

University of Oklahoma College of Law

University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons

American Indian and Alaskan Native Documents in the Congressional Serial Set: 1817-1899

4-20-1874

Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting, in obedience to law, a copy of the report of the Surveyor-General of New Mexico on the private land-claim No. 85, for the tract known as "The Dona Ana Bend," in New Mexico.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.law.ou.edu/indianserialset>



Part of the [Indigenous, Indian, and Aboriginal Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

S. Exec. Doc. No. 43, 43rd Cong., 1st Sess. (1874)

This Senate Executive Document is brought to you for free and open access by University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in American Indian and Alaskan Native Documents in the Congressional Serial Set: 1817-1899 by an authorized administrator of University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact Law-LibraryDigitalCommons@ou.edu.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

UPON

The petition of the legislature of Montana Territory, transmitted to him by order of the Senate, asking protection of citizens of Deer Lodge and Missoula Counties against the depredations of roving bands of Indians.

APRIL 29, 1874.—Ordered to lie on the table and be printed.

3357.]

WAR DEPARTMENT,
April 28, 1874.

The Secretary of War has the honor to return to the United States Senate the memorial (transmitted to him by order of the Senate of the 14th instant) of the legislative assembly of Montana Territory, asking protection to the citizens of Deer Lodge and Missoula Counties against the depredations of roving bands of Indians, with report that, on reference of the same to Lieutenant-General Sheridan, commanding Military Division of the Missouri, it has been returned by that officer with report as follows :

I have no doubt the settlers, not only of Deer Lodge and Missoula Counties, but other parts of Montana, are very much annoyed and endangered by the Indians from the western slopes of the mountains passing through the Hell-Gate Pass to the buffalo-grounds along the Muscleshell and Yellowstone Valleys ; and this petition is worthy of careful consideration, but I do not know where five hundred cavalrymen can be obtained for the protection of these people. We have, unfortunately, no cavalry to send ; not even one company.

We might, if Congress would make the necessary appropriation for quarters, scrape up a few companies of infantry and send them, and by and by we may be able to get a company or two of cavalry to add to the infantry force.

WM. W. BELKNAP,
Secretary of War.

Council joint memorial in relation to the protection of the citizens of Deer Lodge and Missoula Counties.

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

Your memorialists, the legislative council and house of representatives, composing the legislative assembly of the Territory of Montana, would respectfully represent that the citizens of said Territory residing in the counties of Deer Lodge and Missoula live in constant jeopardy from the bands of roving Indians infesting and traversing that country.

Your memorialists would further represent that the Flathead Indians

(of the Bitter Root Valley) have for a long time claimed that region, and while the same has to a great extent been occupied by white settlers engaged in the various pursuits of agriculture and the mechanical trades, the said Indians persist in their determination to inhabit and control the said country, notwithstanding the said country has been surveyed by surveyors of the United States and to a great extent duly preempted by white settlers. The said Indians declare that they will not leave the land unless forcibly removed.

Your memorialists would further represent that by reason of the topography of the country numerous tribes of Indians, in their travels to and from the buffalo-grounds, must necessarily pass through the cañon of the Hell-Gate Valley in said counties, among which may be enumerated the Nez Percés, Cayuses, Cœur d'Alènes, Klikitats, Yakimas, Walla-Wallas, Spokanes, Colvilles, Pend d'Oreilles, Kootenays, Kettle Indians, and also stragglers from the Modoc tribe, many of whom are regardless of the rights of white settlers, frequently plundering their property, driving off their horses, killing and stealing their cattle; wherefore frequent collisions of the said tribes with the settlers are the consequence, and the country is in danger of an Indian war at any time.

Your memorialists would further represent that the clandestine sale of spirituous liquors to the said Indians by lawless white persons and half-breeds, arousing all their bad passions, is an additional source of alarm to the settlers, who are defenseless except such as their own unorganized means and strength can furnish; wherefore your memorialists would pray that a military post, consisting of at least five hundred cavalry soldiers, be established at or near the Hell-Gate Ronde, at the confluence of the Bitter Root and the Hell-Gate Rivers, and to take such other measures as may insure the safety of the citizens of the counties aforesaid; and your petitioners will ever pray.

G. W. STAPLETON,

President of the Council.

JNO. H. ROGERS,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Approved February 5, 1874.

A true copy.

Attest:

B. F. POTTS, *Governor.*

A. M. S. CARPENTER,
Chief Clerk of the Council.