

PROTECTION ACROSS THE CONTINENT.

---

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

IN ANSWER TO

*A resolution of the House of December 6, 1866, transmitting information respecting the protection of the routes across the continent to the Pacific from molestation by hostile Indians.*

---

JANUARY 3, 1867.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington City, December 27, 1866.*

SIR: In answer to a resolution of the House of Representatives of December 6, 1866, asking the Secretary of War for information respecting the protection of the routes across the continent to the Pacific from molestation by hostile Indians, and also for the report of a recent tour of inspection made through Dakota, Montana, and Idaho, I have the honor to transmit herewith General Grant's report of the 11th instant on the subject, to which are annexed Lieutenant General Sherman's and Inspector General Sackett's reports of inspection.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

EDWIN M. STANTON,  
*Secretary of War.*

HON. SCHUYLER COLFAX,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

---

HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES,  
*Washington, D. C., December 11, 1866.*

SIR: In reply to resolution of Congress of December 6, 1866, (copy herewith returned,) I have the honor to forward an inspection report made by brevet Brigadier General D. B. Sackett, Inspector General's department, and also copies of letters from Lieutenant General W. T. Sherman, written from different posts of the plains whilst he was inspecting that part of our territory during the last summer, as furnishing the most of the information called for.

In respect to the additional force required to the regular army to thoroughly protect communication by two great routes, &c., I have to say that I do not believe additional protection would be given by additional force. When the reg-

ular army is filled to the standard now allowed, and as it becomes practicable to withdraw a portion of the troops from States lately in rebellion, as much force can be put upon the plains as it is practicable, with any view to economy, to support them.

A standing army could not prevent occasional Indian outrages, no matter what its magnitude. It is to be hoped, however, that the number of these outrages will materially diminish from this time forward, until finally travel will be as secure through the far west as through the old States. Information derived from last summer's inspections will materially aid in producing this result. The construction of railroads over the plains, now rapidly progressing, will naturally draw all travel to those lines, and will further aid in giving security to communication through and with all the territories of the United States.

I would not recommend any increase to the present regular army.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

U. S. GRANT, *General.*

Hon. E. M. STANTON,  
*Secretary of War.*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
*Omaha, Nebraska, May 14, 1866.*

DEAR GENERAL: \* \* \* \* \* Since that time I have been around to the machine and work shops of the Union Pacific railroad, which are certainly on a large scale, exhibiting both the ability and purpose to push their work. The company has on hand here enough iron and ties to build fifty miles of road, and Mr. Durant assured me that he has contracted for enough for one hundred and fifty miles of road. Already eighty miles of road are done, and he expects to complete the first hundred miles by the middle of June, and the second hundred miles in all 1866. This will make a continuous railway to a point five miles beyond Fort Kearny. With railroads completed to Forts Kearny and Riley, our military question of supplies is much simplified, and I hope the President and Secretary of War will continue, as hitherto, to befriend these roads as far as the law allows. My own conviction is, they will not come together at the 100th parallel, but that the Kansas road will go up the Smoky Hill route straight for Denver, and this one will keep on the north side of the Platte, to a point above Fort McPherson, and its ultimate location will then depend on the interests of the territories beyond. Expecting this summer and fall to go much further west, I will not commit myself further at this time.

I observed but little travel west of the Fort Riley road, but a great deal by Fort Kearny. At the north side of the Platte I found no trains of heavily loaded wagons, but a good many emigrants. The great bulk of travel this season evidently leaves the Missouri river at Atchison and Nebraska City, and follows the old military road by the south side of the Platte.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Truly yours,

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*Major General.*

Lieut. General U. S. GRANT,  
*Washington, D. C.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMY UNITED STATES,  
*December 11, 1866.*

Official:

GEO. K. LEET,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

OMAHA, NEBRASKA TERRITORY, *August 17, 1866.*

DEAR GENERAL: On the supposition that the general should be kept advised of the state of affairs and general progress, I will address you from point to point letters of more minute and general information than would characterize official correspondence, that you may lay before him such matters as may arise or prove of value.

I left St. Louis at 4 p. m. of Sunday last, accompanied by two aids, Colonels Dayton and Audenreid, by the Missouri Pacific railroad. Good, comfortable sleeping cars took us by 7 a. m. to Kansas City, and thence to the city of Leavenworth by 9 a. m.—total distance, 309 miles. You already know that one of the two great Pacific railroads starts from the mouth of the Kansas. This road is now finished to Manhattan, a distance of 115 miles up the Kansas, and has branches from Lawrence both to Kansas City and Leavenworth. This road I am assured will be finished in all September to Fort Riley, but as I propose to return over that road I will say nothing further of it now.

At Leavenworth City, the quartermaster of the fort, Colonel Potter, met me, and took my party in his ambulance to the fort, where I found General William Hoffman in command of the post, and incidentally of the department of the Missouri in the absence of General Pope, at last dates about Santa Fé, New Mexico.

I had telegraphed to Governor Crawford, of Kansas, to meet me there and talk over the Indian matters of the State, but it seems he was absent from Lawrence and could not meet me. I have had some correspondence with him, and infer that small hunting bands of Indians are down on the waters of the Kansas, who discourage, and it may be prevent by intimidation and force, the settlements which are creeping up the Saline and Solomon's Fork of the Kansas. You will remember that last spring I went up the Republican Fork of the Kansas, a hundred miles above Fort Riley, and found farmers making homestead locations so far from neighbors, that I am not surprised that Indians and some whites are tempted to rob and steal of them. Colonel Hoffman had also heard of these disturbances, and had sent small patrols of cavalry into that region, which he deemed sufficient; but I will write from here to Governor Crawford, that for the present, at least, I want him to discourage as much as possible the extension of these thin lines of settlements up into the Indian hunting-grounds, and in no event by action to bring on Indian wars, without the concurrence of the regular military authorities of the United States. I would like the frontier States to be somewhat prepared by organized volunteer companies to help us in case of a general combination of the Indians, which is not unlikely, but it will not do to let the people of any one locality draw us all into such a war.

Of course Fort Leavenworth and the country out as far as Fort Riley is as much a settled country as Illinois and Missouri, but beyond Riley we do and must exercise somewhat the war powers, though the country lies within the limits of an organized State.

Monday evening, at 8 p. m., we took a ferry-boat at Leavenworth City for Weston, ten miles, and then got on cars which by midnight conveyed us forty miles, to St. Joseph, Mo., when we were transferred to the regular packet-boat. J. H. Lacey, which did not start for Omaha till 10 a. m. of Tuesday. We then started, the Missouri river being in fair order, and reached Omaha, 250 miles, at noon yesterday, Thursday. Here I found General P. St. George Cooke, with his staff. Omaha is surely one of the most busy and active towns now in the west, made so by the disbursements and work on the Union Pacific railroad, whose progress surpasses anything in the way of rapid construction I have ever known. Our friend General Dodge is chief engineer, and, as usual, is possessed of every possible piece of information that is desirable. I have

been with him over most of his maps and calculations, and will state in general terms the present situation.

The road is actually finished and carrying passengers out 150 miles, and on Monday next will take passengers to a point on the north bank of the Platte, opposite Fort Kearny, 194 miles.

The company has here on hand iron and ties sufficient to extend it another hundred miles, and their arrangements for iron and ties are such that General Dodge thinks he can keep up that condition of things, viz: go on building road at the rate of a mile or mile and a half per day, and yet keep on hand materials for a hundred miles in the event of any interruption to their supplies. The track-laying parties are so organized that he intends to go right along, and doubts not that he will reach a point on the North Fork of the Platte, two miles above the junction, this fall. There he proposes to cross by a bridge the North Fork of the Platte and follow the valley of the South Fork up as far as Julesburg, or Fort Sedgwick, by April of next year. This will be a great achievement, but perfectly feasible when we see what has been done.

I propose to-morrow to go by cars within five miles of Fort Kearny, and will thence go on in ambulances to Julesburg, and so on to Laramie. I rather think it would be to our military interest that this road should follow the North Fork around by Laramie, or the main road to Utah by the Lodge-pole creek and Cheyenne pass, but the careful surveys which General Dodge showed me, and the influence exercised by Denver, may induce this company to bend down south, but this is not yet resolved on, and parties are still out surveying, whose reports this fall may modify existing ideas.

I am perfectly satisfied that this road is in excellent hands, and I propose to give them all the protection and encouragement we can.

I cannot learn definitely that the Indians on the plains have done anything substantial except the murders along up about Powder and Tongue rivers, on the road from Laramie to Virginia City. We are in no condition to punish the Indians this year, for our troops are barely able to hold the long thin lines that are travelled by daily stages and small parties of emigrants. By next year this railroad will enable us to put a regiment of cavalry at Fort Laramie, which can punish the Indians, who are evidently disposed to contest our right to make roads leading to Montana.

The regiment of black infantry that I ordered up from Arkansas had the cholera break out between Helena and St. Louis, and I had to put it in quarantine below St. Louis. Its term of service is also so short that I will not bring it here, but let General Cooke do the best he can this fall, and trust to raise troops by spring that will enable us to act with more confidence in the matter of Indians. It was not our fault, but that of Congress, that we did not have these troops organized before this.

I will arrange with General Cooke, in person, for all disposition of matters in this quarter, but as that country lying to the north will soon be closed by winter, it is somewhat important that General Terry should reach his post and make himself acquainted with its condition and interests. I want him first to report at my headquarters at St. Louis, and then to come here by way of Fort Leavenworth. Here he can see General Cooke and learn from him all that General Cooke knows, and then I want him to go up the Missouri as far as Fort Rice, and then across the country to Fort Snelling. The sooner he accomplishes this the better. If he wants a leave of absence it would be well if he would defer it till December, for from December till April or May all his troops will be in winter quarters and he could well be absent; but it is all-important that he should see some part of his command in all September and October. I have left instructions to this effect at my headquarters in St. Louis.

I will start to-morrow for the plains, and can be reached by telegraph as far as Julesburg, say August 25th; after that, for two weeks, I will be off the line,

and come again to the telegraph at Big Laramie, some time about September 7. In all the latter part of September I will be within reach of the telegraph, in the neighborhood of Denver.

I will write from time to time, that you may know of my whereabouts.

I am, with great respect, your friend and servant,

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

General JNO. A. RAWLINS,  
*Chief of Staff to General Grant, Washington, D. C.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMY U. S., *December 11, 1866.*

Official :

GEO. K. LEET,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

---

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
*Fort McPherson, Cottonwood, August 21, 1866.*

DEAR GENERAL: I wrote you from Omaha the 16th. On Saturday, August 17th, General Dodge gave us a special train and accompanied us to the end of the Pacific railroad, the whole finished distance, 190 miles. The road lies substantially in the flat prairie bottom of the Platte, and we found the construction trains laying rails within about five miles of Fort Kearny, where our ambulances awaited us. The railroad lies on the north side and Fort Kearny on the south side, and about four and a half miles will lie between the fort and its depot, designed about a mile and a half further than where we left the track. We had to cross the Platte, as mean a river as exists on earth, with its moving, shifting sands, and I feel a little lost as to what to say or do about Fort Kearny. It is no longer of any military use, so far as danger is concerned, and now that the railroad is passing it in sight, but with a miserable, dangerous, and unbridgable river between it, must be retained for the sake of its houses and the protection of wagon travel, all of which still lies to the south side of the river. General Wessels commands, and has two companies at Kearny, and two companies thirty-five miles higher up at Plum creek, where General Pope thought there was or might be danger from some roving bands of Indians that hunt buffalo to the south, over about the Republican. All these companies belong to the 5th United States volunteers (rebels) that I want to muster out, and must muster out somehow this fall; but I will defer making an emphatic order till I look up the line further, and see where other troops are to come from to protect the stores and property. At Kearny the buildings are fast rotting down, and two of the largest were in such danger of tumbling that General Wessels had to pull them down, and I will probably use it to shelter some horses this winter, and next year let it go to the prairie dogs. Same of the temporary station at Plum creek. On Sunday, with five spring wagons and my party, armed with Spencers, we started up the valley, and have travelled on a dead level for three days—distance ninety-five miles—the Platte on the right, and sand-hills on the left, the road all travelled by trains going and coming, with ranches every few miles. These ranches consist usually of a store, a house, a corral, and a big pile of hay for sale. There seems to be no danger or apprehension of danger, for the telegraph line and coach line have never been seriously molested, and you are never out of sight of a train or a ranche.

Here at Fort McPherson, or, as it is better known, Cottonwood Springs, the sand-hills approach the Platte, and the ground is a little higher than the grand level of the great valley. In season of rain, winter and spring, one or more small streams come out of the hills to the south and make this a good camping place. I find General Mizner with two companies of the second cavalry, and

he has also as part of the post garrison two companies of the fifth United States volunteers, who have been out all season escorting surveying parties of the Pacific railroad. They will come in before winter and be discharged.

There is a United States saw-mill here. Some cottonwood timber grows on an island in the Platte near by, and cedar is found in the heads of dry ravines about fifteen miles to the south. These cedars are used here, but are now being fast exhausted by persons engaged in collecting them for railroad ties. The Platte river here is also very treacherous and difficult to cross; and as the railroad keeps on the north side, this post, too, will soon be out of place. Its proper location will be about fourteen miles off, on the north side of the North Platte, where the railroad comes over that fork to follow the north branch of the South Platte. The railroad is progressing with such rapidity that I believe it will be done up to and above this post by Christmas, and next spring we will have to shift this post to the place I have named, for we will have to guard so vital a bridge till in course of time enough people congregate there to make it safe against roving bands of mischievous Indians. I will wait till I get to Fort Laramie before giving General Cooke any instructions on this point, for thus far the working parties of the railroad company have not been molested, though scared several times.

As usual, I find the size of Indian stampedes and stories diminishes as I approach their location, and all I ask is comparative quiet this year, for by next year we can have the new cavalry enlisted, equipped, and mounted, ready to go and visit these Indians where they live, which seems to be north, up about the Black Hills of the Yellowstone, with some roving bands down south on the Republican.

The weather is fine, roads good, and I expect to be at Fort Sedgwick in three days, and at Laramie in seven or eight days.

In the mean time I am, as ever, your friend,

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

General J. A. RAWLINS,  
*Chief of Staff to General Grant, Washington, D. C.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMIES UNITED STATES,  
*December 11, 1866.*

Official :

GEO. K. LEET,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

---

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
*Fort Sedgwick, Colorado, August 24, 1866.*

GENERAL: We got here to-day at noon. I have just looked around the post, which is situated on a plateau of ground about half a mile above the old ford of the South Platte. This post is also on the south bank, and therefore on the wrong bank for the railroad, which is building on the north bank; but all the travel has hitherto been on this side. The Platte, in its whole length, is a mean, ugly stream, shallow, but full of quicksand, never safe; but this is the first point where I can hear that it is fordable more than half the year. The post was first built of sods, and now looks like hovels in which a negro would hardly go. Surely, had the southern planters put their negroes in such hovels, a sample would, ere this, have been carried to Boston and exhibited as illustrative of the cruelty and inhumanity of the man-masters; but here, too, I find progress—three sets of company quarters made of adobe walls, with good doors and windows, but the floors and roofs are of earth. As lumber can be had,

though at an extravagant price, I have instructed that good roofs and floors be made. Officers' quarters, of the same pattern, will also be undertaken, and should be finished by winter. Our calculation of time has failed by reason of trusting to the soldiers to build the quarters, but the two companies of cavalry, which form a part of the garrison, are now, and have been, off all the time on escort duty. One company of the eighteenth regulars is here, and has to do guard duty every other day; and there are a few of the fifth United States volunteers left behind, their companies being out escorting surveying parties for the Pacific railroad, so that the quartermaster has had to hire citizens. I will instruct him to limit his efforts to completing the quarters for three companies and its officers, with half the hospital, as contemplated, and a magazine. I have written to General Cooke to determine, as soon as possible, where he will winter his cavalry, and have ordered General Easton to put at his chief quartermaster's (Myers) disposal a quarter of a million of dollars to complete the summer's work. It is already cold here, but we reckon on a good September and October, during which much can be done. This is the post where wood has to be hauled sixty miles; cost last year \$111 a cord, but this year \$46 by contract. Hay is also an item, costing \$34 a ton. Still, as this is the point where the roads to Denver, Salt lake, and Laramie diverge, it is a military point, and must be held; but the Pacific railroad, if finished next year, will make a complete change.

I see little danger of Indians. The telegraph is unmolested; the stage passes daily; and I find the road filled with travellers, back and forth, with ranches every ten miles; yet there is a general apprehension of danger, though no one seems to have a definite idea of whence it is to come. I have met a few straggling parties of Indians who seemed pure beggars, and poor devils, more to be pitied than dreaded. I will start to-morrow for Laramie, distant 175 miles, with an escort of ten men. This does not look like danger, and I feel none at all.

It is impossible to conceive of a more dreary waste than this whole road is—without tree or bush, grass thin, and the Platte running over its wide, shallow bottom with its rapid current; no game or birds; nothing but the long, dusty road, with its occasional ox team, and the everlasting line of telegraph poles. Oh, for the pine forests of the south, or anything to hide the endless view.

Though cold at night, we cannot afford a camp fire, but trust to our boy to gather up some chips at a stage station, or buffalo chips, now scarce, to boil a pot of coffee. I shall feel an absolute sense of relief when I see the mountains, with their forests of timber, and shall henceforth urge with renewed energy the work on the Pacific railroad.

Two hundred more miles of railroad will bring it here, and then we can afford to haul right and left to the mountain posts. I am not surprised that the Quartermaster General is shocked at the terrible bills and contracts that turn up for this quarter. Still we have no business to put men out here unless we give them food and shelter, and all things but sand and water must be hauled from one to four hundred miles.

I have a telegram from St. Louis that General Hancock has assumed command of his department, headquarters in St. Louis. This must be temporary, of course, for there is not room in St. Louis for two headquarters. The department commanders should be with or near their troops. There is no necessity for troops east of Fort Riley, and either Fort Leavenworth or Fort Riley should be the headquarters of that department if the commander is to have anything to do with his troops. The cost of a headquarters is no small item with the staff and hangers-on, and, therefore, on the score of duty and economy, I think General Hancock's headquarters should be at Fort Leavenworth. It would be a good thing if every department commander would personally inspect his troops and posts every year. If that had been done, we would not have so much waste and extravagance, or so many stampedes, as now occur.

You may mark my route by Laramie, Big Laramie, Cache la Poudre, and Denver, thirty-five miles a day, to be at Denver not far from September 15. All well.

Yours, truly,

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*Lieutenant General*

General J. A. RAWLINS,  
*Chief of Staff to General Grant, Washington.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMY UNITED STATES.

Official:

GEO. K. LEET,  
*Major and Acting Adjutant General.*

---

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
*Fort Laramie, August 31, 1866.*

GENERAL: Since my arrival here I have seen some things, and have received despatches of Generals Hancock and Cooke, which call for some explanation to you, as they may appear to you.

