

MESSAGE

OF

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

IN COMPLIANCE WITH

A resolution of the Senate, of the 11th instant, calling for copies of correspondence relative to the Indian disturbances in California.

FEBRUARY 21, 1856.—Read and ordered to be printed.

To the Senate of the United States:

I communicate, herewith, a report of the Secretary of War and accompanying documents, also of the Secretary of the Navy and accompanying documents, in answer to a resolution of the Senate, passed the 11th of February: "That the President of the United States be requested to communicate to the Senate copies of all the correspondence between the different departments of the government and the officers of the army and navy (not heretofore communicated) on the Pacific coast, touching the Indian disturbances in California, Oregon, and Washington."

FRANKLIN PIERCE.

WASHINGTON, *February 21, 1856.*

NAVY DEPARTMENT,
February 20, 1856.

SIR: In compliance with the Senate's resolution, calling upon the President of the United States "to communicate to the Senate copies of all correspondence between the different departments of the government and the officers of the army and navy (not heretofore communicated) on the Pacific coast, touching the Indian disturbances in California, Oregon, and Washington," I have the honor to transmit, herewith, copies of all documents and papers in the possession of the Navy Department relating to the matter referred to in the resolution.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, your obedient servant,

J. C. DOBBIN.

To the PRESIDENT.

List of papers from the Navy Department, in answer to Senate's resolution of February 11, 1856, touching the Indian disturbances in Washington Territory.

- Copy of letter from C. H. Mason, esq., secretary of Washington Territory, of February 20, 1855, enclosing a memorial of the legislative assembly of the Territory of Washington, relative to the stationing of a man-of-war on the northwestern coast of the United States.
- Copy of the reply of the Secretary of the Navy thereto, dated April 18, 1855.
- Copy of instructions to Commodore Mervine, of April 18, 1855.
- Copy of letter from C. H. Mason, esq., secretary and acting governor of Washington Territory, acknowledging receipt of the letter of the Secretary of the Navy of April 18, 1855.
- Extracts from Commodore Mervine's dispatch No. 13, dated September 18, 1855.
- Extracts from the report of Commander J. S. Sterett, dated August 10, 1855.
- Copy of letter from Commander J. S. Sterett, dated September 7, 1855.
- Extracts from Commodore Mervine's dispatch No. 17, dated November 3, 1855, with copies of enclosures G and H.
- Extract from the dispatch of Commodore Mervine No. 19, dated December 4, 1855, with copies of enclosures A, B, and C.
- Copy of letter from Secretary of the Navy to Commodore Mervine, dated January 3, 1856.
- Extract from Commodore Mervine's dispatch No. 20, dated December 19, 1855, with copies of enclosures marked A and B.
- Copy of a letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, with copies of enclosures from Professor Bache, superintendent of United States Coast Survey, relating to the services of the steamer "Active," Commander Alden, in Puget sound.
- Copy of the reply of the Secretary of the Navy to the Secretary of the Treasury, dated January 5, 1856.
- Extracts from the dispatch of Commodore Mervine, dated January 4, 1856, and
- Copy of the report of Commander Sterett, of the Decatur, dated December 5, 1855, with copy of enclosure.
- Copy of the letter of the Secretary of the Navy to Commander Sterett, dated February 11, 1856, with copy of a letter from the Secretary of War, acknowledging the services of Commander Sterett.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, February 20, 1856.

SIR: Pursuant to your direction, I have the honor to enclose herewith copies of the correspondence in relation to the recent Indian disturbances in the State of California and in the Territories of Oregon

and Washington, called for by a resolution of the United States Senate of the 11th instant.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JEFF'N DAVIS,
Secretary of War.

The PRESIDENT.

Synopsis of Correspondence.

- Letter of Governor Curry to the Secretary of War, Portland, Oregon Territory, October 24, 1855, enclosing letter of Major G. J. Rains to Governor Curry, (A,) Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, October 9, 1855.
- Letter of Governor Curry to Major G. J. Rains, (B,) Portland, Oregon Territory, October 16, 1855.
- Proclamation of Governor Curry, calling for volunteers, (C,) Portland, Oregon Territory, October 11, 1855.
- Proclamation of Governor Curry, calling for volunteers, (D,) Portland, Oregon Territory, October 15, 1855.
- General Orders, No. 10, of head-quarters, Territory of Oregon, (E,) Portland, Oregon Territory, October 20, 1855.
- Letter of General Wool to Lieutenant Colonel L. Thomas, Benicia, California, September 4, 1855, enclosing proceedings of a military commission convened at the camp at Fort Boise, Oregon Territory, July 17, 1855, for the trial of Indians for the murder of an immigrant party.
- Letter of Major G. J. Rains to Colonel S. Cooper, Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, October 3, 1855.
- Letter of General Wool to Lieutenant Colonel L. Thomas, Benicia, California, October 19, 1855.
- Letter of General Wool to Lieutenant Colonel L. Thomas, Benicia, California, November 3, 1855.
- Letter of General Wool to Lieutenant Colonel L. Thomas, Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, November 17, 1855, enclosing letter of Lieutenant John Withers to Colonel S. Cooper, Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, November 12, 1855, with memorandum of entire regular and volunteer force mustered into service in Washington Territory, November 17, 1855.
- Letter of General Wool to Lieutenant Colonel L. Thomas, Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, December 13, 1855, enclosing letter of Colonel J. W. Nesmith (Oregon volunteers) to General Wool, Dalles of the Columbia, November 21, 1855.
- Letter of General Wool to Colonel Nesmith, Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, November 24, 1855.
- Letter of Captain E. D. Keyes to Major E. D. Townsend, Fort Steilacoom, Washington Territory, November 27, 1855.
- Letter of Joel Palmer (superintendent Indian affairs) to General Wool, Dayton, Oregon Territory, November 21, 1855.

Letter of Joel Palmer (superintendent Indian affairs) to General Wool, Columbia barracks, Washington Territory, December 1, 1855.
 Letter of Captain T. J. Cram to Major E. D. Townsend, reporting military reconnaissances, Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, November 30, 1855.

Letter of General Wool to Lieutenant Colonel Thomas, Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, December 25, 1855.

Letter of General Wool to Lieutenant Colonel Thomas, San Francisco, California, January 19, 1856.

TERRITORY OF OREGON, HEADQUARTERS,
Portland, October 24, 1855.

SIR: The frontiers of our Territory are again the scene of Indian hostilities. Heretofore operations for their suppression have been directed against single tribes, or combinations not formidable in point of numbers. The extent of the alliance, the numbers already openly in arms, and the character for bravery and perseverance of the allied tribes, render the present hostilities, especially on the northern frontier, exceedingly grave and important.

My information is reliable, that the number of Yakimas, Klikitats, and disaffected spirits from other neighboring tribes, now in the field on the northern frontier, exceeds fifteen hundred; and that the Cayuse, Pelouse, and Walla-Walla tribes, have taken the resolution to join the war party.

Suspicion for some time past has been attracted towards the Yakimas and Klikitats, and the intercourse of the latter with the bands dispersed through the settlements in the valley of the Willamette has been very carefully observed. To what extent the tampering with these bands has been successful is not known; but the simultaneous rising of the Shasta and Rogue river Indians, in southern Oregon, has occasioned an extraordinary feeling of alarm and insecurity throughout the whole extent of our settlements.

A. J. Bolan, esq., one of the sub-Indian agents of Washington Territory, lately returned from the interior, having heard that depredations were being committed by the Yakimas upon parties of our citizens returning through their country from the Pen d'Oreille mines, and that several returning miners had been waylaid and murdered, immediately set out for the camp of Camiarkin, the principal chief, by appointment of Governor Stevens, relying for his own safety upon the friendly disposition always manifested towards him, and with a confident expectation of being able, by his personal influence, to reconcile any exciting feeling of hostility. On the way he was waylaid and most barbarously murdered by the orders of the treacherous Camiarkin. His death signalized the general outbreak.

