the reserve.

Lieut. Crook arrived at this post on the 18th instant with a detachment of 43 men of Capt. Judah's company, and, in addition to 43 men of Company D, Fourth Infantry, under Lieut. Underwood, form an additional escort to the canyon, if not through it. I give this latter escort at the request of the Indian agent, and deem it necessary in order to protect our friendly Indians against hostile ones or volunteers who have threatened to attack them on this end of the route.

The agent will accompany them to the reserve.

Lieut. Underwood will return with his command by the 13th of March, when I will, with all the force I can muster, take the field.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. J. SMITH,

Captain First Dragoons, Commanding Post.

Capt. D. R. JONES,

Assistant Adjutant-General, Benicia, Cal.

MAP
OF THE SEAT OF WAR, IN ROGUE
RIVER VALLEY.