We are about to afford approximate protection to parties residing along the great routes of travel westward, of which the Platte is one, and the Smoky Hill and Arkansas is another. The posts and number of troops at each are well known to you; and you are also aware that the Indians are constantly engaged in stealing the horses, and in some recent cases have murdered the people along the roads. In assigning troops I have given General Cooke the eighteenth infantry and the second cavalry. A portion of this latter regiment is now on the Smoky Hill, and under my orders should come across the country to this line. This will leave General Hancock for the other road the third infantry, a part of the third United States cavalry, sent last spring from Arkansas to Fort Union, New Mexico, and the new regiment of cavalry that you gave me to organize out of the cavalry recruits from Carlisle, which I instructed should be sent to Fort Riley instead of Jefferson Barracks. From personal inspection I know that Fort Riley is admirably adapted to that end, and the companies as fast as organized could be sent out on that line.

General Hancock, to insure peace in Missouri, thought that object more important than peace on the plains, and ordered some of his troops from Kansas into Missouri, and reported in consequence his inability to spare all of the second cavalry. I have reversed that order, and reiterated my command that the second must come to the Platte, and that troops should not leave the lines of travel over the plains to be in Missouri, not having troops ready for both purposes. General Hancock adjudges the peace of Missouri most important, but my decision is that the peace on the plains is most important, and that they must come from some other quarters or be made up of the new regiments forming. Of course my orders settle the question, but I have given General Hancock authority to appeal to you and the President. If you could travel this long, exposed road and see how difficult it is to defend the mails and telegraph, I would not doubt your decision; but knowing how different questions present themselves from different stand-points, I will abide your decision absolutely and cheerfully.

In like manner General Cooke wants to incur expense in building public quarters for his headquarters, and, it may be, one company at Omaha. Omaha is as safe as St. Louis. Had we public buildings there now, it would be prudent to occupy them, but to build one now is not necessary. The Pacific railroad is done to abreast of Fort Kearny, and will be done to the forks of the Platte this year. In all, next year, it will probably reach Fort Sedgwick



and the Black Hills, a spur of the Rocky mountains, either at Laramie, Cheyenne pass, or Cache la Poudre Pass; at one of which points, in my judgment, will be the true military point from which to control Indian affairs. Therefore Omaha is so temporary that I deem it unwise to expend money there that should go to build a suitable post nearer the enemy. I don't believe in conducting hostilities from the rear; still I am willing General Cooke should remain at Omaha in hired quarters, ready, however, to come forward when his presence is necessary.

I do not apprehend a general Indian war, but for years we will have a kind of unpleasant state of hostilities that can only terminate with the destruction of the hostile bands, only to be accomplished by putting our troops near where the Indians live, viz: along the base of the Rocky mountains. I start to-morrow along down the mountains to the head of the Arkansas *via* Denver.

I am, with great respect,

W. T. SHERMAN,

*Lieutenant General Commanding.*

General U. S. GRANT,

*Commanding Armies of the United States, Washington, D. C.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMIES UNITED STATES.

Official copy :

GEO. K. LEET,

*Major and Acting Adjutant General.*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,

*Fort Laramie, August 31, 1866.*

DEAR GENERAL: I wrote you last from Fort Sedgwick, sometimes called Julesburg, by reason of a few adobe houses called by that name, three miles from the post.

I took ten men in a wagon as escort and crossed the South Platte by an old and well-understood ford; thence up the valley of Lodge-pole creek for thirty-six miles. This valley looks smooth and level, but must ascend some ten or fifteen feet a mile, and is as bare of tree or bush as your hand. The main road to Cheyenne pass continues up the valley, but the Laramie road crosses on a high table prairie, devoid of wood or water for twenty-eight miles, and descends into the valley of the North Platte, which it ascends for one hundred and ten miles—one hundred and seventy-six in all from Sedgwick to this post, Fort Laramie. We were five days in coming, and saw no Indians; saw a few lodges of friendly ones near some isolated ranches. The valley of the Platte generally has good grass, and looks as though by irrigation it would produce wheat, barley, &c.; but the government will have to pay a bounty for people to live up here till necessity forces them. At Laramie the country begins to change; mountains are visible, and the streams, instead of spreading out over flat, shallow but wide channels, contract into narrow channels with coarse, gravel bottoms, with swift and clear current. At the junction of Laramie creek with the North Platte is located this post. Though originally built by the engineer corps, there is no sign of block-house or defence, but a mixture of all sorts of houses of every conceivable pattern, and promiscuously scattered about. The two principal buildings of two stories, originally constituting the post, are now so damaged and so rickety in the high wind that the soldiers of a windy night sleep on the parade. Low buildings of adobe, with good roofs and not too large, seem best adapted to the climate and circumstances; and the commanding officer, Major \_\_\_\_\_, and Quartermaster Dandy, are proceeding in all new structures on that hypothesis. Adobes, or sun-dried brick, are being made by contract;

lime has been burned twelve miles off; a saw-mill is erected fifty miles off, and wood for the use of the post is cut by soldiers and hauled fifteen miles. The garrison is two companies eighteenth infantry and two of second cavalry—few, with almost everything to do, you can understand they have not much chance to hunt down horse-thieving Indians, whose lodges are in the Black Hills of the Cheyennes, four hundred miles off. It is these awful distances that make our problem out here so difficult. For instance, a saw-mill was sent out, but, on unpacking, some pipe was missing; it was telegraphed for, but a wrong one sent from St. Louis, and now the chances are that the mill will not get to work until October. Still Major —— and the quartermaster think they can manage to get things working well, and also be ready to share in an undertaking to punish the horse-thieving Indians. Before I discuss this subject I must endeavor to tell all that is known on this vital question. Ever since the California emigration this road has been travelled as common as the old national road, and the Indians kept clear of it; since then all the Sioux have been driven west from Minnesota and the Missouri river, and the mountain region of Montana, Colorado, and Utah is being settled up with gold miners and rancheros, so that poor Indian finds himself hemmed in. The Indian agents over on the Missouri tell him to come over here for hunting, and from here he is turned to some other quarter; and so the poor devil naturally wriggles against his doom. The settlements of Montana and Colorado seem now to be too strong for the Indians, who turn on our roads, when the trains string out and men scatter and straggle from the trains. Everybody, by travelling days and weeks without seeing an Indian, thinks it all humbug, and rides off a ways and finds himself surrounded and gone. All the murders this year are of this kind, and aggregate some twenty-five to thirty, and mostly about two hundred and fifty miles from here northeast, on the waters which flow into the Powder river and the Yellowstone. General Pope's order last spring required Colonel Carrington, of the eighteenth, with one battalion, to open a new road from here to Montana. Before that time the trains went away round by Salt lake, or by Fort Hall. This new road is some three hundred or four hundred miles shorter. He was ordered to make three new posts, one at Reno and two beyond. Carrington marched and dropped two companies at Reno, and travelled on to a place which he called the forks of the river, which he selected as the site of Fort Philip Kearny. He describes the position as impregnable to all the Indians, with good timber close at hand, and fine coal-beds, and a good soil. He has also selected the site of another post beyond, which he calls C. F. Smith. These three posts he proposes to occupy as points of security on the road leading hence to Montana. The Indians have made no opposition to the troops, but they have hung around and driven off horses out at grass with insufficient guards, and have, as I before stated, killed some twenty-five men, mostly citizens belonging to trains, who wandered off too far from their main parties. A good many trains of government stores, and of stores for Montana, have gone over the road this season, and none have been attacked in force, but have been harassed by small bands of hostile Indians. General Hazen has gone up the road under instructions of General Cooke, commanding the department, and will soon report at full length. The road is important, and must be opened and made secure. I do not want to be involved in a general Indian war, and think it can be avoided; but we must first finish the line of posts, and then so garrison them that each commanding officer can send out strong detachments capable of handling any of these marauding parties. It may be and will become necessary next year to combine all spare troops and send them to the Black Hills on the Big Cheyenne, where it is reported these hostile bands have their families and lodges.

I have met a good many Indians who profess to be friendly, and have generally referred them to the local commanders and advised them to settle down on reserves near some one of our military posts where the commanding officer

would be acquainted with them and discriminate between the friendly and hostile bands. The great difficulty is that the Indians, though classed as Sioux, Cheyennes, Arrapahoes, &c., are not acting in bands, but the older Indians generally profess friendship and an inability to restrain their young braves, who go off on their own hook and commit these acts of murder and horse-stealing. They will sign any treaty for the sake of the annuities, but care no more for their part of the contract than if it were waste-paper. There is a universal feeling of mistrust on both sides, and this will sooner or later result in a general outbreak. The whites who are looking for gold kill Indians just as they would kill beasts, and they also pay no regard for treaties; so that I see no good resulting from these treaties so long as the Indians themselves do not profess to be bound by them further than they are to their individual interest.

We must go on as now, until by law all the Indians are put in our control—a thing that must be done sooner or later. To-morrow I will start for Cheyenne pass and the new post of John Buford, and by way of the Cache la Poudre pass to Denver, which I will reach about September 14 or 15.

Since I left Missouri, General Hancock has withdrawn some troops from Kansas for Missouri. My opinion is that this is not right. We need all we have on the lines of travel on the plains, and more too, and have nothing to spare to enter into the political contest of Missouri. As soon as the new regiments in process of enlistment are advanced, we may then have some men to maintain general order at the November elections. I have so telegraphed to General Hancock, and will be back in time to give this matter my personal attention. I want the department commanders to give their personal attention to these Indian matters, lest by neglect we be drawn into a universal war on the plains.

I will write again from Denver.  
Your friend,

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

General JNO. A. RAWLINS,  
*Chief of Staff, &c., Washington, D. C.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMY UNITED STATES.

Official :

GEO. K. LEET,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

DENVER, *September 12, 1866.*

DEAR GENERAL: I wrote you last from Fort Laramie. On the day appointed, viz., September 1, I started with my five ambulances and a mounted escort of twenty men for the new post on the Big Laramie, now called John Buford, distant one hundred and twenty miles. Our route for the first eighteen miles was over a high broken ridge, devoid of water or timber, but pretty good grass; to the valley of the Chugwater; thence we followed its valley to its very source, for fifty miles, with fine water, grass, and enough wood for camp purposes. The pass from head of Chugwater over to Horse creek is easy and good. Horse creek rises to the west, in the Black Hills, and was a fine clear stream, with good grass, but not a vestige of bush or tree. From Horse creek over to the Lodge-pole the hills are steeper, but smooth; and at ninety miles from Laramie we struck the Salt Lake road, which follows the Lodge-pole at the point where in former years was a camp of troops known as Camp Walbach, of which nothing remains but the ruins of some old stone and sod chimneys. Here we turned due west, and begun the ascent of the Cheyenne pass. The road is hard and good, ascending steadily for twenty miles, the whole character

of the country changing from the naked mountainous prairie to beautiful mountain scenery. Fine trees begin with the pass and become larger and more close up to the very summit, where there is really the best body of timber I have seen yet. I found there a small detachment of eighteen men, of the eighteenth infantry, getting out logs for the new post, John Buford, ten miles distant. From the summit is a magnificent view to the west; Laramie plains beginning at our feet, and the main range of the Rocky mountains, with its higher points covered with snow, to the south and west. We descended by a steep hill in five miles to the plain, and five miles to the new post. This post is designed to be at the junction of the Big Salt Lake road that follows the Lodge-pole, and the other a stage road which comes from Denver. We found Major Mizner there with two companies of the eighteenth, and some detachments of the sixth United States volunteers, engaged in building the post. It has made good progress, from the abundance of materials, and before winter Major Mizner will have his two companies well sheltered, with stores enough for his command. On the whole it is well chosen, and will cover the two roads in question, and could easily be made a good depot for troops to operate towards Salt lake, or to the north and west. I saw or heard of no Indians since last year, when they were very troublesome there. You will remember this is the post that Colonel Babcock thought ought to be further west, at the point where the stage road crosses the North Fork of the Platte, some thirty miles west of Fort Halleck, which is abandoned. I will let Colonel Mizner finish the post, subject to General Cooke's orders as to the limit; but should the mountain Indians come down again on the road, it might be well to establish a single company on the North Platte, for the interval now unguarded from John Buford to Fort Bridger is about three hundred miles, too long a gap in such an important line of travel. You probably know that all the stages travel by Denver, but the telegraph poles go away round to the north by Laramie; but I found poles on the ground, and afterwards met parties building a new telegraph line along the stage road from Denver to Fort Bridger. This, when done, will make a double line of telegraph from Fort Sedgwick to Salt lake, the old one as now, by Laramie, and the new one by Denver. The new fort is not on this stage road, but six miles east, yet in sight. Its location seems to have been determined by a small but living stream of water, one and a half mile back of Big Laramie creek, whose branches are very low and liable to overflow. I saw the stage agent, who told me he could make a new road by the post as short and as good as the present one, and I also learned that the telegraph line in course of construction will be through the fort, so that it will be in easy communication. After two days at John Buford I dismissed my escort back to Laramie, and started for Denver without escort, none being necessary. The road goes south over the plain for fifteen miles, when it ascends by an easy road of only five miles to the summit, and then begins to descend by the Cache la Poudre pass. Laramie plains must be a full thousand feet above the "plains" east of the mountains, for when we were there, September 5th and 6th, it was real cold, ice forming on the surface of the water, and a heavy frost at night. The ascent from the plains to the summit of the pass does not seem over a thousand feet, when the descent begins to the narrow and steep valley of a branch of the Cache la Poudre. At thirty miles we came to a stage station, quite noted for its beauty of scenery and a fine trout stream called Virginia Water. After leaving Virginia Water the road takes over the hills, and in thirty miles descends to the vast plain, near a small group of farms on the main Cache la Poudre called La Porte, and four miles below we found Camp Collins. An officer and twenty-five men of the sixth United States volunteers were there guarding some stores, and I notified the officer that he was to march to Fort Kearny for muster out, and that he should move when the rest of his company moved from Fort John Buford. They await some of their own men from Bridger. Camp Collins is of no use, but I

found there some of the best storehouses I have yet seen. I ordered the quartermaster here to transfer all serviceable stores to John Buford, and give Major Mizner permission to remove the storehouses if they will bear it. I would recommend that the reservation there be given up to settlers, only it is possible the Pacific railroad may in the end be located up Cache la Poudre pass, in which event the camp there would be of some military value.

From Camp Collins to Denver, seventy-five miles, the road lies along the base of the mountains, crossing in succession Big and Little Thompson's creeks, Boulder, Coal, and Clear creek, to Denver, which is on the South Platte, on the junction of Cherry creek. All those creeks come out of the snow-clad mountains with a cold, clear water which in the past six years has been made to irrigate fields and farms of wheat, oats, and corn. These are very important. Of course, at first farmers worked for the high prices at the gold mines, when everything had to be hauled from the Missouri river. Soon, however, competition and new farms lowered prices, and now flour, oats, corn, and grain and vegetables of all kinds are produced here and hereabouts equal in quality with any at home, and prices far below what they could be brought out for. The system has only begun, for in each of the creeks I have seen not one-fiftieth of the water has been diverted from its channels; and when all is, I would not be surprised if these mountain streams would irrigate and make most fruitful one-fourth of all the land from the base of the mountain out for fifty miles. You will at once see how important it is for the military question. When we can find on the base of the Rocky mountains and Utah the food for man and beast at prices reasonable and moderate, then the Indian question and the Mormon question are easy of solution. We ought to and must encourage this system of irrigation and cultivation to its very utmost limit, and I shall extend my visit some two hundred and fifty miles further down along the mountains, and will write back to Laramie and posts in that region, instructing commanding officers to encourage, by all means, a similar style of agriculture as far north as possible. Nothing could be raised out here by the ordinary rains; but these water-courses, fed by snow, are a better substitute, and the land lies exactly right for irrigation. Almost all of India, Egypt, south of Spain, Mexico, and Chili are cultivated in this way, and they have been at various epochs of the world's history the granaries of the world. In Utah the system of irrigation has in a very few years converted an absolute desert into fruitful fields and gardens. The plains lying along the foot of the Rocky mountains present a vast field for the same species of culture, and I shall hope that the small beginning I have seen will be the initiation of a system of agriculture that will prove of inestimable wealth to our people, and the solution of the difficult military problem caused by the vast distances without food for man or beast.

We met outside of Denver the mayor and some gentlemen, who took us in hand, and have been and are putting us through. Last night we had a dinner and ball, which were very creditable, and to-day I must submit to two dinners, one at 3 p. m., and another at 7 p. m. To-morrow I will get off for Garland and San Luis valley. I am told there are farms all the way, and I shall travel without escort.

The question of this as a military post I decide, and emphatically, no. Denver needs no protection. She should raise in an hour's notice one thousand men; and instead of protection, she can and should protect the neighboring settlements that tend to give her support and business. As to a depot, also, I think there is no need of the style and extravagance of a quartermaster's depot, with clerks, stable, shops, &c., &c. It may be the quartermaster's department can buy here lumber and materials and send them with advantage to the posts within reach; but a single quartermaster and a clerk, with a cheap office, can do all this. It is folly to have here stores for distribution. They should go from the depots of Omaha and Leavenworth straight to the posts where needed. I have written fully my

views on this matter to General Easton and Quartermaster General Meigs, and need not bore the general with the subject.

There is a clearness of atmosphere here; cool nights and bright days; very little rain; an utter absence of swamps and trees, or indeed of any vegetation but where there is flowing water in natural or artificial channels; so that, of course, there is perfect health here. I cannot conceive of a more healthy country, especially to persons of weak lungs. I would suggest that next spring you come out with your wife and sojourn here at Denver, or at some of the little towns of the mines, and I doubt not you would experience more relief than from all the doctors or treatment in Washington.

I write in some haste, for I made more appointments than I can well keep.

Weather is now superb, and I propose to make good use of September and October. I will probably write next from Fort Lyon.

As ever, your friend,

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

General JOHN A. RAWLINS,  
*Headquarters of the Army, Washington, D. C.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES,  
*December 11, 1866.*

Official copy :

GEORGE K. LEET,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
*Fort Garland, Colorado, September 21, 1866.*

GENERAL: I wrote you last from Denver, immediately after which I started with the same party in ambulances, without escort, for this post; the road along all its length down in sight of the mountains, with settlements all the way to Pueblo, on the Arkansas; there we forded the Arkansas, and crossed a high prairie divide to the St. Charles and Greenhorn, on both of which streams we found ranches with corn and wheat fields; thence to the Huerfano, which we followed to its source and crossed the Rocky mountains by the Sangre de Cristo pass, making this post on the seventh day; total distance from Denver 205 miles. I learned that General Pope had ordered the building of a new post on the South Fork of the Huerfano, fifteen miles south of the road. I travelled on the east side of the mountains. When abreast of it I sent a courier over with an order to the commanding officer to send to me a staff officer to report. The commanding officer, Colonel A. J. Alexander, of the third United States cavalry, came in person. After consulting with him, Kit Carson, who commands here, and the governor of Colorado, (Cummings,) who came down with me from Denver, I arrived at the conclusion that the new post was unnecessary, and would entail new expense and prove of inadequate use, and I accordingly sent orders by courier to General Carleton, at Santa Fe, that he should not build the new post, but use the troops (three companies) here or at Fort Union, already built at great cost and fulfilling all the objects in view.