Brevet Major Haller, in command at Fort Dalles, with commendable promptitude and gallantry, commenced operations against the enemy; but the events of a few days ascertained the inadequacy of

the whole disposable force of United States troops in this military district to suppress hostilities.

On the 11th instant I received at this place, where I had established headquarters immediately upon hearing of the death of Mr. Bolan, a communication from Major G. J. Rains, commanding officer of the Columbia river and Puget's sound district, copy of which, marked A, is herewith transmitted.

Other and reliable information, painfully confirmed, constrained me to call a larger force into the field than was contemplated by the requisition of Major Rains; and for reasons assigned in my communication to him, (copy of which, marked B, is herewith transmitted,) to maintain a distinct military organization of the force authorized by my proclamation of the 11th inst., copy of which, marked C, is also herewith transmitted.

To enrol an adequate force with that "celerity" which the exigency required, left no other alternative to the election of the executive.

From the office of the adjutant general of the Territory will be forwarded important information connected with the campaign in both sections of the Territory, to which I beg leave to refer.

It affords me great satisfaction to inform you of the zeal manifested by all classes, in support of my efforts to meet the emergency. Without other resources than the generous confidence of my fellow citizens has placed at my disposal, trusting entirely to the justice of Congress for reimbursement, a force of eight hundred men, fully armed and equipped, with subsistence for a campaign of three months' duration, will have been concentrated at Fort Dalles in the short space of three weeks.

The operations in the south will doubtless be brief. For the suppression of hostilities in that quarter, two battalions have been authorized by my proclamation of 15th instant, copy of which, marked D, is herewith transmitted. By the latest information received, the conviction is forced upon me, that the settlers in the Rogue river valley, roused to phrenzy by the repeated outrages perpetrated by the Indians in their neighborhood, and by this renewed evidence of their faithlessness, will have utterly exterminated the Indian race in that valley before an organized force takes the field. To prevent, if possible, the exhibition of such a spectacle, and to insure discrimination between the innocent and the guilty, an order has been issued, copy of which, marked E, is also herewith transmitted.

Constant attention will be paid to the management of each department called into active operation by the state of hostilities, and the utmost prudence and economy in their administration enforced.

Should not a decisive blow be struck early in the campaign, I fear that the northern frontier will be the theatre of a protracted struggle; and I beg to earnestly press upon the attention of the government the necessity in that event of an augmentation of the force of regular troops to relieve the volunteers, whose avocations and relations to society forbid their being kept as a permanent force in the field. Upon the enrolment list and now actively engaged in the service as officers or privates in the volunteer corps, is one of the associate justices of the Territory, Cyrus Olney, esq.; the United States district attorney,

W. H. Farrar, esq.; and several members elect of the legislative assembly.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
 GEORGE L. CURRY,
Governor of Oregon.

Hon. JEFFERSON DAVIS,
Secretary of War.

A.

HEADQUARTERS, COLUMBIA RIVER
 AND PUGET'S SOUND DISTRICT,
Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, October 9, 1855.

GOVERNOR: We have just received information from Brevet Major Haller, who was ordered into the Yakima country with a force consisting of five officers, one hundred and two men, and one mountain howitzer, on the 3d instant. He states that he fell in with the enemy on the afternoon of the 6th instant, and commenced an action with them in the brush on the Pisco river, and after fighting some time, he drove them out at the point of the bayonet, and has taken possession of the heights surrounding that river. He was surrounded, and has called for a reinforcement.

This morning Lieutenant Day, of artillery, leaves Fort Dalles to join Major Haller's command, with about forty-five men and one mountain howitzer.

As commanding officer, I have ordered all the United States disposable force in this district into the field immediately, and shall take command.

As this force is questionable to subdue these Indians, the Yakimas, Klikitats, and may be some other smaller bands, I have the honor to call upon you for four companies of volunteers, composed according to our present organization, each of one captain, one first lieutenant, one second lieutenant, four sergeants, four corporals, two musicians and seventy four privates, this number of companies is just enough for a major's command, and would authorize that officer also.

We have only arms enough at this post for two companies, so it is advisable to have two of the four companies armed with rifles, or such arms as best can be obtained. We have plenty of ammunition, however.

As celerity is the word, we want as many of the volunteers as can be immediately obtained to rendezvous at this post, and proceed with the troops to Fort Dalles. They can be mustered here.

I am, governor, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
 G. J. RAINS.
Major Fourth Infantry, Commanding.

Hon. GEORGE L. CURRY,
Governor of Oregon Territory.

B.

TERRITORY OF OREGON, HEADQUARTERS,
Portland, October 16, 1855.

MAJOR: The very serious character of the Indian difficulties on the northern frontier, more fully developed after the date of your requisition for four companies of Oregon volunteers, to be mustered into the service of the United States, as a reinforcement of the United States troops under your command, has determined me to call into the field a regiment of mounted volunteers, under the command of Colonel J. W. Nesmith, brigadier general of the Oregon militia. This force will cordially co-operate with your command in a vigorous prosecution of the campaign. It is wholly impracticable to induce the citizens of Oregon to enrol for service in the suppression of any Indian hostilities, under the organization prescribed by the rules and regulations of the United States army. I am therefore constrained, in order to secure the enrolment of a sufficient force for the present critical emergency, to preserve a distinct military organization, under the authority of the territorial government, of the force in the field in pursuance of my proclamation. I trust, however, that the effectiveness of the whole force engaged will not be impaired by this necessity, but that both commands, invigorated by a spirit of cordial co-operation, will conjointly achieve a prompt and successful issue to the enterprise in which they will be employed.

A deficiency of suitable arms immediately available to complete the equipment of the first company enrolled, impelled me to send forward that company under command of Captain A. V. Wilson, with a requisition upon Lieutenant Withers, commanding Fort Vancouver, to furnish such of the command as were without arms from the extra supply of guns at that post, and with instructions to halt at the Cascades, an exposed and important point in Washington Territory, then reported to be entirely defenceless, and await further orders. The refusal of Lieutenant Withers, as reported to me by Captain Wilson, to comply with my request, unless the men were mustered into the service of the United States, enforced a delay of nearly twenty-four hours in the march of Captain Wilson's company. I am happy to state, however, that upon my personal application the necessary arms were furnished by Captain Eckerson, of the ordnance department at Fort Vancouver; and company A of the regiment of Oregon mounted volunteers is en route for the Dalles of the Columbia. Two more companies will be dispatched for the scene of action this day. The colonel commanding leaves to-day for the Dalles.

The communication with the settlements in the Willamette valley, across the Cascade range, is reported to me by settlers on this side of the summit to be open, and daily employed by straggling parties of Indians. I have directed a detachment to be sent to the Dalles by that road; it will move to-day.

A band of Klikitats, reported to be friendly, encamped near Cowallis, some seventy miles south of this place, were in possession of the particulars of the engagement in Simcoe valley, between the gallant command under Major Haller and the hostile tribes north of the

Columbia river, on the same day that the intelligence reached this place. It has been known some time by the superintendent of Indian affairs for Oregon, that the Indians west of the Cascade range had been tampered with by those now engaged in open hostilities on the northern frontier; and the Shasta and Rogue river Indians are now in open arms against the settlers in that section of the Territory. For the suppression of this new outbreak I have taken prompt and I trust effective measures. Herewith I transmit for your information a copy of my second proclamation.

The hostile conduct of the Indians on our northern and southern frontiers, together with other circumstances herein named, strongly fortifies the belief that a combination has been effected among the different tribes on our borders, as well as in our midst, and a general war resolved upon on their part against the whites. The zeal and alacrity with which the citizens of this Territory have responded to my call for volunteers in this service during the continuance of the war, is an unmistakable evidence that our people are prepared for the emergency.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEORGE L. CURRY,
Governor of Oregon.