The Ute Indians, who have lived in this valley and the mountain country round about, have been reduced to a condition of absolute poverty that is painful to behold. They are scattered, and not hostile further than a necessity compels them to steal occasionally a cow or sheep to appease hunger. Of course the rangers, Americans and New Mexicans, want the troops to kill them all, but the governor of Colorado, who is also ex-officio commissioner of Indian affairs, is now engaged in collecting them and removing them still further west to the

Uncompagre. He is confident of success, and so is Carson, and I will not permit them to be warded against as long as they are not banded together in parties large enough to carry on war. I have travelled myself through them without danger or form of danger. I have seen wagons hauling wood and hay and grain right through their country without molestation, and all the talk of war is to get troops sent here to make a market for the grain and stock the people have for sale at famine prices. Four companies here will make it impossible for the Utes to combine, and if scattered hunting parties steal a cow or sheep now and then to keep from starving, I will not construe it war. On any of the streams east of the mountain, say the Fountain qui Bouit, the Huerfano, the Arkansas, or Purgatory, the settlers could in three hours assemble fifty men, ample for protection against any band of Ute warriors that has been seen for years. An instance occurred before Colonel Alexander had fairly got to his new post, Fort Stevens. A runner came from the ranche of one Doyle, that the Indians were plundering and stealing. He hurried off a detachment, which travelled seventy miles, and when they reached Doyle they found more than fifty whites who professed to have lost seven cattle, but wanted to sell corn at ten cents a pound to the detachment, and other things in proportion. Fortunately, Colonel Alexander had supplied his men, so they bought nothing, and Doyle contented himself with saying soldiers were of no account against Indians. I propose to pass by Doyle's ranche on my return, and I will tell him plainly that our soldiers are not to be used against cattle thieves; but if they have occasion to visit him again, it shall be at his *cost*.

New Mexico has been and now is a difficult problem to solve. It is very large and thinly settled. The New Mexicans are a poor, miserable set as a whole, and white emigrants of our States will not go there unless to make a fortune out of the military expenses.

There appears to be a civil government there, but as useless as possible, and the military is expected to do all the dirty work. General Carleton has the third cavalry *full*, the fifth infantry filled by recruits, two black regiments, and yet thinks it necessary to retain a part of the New Mexican volunteers. General Pope approved of this, but I have written him that he must muster out all volunteers and bring himself down to the regular army; that he must not use soldiers for guards to towns such as Santa Fé, Albuquerque, &c, strong enough to guard themselves, or to those horse and cattle thieves. I learn also that he has collected at the Bosque Redondo, Fort Stanton, all the Navajoes, eight thousand in number, who are held as prisoners of war and have to be fed as such. This is a matter of some importance, and is most costly. I think we could better send them to the Fifth Avenue Hotel to board, at the cost of the United States. General Pope recommends they be removed to the Indian territory west of Arkansas, where they could be fed at less cost. This whole subject of the maintenance of the Indians, who wont work and must be fed or turned loose, is one that should be solved at Washington, and not thrown on us.

I have called for full and specific reports from General Carleton, which, with those of General Pope, I will digest and send to the general some time this winter, that we may begin next year with some intelligible system. I will start at 2 p. m. to-day on my return, and will visit Fort Stevens, to be certain that I am right as to the conclusion I have stated in regard to it. I will then go down to the mouth of the Huerfano, and thence along all the posts to Fort Riley. My present impression is, that we should have a thin line of infantry posts, *as now*, from the head of the railroad building out to Smoky Hill, to this Fort Garland, at the head of the Rio Grande; that somewhere near Bent's old fort, or the mouth of the Huerfano, on the Arkansas, we should construct, *next spring*, a post or cantonment for a full regiment of cavalry; that the infantry posts should be constructed as main points of security and deposits of stores; but that the regiment of cavalry, posted as above, should at all times be prepared to act offen-

sively against any hostile Indians, forward and back, and to the right and left. To expect infantry to chase Indians is an absurdity, and to scatter our cavalry, as now, in single companies, simply tires them down.

A similar system on the Platte, with the reserve of cavalry at Fort Laramie. Then restrict the Sioux north of the Platte, and Navajoes and Utes south of the Arkansas, would leave nothing between those streams but the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, that we can make keep to their reservations. This will give us a great central belt of security that will soon fill up as far as the soil will admit, and afterwards we could branch northwest to Montana, and southwest to New Mexico. We should encourage rail and stage lines, for they have stations every ten miles that are a great advantage to us. After this year we will be able to maintain cavalry well and cheaply at the head of the Platte and the Arkansas. Even this year the abundance of corn on the tributaries of the Arkansas will compel the farmers to sell corn at four or five cents a pound, which is cheap and reasonable. Single, strong adobe houses are the best for quarters and stables, and already the saw-mills along the mountains can supply lumber and shingles very cheap.

With the troops now in my command, counting the new regiment of white cavalry at Rilcy, and the two black regiments appointed at Leavenworth and Jefferson barracks, I think next spring I can dispose matters so as to make Indian wars of any magnitude an impossibility after this year, and I apprehend none *now*. It is very important that I and the generals of departments should come out to extreme parts, for otherwise every little drunken quarrel or horse-thieving is exaggerated into a big bug-bear.

This is a high, healthy valley, eight thousand feet above the sea, surrounded by mountains covered with snow. I and my party are in fine health, and none the worse for travelling *without* tents. I propose to travel hence to Fort Lyon, through the Cheyenne and Arapahoe country, *without* escort

With great respect, &c.,

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

General JOHN A. RAWLINS,  
*Chief of Staff to General Grant, Washington, D. C.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMY UNITED STATES.

Official copy :

GEO. K. LEET,  
*Major and Assistant Adjutant General.*

---

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
*Fort Lyon, Colorado, September 30, 1866.*

GENERAL: I wrote you last from Fort Garland; soon after which I began my return trip, crossing the mountain by the Sangre de Cristo pass, at the foot of the eastern slope; forty miles this side of Garland we turned south, along the base of the mountain, and in fifteen miles struck the Cuchara, a branch of the Huerfano, at a ranche belonging to a Mr. Francisco; then turning up stream and west five miles, we came to the sight of the new post, Fort Stevens, close up under the Spanish Peaks. General Pope, in his recent tour, ordered General Carleton to build a new post somewhere in that neighborhood to protect the new and growing settlements on the Purgatory, the Huerfano, and Fountain qui Bouit. General Carleton devolved the selection on others, who chose that location, but it was all wrong. A near inspection of the maps sufficed to convince me of this, and a more careful examination in person con-



firmed me in the conclusion, that troops at that point would be powerless to do any good, and the expense of labor and money in building a new post there would be lost. Fort Garland is well placed, and if garrisoned by four companies—two of infantry and two of cavalry—can guard against all danger from the Utes. To guard the settlements against the plains Indians, the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, &c., the troops should be near the mouth of the Huerfano, and even better, near Pueblo. This season is too far advanced now to build posts, and I renewed my order to General Carleton not to attempt to build Fort Stevens, but to use those troops at Garland and Union; I found there one company of the 3d cavalry, Brevet Colonel Alexander, and two companies of the 57th colored United States infantry, whose time will expire in December, when they must be discharged. As to the future distribution of our limited number of troops, I will write at length when I have seen all.

On the 24th instant, in a heavy snow-storm, we started down the Cuchara to Francisco's ranche, there crossed to its north side, and struck northeast twenty-five miles to the Huerfano; next day followed down the Huerfano thirty miles to the ranche of Colonel or Captain Craig, formerly of the army. This is unanimously regarded as the best ranche in this region, and surely reflects great credit on Craig. He is a gentleman of fine intelligence, and seems to have gone into the business for life. He has built him a good house, which is well furnished, contrasting with the dirty jacals and huts that prowl all around him. He has brought around him about fifty families of New Mexicans who stand in the relation of peons to him, cultivating his land on shares and buying all provisions and supplies of him, which makes them absolutely dependent. About a mile and a half above his house he has built a substantial dam across the Huerfano, which is a beautiful stream fed by the springs and melting snows of the mountains. This dam divides the water right and left into canals which supply the intricate system of swollen ditches as acequias, by which he can irrigate all the bottom land for miles below him. He has this year 2,300 acres in a good state of cultivation, mostly in corn, which gives him from forty to sixty bushels of corn to the acre. He and his neighbors produce all sorts of vegetables of the best kind, and have demonstrated beyond all question that all the valley of the upper Arkansas can be made by irrigation to produce all that is needed by man and beast. The soil of these valleys looks as poor as a desert, with its sage bushes and green wood, but the side-hills and extensive plateaus, boundless as the sea, yield the best kind of gramma and bunch grasses, as nutritious for horses and cattle as timothy or red-top. Still, this grass, though so abundant, stands so thin that it will not pay for cutting as hay. Craig, formerly a colonel or captain in the army, and owner of a large ranche on the Huerfano, may be taken as the best sample of the class of men who are settling along the east base of the mountains. He has thoroughly proved the ability to produce, but there comes the more difficult problem of consumption. Who is to buy his corn? The miners of Colorado, in the mountains two hundred miles distant, will take some, but the cost of hauling is enormous. The few travellers and stage companies will buy a little; but he, and all situated like him, look to our military for a market, and that is the real pressure for garrisons and Indian war. The Utes are hunters and peaceable, and the Cheyennes and Arapahoes are off after the buffalo. God only knows when, and I do not see how, we can make a decent excuse for an Indian war. I have travelled all the way from Laramie without a single soldier or escort. I met single men unarmed travelling along the road, as in Missouri. Cattle and horses graze loose, far from their owners, most tempting to a starving Indian, and though the Indians might easily make a descent on the scattered ranches, yet they have not done so, and I see no external signs of a fear of such an event, though all the people are clamorous for military protection. I received at Puebla a petition to that effect,

signed by so many names that I could not help answering that the names to the petition exceeded in number the strength of any of our small garrisons. Still I do think that the efforts of these people to transform the desert into productive farms is worthy the encouragement of the general government, and I will write of the subject again at length.

After spending part of the day and the night at Craig's, I resumed the journey down the Huerfano twenty miles to its mouth, then forded the Arkansas, and turned up five miles to the house of Colonel Boone, a man of note in this quarter. He also has a good two-story frame house, with his family, embracing the wife of Colonel Elmer Otis, but she happened to be away on a visit to some neighbor, and I did not see her. Colonel Boone was at home, and I talked with him freely on the above and all other points of interest. He is an old Indian man; was on the plains with General Ashley as early as 1824, and has been more or less connected with the Indians ever since. He also made the treaty with the Cheyennes and Arapahoes in 1860. He cultivates a farm, and lives, seemingly, as little apprehensive of danger from Indians as the rest of the people. After camping a night near his house, we turned down the Arkansas, and travelled in three days one hundred miles to this post (Fort Lyon.) I did not see or hear of an Indian the whole distance, though we passed the whole length of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe reservation. Here I find one company of the second cavalry, (Gordon's,) which starts to-morrow for Laramie, under my orders to place all that regiment along the Platte. Those fragments of companies of the fifth United States volunteers remain till the arrival of two companies of the third infantry, soon expected to replace them, when they go to Leavenworth for muster out. This post was built by four companies of cavalry, under Major (afterward General) Sedgwick, in the winter of 1859-'60. It is on the flat valley of the Arkansas, doubtless to escape the high wind that prevails over the higher plateau. In consequence, when it does rain, the water stands till absorbed. The buildings are extensive, all of single story, with flat roof of cottonwood timber, covered with dirt. The walls are of stone, got out of the neighboring hills, laid up roughly with mud. The men's quarters have no floors, but the officers' quarters have floors, doors, and windows, doubtless sent out in wagons. The post is about as good as could be expected under the circumstances, but is not fit for troops. Anybody looking through them can see full reason for the desertions that have prevailed so much of late years. I believe it is now universally conceded, that if the necessities of our growing empire demand that troops should be stationed in this barren country, they should have decent houses and decent beds. Their food and clothing are all that could be asked for. I shall, therefore, instruct the new commanding officer to at once prepare plans and estimates for a new two-company post to replace this, to submit them this fall to General Hancock, ready for approval and commencement of work by spring, and, as this site is not good, to select a new site a little higher up, about the mouth of the Purgatory. Enclosed please find a copy of his instructions. I would make this a two-company post, with the reserved understanding that, sooner or later, we must build a considerable post on the Arkansas, higher up, at a point common to the road going to Mexico, to Denver, and the country beyond the mountains towards Grand river. General Hancock designs for this post this winter two companies of the third infantry and one of cavalry, for whom there are abundant supplies of all kinds, and the quarters are ample, such as they are.

I propose to come in by the line of posts to Riley, and thence to St. Louis, which I expect to reach not far from 20th of October, when I will submit to the general a short, comprehensive plan for this whole frontier, which I believe will be sufficient and economical.

The quicker we get our garrison and military establishment down to the regular army, the quicker we will secure economy. All the people west of the

Missouri river look to the army as their legitimate field of profit and support, and the quicker they are undeceived the better for all.

With great respect,

W. T. SHERMAN.

General JOHN A. RAWLINS,

*Chief of Staff to General Grant, Washington, D. C.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES,

*December 11, 1866.*

Official copy :

\_\_\_\_\_, A. A. G.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,

*Fort Lyon, September 30, 1866.*

SIR : After an examination of the site of Fort Lyon, its buildings and out-houses, I am satisfied that the post is badly located, and not fit to be continued as a United States military post. You will therefore expend as little money and labor on the post as possible—just enough to make your officers and men comfortable during the winter. You may at once proceed to examine well the ground at Twelve-mile Point, twenty-five miles above Lyon, on the north bank of the Arkansas, just above the mouth of the Purgatory, prepare the best map you are able, and make estimates and plans for a good two-company post, with good buildings and shingle roofs.

Do not be in too great hurry, but take time, say all November, and collect from the saw-mills about Denver and Puebla full estimates of all kinds of lumber delivered on the site; also as to stone, lime, &c. Single-story adobe or stone buildings, with a good cellar below, and half attic above, seem to me best adapted to this climate. Soldiers on extra duty should get out stone, and aid in getting up their own and officers' quarters; but hired mechanics should carry up the buildings and do the finer work. Make your estimates as close as possible, looking to the work being done next year, and submit them, through proper intermediate commanders, to General Hancock, who will notify you if they are approved, and when the work should be begun. I think many of the wings, timbers, and floorings of the present Fort Lyon can be used again.

Also look to having a free bridge across the Arkansas near the post, to give you access to the large pasture bottom land opposite, and so open the true route of travel to Santa Fé up the Purgatory.

The ground just below where the present road touches the Arkansas, twelve miles east of Bent's old fort, appears to me well adapted for a post—high, well drained, the river washing the bluff, which is not too high, and several small islands, very well placed for a bridge. Yet a more critical examination may develop a better site; anyhow, the new post should not be far from the mouth of the Purgatory, because of the protection, it would naturally give to the farmers of that and the Arkansas valley.

I am, with great respect,

W. T. SHERMAN,

*Lieutenant General Commanding.*

COMMANDING OFFICER,

*Fort Lyon, Colorado.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES,

*December 11, 1866.*

Official copy :

GEO. K. LEET, A. A. G.

CAPE VINCENT, NEW YORK,

October 26, 1866.

GENERAL: In compliance with instructions from your office dated April 2, 1866, and received by me in New York city, April 5, 1866, I reported without delay to Major General Sherman, Saint Louis, Missouri.

General Sherman having received no instructions with respect to my tour of inspection, a telegram of inquiry was sent to the general-in-chief, and a reply received directing my destination to be changed from the overland route to the Missouri river or northern route.

The following are the instructions I received from Major General Sherman, and by which I was governed during my tour, viz:

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, April 19, 1866.

COLONEL: From General Grant's letters and official notice for you to report to me for instructions, I infer that it is the intention of the War Department to avail itself of this season to make a thorough inspection of the new Territories between the Mississippi river and Pacific ocean, that the best general plan may be arranged for stimulating the settlement of these Territories, and for protecting their people during the period of their infancy. To you has been assigned the part of Montana Territory, with its roads east and west. I therefore enclose you a copy of General Orders No. 3 of this date, which gives you all the authority I have to call for transportation, guards, escorts, and whatever military assistance we possess. I regret to say that by reason of the discharge of the volunteer troops, and the delay in increasing the regular army, we do not now possess a force adequate to the wants of this extensive region of country; but you may assure the people whom you meet that their safety and the protection of their interests will command our earnest attention as soon as Congress increases the regular army, and as soon as, by inspections and explorations now in progress or in contemplation, we can act with due regard to the interests of all alike. If the Territory of Montana be rich in gold, as represented, and has enough fertile lands to produce the grain and vegetables necessary for its inhabitants, as also hay and corn, or barley, for animals, there will be little trouble in time to afford them troops to make them comparatively safe whilst engaged in their peaceful pursuit of wealth; but they should, this year and next, not scatter too much, but confine their efforts to mines already known, and to lands that will not disturb the Indians in a possession either guaranteed by treaty or inferred from long habit.

Copies of General Pope's communications and orders will put you in possession of all authentic information; but you had better confer also with General Cooke at Omaha, and possess yourself with his views, as he is specially charged with the protection of the vast country bordering on the Upper Missouri and Mississippi.

We have settled down to the conviction that the routes of trade and travel to Montana will follow three routes:

1. By the Missouri river.
2. By land following the Platte to Laramie; thence along the east base of the Rocky mountains, by Fort Reno and head of Yellowstone, to Virginia City.
3. From the neighborhood of Fort Pierre to the valley of the Big Cheyenne to the Black Hills, and thence across to the Powder river, there falling into the second route above described.

All of these roads will be partially guarded this year, and our efforts will be directed to make them more and more secure and easy of travel each year.

I wish you to follow the first named route by the valley of the Missouri river, inspecting it closely, beginning with Omaha, visiting each of the posts of that route referred to in General Pope's orders Nos. 27 and 33, and sending

back to me by the speediest means partial and confidential reports of your observations. You cannot be too full and explicit, especially in describing the natural resources of the country as to materials for buildings, character of soil, coal, and any minerals likely to attract emigrants and settlements. It seems to me that inasmuch as our people have sprung across the zone of desert prairie so well described by General Pope, it is all-important that our chain of military posts should be along that line which affords the best chances for farming and for settlements. The dangers and privations of the long journey will be better diminished by getting as many settlers along the route travelled as possible, so that corn, oats, and forage may be produced, and obviate the necessity of hauling these things at such heavy costs by trains. I want to send cavalry up into that remote region, but it would be absurd to attempt it till we know forage can be had there at some price below its weight in gold. The distance hence to Montana is so great that I do not expect you can cover much of it by your personal observations, but you may collect information on these points from other parties, being careful to state the authority.

Above Fort Union, at the mouth of the Yellowstone, we will have no garrison this year, but it is believed you will have no particular trouble in making your way safely to Fort Benton, Helena, and Virginia City, partly by steamboat and partly by land, joining some one of the numerous trading and transportation companies which already exist there. Arrived at Montana, make the best use of the season to see all that is possible, and then go on to the Pacific, keeping along the routes leading to Walla-Walla, if possible. It is possible Montana may be reached from that quarter easier than from this, but it is not well to take the word of interested traders, but see with your own eyes and judge from your own stand-point.

Report to me formally and informally all matters in my limits of territorial command, and do the same to General Halleck after passing into Idaho, making, of course, to your own chief, in Washington, the accustomed reports more at leisure. I advise you to take plenty of time, and not hurry unless forced by the season or some other cause and; wishing you generally a good time,

I am your obedient servant,

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*Major General Commanding.*

Colonel D. B. SACKETT,

*Inspector General U. S. Army, St. Louis, Missouri.*

This report will be made up almost wholly of my reports already rendered to Major General Sherman.

On April 29, 1866, I wrote as follows:

I found little or nothing to look into at Omaha. General Cooke has but recently arrived; his staff officers, clerks, &c., are somewhere on their way up the river.

General Wheaton and staff were about packed up, making their arrangements to go east.

There is a small detachment of mounted troops, composed of some ten or a dozen men, that General Wheaton has had at his headquarters, that belong to General Pope's department, and the regiment to which these men belong is stationed at Fort Laramie. General Cooke says he has no use for them, and does not wish them at his headquarters. It would be well to muster the detachment out of service, or have it ordered back to its regiment.

As to the road from the mouth of the Niobrara to Fort Reno, I am informed

General Wheaton and other disinterested persons that it is impracticable,

and can never be made a good or desirable road. General Wheaton tells me he is satisfied that certain citizens, interested in this route, paid the officers who passed over it last summer quite a large sum of money to get them to report favorably upon it. Emigrants who might wish to take this route would have but very little further to go to strike the Platte route, which is a much better and safer one in all respects. General Wheaton regards it as time, labor, and money thrown away, to have anything to do with this route. The general should be well posted on this subject, as he has passed over a portion of the country through which this road must go, and has been stationed here in command for some time.

The Missouri river is very high, overflowing its banks and all the bottom lands. At Omaha, one is compelled to procure a skiff to get from the steamboat landing (a sand bank) to the town. A portion of the Union Pacific railroad has been washed away, and should the river rise much more, the depots, shops, &c., of this road will be in great danger of destruction. I am now on my way to Sioux City and Fort Randall, but with this stage of water and rapid current, it renders the progress of steamers very slow.

On May 5th, as follows :

I learn from men who have just come down the Missouri in a Mackinaw boat, from above Fort Union, that serious troubles are anticipated with the Blackfeet Indians, near Fort Benton. These men report that both Indians and white men have been killed, and that there are great fears in the northern part of Montana of a general uprising of that powerful tribe. It appears to me that every effort and precaution should be made to avoid such a war. These Blackfeet live so near the border—in fact they live on both sides of the line—that it will be a very difficult matter to punish them; to say nothing of the inconvenience and expense of conducting a campaign in that remote region of our territory. I learn that the Blackfeet are well armed with rifles and bountifully supplied with ammunition which they procure from the Hudson's Bay Company traders. I would respectfully suggest, would it not be well for the destination of some of the troops now on their way up the river to be changed and a four or six company post be established near Fort Benton, say at some point on the river north of Benton, or at the best point to afford the greatest protection to the settlements in the northern portion of Montana? The more I learn of the Niobrara route, the more I am convinced that a soldier should not be sent over it, nor a dollar spent upon it.

By countermanding the order for that expedition, it would give two more companies to work upon the fort to be established on the Big Cheyenne. Further, there can be little or no use of troops at Fort Randall any longer, and the four companies ordered to winter there could take the places of those I suggest to have sent to the neighborhood of Fort Benton. The companies, or a part of them, now on their way to Rice, Berthold, and Union, might continue on and establish the proposed new post.

I am convinced there is urgent necessity for troops in that section of the country, and should the general feel disposed to make the changes I have suggested, I think by sending orders by telegraph to Omaha and by express from there, through by land as far as Rice or Berthold, they would reach these posts before the troops now on the river. That would allow the troops to continue on up the river without disembarking from their transports.

On May 14, 1866, the following :

I have the honor to submit the following report of my inspection of the post of Fort Randall.

Inspected on May 8, 9, and 10.

*Field and staff.*

Lieutenant Colonel Charles C. G. Thornton, fourth United States volunteers, commanding.

First Lieutenant (regimental adjutant) Henry O. Fox, fourth United States volunteers, post adjutant.

First Lieutenant (regimental quartermaster) William H. Blyton, fourth United States volunteers, post quartermaster.

Second Lieutenant Hamer Satcliffe, fourth United States volunteers, post commissary of subsistence.

Assistant Surgeon S. P. Yeomans, seventh Iowa cavalry, post surgeon.

*Non-commissioned staff.*

Hospital steward, Wm. Garlach.

Ordnance sergeant, none at post.

*Garrison.*

Company B, fourth United States volunteers, commanded by Second Lieutenant Joseph C. Riley. Captain William C. Johnston absent on general court-martial at Sioux City, Iowa :

Enlisted men present for duty.....	30
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	26
Enlisted men sick.....	6
Enlisted men absent.....	4
	—
Total.....	66
	==

Company D, fourth United States volunteers, no commissioned officer present with the company. First Lieutenant Robert K. Wilson is acting ordnance officer at Sioux City, Iowa :

Enlisted men present for duty.....	40
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	20
Enlisted men sick.....	6
Enlisted men absent.....	3
	—
Total.....	69
	==

Company K, Iowa cavalry, no commissioned officer present for duty with the company. Captain F. H. Cooper and First Lieutenant Walter Potter are absent on general court-martial at Sioux City, Iowa :

Enlisted men present for duty.....	25
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	26
Enlisted men sick.....	7
Enlisted men absent.....	31
	—
Total.....	69
	==

## REVIEW AND INSPECTION OF TROOPS.

I reviewed the two companies of infantry by themselves, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Thornton. Inspected the company of cavalry on foot, for the reason that the men had no horses. After the review and inspection of the troops, made a general inspection of the quarters of the men and laundresses, the kitchens and messes, the hospital and guard house; examined the post and regimental records, also the company books, accounts, &c.

In company B, fourth United States volunteers, commanded by Second Lieutenant Joseph C. Riley, the appearance of the men was indifferent, the clothing dirty and in many cases ragged; most of the men wore their hair very long and their beards untrimmed. Arms, belts, and cartridge-boxes in pretty fair order, no knapsacks or haversacks, and a small number of canteens. The knapsacks and haversacks had been condemned by an inspector, and turned in or destroyed; and as the regiment was soon to be mustered out of service, none others had been issued. Each man carried twenty rounds of ammunition in his box; it was in very good order and properly cared for.

In company D, fourth United States volunteers, temporarily under the charge of Second Lieutenant Riley, the appearance of the men indifferent. The same remarks will apply to this company as to company B.

In company K, seventh Iowa cavalry, under the charge of a sergeant, the appearance of the men was unsoldierly in the extreme, clothing dirty and ragged, hair and beards long, carbines, revolvers, belts and boxes in poor condition. The men of the company do not carry sabres and are not mounted.

The men of this garrison expect soon to be mustered out of service, and for that reason have not drawn clothing enough of late to make themselves look neat and tidy. For the same reason the officers have not been as particular with their men as they should have been.

## POST, REGIMENTAL, AND COMPANY RECORDS, RETURNS, ETC.

The post order and letter books, &c., do not extend back of the date at which the fourth United States volunteers became its garrison. Current orders and files complete. The companies at this post have no company funds. The company papers of company B, fourth United States volunteers, complete and neatly kept. Returns of clothing, camp and garrison equipage, and of ordnance regularly rendered. In company D, fourth United States volunteers, and company K, seventh Iowa cavalry, the books and papers are not neatly kept, but I think correct. Returns regularly rendered.

## MEN'S QUARTERS, KITCHENS, MESSES, ETC.

The quarters are uninhabitable; built of cottonwood logs, the lower logs of the buildings rotted out; every crack and crevice swarms with bed bugs, fleas, rats, mice, spiders, &c. The quarters are in fair police only; there is no inducement for men to try and keep them in good order. The men sleep out of doors whenever the weather will permit. The kitchens are built of logs, are very low and dark, and not clean. The cooking and messing quite good.

## DRILL.

The colonel commanding informed me he had not had a drill or a dress-parade for months; that it took all the men he had to keep the post in tolerable police and to supply it with wood and water. I did not have the troops drilled, being fully satisfied that they knew little or nothing about it. The cavalry company did not know how to come to an inspection of arms. I had no target practice. The men were so soon to be mustered out of service that I did not consider it worth while to expend ammunition needlessly.



## GUARD-HOUSE.

The guard-house is a log building, in poor order and in bad police. No prisoners confined in the guard-house.

## POST HOSPITAL.

Assistant Surgeon S. P. Yeomans is in charge of the hospital. I should judge him a very good and efficient officer, attentive to his duties. The location of the hospital is a good one. It is well built. The ventilation, however, is bad. It has three wards; room enough for eight or ten beds in each ward. It is filled, as every other building at the post is, with bed-bugs, fleas, &c. The supply of water for the hospital and for the whole garrison has to be hauled from the river. Well-water cannot be used, as it is alkaline. In case of fire, there is no means of extinguishing it at the post. The hospital is quite well supplied with bedding, and in good order. The kitchens and kitchen utensils are clean, and the cooking good. The hospital is rather short of furniture, particularly in chairs, most of them being broken. I condemned a large amount of medical property, which had been accumulating for years. There was no portion of it that would sell or could be repaired. It was of so little use I directed it to be destroyed. The dispensary was in good order, clean, and fully supplied with medicines, the hospital stores and clothing in good order, books neatly and correctly kept, all reports and returns regularly rendered. The laundress of the hospital is the wife of the steward, and lives in one of the wards. At this time there can be no objection to this, as there are very few sick in hospital. There are but four men sick in hospital—one of paralysis and the others of rheumatism. The post is very healthy; no epidemics. Deaths are of very rare occurrence. The instruments in use at the hospital are in very good order. There are several sets, more or less out of order, requiring sharpening or other slight repairs. They are not required here, and should be sent to the medical director or purveyor to be disposed of or put in order. They cannot be repaired here, and would bring little or nothing if sold.

## POST ORDNANCE.

The ordnance storehouse is built of logs, is dry and in good condition; it is near the guard house, and under the eye of the sentinel on post No. 1. The supply of ammunition and ordnance stores is not large, but ample for the wants of the garrison.

## QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT.

The public buildings, quartermaster's property, clothing, camp and garrison equipage, are under the charge of First Lieutenant William H. Blyton, fourth United States volunteers.

## FUNDS.

Amount of funds on hand, \$120 50. This amount was received from sales of clothing, &c., to officers. The post quartermaster makes no disbursements; all are made by the chief quartermaster at department headquarters.

## PERSONS EMPLOYED.

There are no citizens employed. The interpreter, (a negro,) who has been employed at this post for a number of years, and is a most excellent man, (so I am informed,) was discharged April 30, 1866, by order of Brevet Brigadier

General Easton. He had pay due him from March 1, at \$50 per month, amounting to \$100. He still acts as interpreter, and it is impossible for the commanding officer to get along without one; and I would respectfully suggest that this man be re-employed immediately, and that he be allowed pay from the date of his discharge, as he has performed the duty all the while, and is still performing it, and that he be paid the \$100 now due him.

There are 28 enlisted men on duty in the quartermasters' department, viz: 2 blacksmiths; 1 saddler; 1 clerk; 9 teamsters; 1 acting quartermaster's sergeant; 12 men on ferry-boat, and 2 carpenters. No more, in my opinion, than is actually required.

#### BUILDINGS.

The quarters at this post are intended for six companies, all built of cottonwood logs with the exception of the set of quarters intended for the commanding officer, which is a frame building, erected at an enormous expense. None of the quarters, either for officers or men, are inhabitable; they are filled with bed-bugs, fleas, rats, mice, &c. The lower logs of the quarters are rotten, and many of the buildings are falling. During the warmer months the officers move out of quarters and live in tents, and the men sleep on the parade to avoid being devoured alive by vermin. While sitting in the commanding officers' quarters two bugs dropped from the ceiling upon me. The bed-bug is, without doubt, indigenous to the cottonwood tree. The laundress's quarters, out-houses, &c, are in a dilapidated state, and not worth repairing; in fact the same remark will apply to all the quarters at the post.

The hospital is a frame building, with a wide piazza on two sides, which renders the wards very dark and ill ventilated. The stable is a well-constructed frame building, ample for the wants of the post. There are five very good frame storehouses, sixty by twenty feet, for the use of the quartermaster's department; also two for the commissary department; one one hundred by twenty feet, the other sixty by twenty feet, affording all the store-room required.

#### QUARTERMASTER'S SUPPLIES, ETC.

*Hay* is cut and delivered on contract made in St. Louis. At this date there is no hay on hand.

*Corn*.—About sixty sacks on hand, and in good order. Early this spring some 57,344 pounds of corn were sent to this post by wagons, from Sioux City; the ice was breaking up on the river, and it was impossible to cross. The corn was stored in a building on the north bank. With the breaking up of the ice came an unprecedented rise in the river, which carried away storehouse and corn; when the river fell, some few sacks of corn were found, but in so damaged a state that Colonel Thornton inspected and condemned it, directing it to be issued to the starving Indians then encamped near the post.

*Wood*.—There is very little to be had; the supply is cut and hauled by enlisted men. The nearest wood is about four miles from the post.

*Water*.—The supply has to be hauled from the river. Well-water cannot be used, owing to its alkaline properties.

*Means of transportation*, with the exception of the horses, is in very good order; the mules are a little gaunt for the want of hay, the grazing being still poor and of very little use to animals. Horses cannot be kept in condition at Randall; mounted troops should not be sent there. The hay and grass the horses must eat, grown upon these lands, causes their hoofs and tails to drop off, and in many cases kills them. To keep horses in any kind of condition, the hay used at the post has to be cut about nine miles above, and on the north side of the river.

There are at the post 23 horses, 2 serviceable and 21 unserviceable; 40 mules, serviceable; 15 oxen, serviceable; 21 wagons, 15 serviceable and 6 unserviceable; 2 ambulances, serviceable.

## CLOTHING, CAMP AND GARRISON EQUIPAGE.

The clothing on hand is in good order. Certain articles are wanting to make the supply complete; but the requisition had been made for them, and the quartermaster had received notification that they had been shipped to him. From the good order in which I found things in and around the quartermaster's department at this post, I must give First Lieutenant Wm. H. Blyton, fourth United States volunteers, the credit of being an attentive and faithful officer in the discharge of his duties.

## COMMISSARY DEPARTMENT.

The commissary department is under the charge of Second Lieutenant Satchliffe, fourth United States volunteers.

## FUNDS.

Amount on hand \$156 38, arising from the sales of provisions to officers. No disbursements since his last return.

## COMMISSARY PROPERTY.

There is very little property on hand, and it is in serviceable condition.

## SUBSISTENCE STORES.

The stores are, as a general thing, of good quality and well cared for. There was a large amount of bacon, hams, and flour, which had been on hand a long time before Lieutenant Satchliffe took charge of the department. A board of survey had been ordered upon this meat and flour some time previous to my arrival. I inspected it carefully. The flour (18 barrels) was caked and musty; the bacon (9,379 pounds) and the hams (10,360 pounds) were badly spoiled and filled with maggots. I condemned the whole lot and directed it to be issued to those Indians who had no agent; as they were on the verge of starvation, they would eat it and were very glad to get it; it will moreover save issuing good provisions to them, as they eat the bad with as much if not more relish than they do the good.

Fresh beef is furnished by contract at ten cents per pound, which I should think high; the beef is very good.

*Chaplain.*—There is none at this post.

## GENERAL REMARKS.

It is my opinion that Fort Randall should be abandoned; it is on the wrong side of the river, and of little or no use to the service where it is. No roads lead to or from it; they are all on the north bank. Wood is four miles from the post. Little or no grass grows near to it; the hay has to be cut on the north side of the river. Everything arriving by land must be ferried across the river on a flat-boat, which requires a large detail of men to work. Days at a time communication between the two shores is interrupted; at the formation or breaking up of the ice during freshets, all connection with the north side is cut off. Mules are often drowned; loads of commissary and other stores are capsized or sunk; the flat-boats smashed up or get adrift. Something is constantly happening, for the simple reason that the fort is improperly located—that is, on the wrong side of the river.

The channel of the river is also on the north side of the river; boats to make a landing are compelled to stop two miles below or one mile above the garrison. I can see no use of a six-company post at this point—in fact can see very little use of a post of any kind. If it is absolutely necessary to keep troops at or near this point, one company certainly would be sufficient. In that case I would suggest the building of a new one-company post on the north side of the river, about nine miles above Fort Randall, on a small creek of good water, (Pease creek,) where there is plenty of wood, and on the ground where the hay is now cut for Fort Randall. The frame buildings could be easily taken down and moved to the new point. There is good building-stone to be found on the bank of the river a few miles above where I propose to place the new post, of which I would suggest the quarters for officers and men and for the hospital be built. Such quarters nicely plastered could be kept free of bugs, &c.

The amount that would be saved to the government in a single year in horses, mules, hay, wood, flat-boats, losses in crossing the river, in time, labor, &c., would very near pay the expenses of building a new one-company post.

Before troops can (or should) occupy Fort Randall it must be put in repair, which will amount to rebuilding it, and I have my doubts if even then it can be made inhabitable.

Lieutenant Colonel Thornton, the commanding officer, appears in every respect well fitted for the position he fills. The discipline of his command is good; the men are orderly and respectful.

There can be no inducements for citizens to settle near Fort Randall, as nothing can be raised upon this alkaline soil. The soldiers' gardens, I am informed, do partially succeed, with a great deal of work and attention, about one year in five.

On May 28th, as follows:

I have the honor to submit the following report of my inspection of the post of Fort Sully.

Inspected May 20 and 21.

*Field and staff.*

Lieutenant Colonel John Pattee, seventh Iowa cavalry, commanding post.

Surgeon L. F. Russell, fourth United States volunteers, post surgeon.

Second Lieutenant George Strong, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, acting assistant quartermaster and acting commissary of subsistence.

The lieutenant colonel commanding had no post adjutant and no non-commissioned staff.