Major G. J. RAINS,
*4th Infantry, United States army,
Commanding Columbia River and Puget's Sound district.*

C.

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE TERRITORY OF OREGON.

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas certain Indians have been guilty of criminal offences, and have combined and are now engaged in hostilities that threaten the peace and security of the frontier settlements, and the chief in command of the military force of the United States in this district having made a requisition upon the executive of this Territory for a volunteer force to aid in suppressing the attacks of said hostile Indians, I issue this my proclamation, calling for eight companies of mounted volunteers, to remain in force until duly discharged; each company to consist of one captain, one first lieutenant, one second lieutenant, four sergeants, four corporals, and sixty privates; each volunteer, if possible, to furnish his own horse, arms, and equipments; each company to elect its own officers, and rendezvous, without delay, on the right bank of the Willamette river, opposite Portland, where they will be mustered into service on reporting to the adjutant general of the Territory.

The following named counties are expected to make up the number of men wanted; and, in order to facilitate operations, the subjoined named gentlemen are respectfully requested to act as enrolling officers in their respective counties:

Multnomah county, one company, Shubrick Norris.
 Clackamas county, one company, A. F. Hedges.
 Washington county, one company, W. S. Caldwell.
 Yamhill county, one company, A. J. Hembree.
 Marion county, one company, L. F. Grover.
 Polk county, one company, Fred. Waymire.
 Linn county, one company, L. S. Helm.
 Wasco county, one company, O. Humason.

The last named company will organize at the Dalles and report, in writing, to the adjutant general.

Our fellow-citizens who may be in possession of arms, rifles, muskets, and revolvers, are most earnestly desired to turn them over to the assistant quartermaster general, Albert Zieber, or his agents, in order that they may be appraised, and supply a deficiency that is most seriously experienced.

Given under my hand, at Portland, this 11th day of October, A. D. 1855.

By the governor.

GEO. L. CURRY.

B. F. HARDING,
Secretary of the Territory of Oregon.

D.

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE TERRITORY OF OREGON.

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas, by a petition numerously signed by citizens of Umpqua valley calling upon me for protection, it has come to my knowledge that the Shasta and Rogue river Indians, in southern Oregon, in violation of their solemn engagements, are now in arms against the peace of this Territory; that they have, without respect to age or sex, murdered a large number of our people, burned their dwellings, and destroyed their property; and that they are now menacing the southern settlements with all the atrocities of savage warfare. I issue this my proclamation, calling for five companies of mounted volunteers to constitute a northern battalion, and four companies of mounted volunteers to constitute a southern battalion, to remain in force until duly discharged. The several companies to consist of one captain, one first lieutenant, one second lieutenant, four sergeants, four corporals, and sixty privates; each volunteer to furnish his own horse, arms, and equipments; each company to elect its own officers, and thereafter to proceed, with the utmost possible dispatch, to the rendezvous hereinafter appointed.

It is expected that Jackson county will furnish the number of men wanted for the southern battalion, which will rendezvous at Jacksonville, elect a major to command, and report, in writing, to headquarter-

ters. It will then proceed to take effective measures to secure indemnity for the past, and conquer a lasting peace for the future with the enemy.

The following named counties are expected to make up the number of men wanted for the northern battalion: Lane county, two companies; Linn county, one company; Douglas county, one company; Umpqua county, one company; which will rendezvous at Roseburg, Douglas county, elect a major to command, and report, in writing, to headquarters. It will then proceed immediately to open and maintain the communication with the settlements in the Rogue river valley, and thereafter co-operate with the southern battalion in a vigorous prosecution of the campaign.

Given under my hand at Portland, the 15th of October, 1855.

By the governor.

GEO. L. CURRY.

B. F. HARDING,
Secretary of the Territory of Oregon.

E.

GENERAL ORDERS, No. 10.

TERRITORY OF OREGON, HEADQUARTERS,
Portland, October 20, 1855.

Information having been received that armed parties have taken the field in southern Oregon, with the avowed purpose of waging a war of extermination against the Indians in that section of the Territory, and have slaughtered, without respect to age or sex, a band of friendly Indians on their reservation, in despite of the authority of the Indian agent and the commanding officer of the United States troops stationed there, and contrary to the peace of the Territory, it is therefore ordered that the commanding officers of the battalions authorized by the proclamation of the governor of the 15th day of October instant, will enforce the disbanding of all armed parties not duly enrolled into the service of the Territory by virtue of said proclamation.

The force called into service for the suppression of Indian hostilities in the Rogue river and Umpqua valleys, and chastisement of the hostile party of Shasta, Rogue river, and other Indians now menacing the settlements in southern Oregon, is deemed entirely adequate to achieve the object of the campaign, and the utmost confidence is reposed in the citizens of that part of the Territory, that they will support and maintain the authority of the executive, by cordially co-operating with the commanding officers of the Territorial force, the commanding officer of the United States troops, and the special agents of the Indian department in Oregon.

A partisan warfare against any bands of Indians within our borders or on our frontiers is pregnant only with mischief, and will be viewed

with distrust and disapprobation by every citizen who values the peace and good order of the settlements. It will receive no countenance or support from the executive authority of the Territory.

By the governor.

E. M. BARNUM,
Adjutant General.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE PACIFIC,
Benicia, September 4, 1855.

SIR: I have reports from Brevet Major Haller, commanding the expedition against the Snake Indians, dated July 31.

The command reached Fort Boisé July 15, Mr. Olney, Indian agent, being with it. The next day a talk was held by some two hundred Indians there collected, of whom sixty-five were warriors; and it having been ascertained that four of the murderers were present they were seized, brought before a board of officers, or, as Major Haller terms it, a military commission, and their guilt having been clearly established, three were hung on the graves of their victims, the 18th; the fourth was shot by the guard in endeavoring to escape. The proceedings of the commission are herewith enclosed.

The command then continued to the Great Cammish prairie, thirty-five miles west from crossing of Malade river, and upwards of sixty miles beyond Fort Boisé. One emigrant train had been met and escorted to Fort Boisé, and detachments had been sent out towards the Salmon Falls and other routes where emigrants were expected, and where they might be molested by the Indians.

It appears that a tribe known as the White Knives, numerous and powerful, are the authors and instigators of most of the outrages committed by Indians upon emigrants, their object being plunder. They cover a large extent of country along the south side of Snake river, for one hundred miles above and below the Salmon Falls, across to the head waters of Humboldt river, and down that stream, and across to Lake Syloi, at or near the head of Malheur river. It was Major Haller's purpose to visit this tribe, and to cut them off from their fishery. He had some expectation of a hostile reception from them.

The activity and energy of Major Haller, and the officers of his command, deserve commendation.

The excitement in Scott's valley has somewhat abated. The origin of the difficulty there seems to have been the refusal of a white man to give up a squaw, for whom he had paid one horse—the Indian from whom the purchase was made having stolen the squaw from the Applegate tribe. This man was one of those murdered, and his body alone was much mutilated after death. Captain Smith, at Fort Lane, has some of the Indians implicated, and has refused to surrender them to a company of volunteers, except on a warrant or requisition from the governor of California—their reserve being in Oregon. Upwards of a hundred Indians, chiefly women and children, have collected for protection on the military reserve at Fort Jones. Captain Judah in-

forms me that there are constant threats of a night attack upon his post, for the purpose of killing these inoffensive people, but that he has made known that he shall repel force by force. It is found necessary to issue flour and beef to the Indians thus collected on the reserve, the superintendent of Indian affairs declining to subsist them.

At a council held by the Oregon superintendent, thirty miles from Fort Orford, an Indian shot a white man. As usual, the Indian was demanded, that he might be hung. He was protected by the detachment of troops from Fort Orford; and, while being conducted to be given over to the civil authority, in charge of a constable, and guarded by a corporal's guard, the boat in which he was pursued by a party of whites, who fired into the boat, killing the prisoner and the Indian who was poling the canoe. The corporal warned the party, before they fired, to keep off, and returned their fire, killing three of them; the rest gave up the pursuit. The superintendent had sent for the commanding officer of Fort Orford and, notwithstanding the excitement, was endeavoring to keep the Indians together and finish the council.

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

JNO. E. WOOL,
Major General.

Lieut. Col. L. THOMAS,
*Assistant Adjutant General,
Headquarters of the Army, New York City.*

OCTOBER 3, 1855.

Mostly on *Indian affairs*. Interesting. Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.

WINFIELD SCOTT.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, *October 5, 1855.*

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.

S. COOPER,
Adjutant General.

CASE No. 1.

Proceedings of a Military Commission convened at the camp at Fort Boisé, O. T., July 17, 1855, pursuant to the following order:

[Extract.]

ORDERS, No. 5.]

HEADQUARTERS WINNASS EXPEDITION,
Camp at Fort Boisé, July 17, 1855.

1. A military commission will convene this morning, at 10 o'clock, in this camp, for the trial of four Indian prisoners, accused of being present, and having, in some degree, participated in the massacre of

immigrants, which took place on Boisé river, on the 20th August, 1854.

The commission will, after mature deliberation on the testimony adduced, determine whether the accused persons are guilty or not guilty.

The commission will consist of Captain David A. Russell, 4th infantry; First Lieutenant Hiram Dryer, 4th infantry; Second Lieutenant Edward H. Day, 3d artillery. Assistant Surgeon John T. Milhau, U. S. A., will act as the judge advocate to the commission.

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By order of Brevet Major G. O. Haller.

HIRAM DRYER,

*First Lieutenant 4th Infantry, and
Adjutant of the Battalion.*

Present: Captain David A. Russell, 4th infantry; First Lieutenant Hiram Dryer, 4th infantry; Second Lieutenant Edward H. Day, 3d artillery; and Assistant Surgeon John P. Milhau, U. S. A., judge advocate.

The accused, "Bee Sheet," a warrior of the Winnas-ti band of Snake Indians, also present. Mr. Nathan Olney, Indian agent, being duly sworn as interpreter, the order convening the commission was read and interpreted to the prisoner. The members of the commission then took the following oath:

"We solemnly swear that we will well and truly inquire into the matter now before us, between the United States and the prisoner to be tried; and that we will determine according to the evidence adduced and the best of our belief, without partiality; favor, or affection, as to the guilt or innocence of the accused; neither will we disclose or discover the vote or opinion of any particular member, unless required to give evidence thereof, as a witness, by a court of justice, in a due course of law; so help us God."

The judge advocate having been sworn, the prisoner, "Bee Sheet," was arraigned for trial on the following—

Charge.—"Being present, and having, in some degree, participated in the massacre of immigrants, which took place on Boisé river, on the 20th August, 1854."

Plea.—To this charge the prisoner plead "guilty," and acknowledged having killed one of the murdered party.

Defence.—The prisoner said that himself and the people of his village were induced to commit the atrocious act by representations made to them by five Indians from Salmon Falls, who told them that *they* were in the habit of murdering the immigrants and pillaging the trains with impunity, and advised these to commence by attacking the party in question; and he further stated that twenty-six Indians, three of them boys, were engaged in the massacre. After the immigrant camp was taken, four squaws tomahawked the young white woman found near the wagon; two other white women were taken to the lodges and there killed by the squaws.

He implicated his three fellow-prisoners as having been engaged in the massacre, but to what extent he did not know. He further stated

that he knew where most of the murderers were, and was willing to conduct a party to apprehend them. The prisoner having no further defence to offer the court was cleared.

After mature deliberation the commission confirm the plea of the prisoner.

While the commission were deliberating the prisoner attempted to escape from the guard, and was shot by the sentinel and expired in a few minutes.

D. A. RUSSELL,
Captain fourth Infantry, presiding.
 JOHN J. MILHAU,
Assistant Surgeon U. S. Army, Judge Advocate.

HEADQUARTERS WINNASS EXPEDITION,
Camp at Fort Boisé, O. T., July 18, 1855.

The above proceedings and findings are approved.

G. O. HALLER,
Captain fourth Infantry and Brevet Major,
Commanding Expedition.

CASE No. 2.

Proceedings of a military commission convened at the camp at Fort Boisé, July 17, 1855, pursuant to the following orders:

[Extract.]

ORDERS No. 5.]

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Camp at Fort Boisé, O. T. July 17, 1855.

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The commission will, after mature deliberation on the testimony adduced, determine whether the accused persons are guilty or not guilty.

The commission will consist of Captain David A. Russell, 4th infantry; First Lieutenant Hiram Dryer, 4th infantry; Second Lieutenant Edward H. Day, 3d artillery. Assistant Surgeon John J. Milhau, United States army, will act as the judge advocate to the commission.

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By order of Brevet Major G. O. Haller.

HIRAM DRYER,
First Lieutenant 4th Infantry, and
Adjutant of the Battalion.

Present: Captain David A. Russell, 4th infantry; First Lieutenant Hiram Dryer, 4th infantry; Second Lieutenant Edward H. Day, 3d artillery; Assistant Surgeon John P. Milhau, United States army, judge advocate.

The prisoner, "*Nam-bi-gred*," a warrior of the Winnas-ti band of Snake Indians, also present.

Mr. Nathan Olney, Indian agent, and "*Tababovia*," half-breed, were duly sworn as *interpreters*.

The order convening the commission was read and interpreted to the prisoner. The members of the commission, and the judge advocate, having been duly sworn, the prisoner, "*Nam-bi-gred*," was arraigned for trial on the following—

Charge.—"Being present and having, in a degree, participated in the massacre of immigrants, which took place on Bois  river, on the 20th August, 1854."

To which the prisoner plead as follows: That he was present at the massacre; he had no weapon, but rode about yelling and whooping.

Watson R. Masters, a witness for the prosecution, being sworn, testifies that he recognizes this Indian as the one he saw at Fort Bois  last summer, about five days after the massacre. The prisoner, at that time, had on a pair of Sioux moccasins, which had belonged to Mr. Ward, a murdered man; he had come in with twenty-three head of cattle belonging to the murdered party. The son of Mr. Ward, a boy of thirteen years, pointed out this Indian to witness as the one that he saw cut, with a knife, a Dutchman that was previously wounded. Witness thinks this is the same Indian, but is not *positively* certain.

The prisoner here made the following statement: That he was present at the murder and had a gun, but, for want of caps, could make no use of it; during the fight he picked up a knife, and joined in the pursuit of a white man who ran by him, followed by an Indian; he made several attempts to stab this man, but failed; the other Indian then took the knife, and, in a second attempt, succeeded in striking the white man; both Indians then fell on him and killed him.

Defence.—That he and another Indian, "*Bee Sheet*," were gambling in his lodge, when "*Bell Pos*" rode up on a horse he had taken from the Americans, and induced them to follow him to the fight. The prisoner having no further defence to offer, the court was cleared.

The commission, after mature deliberation, finds the prisoner "*guilty*" of participating directly in the massacre.

D. A. RUSSELL,

Captain 4th Infantry, commanding.

JOHN J. MILHAU,

Assistant Surgeon United States Army, Judge Advocate.

HEADQUARTERS WINNASS EXPEDITION,

Camp at Fort Bois , O. T., July 18, 1855.

The proceedings and findings in the foregoing case of *Nam-bi-gred*, are approved.

G. O. HALLER,

*Captain 4th Infantry, and
Brevet Major Commanding Expedition.*

CASE No 3.

Proceedings of a Military Commission, convened at the camp at Fort Boisé, O. T., July 17, 1855, pursuant to the following order :

[Extract.]

ORDERS, No. 5.]

HEADQUARTERS WINNASS EXPEDITION,
Camp at Fort Boisé, O. T., July 17, 1855.