*Garrison.*

Company E, fourth United States volunteers, Second Lieutenant L. O. Parker, commanding company; Second Lieutenant Hamer Satcliffe, fourth United States volunteers, commissary of subsistence at Fort Randall:

Enlisted men present for duty . . . . .	46
Enlisted men on special or detached duty . . . . .	18
Enlisted men sick . . . . .	1
Enlisted men in confinement . . . . .	1
Enlisted men absent . . . . .	6
Total . . . . .	72

Company F, fourth United States volunteers, Second Lieutenant William H. Vose, commanding company :

Enlisted men present for duty.....	12
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	7
Enlisted men sick.....	1
Enlisted men in confinement.....	2
Enlisted men absent.....	3
Total.....	25

Detachment of company A, fourth United States volunteers, Second Lieutenant William H. Vose, commanding. This detachment is mounted on ponies :

Enlisted men present for duty.....	2
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	14
Enlisted men sick.....	2
Enlisted men in confinement.....	2
Total.....	20

#### INSPECTION OF TROOPS, ETC.

I inspected each company by itself, and after the inspection of the troops made a general inspection of the quarters, the kitchens, messes, the hospital, guard-house, quartermaster and commissary papers, property, and stores. Examined the post and company records, books, returns, &c.

In company E, fourth United States volunteers, commanded by Second Lieutenant L. O. Parker, the appearance of the men was very good; the clothing, as a general thing, in fair order; most of the men wore their hair quite long, which gave them an untidy appearance; arms, belts, knapsacks, haversacks, and canteens clean and in good order; ammunition in boxes in good condition and well cared for. The men have drawn but little clothing of late, as they soon expect to be mustered out of service. The fine condition of this company shows conclusively that Lieutenant Parker must be an attentive officer to his duties. This company does all the guard duty at the post, and very little of the special or daily duty.

In company F, fourth United States volunteers, commanded by Second Lieutenant William H. Vose, the appearance of the men was indifferent; they wore their hair long; their clothing was dirty, and in most cases ragged; arms, belts, &c., in fair order only; the men had neither knapsacks, haversacks, nor canteens; ammunition in cartridge boxes in fair order only. This is a skeleton company; its ranks are never filled. Lieutenant Vose does not belong to this company, but commands it with a detachment of his own company stationed at this post.

Detachment of company A, fourth United States volunteers, commanded by Second Lieutenant William H. Vose: The men of this detachment are mounted on ponies; they perform all the express and herding duty at the post; they are armed with Sharp's carbine and Colt's navy revolver; arms, &c., in bad order; most of the carbines very rusty, showing great neglect of duty on the part of the men and of Lieutenant Vose, who commands them; the appearance of the men unsoldierly; clothing very dirty, and in most cases ragged; the ponies are in fair order, but poorly attended to; they have had no hay for a long time, but are now improving, the graas being high enough to afford them some sustenance; the stable is badly constructed for comfort or ventilation; the ponies are

crowded together, and, as a general thing, are fed corn upon the ground, so that the greater portion of it is wasted and lost. This company compares very unfavorably with company E of the same regiment.

#### POST AND COMPANY RECORDS, BOOKS, ETC.

The post books are not well kept, nor are they complete. The adjutant's office is in the lieutenant colonel's quarters; he has neither adjutant nor sergeant major; he attends to the papers and other duties of the office himself; he sometimes calls upon Lieutenant Parker, or some private soldier of the command, who writes a good hand, to assist him. The first sergeant of company E turns off the guard, and to judge from what I saw, I came to the conclusion that all military duty was performed in a very loose manner. The lieutenant colonel commanding asked me to excuse him from appearing on inspection, as he had no uniform to wear. His dress while about the garrison is shirt-sleeves, citizen's pants, and moccasins. I was told he appeared at all muster of troops in this same dress. Lieutenant Colonel Pattee may be a most excellent man, but he certainly has not the first element of a soldier in his composition.

The company books, returns, &c., were very neatly kept, and all returns of clothing, camp and garrison equipage, and of ordnance, regularly rendered. These companies have no company funds.

#### QUARTERS, KITCHENS, MESSES, ETC.

The officers and men's quarters are not fit to live in; they are dark, low, and ill ventilated log houses; the rafters or logs upon which the roofs rest are broken and falling in; the roofs and floors are made of mud; the houses are filled with bed-bugs, fleas, rats, &c.; it is next to impossible to keep anything away from the rats; they destroy everything; when the wind blows a fine dust penetrates every crack and covers everything; in the winter snow enters in the same manner, and I am told there is no possible way of keeping it out of such buildings. The men's kitchens are worse than the quarters; they are contracted, dirty, dark, and badly ventilated. The quarters are, in my opinion, uninhabitable and troops should not be required to occupy them. The rations were very good, and the cooking and messing quite well conducted.

#### DRILL.

The troops at Fort Sully have not had a drill for more than a year; they have had no target practice. I did not have them drill or fire at target, knowing it would be time and ammunition thrown away uselessly. It will be a great thing for the service, and for the Indians, when all the volunteers at these posts are mustered out of service and replaced by regular troops.

#### GUARD-HOUSE.

The guard-house is a low log building in bad police; the prison-room is dark, ill ventilated, and filthy; there are four prisoners confined in it undergoing sentences of, or awaiting trial by, general court-martial.

#### POST HOSPITAL.

The hospital is under the charge of Surgeon L. F. Russell, fourth United States volunteers. The building is in no way suited for a hospital; it contains but one ward, about ten by twelve feet, and a small room used as a dispensary. A second ward and a store-room were burned this spring. What remains of the hospital has been made by the surgeon quite comfortable; all about the establishment is in fine order, and very clean, instruments in fine order, books well and neatly kept, supply of medicines and stores ample and in good order. There are but

two men sick in hospital, one of rheumatism, and the other of fever. The good order in which Surgeon Russell keeps such a dilapidated hut convinces me he must be a most efficient officer and very attentive to his duties, and is well fitted for his position. There is no hospital steward at this post, and no soldier detailed to act as such; the surgeon attends to all the duties usually performed by a steward.

#### POST ORDNANCE.

The building used as a magazine and ordnance store-room is in no way suited for this purpose; in case of heavy rains or melting of snow, it is flooded; the floor (mud) was quite wet when I made my inspection. The commanding officer reports a considerable amount of ordnance stores stolen on the occasion of the burning of the hospital. The magazine being so very near the fire, and in great danger, the stores were moved, and during the removal a large amount of them were stolen. The room is locked by an ordinary padlock, and the temptation to steal powder and ball is very great, as the thief can always find ready sale for such articles among the hundreds of Indians constantly swarming around the post. The supply of musket and Sharp's carbine ammunition is ample for the use of the garrison. The room used as a magazine is about as good as any other store-room at the post.

#### QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT.

The quartermaster's department is under the charge of Second Lieutenant George Strong, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers.

#### FUNDS.

Amount on hand, \$306 64, received from sales of clothing to officers, &c. Lieutenant Strong makes no disbursements; they are all made by the chief quartermaster at department headquarters.

#### PERSONS EMPLOYED.

The only person employed at this post is Louis Benoiat, the interpreter; he receives fifty dollars per month for his services. It is absolutely necessary he or some other man should be retained as interpreter, as the post is infested by Indians, who are continually in quest of the commanding officer, the quartermaster, the commissary of subsistence, or the surgeon. There are fifteen enlisted men employed in the department, viz: one clerk, one carpenter, one blacksmith, three teamsters, six herders, and three men on ferry-boat.

#### QUARTERMASTER'S STORES, STOREHOUSES, ETC.

None of the buildings used as storehouses are fit places to store property; they are damp and not secure; the mud roofs leak, and during driving snow-storms everything is covered with it. During the melting of the snow and ice in the spring, most of the floors of the store-rooms and of the quarters are flooded. The rats also give a great deal of trouble, as they eat through all boxes and packages.

The clothing, camp and garrison equipage on hand appeared to be in fair order; nearly the whole amount on hand is retained in the original boxes or packages in which it was received. It is a wonder the clothing is not more damaged, being stored in such wretched storehouses, overrun by rats, that eat through almost everything. An officer told me he was compelled to lock up all he had in sheet-iron boxes, as trunks or wooden boxes were of no use as protection against rats.

## QUARTERMASTER'S SUPPLIES, ETC.

*Hay.*—None on hand. It is furnished by contract at \$29 60 per ton; it is cut at a distance of fifteen to twenty miles from the post; it is not delivered at the garrison, but is put up in stacks on the spot where it is cut, and is hauled by the troops. I regard the price as exceedingly high.

*Corn.*—A supply of good corn had just been received. 2,500 sacks were piled up in the open air, there being no store-room in which to place it. There is very little danger of its being damaged by rain, as there will probably none fall for months, but it will suffer (unless very closely guarded) by rats, soldiers, and Indians.

*Wood.*—There is no wood near the fort; the supply is obtained from Farm island, in the river, about two miles from the post. A supply must be cut and hauled during the winter, as it is almost impossible to get it when the river is open. This island is almost three miles long, with a considerable wood still upon it; but if a five or six company post is to be built from this timber, and it is to furnish fuel for the same force, I fancy Fort Sully will soon share the fate of Fort Pierre (five miles above;) that is, be abandoned on account of the scarcity of fuel.

*Water.*—The supply of water has to be hauled from the river; all well-water is bad, owing to the presence of alkali.

*Lumber.*—There is none of any kind at the post—not sufficient to make a coffin should any one die.

## MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION.

The means of transportation consists of twenty-one serviceable mules, five serviceable horses, nine serviceable wagons, nineteen unserviceable oxen.

The animals, with the exception of the oxen, are in fair serviceable condition. The oxen were placed on Farm island to winter. The breaking up of the ice in the spring, was followed by a great freshet, which overflowed most of the island; the cattle were driven for protection to a few high spots destitute of grass, and came very near starving to death. The flat-boat was carried away by the freshet, and there was no communication with the island, and no means of getting the cattle away. A short time before my arrival a new flatboat had been built and the cattle removed to the main shore, where they are now commencing to pick up a little, and in the course of a month or six weeks should be in a serviceable condition again. All the public animals not in constant use are kept out on herd. The grazing is quite good some five or six miles below the post; there is none nearer, for the simple reason that it is all eaten off by the herds of Indian ponies constantly grazing in the immediate vicinity of the post. Second Lieutenant George Strong, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, the acting assistant quartermaster, belongs to a one-year regiment, and has been on duty in charge of the quartermaster's department at this post about two months. He has not the least conception of what his duties are, and is totally disqualified for the position he holds. He had forwarded some few of his returns—others he had not; his excuse for not having rendered them was that he had not been furnished with blanks. I directed him to rule out blanks, make up his papers and send them forward immediately.

## COMMISSARY DEPARTMENT.

The commissary department is also under the charge of Second Lieutenant George Strong, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers.

*Funds.*—There are no commissary funds on hand.

*Provisions, &c.*—A new supply of most excellent provisions had been received at this post a week or ten days before my visit; none of the old supply



remained on hand, it had been issued, by order of Lieutenant Colonel Pattee, to the Indians. The commanding officer informed me he had ordered issues to Indians to a very large amount during the winter and spring, to prevent them from starving. He said he did not know that his action in making these large issues would be approved, but that he could not sit still and see the poor creatures perish for want of food when he had it on hand and it was not required for immediate issue to the troops. Lieutenant Strong is just about as innocent of his commissary as of his quartermaster duties. I think it very wrong to detail men upon such duties who have but recently entered the service. Young graduates just from the academy should not be subject to detail in either the commissary or quartermaster's department. Officers of more experience and longer in service should be selected; young men detailed upon these duties, immediately upon entering the service, are almost certain to get into trouble with their accounts, papers, or returns, have their pay stopped, and be annoyed and vexed for years in extricating themselves from the situation their inexperience led them into.

I found at Fort Sully Captain N. T. Strong, United States volunteers, who has been on duty as inspector of commissary stores at the military posts on the Upper Missouri. He was ordered to Fort Sully from headquarters department of Missouri, to await orders from headquarters department of the Platte. Captain Strong appears well posted in his duties, is intelligent, and in every way well fitted for the position he holds.

*Chaplain.*—There is none at this post.

*Sutler.*—He pays very little attention to his sutler business, and keeps little or nothing on hand for the use of the troops; his attention is particularly directed to the Indian trade.

#### GENERAL REMARKS.

Fort Sully may have been very judiciously located, but it is now impossible to find one good reason for placing it upon this barren, desolate spot. It is about three-quarters of a mile from the river, upon a second plateau; there is not a stick of wood, a bush, or a blade of grass within two miles of it. On Farm island, about two miles distant, there is considerable cottonwood, but it is almost impossible to get at it except in the winter when the river is frozen. The fort is too small and contracted for more than two companies. There is not an inhabitable building in it. The only structure I saw in and around Fort Sully, of the least value, was the flagstaff, and it is only a tolerable one. Steamers cannot land nearer than three miles of the fort.

The colonel of the thirteenth United States infantry, who is to command at Fort Sully, should be authorized to select another location for this post. I take it for granted he will never occupy this one. He should be allowed to place it at any suitable point on the river between Fort Sully and the mouth of the Big Cheyenne, (a distance of sixty miles.) In the bend just above Cheyenne island is a most excellent site for a post, with a large heavy timber near it, along both shores of the river, with fine grass and good steamboat landing. This will be the point where the road to Montana must cross the Missouri river. Indian traders, half-breeds, French Canadians, vagabond white men, Indians, and Indian women, should not be allowed upon the military reservations, (which should be some eight or ten miles square;) they are all nuisances, and tend to corrupt and ruin a command. They all have herds of ponies that destroy all the grass within miles of the post, that is required and should be kept for the public animals.

There are at this time three Indian trading establishments within a stone's throw of the fort; also two hundred and fifty Indian lodges, with an average of seven persons to a lodge, encamped close around these traders. The number of

Indians was increasing every day. The Indian commission made an agreement with certain bands of the Sioux to meet them at Fort Sully on the 20th instant, and also promised them that their goods and presents should arrive by the first steamer up the river in the spring. I reached Sully on the 20th, and had the misfortune to be taken for a commissioner, and was compelled to shake hands and be hugged by every dirty buck I met. Nothing had been heard of the commission, and twenty-seven steamers had already passed up the river this spring, and not a trinket had any of them brought to the Indians from the commission. The Indians express great dissatisfaction at the non-compliance of the commissioners with their promises. White men should now and then take a lesson from the red men, and "never make a promise." Any delay in fulfilling an agreement the Indian regards as deceit, and weakens his confidence and respect for the whites. They told me the commission "talked lies to them." I heard while at Fort Sully that this commission had promised the Indians that the upper or ridge road, from Sully to Rice, should not be used; that all teams and travellers should go by the river road; also, that no road should be made along the Big Cheyenne to Montana. I cannot believe such to be the fact. If such an agreement has been entered into it is an outrage, and the action of the commission should be set aside immediately. The road along the river from Fort Sully to Fort Rice is much longer, and is impassable for loaded teams. It is up and down ravines nearly the whole distance, whereas upon the ridge the road is excellent, and is fully sixty miles shorter.

I find the impression in this region is almost universal that the troops destined to build the new post on the Big Cheyenne, north of the Black Hills, will meet with serious opposition from the Sioux Indians. If it be true that the commission has promised there should be no roads or posts constructed in that direction, little blame can be attached to the ignorant Indians for attempting to oppose the progress of a command, and a second Sioux war can be set down to the credit of an Indian peace commission.

The War Department and military men should have the sole control and management of the Indians; it would be for the good of the government and the salvation of the red man, and we should no longer hear of Indian wars and Indian massacres.

Were it possible to have the act of Congress making Dakota a Territory repealed, and then divide it up into reservations for Indians, it would be, I think, the best thing government could do; it would be relieved of a number of useless civil officers, and would at the same time be the very best thing that could be done for the Indians. This Territory of Dakota, north of the Vermillion river, never will be settled by the white man, and it will make a very good and cheap donation on the part of the government to the Indians.

Lieutenant Colonel Pattee is attempting to raise a crop of corn and potatoes this summer on Farm island. He reasons that as the island was under water this spring, the soil will retain sufficient moisture to raise a crop. There can be no inducement to farmers to settle near Fort Sully, as crops are almost a certain failure. I am told gardens do not succeed; all vegetables used at the post are brought from St. Louis, Missouri.

On June 9th, as follows:

I have the honor to submit the following report of my inspection of the post of Fort Rice.

Inspected May 30th and 31st.

*Field and staff.*

Colonel John G. Clark, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, commanding post.  
Major Hugh McDermott, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers.  
Surgeon John H. Vivian, post surgeon.

Assistant Surgeon Curtis T. Fenn.  
 First Lieutenant Rufus H. Blodget, post adjutant.  
 First Lieutenant and Regimental Quartermaster R. P. Smith, post quartermaster.  
 Second Lieutenant R. S. Andrews, post commissary of subsistence.  
 Edward Morris, chaplain.

*Non-commissioned staff.*

One hospital steward and one sergeant major.

*Garrison.*

Consists of nine companies of the fiftieth regiment of Wisconsin volunteers.

Company A, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, Captain John C. Spooner commanding company; Second Lieutenant S. S. Tabbs; First Lieutenant R. H. Blodget, acting adjutant:

Enlisted men present for duty.....	34
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	13
Enlisted men sick.....	3
Enlisted men absent sick.....	1
	<hr/>
Total.....	51
	<hr/> <hr/>

Company B, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, commanded by Captain J. W. Allen.  
 No other officers attached to this office:

Enlisted men present for duty.....	20
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	21
Enlisted men absent.....	5
	<hr/>
Total.....	46
	<hr/> <hr/>

Company C, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, Captain O. M. Diring commanding company; First Lieutenant R. H. Williams, present; Second Lieutenant T. S. Winchell, present:

Enlisted men present for duty.....	27
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	19
Enlisted men sick.....	2
Enlisted men in confinement.....	5
Enlisted men absent.....	4
	<hr/>
Total.....	57
	<hr/> <hr/>

Company D, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, Captain A. R. Putman commanding company; First Lieutenant Gasman, present; Second Lieutenant George Strong, absent, acting assistant quartermaster and assistant commissary of subsistence at Fort Sully:

Enlisted men present for duty.....	19
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	20
Enlisted men sick.....	5
Enlisted men in confinement.....	11
Enlisted men absent.....	4
	<hr/>
Total.....	59
	<hr/> <hr/>

Company F, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, Captain Chas. C. Levitt commanding company; First Lieutenant Chas. Pfoerbraur, present; Second Lieutenant Frank T. Brayton, present:

Enlisted men present for duty.....	21
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	18
Enlisted men sick.....	5
Enlisted men in confinement.....	1
Enlisted men absent.....	8
	<hr/>
Total.....	53
	<hr/> <hr/>

Company G, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, Captain G. R. Clements commanding company; First Lieutenant M. B. Cowles, present; Second Lieutenant R. S. Andrews, acting commissary of subsistence:

Enlisted men present for duty.....	32
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	16
Enlisted men sick.....	5
Enlisted men in confinement.....	3
Enlisted men absent.....	9
	<hr/>
Total.....	65
	<hr/> <hr/>

Company H, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, Captain John C. Cover commanding company; Second Lieutenant Jerome White, present:

Enlisted men present for duty.....	29
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	23
Enlisted men sick.....	3
Enlisted men absent.....	6
	<hr/>
Total.....	61
	<hr/> <hr/>

Company I, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, Captain William B. Reed commanding company; Second Lieutenant J. P. Tillotson, present:

Enlisted men present for duty.....	17
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	21
Enlisted men sick.....	1
Enlisted men absent.....	1
	<hr/>
Total.....	40
	<hr/> <hr/>

Company K, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, Captain I. W. McKendry commanding company; First Lieutenant W. A. Morgan, present; Second Lieutenant H. Ottekeo:

Enlisted men present for duty.....	23
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	27
Enlisted men sick.....	6
Enlisted men in confinement.....	2
Enlisted men absent.....	6
	<hr/>
Total.....	64
	<hr/> <hr/>

## REVIEW AND INSPECTION OF TROOPS, ETC.

I commenced with a review of the troops of the garrison (nine companies) commanded by Colonel John G. Clark. After the review and inspection of the troops, I made a general inspection of the men's quarters, kitchens, messes, hospital, and the guard-house; examined the post and regimental records, also the company books, accounts, &c.