1. A military commission will convene this morning, at 10 o'clock, in this camp, for the trial of four Indian prisoners, accused of being present, and having, in some degree, participated in the massacre of immigrants which took place on Boisé river, on the 20th August, 1854.

The commission will, after mature deliberation on the testimony adduced, determine whether the accused persons are guilty or not guilty.

The commission will consist of Captain David A. Russell, 4th infantry; First Lieutenant Hiram Dryer, 4th infantry; Second Lieutenant Edward H. Day, 3d artillery; Assistant Surgeon John J. Milhau, U. S. A., will act as judge advocate to the commission.

* * * * *

By order of Brevet Major G. O. Haller.

HIRAM DRYER,
First Lieutenant 4th Infantry, and
Adjutant of the Battalion.

The commission met in compliance with the above.

Present all the members, viz: Captain David A. Russell, 4th infantry; First Lieutenant Hiram Dryer, 4th infantry; Second Lieutenant Edward H. Day, 3d artillery; and Assistant Surgeon John J. Milhau, judge advocate.

The prisoner, "War-be," a warrior of the Winnas-ti band of Snake Indians, also present. Mr. Nathan Olney, Indian agent, and "Tababoo," a half-breed, were duly sworn as interpreters.

The order convening the commission was then read and interpreted to the prisoner. The members of the commission and the judge advocate having been duly sworn, the prisoner, "War-be," was arraigned for trial, on the following charge:

Charge.—"Being present and having in some degree participated in the massacre of immigrants, which took place on Boisé river, on the 20th August, 1854."

Plea.—To which charge prisoner plead "guilty," and went on to state that he was at the fight, and fired two shots with a gun at the wagon, from a distance, the first shot without effect, while the second hit an ox. He does not know whether he killed any one or not. He joined the party after all the whites were killed, and took as his share of the plunder a piece of canvass, two quilts, three files, and a small gold coin. He further stated, that "Nam-bi-gred," and "Pam-bouya," received their share; the former, a double-barrelled gun, some powder, clothes, and thirty dollars in gold; the latter, a double-barrelled gun, and a purse containing gold and silver.

Defence.—Having heard that a train was encamped near his village, he and another Indian went to meet the immigrants for the purpose of trading. While on their way, the Americans took one of their horses from them; they then returned to the village. Shortly after, "Bell Pos" came in with a horse he had taken. The Indians were in favor of returning this horse to the whites, and one of them pulled "Bell Pos" from the horse and returned the horse to the immigrants; the latter then released the Indian horse they had taken.

Prisoner having no further defence to offer, the court was cleared.

The commission, after mature deliberation, finds the prisoner, "War-be," "guilty" of participating directly in the massacre.

D. A. RUSSELL,

Captain 4th Infantry, presiding.

JOHN J. MILHAU,

Assistant Surgeon U. S. A., Judge Advocate.

HEADQUARTERS WINASS EXPEDITION,
Camp at Fort Boisé, O. T., July 18, 1855.

The proceedings and findings in the case of *War-be* are approved.

G. O. HALLER,

*Captain 4th Infantry, and
Brevet Major Commanding Expedition.*

CASE No. 4.

Proceedings of a military commission convened at the camp at Fort Boisé, Oregon Territory, July 17, 1855, pursuant to the following order:

[Extract.]

ORDERS No. 5.]

HEADQUARTERS WINNASS EXPEDITION,
Camp at Fort Boisé, O. T., July 17, 1855.

1. A military commission will convene this morning, at ten o'clock, in this camp for the trial of four Indian prisoners, accused of being present, and having, in some degree, participated in the massacre of immigrants which took place on Boisé river, on the 20th August, 1854.

The commission will, after mature deliberation on the testimony adduced, determine whether the accused persons are guilty or not guilty.

The commission will consist of Captain David A. Russell, 4th infantry; First Lieutenant Hiram Dryer, 4th infantry; Second Lieutenant Edward H. Day, 3d artillery. Assistant Surgeon John J. Milhau United States army, will act as the judge advocate to the commission.

* * * * *

By order of Brevet Major G. O. Haller.

HIRAM DRYER,
*First Lieutenant 4th Infantry,
Adjutant of the Battalion.*

The commission met in compliance with the above order; present, all the members, viz: Captain David A. Russell, 4th infantry; First Lieutenant Hiram Dryer, 4th infantry; Second Lieutenant Edward H. Day, 3d artillery, and Assistant Surgeon John J. Milhau, United States army, judge advocate.

The prisoner "Pam-bou-ya" a warrior of the "Win-nas-ti" band of Snake Indians, also present.

Mr. Nathan Olney, Indian agent, and "Taba-boo," a half-breed, were duly sworn as interpreters.

The order convening the commission was then read and interpreted to the prisoner. The members of the commission and the judge advocate having been duly sworn, the prisoner "Pam-bou-ya" was arraigned for trial on the charge of being present, and having, in some degree, participated in the massacre of immigrants which took place on Bois  river on the 20th August, 1854.

Plea.—To this charge he answered as follows; That he was present at the massacre, and rode about on horseback; he stated also that after the fight he took possession of a horse and saddle; he rifled the pockets of a dying American, and took from them a purse containing three silver dollars and seven gold pieces; he then went to the wagon and picked out a fine rifle, a pistol, a powder horn and several other things. Prisoner went on to state that after the fight the Indians hauled the wagon off of the road into the bushes; with this he had nothing to do, being busy, at the time, dragging a sack of flour into the thicket.

Defence.—He states that he has never been considered a brave, and that other Indians were sent to commit depredations on the Americans, while he generally went to the fisheries and exchanged his salmon for horses stolen by the others; though present at the massacre, he had no weapon and took no active part in the murders.

"Bell Pos," he states, took a more active part in the matter than any other Indian; during the firing a white female was accidentally killed; three others were found in a wagon, taken to the lodges, and there killed by the squaws. An Indian man, "Tas-si-mow-ye," fired at one of the white women, but without effect, and she was tomahawked by a squaw. The prisoner had nothing further to say in his defence.

Finding.—The commission, after mature deliberation, finds the prisoner "Pambouya" guilty of participating in the massacre.

D. A. RUSSELL,

Captain 4th Infantry, presiding.

JOHN J. MILHAU,

Ass't Surg. U. S. A., Judge Advocate.

HEADQUARTERS WINNAS EXPEDITION,

Camp at Fort Bois , Q. T., July 18, 1855.

The proceedings and findings in the case of Pam-bou-you are approved.

G. O. HALLER,

*Captain 4th-Infantry, and Brevet Major,
Commanding Expedition.*

There being no further business before the commission, it adjourned
 “*sine die.*”

D. A. RUSSELL,
Captain 4th Infantry, presiding.
 JOHN J. MILHAU,
Ass't Snrg. U. S. A., Judge Advocate.

ORDERS No. 6.] HEADQUARTERS, WINNASS EXPEDITION,
Camp at Massacre Ground, Boisé River, July 18, 1855.

[Extract.]

II. The proceedings and findings in the foregoing cases of the Wen-nes-te warriors, *Besheet, Nambigred, Warbe and Pambouya*, are approved.

During the deliberation of the commission, with closed doors, the prisoner *Besheet* attempted to make his escape, which cost him his life. The promptness and accuracy of the shot of Sergeant *Kellehard*, of company G, 4th infantry, deserve commendation.

The guilt of these warriors having been established beyond a doubt, it becomes the painful duty of the commanding officer to see his own instructions—conveyed in a letter from the commanding officer of the Columbia river and Puget Sound district, dated June 21st, 1854—carried out, and accordingly direct that *Nambigred, Warbe and Pambouya* will be taken out, at or soon after sundown, to the grave of the massacred immigrants, at which a gallows has been erected, and there be hung by the neck, and left hanging, as a warning to others, until after sunrise.

III. A signal will be given, at which the troops will parade with fire-arms, when all but the sentinels on post will be marched to the spot, to witness the spectacle. The men who can be spared, in the employ of the acting assistant quartermaster, will also attend, in two ranks, and take their place on the left of the troops.

It is expected that the utmost decorum will prevail at the execution of these unfortunate warriors, who—although their people have shown the utmost barbarity towards their victims, and deserve death—are executed as an example, in hopes it will prevent other murders, and not from the instinct of revenge. The poor Indian's acts cannot and should not be judged by the standard of the civilized and christianized nations of the earth.

G. O. HALLER,
Captain 4th Infantry, and
Brevet Major commanding expedition.

Respectfully forwarded.

JOHN E. WOOL,
Major General.

SEPTEMBER 4, 1855.

HEADQUARTERS, FORT VANCOUVER.

Washington Territory, October 3, 1855.

COLONEL: I have the honor to transmit, herewith enclosed, the return of this post for the month of September, 1855.

I have also the honor to request a supply of blank post returns.

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

G. J. RAINS.

Major Fourth Infantry.

Colonel S. COOPER,

Adjutant General United States army, Washington, D. C.

P. S. COLONEL: The Yakima, Klikatats, and possibly some other smaller tribes, much dissatisfied with the treaty made with them by Governor Stevens and General Palmer, (superintendent of Indian affairs,) in this region, have murdered their agent, A. J. Bolon, and it is also reported that some 28 more citizens have met their death by the same means; so on the representation of facts, confirmed by a call for troops from acting Governor Mason, of this Territory, we have sent 142 men, (40 and 2 officers from Fort Steilacoom, and 102 from Fort Dalles,) with 5 officers, into the Yak-i-ma country, and shall follow, if necessary, with all our force.

Officially reported to department headquarters.

Very respectfully, &c.,

G. J. RAINS,

Major Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE PACIFIC,

Benicia, California, October 19, 1855.

SIR: The Yakima and Klikatat Indians in Oregon and Washington Territories being dissatisfied, as it is said, with the treaty made with Governor Stevens, have assumed a warlike attitude, and have killed a number of white inhabitants going to and returning from the mines near Fort Colvill. To punish these Indians, and to check their murderous intentions, Major Haller moved against them with about 100 men. He met them on the banks of the Pisko river, Sinqua valley, but finding them too strong, he retired to the heights, and sent for a reinforcement; Major Rains with all the forces under his command marched to his relief. I have ordered two detachments, one from Benicia, and the other from the Presidio, composed of one captain, two lieutenants, and seventy rank and file, to proceed in the steamer Columbia to reinforce Major Rains. I have no doubt the major will be able to chastise the Indians and bring them to terms.

The whites and Indians keep up a predatory warfare near Forts Jones and Lane. The whites have determined to exterminate the Indians in that region, hence they kill indiscriminately the innocent as well as the guilty.

I ordered Major Fitzgerald with his company of dragoons, some two months since, to the Dalles, but owing to difficulties between the whites and Indians in southern Oregon and northern California I suspended the order until his services could be dispensed with. It is rumoured that he has recently had a brush with the Indians, when he killed and wounded forty of them.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN E. WOOL.

Major General.

Lieut. Col. LORENZO THOMAS,
Assistant Adjutant General,
Headquarters of the army, New York city.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
New York, November 14, 1855.

Respectfully forwarded by command of Brevet Lieutenant General Scott.

L. THOMAS.

Assistant Adjutant General.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
November 16, 1855.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.

S. COOPER.

Assistant Adjutant General.

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

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

Captain Smith immediately sent a detachment, under Major Fitzgerald, to the scene of the outrages, for the protection of the settlers, and to punish the murderers.

The troops are now actively employed in trying to suppress the

troubles, but with what prospect of success, while there is an Indian left for whites to destroy, may be easily conjectured.

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

Brevet Major Haller marched from Fort Dalles, with one hundred men, the 3d of October, in pursuit of some hostile Indians. He seems to have been drawn into a sort of ambush, for on the 6th he found himself surrounded in a position, without wood or water, and was compelled to return to the Dalles, reaching there the 10th, after much hard fighting. The loss is reported to be, three enlisted men killed, nineteen wounded, and two died of wounds. One mountain howitzer was cached and abandoned, the carriage being broken and the mule having given out. About thirty pack animals were also lost. Major Rains had gone to the Dalles, whither he had ordered all the troops at Steilacoom and Fort Vancouver. I have ordered, in addition to Captain Ord's company, already arrived in Oregon, the company at the Presidio, except a guard of twelve men to preserve the reservation from the eager hands of squatters, and a company from Fort Humboldt; also, the company of infantry at Fort Reading, to relieve Fitzgerald's company 1st dragoons, at Fort Lane, the latter company to push on as fast as possible to the Dalles. Ample stores and ammunition have been forwarded, and I leave in the steamer of the 6th instant for the scene of war at the Dalles, where I shall be able more clearly to explain to you the position of affairs. It will not be safe to move any more of the troops from their present positions, but I shall endeavor to avoid the necessity of recognizing volunteers in the United States service.

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

JOHN E. WOOL,
Major General.

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

JOHN E. WOOL,
Major General.

Lieut. Col. L. THOMAS,
Asst. Adjt. Gen., Army Headquarters, New York.

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

The general-in-chief directs me to forward this dispatch for the information of the War Department, and to say that he proposes to

send the 9th infantry from Fort Monroe, to reinforce General Wool's command, (department of the Pacific.)

Very respectfully,

IRVIN McDOWELL,
Assistant Adjutant General.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.

S. COOPER,
Adjutant General.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
December 3, 1855.

The 9th infantry will be dispatched with the least delay by the isthmus route, to reinforce the command of the department of the Pacific.

JEFF'N DAVIS,
Secretary of War.

DECEMBER 3, 1855.

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE PACIFIC,
Fort Vancouver, November 17, 1855.

SIR: I have the honor to report my arrival at this post yesterday. The enclosed detailed report from Lieutenant Withers conveys a clear view of the state of affairs in this quarter. I have little to add except that, finding a reinforcement more necessary at Steilacoom than in any other section, I have ordered Captain Keyes there with his company. The route hence to Puget's Sound, *via* the Cowlitz river, is next to impracticable at this season, owing to rapid currents of that river and its numerous tributaries. I accordingly ordered the charter of the mail steamer to convey the troops and a quantity of stores now required at Puget's Sound. Besides the hardships and exposure of health saved to the troops by this arrangement, there will be a saving of from one to three weeks in time, and I shall be enabled to throw upon Puget's Sound an ample supply of stores, which it might be impossible to do if the Indians of the northern possessions should make a descent upon the sound, one of their war canoes being quite able to capture an ordinary sail transport.

Finding it impossible to cross the bar at Humboldt bay, I did not bring with me a company from Colonel Buchanan's command. I shall order it to Crescent City, to guard and escort the supplies for Forts Lane and Jones.

I hope that the successes of Major Rains and Captain Maloney have already effectually destroyed the combination among the various tribes, which at first appeared so formidable.

A report from Lieutenant Kantz, received at Crescent City, confirms the details of Captain Smith's engagements, except that it does not mention that Lieutenant Gibson was wounded.

Enclosed is a memorandum of the force now in this portion of the department.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
JOHN E. WOOL,
Major General.

Lieutenant Colonel L. THOMAS,
Assistant Adjutant General,
Army Headquarters, New York.

FORT VANCOUVER, W. T., *November 12, 1855.*

SIR: I have the honor, herewith, to submit a brief summary of the events in this district, so far as heard from, since the sailing of the last steamer.