In the regiment fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, commanded by Colonel John G. Clark, there is very little difference in the appearance of the men in the different companies. The general appearance of the men is good, the clothing quite good, and generally clean, and without holes. It is almost universal for the officers and men to wear their hair long. The arms and accoutrements were in fine order; none in bad order; in some few cases in most excellent order. Ammunition in good order, and carefully cared for; each man carried twenty rounds in his box.

## POST, REGIMENTAL, AND COMPANY RECORDS, RETURNS, ETC.

The post order and letter books were very nicely kept, the files of orders complete; the regimental descriptive order and letter books very neatly and correctly kept; post and regimental returns, &c., regularly rendered; all books, papers, &c., at headquarters and in the adjutant's office in very nice order.

The company clothing, descriptive and morning-report books well, and, as a general thing, neatly kept in all the companies. All have company funds—some quite large. The account of this fund is correctly kept, and the disbursements judiciously made. The company commanders have all rendered regularly their returns of clothing, camp and garrison equipage, and of ordnance.

## OFFICERS AND MEN'S QUARTERS, KITCHENS, ETC.

The quarters of the men at this post are comparatively comfortable; that is to say, they are much better than those at Forts Randall and Sully, which is not saying a great deal in their favor. Colonel Clark cannot be too highly praised for the improvements he has caused to be made at this post. He has put floors, windows, and ventilators in all the quarters, thereby rendering them, in a partial degree, habitable; but they are still far from what they should be. The amount of air space in the quarters is altogether too small. They were originally constructed to accommodate full companies of eighty-six men; they would be overcrowded if made to accommodate thirty men. The floors are below the level of the ground outside, and the roofs are of dirt, and altogether too low. The light, although in this particular they have been immensely improved by Colonel Clark, is altogether insufficient; and, in consequence of their faulty construction, there can be no means of floor ventilation. The floors should be raised at least two feet above the ground, and the roofs should be raised fully five feet above their present height. The remarks made of the men's quarters will apply equally to the officers' quarters and to the hospital building, except as to air space. The quarters were, as a general thing, in very good order. The same complaint of bed-bugs, fleas, &c., I find here as at all the other posts along this river. The mess-rooms are low log houses, quite dark. They were originally intended and used as storehouses. Colonel Clark has remedied them somewhat by placing here and there a window and ventilator, so that they are passable; they are kept in quite good order. The messing is good and well conducted. The officers' quarters are low log buildings, dark, badly constructed, and uncomfortable. Colonel Clark has built one very good set of quarters, now used as headquarters; it is two stories high and well plastered inside, and clap-boarded and shingled outside; the other blocks of officers' quarters should be

built in a like manner. A number of log buildings, intended for officers' kitchens, were so badly constructed for light and ventilation that they were abandoned as kitchens and were used for a while as store-rooms; but they were so overrun with rats that they had to be abandoned altogether, and should be pulled down and proper kitchens be erected.

#### DRILL, ETC.

The fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers have been on fatigue duty the whole time since their arrival at this post, and have had neither drill nor target practice during this time. I did not think it worth while to try and make a one-year regiment drill when it had not had a drill during its term of service. The buildings this regiment has put up are probably of more benefit to the service than if it had occupied its time in drilling.

#### GUARD-HOUSE.

The guard-house is a log building at the main entrance of the fort; it is comfortable and in fair order. There are a few enlisted men confined under guard, and one citizen in irons. He was recognized and arrested by some of the men of this regiment as a murderer from Wisconsin. The governor was notified of the fact; he made a requisition upon the governor of Dakota for the murderer, and the latter directed his return to Wisconsin, and the regiment propose taking him back with them when they return home. The guard appeared quite well instructed, and vigilant and attentive in the performance of their duties.

#### POST HOSPITAL.

Surgeon John H. Vivian, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, is in charge of the hospital; Assistant Surgeon Curtis T. Fenn, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers, is his assistant. They both appear to be highly accomplished gentlemen, and well qualified for the positions they hold. The hospital is not what it should be; it is about the best building at the post. It is constructed of sawed logs, ceilings high, and quite well ventilated. During the stay of this regiment at this post it has been quite healthy except during the months of March and April, when scurvy prevailed to considerable extent; but one case, however, proved fatal. The post, from its location, should, with proper sanitary precautions, be a healthy one, there being no body of stagnant water or other cause in the vicinity of it to produce miasmatic or epidemic diseases. The only disease to be dreaded is scurvy; and to conquer it every precaution should be taken to insure a supply of fresh vegetables both in the fall and by the first boats in the spring. With these and a proper supply of vegetable acids, there should be little difficulty in combatting the ill effects of this disease.

Instead of the hospital being placed, as it now is, on the lower part of the fort enclosure, facing the north, a new one should be built on the high ground in the rear of the fort and outside of the present stockade, and should be so constructed as to admit of free ventilation, both at the floor and roof—neither of which can be had in the present building. The supply of medicines and hospital stores on hand is in the main good; of some articles it is quite large, for the articles lacking requisitions have been made. It appears to me that an inordinate supply of hospital bedding, clothing, &c., has been shipped to this post from St. Louis. The capacity of the hospital is twenty-four beds, or two wards of twelve beds each. During the time the fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers have garrisoned this post, the largest number of patients in hospital has not exceeded twelve, and that only for a short time, the average number having been about six. This regiment numbers nine companies. The garrison to relieve this regiment is to consist of five companies. I find by looking over the

returns forwarded to the medical director on the first day of January, that to furnish this hospital there were on hand of bedding, clothing, &c., the following amounts :

Bed sacks, 141; hair mattresses, 30; blankets, 602; pillow-cases, 184; drawers, 160; socks, 100; shirts, 200; sheets, 360; hair pillows, 105; mosquito bars, 12; and counterpanes, 13.

Under date of April 3d, 1866, the medical purveyor at St Louis sends invoices of supplies shipped to this post, and among other things is the following list of bedding, clothing, &c.: bed sacks, 36; hair mattresses, 160; pillows, 75; mosquito bars, 100; counterpanes, 160; sheets, 300; pillow-cases, 53; caps, 160; drawers, 160; shirts, 120; socks, 200; and iron bedsteads, 160.

This to furnish a hospital of twenty-four beds at a post the garrison of which is to consist of five companies. These supplies seem to me altogether too large, and sending them here where storage is so limited can only result in the destruction by rats of all that rats can destroy, unless it is intended to make this a depot from which to supply other posts, in which case a new storehouse, rat-proof, should be erected for the use of the medical department. I was compelled to condemn a large number of blankets and hair pillows that had been completely destroyed by rats. There are but four men in hospital, and only one of them sick in bed. The instruments are in fine order. The kitchen and cooking utensils are very clean and neat. The police in and around the hospital is excellent.

At all the posts on the Missouri river I find there is a great deal of syphilis; less among the men at this post, however, than at any of the others. Nearly all the Sioux, Ree, and Mandan women are diseased, and unless something is done to keep these creatures away from the post, and to prevent free intercourse between them and the men, a large proportion of the soldiers will be a great portion of the time unfitted for duty. Most of the surgeons tell me they do not excuse men from duty on account of this disease.

#### POST ORDNANCE.

The magazine is built of logs and covered with dirt and sods, and is very contracted and not one-half large enough. It is dry and the ammunition in very good condition. The ordnance stores are kept in a room originally intended for an officer's kitchen. What little property there is on hand is in most excellent condition, well stored and carefully attended to.

#### QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT.

The public buildings, quartermaster's property, clothing, camp and garrison equipage are under the charge of First Lieutenant R. P. Smith, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers.

#### FUNDS.

Amount on hand \$219 37, received from sales of clothing to officers. No disbursements are made by Lieutenant Smith; they are all made by the chief quartermaster of the department.

#### PERSONS EMPLOYED.

One interpreter, Frank Laframboise, a citizen, is employed at a salary of \$50 per month. There are 42 enlisted men on special duty in the department, 20 herders, 10 stable hands, 2 carpenters, 3 blacksmiths, 1 saddler, 1 clerk, and 5 warehouse men. None too large a number for the size of the post.

## BUILDINGS, ETC.

The quarters of this post were intended for a regiment; they are so small they cannot accommodate, with comfort, more than five companies; and as I have stated in another place, to make these healthy and habitable they should be raised four or five feet higher, should have new roofs, the floors raised, and additional windows and ventilation. The hospital is rather a good building, but not in the least suited for a hospital. If a new hospital could be erected this building would make very good officers' quarters.

*Stables.*—Lieutenant Smith has caused to be built four horse and mule stables and two for oxen—one of the latter for the use of the beef cattle. The stables are well built, on high, dry ground, are roomy and well ventilated, and they are enclosed within a fine corral, which is divided in two, giving one yard to the mules and another to the cattle. Within the corral are built quarters for the stable men and a guard-house for the stable guard. Everything is so well arranged and constructed that two sentinels can guard perfectly all the stables, hay-yard, corn-house, and corral. Before these were built the stables, hay-yard, corn-houses, corrals, &c., were detached one from the other, so that each one required one or more sentinels to guard it. With the present arrangement the guard duty of the post is very much reduced. This spring the old stables, corral, &c., were some four or five feet under water; where the new stables stand they will always be perfectly dry, no matter how much rain or snow falls.

*Saw-mills.*—This mill has furnished the post with all the lumber required until recently; it is now so much out of order that it is dangerous to use it. The boiler is burned and the engineers are afraid to run it. The saw-mill is badly located—altogether too far from the post; it should be on the banks of the river near the fort, with a pump attached to raise the water required for the use of the garrison.

## QUARTERMASTER'S SUPPLIES, ETC.

*Hay.*—There is none on hand. During the last season the hay was cut by contract at seven dollars per ton. The contractors simply cut the grass, and the soldiers cured, hauled, and stacked it. It was cut ten miles from the post, and on the opposite side of the river; it is said to be very difficult to find. As few horses and mules as possible should be kept at the post, on account of the scarcity of hay and the expense of getting it.

*Corn.*—I found some 237,000 pounds of corn on hand, of which 90,000 pounds had been totally destroyed by rats. It was so badly damaged and soiled that neither horse, mule, nor ox would touch it. I condemned it and directed it to be issued to the Indians; they are the only creatures on earth that could eat it. Were it not given to them it would have to be thrown away. There is no use of sending corn, or anything else that rats will eat, to this post until rat-proof storehouses are erected. These storehouses should be built upon posts set in the ground, and the posts covered with tin. Lieutenant Smith had moved this corn I condemned three times to try and save it from the rats. The rats are so numerous, and on the increase, that nothing can be saved unless storehouses are built as I have suggested. Colonel Clark and Lieutenant Smith estimate that the rats destroy daily of corn and provisions at least one thousand pounds. Tin for covering posts should be sent to these forts by the first steamer up the river.

*Wood* is cut and hauled by the troops; there is an abundance of it within a mile or a mile and a half of the post, just above in a bend of the river. Three miles below on Cannon Ball river, and on the opposite side of the river from the forts, there is fine timber—a most excellent place to procure wood or saw-logs in the winter.

*Water* is hauled by mule teams from the river. The water procured from



wells cannot be used. With a steam-pump to raise water, great labor and expense would be saved. At Fort Leavenworth two eight-mule teams, with a detail of some four or five men to each team, have been hauling water for the use of that garrison for the last thirty years. I fancy few persons have ever passed up or down the river without seeing at least one of these teams with a load of water, creeping at a snail's pace up that long hill leading to the fort. One small steam-engine (that would not cost more than one of those eight-mule teams) with the aid of one man would pump all the water required, besides sawing all the wood used by the garrison. Pumps for raising water should be furnished with all the saw-mills sent to these posts; much labor and expense could thus be saved.

#### MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION, ETC.

The means of transportation at this post is as follows: Fifty-two horses; forty-five mules; six oxen; twenty-five wagons; one ambulance, and eight carts. The animals are in very good condition and well attended to. They are kept out grazing during the day, and have to be driven some five or six miles away from the post to find grass. That near the post is all eaten off by the ponies belonging to the traders and Indians who constantly surround the post. I trust when the regular troops reach here that they will have these things changed; that the public animals shall be permitted to graze near the post, and that those of outsiders be made to go beyond the limits of the reservation. At the post on the Arkansas neither citizens nor Indians are allowed to encamp or graze their animals within a certain prescribed distance of the garrison. Such should be the regulations at all of these frontier posts. Lieutenant Smith has transferred during the winter and spring, on the order of Colonel Clark, twenty head of cattle to the commissary department for beef.

#### CLOTHING, CAMP AND GARRISON EQUIPAGE.

There is a very good supply of clothing, camp and garrison equipage on hand, which is, as a general thing, in very good order. Many tents, wagon-covers, &c., that had been used and had grease spots upon them, are completely destroyed by rats. All new articles that had been retained in boxes or bales escaped pretty well. Lieutenant Smith's storehouses are in most excellent order, everything being nicely and carefully stowed.

The duties of quartermaster to Lieutenant Smith are comparatively new, but through the assistance of Colonel Clark, who served two or three years as assistant quartermaster with the armies in the field, he has made himself well acquainted with his duties. He is attentive, careful, correct, and economical. His books, papers, and accounts are neatly and correctly kept, and his returns are regularly rendered.

#### COMMISSARY DEPARTMENT.

The commissary department is under the charge of Second Lieutenant R. S. Andrews, fiftieth Wisconsin volunteers.

#### FUNDS.

Amount on hand \$156 38, arising from sale of provisions to officers since the 10th of October, 1865.

#### COMMISSARY PROPERTY.

All the commissary property is in good order, and sufficient on hand for the use of the garrison.

## SUBSISTENCE STORES, ETC.

I have not seen commissary stores at any post better cared for than at Fort Rice. Large, well-constructed storehouses, with good cellars under them, have been erected by Colonel Clark. Racks have been put up, so that all barrels containing meats or liquids can be rolled as often as may be necessary. In fact everything is stored with the utmost care and regularity, and were it not for the rats there would be no trouble in preserving subsistence stores in most excellent condition; as it is, the rats destroy all the hard bread, flour, and much of the meal. Lieutenant Andrews has charge of the bakehouse, which is well built, has a most excellent oven, and fine bread is made in it. There is very little or no good flour remaining on hand at the post. There is a quantity of caked and musty flour, unfit for issue to the troops, on hand, upon which Lieutenant Andrews has been feeding his beef cattle for some time past, which is about the best disposition that could be made of it. All issues to Indians, except it be of condemned stores, has been stopped. Issues are made to two citizens, the interpreter, and a prisoner. Lieutenant Andrews has received from the post quartermaster, during the winter and spring, twenty head of cattle to be killed and issued to the troops as fresh beef. The commissary cattle gave out early in the winter. The fresh beef is quite good; the price formerly paid for it was fourteen cents. With the exception of flour there is a very good supply of subsistence stores on hand, and, as a general thing, in most excellent condition.

Lieutenant Andrews's books, papers, accounts, &c., are neatly and correctly kept, and his returns are regularly rendered. Great credit is due Lieutenant Andrews for the fine order in which he keeps all things connected with his department; he is certainly a very careful and attentive officer to his duties, and very well qualified for the position he fills.

## GENERAL REMARKS.

Fort Rice has been particularly fortunate in having such a man and soldier as Colonel Clark to command it. General Sully found fault with Colonel Clark for making certain alterations, and for putting up certain buildings in the fort. In my opinion the colonel should have been highly complimented for every change he made. He built an excellent row of storehouses, the only ones at the post deserving of the name. He brought the carpenter and blacksmith shops inside the stockade, a move absolutely necessary to keep the Indians from picking up and carrying off every tool and bit of iron about the shops. He erected the only decent set of quarters at the post. He caused floors and ceilings to be put in all the quarters and storehouses. He put up new stables, granaries, corrals, &c., upon high and dry ground, where they should have been placed originally. Many of the old buildings he raised several feet higher and put new roofs upon, and windows and ventilators in them. By his good management he was able to reduce the number of sentinels from fourteen to six, and I am satisfied everything is far better guarded than formerly. Colonel Clark has evidently performed his duty faithfully, and for the very best interest of the service, and for the health and comfort of his command. By an order of General Sully Colonel Clark was compelled to tear down and remove certain buildings he had put up; it is a great pity, as far as the comfort of the garrison and the security of the public stores go, that any such order was ever issued. A row of storehouses and shops should be put up on the north side of the fort, similar to those erected by Colonel Clark on the south side, which would render the fort very compact, convenient, secure, and complete. I think the post of Fort Rice was badly located, and if it is the intention of the government to keep it up for a number of years it would be better for the service and the

troops now occupying it to build a new fort in place of patching up the old one. About one-half a mile further down the river, on a bluff similar to the one the fort stands upon, is by far the best location for the post. Good building stone can be taken from the bluff; the steamboat landing is rock, and can never change. Now, during low water, steamers cannot get to the fort; they are compelled to unload at this lower bluff, and the stores to be hauled to the post. The present fort would do well enough for the garrison to occupy while they were employed in building a better one on the bluff below. Colonel Clark deserves the greatest praise for the tact and discretion with which he has managed a "one-year volunteer regiment," whose time has been out for over four months. The men have been discontented and anxious to return home, but, with all this disaffection, Colonel Clark has kept them busily at work, and has maintained the strictest discipline in the regiment.

No attempt has yet been made to till the soil. I would not be surprised to hear that gardens, if made on the bottom lands, succeeded very well. I learn that at Forts Berthold and Union, vegetables have been raised with fair success and without irrigation.

I find at Fort Rice, as at Fort Sully, thousands of Indians awaiting the arrival of the Indian commissioners. I learn that soon after my departure from Fort Sully the Indians became very bold, defiant, and somewhat troublesome, and some swore threats. The reason for this conduct was that they thought they had been deceived by the commission. It is my opinion, and that of all persons here who know anything about Indians, that the commission will not be fairly out of the country before the Sioux will recommence their acts of hostility. Nor would I be surprised to hear the commissioners had called upon the military to assist them in getting safely out of the Indian country.

On June 11, as follows :

I have the honor to submit the following report of my inspection of the post of Fort Berthold.

Inspected June 3, 1866.

This post is garrisoned by company C, fourth United States volunteers, commanded by Captain Adams Bassett, fourth United States volunteers.

Company C, fourth United States volunteers, Captain A. Bassett commanding company; Second Lieutenant William N. Eaton, acting assistant quartermaster and assistant commissary of subsistence :

Enlisted men present for duty.....	47
Enlisted men on special or detached duty.....	7
Enlisted men sick.....	3
Enlisted men in confinement.....	4
Absent.....	8
<hr/>	
Total.....	69
	<hr/>

After the inspection of the company I made a general inspection of the men's quarters, the kitchens, messes, the hospital, and the guard-house. I examined the post and company books, records, &c.

In company C, fourth United States volunteers, commanded by Captain Adams Bassett, the appearance of the men is quite good, the clothing clean and in good order. As a general thing the men wear their hair long, giving them an untidy appearance. Arms, belts, knapsacks, haversacks, and canteens in good order; some of the men had their arms and accoutrements in most beautiful order. Ammunition in cartridge-boxes in good order, and apparently well cared for. Take the company as a whole, it was in very fair order. I think it is the best company I have inspected belonging to the fourth United States

volunteers. The company has had neither drill nor target practice for the last year. The post order and letter books in very good order and correctly kept; files of orders complete; post returns regularly forwarded. The company description book, clothing and morning report books very neatly and correctly kept. The returns of clothing, camp and garrison equipage, and of ordnance have been regularly rendered.

#### QUARTERS, MESSES, HOSPITAL, ETC.

The government possesses no buildings at this point. The Northwestern Fur Company have given up their fort to Captain Bassett for the use of the troops, and without pay. The fort consists of a square stockade, with block-houses at two of the corners, and a number of log houses arranged around the stockade on the inside. A long, low, dark, ill ventilated room serves the company as quarters. A single small, dark room is used as a kitchen. There is no mess-room; the men are compelled to take what they have to eat in their hands to their quarters and eat it there. The quarters and kitchen are in poor order; it could not be otherwise; such holes cannot be kept in good order. The officers' quarters are small, dark rooms; the room the acting assistant surgeon occupies serves him as dispensary, store-room, and quarters. The hospital is another dark room; ward, kitchen, &c., all in one. There are three men in hospital, sick with scurvy, but none of them ill enough to be in bed. The supply of medicines and medical stores is quite complete and in good order. Doctor Washington Mathews is the acting assistant surgeon employed at this post. The rooms the officers and men are compelled to occupy are really uninhabitable, as they are filled with bed-bugs, fleas, &c., to say nothing of their darkness and bad ventilation. The guard-house is a small, dark, dirty room.

#### QUARTERMASTER'S AND COMMISSARY DEPARTMENTS.

These departments are under the charge of Second Lieutenant William N. Eaton, fourth United States volunteers.

#### FUNDS.

Amount of quartermaster funds on hand \$38, arising from sales of clothing, &c., to officers.

There are no citizens employed at this post. Pierre Garran was formerly employed as interpreter, but was discharged April 30, 1866, by order of the chief quartermaster at headquarters department of Missouri. The commanding officer is compelled to call upon Garran almost every hour in the day. He should be re-employed immediately, and receive pay from the date of discharge, as he has really performed the duty of interpreter during all that time. He has the reputation of being a great linguist; he speaks Gros Ventres, Sioux, Ree, Mandan, Assinaboine, Crow, Blackfeet, and the French languages.

#### QUARTERMASTER'S SUPPLIES.

*Corn.*—There are 40,000 pounds of corn on hand and in very good order.

*Hay.*—No hay on hand, and no place near Fort Berthold that grass good enough to make hay can be found.

*Wood* has to be hauled about two miles. In the winter it can be procured on the south side of the river directly opposite the fort.

The means of transportation is as follows: Four mules, two horses, and one wagon. The animals are in fine order. Two mules were accidentally drowned last spring. Lieutenant Eaton has a very small amount of quartermaster's stores and clothing, camp and garrison equipage, on hand; all he has is in very good order. Fort Berthold, luckily, is not troubled with rats—they have not yet found their way to this post.

## FUNDS.

Amount of commissary funds on hand \$2,923, arising from sales to officers and funds received from Lieutenant Eaton's predecessor.

There is but a small amount of subsistence stores on hand, and all of it more or less damaged. Nearly the whole of it is unfit for issue to the troops; they have been compelled to use it, as there is no other kind to be had. There has been no fresh beef at the post since the end of February. All the fresh meat the men have had has been the buffalo-meat they have been able to purchase from the Indians. Lieutenant Eaton's quartermaster and commissary books, papers, accounts, &c., are quite well and correctly kept, and his returns regularly rendered.

A few boxes of rifle-musket cartridges, and four boxes of fixed ammunition for one six-pounder iron gun, constitute all the ordnance and ordnance stores at the post. The ammunition is in good order, and is stored in the same room with the commissary stores, there being no better or safer place at the post for it.

## GENERAL REMARKS.

Fort Berthold is situated upon a high bluff on the north bank of the Missouri river, in the midst of the Ree, Mandan, and Gros Ventres village. The officer who builds a post here should locate it some distance away from this Indian village. I can see very little use of a post at this point. General Sully told me the only reason he wished a company at Fort Berthold was to protect these three small tribes, now consolidated into one, from other Indians. Since a company of troops has been stationed here the young men of the village amuse themselves in going off and stealing horses from the Sioux, and from the very bands that are at peace with them. A short time since they stole some twenty horses from Four Bear's band, encamped within a stone's throw of Fort Rice. Colonel Clark sent a messenger (a Ree Indian) to Berthold on the same steamer I was on to tell these Indians they must return the horses. On our way up, at a point about twenty miles below Fort Berthold, we met twenty-three young bucks in their ball-boats on their way down on a second horse-stealing expedition. The steamer stopped, and the messenger informed them of his mission, and directed them to return home. Whether they obeyed or not I don't know; they had not returned when I left the post. The troops knew nothing of their departure on this stealing expedition. These Indians say they will not return the horses unless the government pays them for their horses stolen by the Santee Sioux. The Santee Sioux are at war with these Indians, and also with the whites. These Rees, Mandans, and Gros Ventres say, that when they leave their village they are going to steal from the Santees; but, instead of doing so, they go and steal from a band with whom they have a treaty of peace, and who are friendly to the whites. They have become very brave since they have a company of troops to protect them. I hardly believe in using troops to protect Indians from Indians; we have as much as we can do to protect white men from the Indians. If the Indians will use each other up, I don't know but what it is about as well to let them do so. If we promise to protect tribes from each other, we will have our hands full the whole time, and will not fulfil our promises in the end.

I would not build a one-company post at Fort Berthold, but would send the two companies to Fort Union. One-company posts are never efficient; they have not men enough to send out on detached service and leave behind a sufficient force to protect the fort. The discipline of small posts is never as good as at large ones, and the fatigue duty is about the same in both. I would be glad to see all our posts garrisoned with not less than a battalion of troops in each.

The Indian women at Berthold raise on the river bottom large quantities of corn. This season the chances are they will not raise near so much as usual; the freshet in the spring flooded all the bottom lands, and when the water receded, left their farms covered with sand to the depth of three or four feet. I am satisfied the troops can have good gardens here with very little labor. There is hardly bottom land enough in the vicinity of Berthold to induce farmers to come here and settle. The more I see of Dakota the more I am convinced the government should donate every foot of it to the Indian, and the Indians should be well recompensed in addition, if they agree to remain and live within its borders.

On July 2, 1866, as follows:

I have the honor to submit the following report of my inspection of Fort Union.

Inspected June 11, 1866. The regular troops destined for this post had not arrived at that date.

Captain Wm. H. Greer, first United States volunteers, who commanded at Fort Union last season, on his departure, left a quantity of quartermaster's stores and ordnance, and ordnance stores, in charge of the agent of the Northwest Fur Company. I examined this property. That belonging to the quartermaster's department consisted principally of bar and rod iron, kegs of nails, mule and horse shoes, a mowing machine (in good serviceable order,) and a horse saw-mill, also in serviceable condition. The ordnance consisted of two six-pounder iron guns and one twelve-pounder bronze howitzer. The last named gun the agent had loaned to the captain of the steamer Deer Lodge, who had not returned it, but had left it at Copelin, a trading post near the mouth of Milk river. My impression is, it was taken to Copelin by the Deer Lodge more for the protection of that trading post than of the steamer. The agent promised the howitzer should be returned to Fort Union in a few days. The ordnance stores consisted mostly of fixed ammunition for the use of these guns, a few friction tubes, &c.; they are stored in good dry warehouses, are well boxed, and were without doubt in good order. The agent assured me they had not been touched since he had had them in his possession. Fort Union itself would be a poor location for a military post. At old Fort Williams, three miles from Fort Union by land and seven by river, is a much better site. It is two miles below the mouth of the Yellowstone, on a second branch or high table-land. Wood in abundance about three miles below, on the river; it is a short distance from the place where the hay is procured for Fort Union, with good bottom lands, near at hand for gardens, and a good steambot landing within a short distance. Excellent timber can be obtained and rafted down from the Yellowstone near its mouth, for the construction of the post. A soft yellow sandstone is found within three or four miles of old Fort Williams, which will make a fair building stone. The block (stone) houses at the corners of the stockade at Fort Union are built of this stone, and appear to stand the effects of the weather very well. Another good location for a post is just below Fort Union on the west side of the river, in the angle formed by the Missouri and the Yellowstone. I did not learn the point to be selected for the new post, but I should think the site of old Fort Williams about the best of any in the immediate neighborhood of Fort Union. In my judgment the garrison of this post should consist of some four or six companies; it is the great crossing point to the Yellowstone country for all the tribes living on the northeast of the Missouri. Fort Union is supposed to be in Montana by about one-half of a mile, and Fort Williams about the same distance in Dakota.

I met with a very intelligent gentleman on the river, Mr. Laepantico, who has lived in this country over thirty years, and most of the time in charge of Fort Union. He built Fort Alexander, on the Yellowstone, and has been up

and down that river a great many times, at all seasons of the year, and at all stages of water. He says the Yellowstone is not navigable for steamers and cannot be rendered so. According to his statement, the river has a great many falls and rapids in it, which in low water are filled with rocks and boulders, rendering it almost impossible to get a Mackinaw boat over in safety. In high water the fall in the river is so great, and the water so rapid, that it would be impossible to build a steamer with sufficient power to stem the current.

The Missouri river, as laid down on the maps furnished me from your office, is remarkably accurate as far as Fort Union. I have watched and observed every bend very closely. The distances furnished by the quartermaster's department are very inaccurate. I send herewith a list of distances that I have compiled, derived from information obtained from steamboat captains, pilots, and cards of distances, by timing the steamers, &c. I have been on some six or seven different boats since leaving St. Joseph, Mo. I have shown this list of distances to several captains and pilots, and they were much pleased with it. The information it contains with regard to "wood" will be of great service to captains who have never been up the river; comparatively few have been. For the last few years the distance from St. Louis to Fort Benton has been growing longer and longer. It is called by most steamboat captains 3,175 miles. Lewis and Clark called the distance 3,000 miles in their day. They were nearer the true distance than the men of the present time. I am satisfied, when the river is properly measured, it will not be found to exceed 2,800 miles much. For the protection of the government, as it will, no doubt, be sending large quantities of stores up the river soon, the whole river should be accurately measured, in order that transportation may be contracted and paid for understandingly and correctly. If a couple of engineer officers could be spared next season, it would be well to have the Missouri and the Yellowstone surveyed from their source to Fort Union. I regard the true head of navigation of the Missouri river at the mouth of the Muscle-Shell river, and not at Fort Benton. To the Muscle-Shell steamers drawing three feet to three and a half feet can ascend almost every season. If they can reach Fort Union they can get to Muscle-Shell. Fuel is abundant this far and for a few miles further, to Cow island; but from there, to Benton there is none. What little is found (pine knots) has to be carried from a half to two miles. The river is a series of rapids from Cow island to Fort Benton, over which all steamers are compelled to warp or cordelle. The distance by land from Muscle-Shell to Virginia City is not as great as from Benton to Helena. The distance is some fifty or sixty miles further than from Benton. The distance from Muscle-Shell to Benton, by river, is about 300 miles. Should it be the intention to send troops to this Upper Missouri, I think a point a few miles above Muscle-Shell would be an excellent point for the location of one post. There is no timber of any kind anywhere near Fort Benton, and the first good timber below there on the river is at or near the mouth of Muscle-Shell. There is some timber (cottonwood) on the "Judith," but not sufficient, in my judgment, to justify locating a post there.

I understand that parties are building a road from Virginia City to Helena, to mouth of Muscle-Shell. If such is the case, and a practicable road is found, few steamers will pass that point next season. From the mouth of Muscle-Shell would be the point from which the new post to be established on Clark's Fork, on the road from Fort Laramie to Virginia City, should draw its supplies. It cannot be over one hundred miles, and almost due south from Muscle-Shell. The river from Muscle-Shell to Benton is very difficult of navigation, being filled with dangerous rocky rapids, and is destitute of fuel. Steamboat men dread and fear it, and will avoid running that portion of the river if they can possibly do so. They will make a difference of some three cents per pound in freights in favor of Muscle-Shell.

I would respectfully call the attention of the general to the class of steamers chartered for government service on the Upper Missouri. I find that merchants and traders never ship their goods on steamers drawing over three feet and a half of water, and as a general thing they do not draw over three feet.

The troops for Forts Randall, Sully, Rice, Berthold, and Union were shipped on steamers drawing four and a half to six feet. The steamer Dora, drawing four and a half feet, was forty-seven days in getting from St. Louis to Fort Rice. The Tracy, destined for the same post, was drawing from five to five and a half feet. The Lexington, for Fort Sully, was drawing some six feet. The Mary McDonald, for Forts Berthold and Union, was drawing, loaded, four and a half feet. Had not the season been the most remarkable in thirty years for high water, not one of these steamers transporting troops would have reached its destination. I was on board of several steamers that left St. Louis weeks after the above named steamers; they reported them all aground far down the river. I was told that the troops on the steamer Lexington, notwithstanding the high water, were compelled to land at Crow Creek agency and march to Fort Sully. There should be instructions given to the officers of the quartermaster's department forbidding them to allow any steamboat freighted with government stores or with troops destined for any of the posts above Fort Leavenworth, to leave St. Louis drawing over three feet and a half of water. The chances may then be that they will reach their point of destination within some reasonable length of time. Last season twenty-four steamers were freighted and started for Benton, none drawing over three and a half feet of water. The season was an average one for water. Of this number, but two reached their destination; one or two others got as far as the mouth of the Marias, a like number to Cow island, and the greater number no further than Fort Union. This year, the most remarkable in thirty for high water, I met no less than four big rises during my trip. Some thirty steamboats have started for Benton, and, owing to the unprecedented high water, twenty-eight certainly out of the thirty will reach Benton. Twenty-five have already reached their destination, and there is no reason why all the others should not do so, as the river is still some seven or eight feet higher at Benton now than it was last season at this date.

After writing the above, I learned that the steamer Deer Lodge had made a second trip this season, and that several other steamers proposed doing the same thing. Two trips to the mountains in the same season is a very rare occurrence.

On July 18, 1866, as follows:

Soon after my arrival at Fort Benton, I saw in a Montana paper a copy of General Orders No. 5 from headquarters department of the Platte, designating the first battalion thirteenth regiment infantry to proceed to Fort Benton, and to establish a new post in that vicinity. I obtained all the reliable information I could with respect to the proper location for the post, and after my trip from Fort Benton to Helena, wrote to Colonel Reeve the following letter:

HELENA, MONTANA, July 9, 1866.

COLONEL: Soon after reaching Fort Benton I learned of the order sending troops to that vicinity, and saw that you were instructed to select the site for their location. To aid you in the matter I paid particular attention to the country between Benton and this place, and have obtained all the information possible on the subject. I find that the troublesome Indians are the Bloods, a band of the Blackfeet; they reside on the headwaters of the Sun and Deerbone rivers. Their depredations are mostly directed against the ranches on these streams, and against persons passing over the road from Benton to Helena.

Benton is certainly no place for a post; there is not a stick of timber or of



wood, even, within miles of it, nor is it in much danger from hostile Indians. My impression is, the new post should be placed upon Sun river near its junction with the Missouri—that is, near the Great Falls of the Missouri. All accounts agree that it is a most beautiful spot, with abundance of timber, plenty of grass, good water, and is about the only place near Benton where grass grows high enough to make good hay. By going a short distance above the mouth of Sun river, on the Missouri, any quantity of most excellent pine timber can be had and easily rafted down to the post. The point that I have designated appears to me to possess all the requisites necessary for a military post, besides being within short striking distance of the stronghold of the Bloods now in open hostilities with the whites.

I would have been very glad to have met you and to have aided you all in my power, and had I not so long a trip before me, would remain and do so; as it is I must push on.

I am, colonel, &c.

Colonel ISAAC V. D. REEVE,

*Thirteenth U. S. Infantry, Fort Benton, M. T.*

Since writing the above I am satisfied the point I designated is the proper one. The Catholics have a mission near the point and were compelled to leave it last season on account of the hostilities of the Indians. The Catholics never select bad locations for their missions. The bands of Blackfeet now in open war with the whites are the Bloods and a portion of the Pagans; they reside on the headwaters of the Sun, Teton, and Marias rivers, which you will see by the accompanying map all head near together, and in a northwesterly direction from the mouth of Sun river. The post thus located will protect perfectly the road between Benton and Helena, and all the northwest section of the Territory. Deep creek, I am credibly informed, flows through a most beautiful valley and empties into the Missouri but a short distance above Sun river; it furnishes a most excellent natural road without a steep grade upon it, to the headwaters of the Muscle-Shell, in the very heart of the Indian hunting-grounds, between the Yellowstone and the Missouri. Acting Governor Meagher tells me that the Crow Indians are not only willing but anxious to sell their country, and are desirous to go upon a reservation, under the protection of the government. They claim the section of country lying between the Yellowstone and the Missouri as their homes, and until the last few years did hold undoubted and undisputed right to it, but lately the Sioux have proved too powerful for them, and have compelled them to move to the north bank of the Missouri.

The Crows still make this section of country their hunting-ground, as do also the Pend d'Oreilles and the Flatheads. Yearly desperate battles are fought between them and the Sioux. It would be well to have the Indians' title to this land extinguished, and allow the whites to push into it and prospect to their hearts' content; they will never rest satisfied until they have done so. I would respectfully suggest that a post be established early next spring at some point on the Missouri river, between the mouth of Muscle-Shell and the rapids above. With this post, the one on Clark's Fork, and that on Sun river, and the Indian title extinguished, would render all that section of country between the Missouri and the Yellowstone, west of a line drawn from the mouth of Muscle-Shell to the mouth of Big Horn, comparatively safe. To judge from what I saw as I came up the river, that portion of Montana east of the line above designated is very much akin to Dakota—that is to say, worthless.