As you will already have learned, the Indian war has become general, and a combination, for purposes of hostility to the whites, been formed on a scale which those most intimately acquainted with Indian character have heretofore believed impossible. Upon the east of the Cascade range, it may be now assumed that every tribe in Washington Territory, as far as the Rocky mountains, is engaged in the war, with the exception of the Flatheads, Spokans, Pen d'Oreilles, and part of the Nez Perce; and that, even of them, a great many of the young men are with the Yakimas. The total number of warriors in the field is variously estimated at from three to four thousand. It is certain that they are greatly out of proportion to the supposed population of the country. In the distance, bordering on Puget's Sound, hostilities have also been commenced; but I have no information as to their extent. The number of fighting men among the Indians within our own Territory, in that neighborhood, is from two thousand to two thousand five hundred; of whom a small part, those between the Nesqually and White rivers, are connected, by intermarriage, with the Yakimas. My own opinion is, that the war will be confined to these, if no untoward accident occurs to Captain Maloney's command; but the influence of the white population over the Indians depending altogether upon morale, any serious defeat would probably bring out the whole, as well as the wilder tribes which inhabit the coast from Gray's harbor to Cape Flattery. An additional danger to be apprehended is an attack from the Indians of Vancouver's island and British America generally. The entire population of that country, within reach of our Territory by water, is not less than forty thousand, of which one-fourth are warriors. They are well armed, and much superior to the coast Indians of Oregon and Washington Territories in courage and warlike enterprise. In southern Oregon, the Rogue river Indians, combined with some of those on the coast, the Umpquas, Pitt river, and Shasta Indians, have also broken out into a fresh war, and one of evidently intended extermination against the whites. The causes leading to this may be different from those which excited hostilities in Washington Territory, where the motive was altogether political, and sprung from no actual

grievance; but its result must, of course, be the same. The number of these Indians I am not informed of. Including the Klamath and Trinity Indians, they, however, make a considerable force.

Such is the present state of the Territory. As regards those tribes who have not yet committed themselves, efforts have been made by the Indian agents to bring in and disarm the different parties, placing them under the superintendence of individual citizens, and, by affording them protection from ill-advised attacks, induce them to remain quiet. Pursuant to this policy, I caused the band of Klikitats, amounting in all to about 150 souls, who usually live at the mouth of the Cathlapootl river, opposite St. Helens, to come in and encamp at this place. The circumstances attending their flight will be mentioned presently.

You have already learned, I suppose, that Lieutenant Slaughter, who, with a party of fifty men, had left Fort Steilacoom and crossed the Cascades by the Nahchess pass, had, on hearing of the force opposed to him, very judiciously fallen back upon White river. Upon this Captain Maloney took command with about 100 regulars, and a company of volunteers (mounted) under Captain Hayes, and again crossed the mountains for the purpose of connecting with Major Rains, who, it was expected, would have simultaneously left the Dalles. As, however, some delay necessarily occurred in the movements of the latter, an express was sent to Captain Maloney advising him of the fact, and he accordingly returned to White river. This movement, so far as the Sound country and Captain Maloney's command are concerned, proved a most fortunate one. The Indians of the country, at the western slope of the Cascades, had risen after his departure, killed two men, and compelled a detachment of rangers to post themselves in a house. The inhabitants had all left their houses, and were fortifying themselves at Seattle, Steilacoom, and Olympia. The garrison at Fort Steilacoom being reduced to a handful of soldiers and a few sailors from the revenue cutter Jefferson Davis, there was great reason to apprehend an attack upon the post. If Captain Maloney had not returned to White river, he would, most probably, have been compelled to fight the whole Indian force before Major Rains could have rendered him any succor. A party sent back to Fort Steilacoom by Captain Malony, with an express, was waylaid by the Indians, and several persons killed within a day's march of the fort. On the 2d instant Captain Maloney reached White river, and, on the 3d, a party of fifty regulars and fifty volunteers under Lieutenant Slaughter, detached for the purpose, attacked the Indians, who numbered, it is said, one hundred and fifty or two hundred, and killed thirty of them. Captain Malony, with a force of two hundred men, intended to make another attack upon the Indians on the 4th instant. Concerning this engagement we have heard nothing. The country between the Cowlitz river and the sound is entirely deserted; all the inhabitants having retired to stockades built for their protection. The condition of the road renders communication during the winter always difficult; and, during the heavy rains, often interrupts it entirely for a week or ten days at a time. Acting Governor C. H. Mason left here on the 3d instant, on his return from the Dalles, taking with

him one hundred rifles and a quantity of ammunition, furnished, on his requisition, by Mr. Eckerson, as the citizens are lamentably deficient in arms; we have heard of him no further than the Cowlitz landing.

Major Rains moved from the Dalles on the 30th ultimo, with about 350 regulars, consisting of parts of companies "G," "H," "I," and "K," of the 4th infantry, "L," "M," and "B," of the 3d artillery, and "C" and "E" of the 1st dragoons. He took twenty days' provisions with him, and has plenty more at the Dalles for all the regular force. On the 4th instant, when about twenty-five miles from the Dalles, he broke up some large caches of Indian provisions, taking away ten mule loads of stores, and destroying about twenty more. He is reported to have lost fifteen animals, taken by the Indians. He has with him an Indian prisoner, captured as a spy, who pointed out the place where the provisions were hidden. Governor Mason visited him at Camp Yakama, opposite the Dalles, previous to his departure, and, in view of the probable events of the war, conferred upon him the rank of brigadier general of Washington Territory volunteers.

About six companies of Oregon volunteers, under Colonel Nesmith, have also taken the field against the Yakamas, and three companies have moved to Fort Walla-Walla, the Hudson's Bay Company's post, which had been abandoned. This, it is understood, will be their headquarters, and their supplies are all to be sent there. They have refused to be mustered into the service of the United States, but I do not believe they can supply themselves with provisions or clothing. Major Rains has not issued either to them, but Mr. Eckerson has armed two companies. They are all mounted. No intelligence has yet been received, either from the regulars or volunteers, since they passed thirty miles into the enemy's country, and it is apprehended that the expresses have been cut off.

From the south I learn, through General McCarver, the commissary general of the Oregon volunteers, that an engagement had taken place with the Indians near Grave Creek, about six miles south of the Oregon trail, on the 31st October and 1st November. The Indians are supposed to have numbered three hundred. They were posted securely on a steep hill covered with forest, and had cut down trees to form obstructions to any attack. Some six hundred men are reported to have been engaged, including parts of companies "C" and "E," 1st dragoons, commanded by Captain Smith and Captain and Brevet Major Fitzgerald. Lieutenant Gibson, 3d artillery, who lately left the Willamette valley with a portion of the escort to Lieutenant Williamson, on his way to California, was in the engagement, and is reported to have been severely wounded. Of the regulars, four privates were killed and five wounded; and of the volunteers, nine were killed, thirteen severely wounded, and twelve slightly wounded. The assailants, the whites, were repulsed on both days.

I have referred to the flight of the Indians from this place; it occurred on the 9th instant. They were evidently frightened by the senseless and mischievous conduct of white men, and do not seem to have contemplated any hostility themselves. As they numbered about

fifty men, and proved to be supplied with arms, I detached Captain Strong, with a party of volunteers of the Washington mounted rifles, and Captain Newell, with a few Oregon scouts, to follow and bring them back. The force amounted to thirty men. They found the Indians encamped on a prairie, about thirty-five miles north of this place, and after a parley induced them to agree to return. After the council, their chief, Umtuts, as it would appear, started to come in alone, and was waylaid and murdered by some of his own party.— This event induced Captains Strong and Newell to grant them a respite of a few days, to perform the usual funeral ceremonies. They have no doubt of their willingness to return to this place, as the death of Umtuts was probably due to his having led them off. They cannot pass the mountains, and, having their families with them, must, unless they return here, soon suffer for provisions.

Captain Strong has already forwarded two detachments of his company, amounting to forty men, to camp Yakama, opposite Fort Dalles, and will follow immediately with the remainder. All the Washington Territory volunteers have mustered into the service of the United States.