With that one additional post, I think Montana will have all the military protection she will ever require. Cavalry she does not want; number of Canadian or California horses at each post is all that is required. These horses do not require grain, and keep fat easily upon the mountain grasses. In the west and northwest of Montana are the Bannocks, Pend d'Oreilles, and Flathead

Indians, all on terms of friendship with the whites. On the north are the Blackfeet and Crows; a portion of the Blackfeet (the Bloods) are hostile; the Crows are friendly and are desirous of remaining so. On the east and south-east are the Sioux and some Cheyennes, who must be well and thoroughly thrashed before they will be at peace with the whites, notwithstanding the numerous treaties made with them by peace commissioners. On the south there are few or no Indians by which Montana can be molested.

The Bannocks, Snakes, Pend d'Oreilles, Flatheads, Crows, and Gros Ventres are all desirous to go on reservations; they have been badly treated by the whites and sadly neglected by the government. Most of them have not received their annuities for years, and are now in a deplorable and starving condition. It is the duty of the Indian department to see that they are placed upon proper reservations, and the treaties heretofore made with most of them fully complied with. Honest agents, if they can be found, should be sent to them, to protect them in all their rights. White men in these regions concede very few rights to the Indians. It is a great wonder the Indians, having been so badly treated and neglected, have behaved themselves so well. Had they misbehaved, they would no doubt have received their annuities and presents long ago. Some of the Bannocks, Snakes, Pend d'Oreilles, and Flatheads came to me and requested me to ask the government to have one "Augustus Sohon" appointed their agent. I learn from Captain W. W. Delacy, and others, (General Ingalls,) that this man "Sohon" would make a most excellent appointment; he speaks the language of all these tribes, is well known by them, and is also very popular with them; he is loyal, honest, and of good principles. He resides at Vancouver, Washington Territory.

I have never seen "Sohon," but simply record the request made by these poor starving creatures, and the character given him by gentlemen of standing. The wish of these tribes should receive some slight consideration in the appointment of an agent. As a general thing, however, their wish or rights are no more considered by the Indian department in Washington than they are by the miners out here.

I could not ascertain the number of Indians within the borders of Montana. The principal tribes are Bannocks, Snakes, Pend d'Oreilles, Flatheads, Nez Percés, Blackfeet, Crows, Gros Ventres, Sheep-eaters, and Sioux.

#### MINERALS, MINING, ETC.

The area of Montana Territory is about 160,000 square miles, embracing 87,000,000 acres of land, the larger portion of which is auriferous and argentiferous in character, and promises to become one of the richest sections in minerals upon the continent. The first discovery of placer or gulch gold was near Bannock City—and known as Beaver Head or Grasshopper diggings—in the fall of 1862. About June 1, 1863, gold was found in Alder gulch, about eighteen miles in length, sixteen of which worked with great success, and out of which not less than \$25,000,000 have been taken. Last Chance gulch, discovered in 1864, is immensely rich, out of which millions have been taken, and is still worked and paying well. Nelson gulch is also very rich; in this the nugget weighing \$2,100 was found, of pure virgin gold; not a particle of quartz was found in it. As yet, the mineral resources of the Territory have been but partially developed. Great numbers of miners are flocking to Montana this season from Nevada, California, and Oregon, and many important discoveries will be made, without doubt, this season. The recent discovery on the east side of the Missouri—known as Montana Bar—is marvellously rich in gold; also late discoveries have been made on the western slope of the mountains. The Blackfoot, Jefferson, and Washington mines have all proved very rich, paying, per day, from thirty to eighty dollars per hand. The new military

posts on Clark's Fork, and near Fort Benton, will afford great protection to prospecting parties on the headwaters of the Yellowstone and Muscle-Shell; and if one-tenth of the stories told prove true, with respect to the mineral wealth of that section of the Territory, it will certainly be the real Eldorado. It is my impression, however, that the very richest regions for minerals are those where prospecters cannot or dare not go.

As yet, little has been done in quartz mining; and until this year there have been but two or three quartz mills in the country. Quite a number are coming out this season, but have not yet been put up, and will hardly get to work much before next spring. There have been fine quartz leads discovered in the Hot Spring, Rattlesnake, Boulder, Mill Creek, Helena, and Silver Bow districts; also in other parts of the Territory, which attests to its inexhaustible wealth. The quartz mill at Bannock is doing remarkably well. The great misfortune here is that persons totally unacquainted with mining have gone to the expense of purchasing and transporting mills to this country totally unfitted for the work they have to perform, and, of course, prove on the first trial to be worthless. All kinds of experimental mills have been brought out at great cost, and are sure to prove failures. I would not be surprised in five years from this time, when proper machinery is brought to this Territory and the machinery properly worked, to see Montana rival any of the mineral regions in this country, and, perhaps, of the world. It has one great advantage over Idaho, Nevada, California, and Arizona, in having an abundance of fuel and water.

During the last few years, Montana has sent to the States over \$70,000,000 in gold dust, and will this year, no doubt, send fully \$30,000,000.

There appears to be a great deal of feeling among the people of Montana against a bill proposed in Congress to survey the gold fields into small parcels and to sell out the ultimate title to the highest bidder. The passage of such a bill, they contend, would entail great hardships upon the people of this Territory who have, by their energies, developed it. The sale of the mineral lands would bring the adventurous explorer in competition with capital, which would be very clearly unjust. It would not be many years before foreign capital would control the greater portion of the mineral lands. These lands should not be sold; they should remain in the possession of the government, and all the various avenues leading thereto should be thrown wide open to the energetic and ambitious pioneer.

#### ROADS, ETC.

Montana is reached by water communication from the Atlantic by the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, a distance of nearly 5,000 miles. The upper portion of the Missouri, for 300 miles, is much obstructed by rapids and boulders, so much so as to render the navigation of it dangerous; the lightest draught boats alone can navigate it, and they for no more than three or four months in the year; to overcome these difficulties of navigation the government should build a first-class military road, starting at some point on the Missouri between the mouth of the Muscle-Shell and the foot of the rapids, running in a south-westerly direction between the Muscle-Shell river and the Judith basin, and passing south of the Belt mountains, then west and northwest along said range of mountains to the Missouri river, then nearly a due west course, and intersecting the Mullen road at the eastern base of the Rocky mountains, at a point about fifteen miles from Helena, the largest and most flourishing town of the Territory.

This road would not be an expensive one to build, and would be of incalculable benefit to the people of Montana, as it would pass through the geographical, as well as the mineral, centre of the Territory, and from which lateral roads can be made, extending by easy grades to all portions of the Territory.

From the point where this road would intersect the Mullen road, that road should be placed in thorough repair as far as Walla-Walla. Many or about all the bridges on the Mullen road have been carried away, and there are a very large number of them. Fires in the heavy timber along the road have caused many large trees to fall across it, thereby rendering it wholly impracticable for wagons. Pack trains, with a great deal of trouble, do make out to travel it. It is highly important for Montana that this proposed road should be built, and the old one put in good repair; it would then give her a short and easy exit, both to the east and to the west, and would thereby cheapen the rate of transportation to Montana, and it would also be important to the commerce of the Atlantic and Pacific, by giving a direct communication between the waters of the Missouri and the Columbia—the two great rivers of the east and west.

Two years ago the legislature of Montana took upon itself the power to grant to certain individuals the right to erect toll-gates upon the military (Mullen) road between Benton and Walla-Walla, at least over a portion of that road, running along Hell-gate and Blackfeet river. I am credibly informed that these persons have expended little or nothing towards the repair of the road, and that their charges for toll are exorbitant. I submit to the general, has the legislature of a Territory the power to place toll-gates and toll-gate keepers upon a military road built by government officers and with government funds?

#### AGRICULTURAL.

But little has been known until the past year in regard to the agricultural resources of Montana; but the fact is sufficiently ascertained that the cereals of all kinds and the coarser and more hardy grasses mature fully notwithstanding the high latitude, and that by 1868 it is predicted that Montana will be fully self sustaining, so far as breadstuffs and meats are concerned. This Territory is contributing annually not less than one to one and a half million of dollars to Utah for the article of flour alone; but it is hoped this will not be the case for more than a year or two longer.

This season, which was a very backward one, with much high water, the grasshoppers have made their appearance in great numbers and threaten the entire destruction of the crops in many localities. When they make their appearance it is not by hundreds or thousands, but in clouds; they pass from one section of the country to another, and from farm to farm, and attack and destroy everything in the shape of vegetable or grain, leaving absolutely nothing but the field enclosed by its fences. In some portions of the Territory they have been much worse than in others. Some sections have not yet been visited by them, and the farmers hope not to receive a call; but there is no telling at what hour they may appear. The Gallatin valley, the finest agricultural portion of the Territory, has been completely devoured. Between Fort Benton and Sun river, a distance of some fifty or sixty miles, the grasshoppers have completely cleaned the country of grass. There is also a species of bug that has made great ravages on all garden vegetables, and has been so particularly severe on the potato crop that it is termed here the "potato bug." The cricket, in some localities, has also done a great deal of mischief to the crops. With the backward season, high waters, grasshoppers, crickets, and bugs, the farmers of Montana have had a hard and discouraging time of it this season.

The valleys are numerous, through which beautiful streams thread their way. Irrigation is used in all cases; the streams are so numerous and the valley so gently undulating that this process is neither very costly nor difficult. The soil is quite productive; wheat, barley and vegetables grow to perfection. As yet none but spring wheat has been raised; I learn that winter wheat will be sown this fall for the first time. The valleys of the Gallatin, Jefferson, and Madison rivers are being rapidly settled for farming purposes. Beautiful ranches have

sprung up like magic upon the Sun, Deerbone, and Prickly Pear rivers; the valley just in front of Helena, through which meanders the Prickly Pear, Ten Mile and Silver creeks, dotted with its fine farms, covered with herds of cattle and sheep, presents as beautiful a panorama as the eye ever rested upon; and to think that upon this very spot, but a year or so ago, trod the foot of the savage, and to-day the banks of these streams are as safe as those of the Ohio or the Hudson. The energy and enterprise of our people cannot but challenge the admiration of all Americans, and also of the world. I think this country well adapted to raising stock; better beef and mutton I have never tasted than that raised and fed upon the mountain grasses of Montana. I am told that cattle are wintered in the valley upon the wild grass, and make as good beef in the spring as that wintered and fed upon corn and the best of hay. I have seen nowhere in any part of our country horses, mules, or cattle, working in teams, in as fine condition as they are in Montana. The streams are filled with delicious fish, and wild game, from the buffalo to the prairie chicken, abound in great abundance, and the climate is delightful; and the only drawback is the long and cold winter, not as long nor as cold, however, as in the same latitude on the eastern coast. Nature has furnished the mountain portion of Montana with an abundance of excellent fuel and timber. Most excellent coal has been found on the Missouri river about thirty-five miles below Fort Benton and at Drowned Man's rapids, and with a little search it can be found, without doubt, at many points. Good indications of coal are seen at many points on the Missouri river, and were it not for the hostile Indians it would be very soon developed.

## MAPS, ETC.

The map I enclose was made and presented to me by Mr. W. W. De Lacy, of this city, (Virginia,) a gentleman of fine abilities, and is well known to several of our engineer officers. He served with Governor Stevens, Majors Mendell, W. F. Smith and Captain Mullen, and in former days in Texas with J. E. Johnston, and William H. C. Whiting. He was employed by Governor Stevens and Captain Mullen in their surveys through this Territory. Should officers be sent to this country to make the surveys of the Yellowstone, Missouri, &c., I would respectfully suggest that the services of Mr. De Lacy be secured to aid them in their labors. I am satisfied that no better assistant could be secured. I make this suggestion unknown to Mr. De Lacy, nor do I know that he would wish to be employed, as I have suggested, but make it, being fully satisfied it would be to the interest of the government to secure the services of so fine a draughtsman, and a man so familiar with this whole country; Mr. De Lacy is now the public surveyor for the county of Madison, and his residence Virginia City. He asks that a copy of this map be not allowed to fall into the hands of citizens interested in getting up maps. The mountains are not put down on this map; the names of the different ranges are simply written in; thereby rendering the streams, roads, &c., far more distinct. Wherever there is a light spot on the map, it should be filled in by mountains. The proposed road from Muscle-Shell to Helena and Virginia City I have caused to be indicated here; the county boundaries are also denoted on the map. I will ask to have this map sent to me after my return to the Atlantic States, as I wish to send it with my final report to the War Department. I also enclose a list of distances furnished me by Mr. De Lacy, which I think will be of interest; most of them are from actual odometer measurement. \* \* \* \* I wish very much to send for the information of the general the amount of freight brought to the Territory this season, but it is impossible for me to do so, as the wagon trains across the plains have not yet reached here; they are just beginning to arrive. I have ascertained the amount received at Fort Benton up to the 3d of July by twenty-six steamboats, which amounts to four thousand three hundred and eight tons, a large portion of which is mining machinery.

The current prices (in gold dust) in Montana at this date are—

For fresh beef on the hoof, 10 cents per pound; bacon, 52 cents per pound; hams, 53 to 60 cents per pound; flour, \$15 per sack of 100 pounds; sugar, 40 to 45 cents per pound; coffee, 56 cents per pound.

I was very sorry to have been unable to get across the mountains from Helena, Montana, to the headwaters of the Columbia, Oregon, owing to unprecedented high waters in the spring, which lasted almost all summer, and caused the destruction of nearly all the bridges. Mullen's road was impassable.

I saw one pack train that had been forty-seven days coming through from Walla-Walla to Helena, a distance of about four hundred and ninety miles. They were compelled to swim their mules and to build rafts to cross over all the streams on the road. I went to the owner of the pack train to make arrangements to get to Walla-Walla with him on his return. He informed me that there was not money enough in Walla-Walla to induce him to return over that road—Mullen's; that it was his intention to start with his train for Arizona in a few days. A party of some five men on mules left Helena for Oregon, to go by Mullen's road, a few days after my arrival in Montana, and before I was able to start; after that I could learn of no parties going that road to which I could attach myself, so was compelled to go to Boise City, Idaho, by the way of Bear river, Utah.

As one travels south through Montana the country grows less interesting and more and more barren; and about the time the line between Montana and Idaho is crossed, the sage-brush country commences, and from that point to Bear river, and from thence to Boise City, nothing is to be seen but a barren, desolate waste, covered with sage brush. Not a tree or a living thing in the shape of game to be found on the whole route; and but one habitation in a distance of three hundred miles, but what belongs to Ben Holliday, the mail contractor. His stables are established along at a distance of about eighteen miles of each other; and a more fatiguing and uninteresting stage ride never was taken than that from Bear river to Boise City. Any one taking this route I would advise him to take his own rations with him.

On arriving at Boise City I learned that Generals Halleck and Steele, with several staff officers, had passed through Boise City, on their way to Walla-Walla, on a tour of inspection. I could see little necessity of my making a written report to General Halleck of what I had seen in his division when he had passed through and seen it all himself but a few days before, so I reported all I had to say to General Halleck verbally. On the Columbia river I met a Mr. Drake, one of the party of five that left Helena for Oregon on mules. He gave me an account of his trip. All the bridges on Mullen's road, with the exception of three, had been carried away by high water; his party were compelled to swim several streams, but otherwise got through without much trouble. He says it is a thing impossible to get a wagon through on that road in its present condition. Mr. Drake is a man who has made the mountains his home for many years, and has travelled all these roads at all seasons of the year, and he does not think Mullen's road can ever be made practicable for more than three or four months in the year. In the spring and early summer the streams are kept more than full by the continual melting of the snows in the mountains, and the roads are, consequently, impassable on account of the mud. The Mullen road follows the bottom lands on the streams nearly the whole distance. In the winter the roads are impassable on account of snow.

I learned of a second route after my arrival in Oregon, of which I had heard nothing while in Montana, which, when completed, will be the route travelled between Oregon and Montana. It is called the Pend d'Oreille lake road; it is in the hands and under the management of the Oregon Steam Navigation Company. One steamer is already on Pend d'Oreille lake, and runs from the foot of the lake to Cabinet mountain, a distance of sixty miles. This steamer's route

is partly over the lake and down Clark's Fork to the east or southeast of Cabinet mountain. The road over this mountain is next to impassable; but by water the mountain is avoided. Beginning at this point on the river there are bad rapids for twenty miles, around which there is a portage by a good road.

The Oregon Steam Navigation Company are building a second steamer, which was to have been completed early this fall, to run sixty miles further on Clark's Fork to Thompson's river. At this point on the river there is a short portage of two miles around Thompson's falls, over a good road.

The company say they will put on a third steamer next spring, to run from Thompson's falls to Jack's river, a distance of ninety miles. It is said to be one hundred and sixty miles from Jack's river to Helena; and the road a very good one. It is claimed for this route that it can be used the greater portion of the year, and that all the bad portions of the wagon roads are avoided by the steamers.

Mr. Drake, who has no interest in the Navigation Company, tells me this is the fact, and that the route will be a good one as soon as the three steamers get to running, but without the steamers it is an awful road, and cannot be travelled by loaded wagons. The intention of this route is to compete with the Missouri river in supplying Montana Territory. I cannot see how it is to be effected, as the charge for freight from Portland, Oregon, to Wallula alone, is seven cents per pound, while the steamers on the Missouri river carry freight from St. Louis to Fort Benton for from eight to twelve cents per pound.

From White's bluff, on the Columbia river, to foot of Pend d'Oreille lake is . . . . .	160 miles.
From Wallula, on the Columbia river, to foot of Pend d'Oreille lake is . . . . .	218 miles.
From foot of Pend d'Oreille lake to Cabinet mountain . . . . .	60 miles.
From portage around rapids, (a good road) . . . . .	20 miles.
From foot of rapids to Thompson's river . . . . .	60 miles.
From portage around Thompson's falls . . . . .	2 miles.
From Thompson's falls to Jack's river . . . . .	90 miles.
From Jack's river to Helena . . . . .	160 miles.
From Wallula to Helena . . . . .	610 miles.
From White's bluffs to Helena . . . . .	552 miles.
From Wallula (by Mullen's road) to Helena . . . . .	490 miles.

I send herewith a list\* of distances furnished me by a Mr. Whitman, of Walla-Walla. The road from Walla-Walla to Helena Mr. Whitman has travelled a great deal; his distances, as far as they go, agree very closely with those on the Mullen road. I think Mr. Whitman follows Mullen's road most of the way, but makes a number of cut-offs, thereby reducing the distance somewhat. I have written to General Sherman, requesting him to send me the map mentioned on page 53; I will forward it to the Adjutant General as soon as it is received.†

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

D. B. SACKET,  
Inspector General U. S. A.

The ADJUTANT GENERAL  
U. S. Army, Washington, D. C.

\* Not copied.

† Not received.