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

JOHN WITHERS,

1st Lieutenant 4th infantry, commanding post.

Col. S. COOPER,

*Adjutant General United States army,
Washington City, D. C.*

N. B. *November 16th.*—On account of an accident, by which some of the machinery of the mail steamer was rendered useless, on her trip from San Francisco to this place, the mail for the Atlantic coast was not closed at the usual time; and I am, in consequence, enabled to give some little additional news from the Yakama valley. The command under Major Rains reached the Yakama Mission, on the Atahnam river, having met with no great opposition from the Indians, except in crossing the main Yakama. Colonel Nesmith, with two hundred and seventy volunteers, accompanied by Lieutenant Hodges and Dr. Steinberger, together with Lieutenant Sheridan, in command of twenty dragoons, started out towards the Nahchess pass, to see what has become of Captain Maloney and his command. It seems that Major Rains expected Captain Maloney to remain on the eastern slope of the Cascade mountains until he marched out to meet him, but the express conveying directions to that effect did not reach the latter until after he had recrossed the mountains. Major Rains discovered several large caches of provisions, and one of powder and arms, near the Mission. The Catholic priest has left the Mission—whether by compulsion of the Indians or not is yet unknown.

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

JOHN WITHERS,

1st Lieutenant 4th infantry, commanding post.

Col. S. COOPER,

*Adjutant General United States army,
Washington City, D. C.*

Memorandum of entire force, regular and volunteer, (mustered into the service,) in Washington Territory, November 17, 1855.

MAJOR RAIN'S COMMAND.

480 regulars, (20 dragoons included.)
62 volunteers, Yakima, Captain Strong, mounted.
50 volunteers. Yakima, Captain Newell, mounted.

592—total.

STELACOOM COMMAND.

168 regular, 4th infantry.
54 regulars, 3d artillery, (Captain Keyes.)
84 volunteers, Puget sound, Captain Hayes, mounted.
84 volunteers, Puget sound, Captain Wallace, mounted.

390—total.

RECAPITULATION.

Major Rain's total force	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	592
Steilacoom total force	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	390
Total strength	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<u>982</u>

Regulars, total, 702.

Volunteers, total, 280—all mounted.

This memorandum is correct, or nearly so.

JNO. WITHERS,
1st Lieutenant 4th Infantry.

BENICIA, HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE PACIFIC,
Fort Vancouver, December 13, 1855.

COLONEL: Since my arrival, the 17th ultimo, at this place, and my communication with Lieutenant Withers, report of affairs in this region, nothing has occurred worthy of notice, except the return of Major Rains with his command, 350 regulars and three howitzers, to the Dalles, and, I regret to say, the destruction of the Yakama Mission by the volunteers who followed, under the command of Colonel Nesmith, and ordered into the field at an enormous expense by Governor Curry, where they were not required, without my sanction or that of Major Rains. The latter, in the course of his march, three hundred miles going and returning, encountered the Yakimas—authors of the war in Washington Territory—and, after several skirmishes with them, they fled beyond his reach over mountains deeply

covered with snow. On his return from the mission to the Dalles, he reports that he passed over mountains covered with snow from two to five feet deep.

The Indians will not engage in a field fight with any considerable number of regulars. Their mode of carrying on war is not by regular engagements, but one of ambush and surprise. Their country, both in Oregon and Washington Territories, except Puget sound, being mountainous, is well calculated for that mode of warfare, and which seems to have been practised by the Indians of Rogue river country, where they appear to have successfully maintained themselves in their mountain fastnesses. Under these circumstances, it is scarcely necessary to remark, that it would be exceedingly difficult with my present force, however well prepared, which is not the case, to either conquer or bring the Indians to terms in this region, by chasing them, all being well mounted, through the mountains; and certainly not at the present moment, the mountains being generally covered with snow several feet deep. They can only be conquered or brought to terms by occupying their country, and such positions as would command their fisheries and valleys, where their cattle and horses must graze; their main dependence for subsistence being on fish, cattle, and horses. This I propose to do, that is, to occupy their country, and I am now, with my staff, actively preparing an expedition for that purpose. This, however, after a critical inspection of the troops, supplies, &c., I find cannot be accomplished as soon as I could wish, owing to the want of a sufficient number of troops, the means of transportation, and the want of clothing for the 4th infantry. I intend, however, with what troops I have, as soon as they can take the field, to occupy the Walla-Walla country. The several expeditions, viz: to Fort Boisé, the recent expedition of Major Haller to the Yakama country, and the more recent one of Major Rains, have reduced the greater part of the horses and mules of the command, including Major Fitzgerald's company, just arrived from Fort Lane, to a condition which renders them, for the time being, unfit for service. As soon as the animals have recruited and are rendered fit for service, my present force will be ready to take the field, and if I should receive in the meantime an additional force, at least a regiment, which would supersede the necessity of employing so expensive a force as volunteers, I have no doubt I will be able, in a short time, to either conquer the Indians in Oregon and Washington, or compel them to sue for peace or abandon their country.

Owing to the arduous services of the 4th infantry for the last six months, many of the rank and file have worn out their clothing. Estimates for clothing for these companies were forwarded to Washington in June last, and it has not yet arrived. Major Cross has, by my order, sent to Benicia for one thousand pairs of shoes, many of the men being barefooted, and for other clothing if it is in depot. I believe, however, it has all been issued or sold.

After the partial defeat of Major Haller, which created a great excitement and alarm in Oregon and Washington, lest all the Indian tribes should combine and come down at once upon the settlements, Major Rains called upon the acting governor of Washington Terri-

tory for two companies of volunteers, and on Governor Curry, of Oregon Territory, for four companies. The call was responded to by Acting Governor Mason, and two companies were ordered immediately to report to Major Rains. Besides these, he has ordered out several other companies, to co-operate with the regular troops, at Puget sound. Governor Curry, however, refused to comply with the call, on the ground that Oregon volunteers would not serve under the command of the United States' officers. In the meantime, he called out a much larger force, all mounted, whose operations were to be exclusively under the orders of the territorial officers. It may not be improper here to remark, that I have, in no instance, received or authorized the raising of volunteers in the Pacific department.—(See correspondence, herewith forwarded, between Colonel Nesmith and myself, marked No. 1.)—I have adhered to this rule, because I applied to the Secretary of War for the authority, which was not granted. This authority, it appears to me, should be granted, being six thousand miles distant from the seat of government, whilst it takes two months and a half before a response can be had to communications. An Indian war, extending from northern California through Oregon and Washington Territories, has suddenly sprung upon us without the slightest warning, at the same time threatened with a war with the Indians on the Colorado, and yet I have no authority to call for volunteers, no matter how great the necessity may be.

The regular force under my command, in order to give equal protection to the inhabitants of the frontier, was dispersed in small commands, from the northern to the southern extremity of the department, extending over more than sixteen hundred miles, but not a sufficient force at any one point to overcome a combined attack by several tribes of Indians. Under such circumstances, before reinforcements could be received from the east, or authority to call for volunteers, which would occasion a delay of at least two months and a half, the Indians, in a general war, might inflict an irreparable injury on the country, for it would be utterly impossible, with my limited means, to guard and protect so extended a country at all points at the same moment. If the Indians on the Colorado should make war, which is threatened, on the people in that section of the country, I could send no relief beyond the troops at Fort Yuma and San Diego, which, Lieutenant Parke's escort, would not probably exceed two hundred and fifty rank and file, except by withdrawing troops from this region and Rogue river. This could not be done at this time without endangering the safety of the settlements in Washington, Oregon, and northern California.

It may not be improper to remark, that the horses sent with Colonel Steptoe's command, to mount three companies of dragoons, the only mounted troops I have in the department, after marching last spring and summer nearly or quite a thousand miles, have not been in a condition since their arrival to do efficient service.

Major Rains received and mustered into the service two companies of volunteers, one under the command of Captain R. Newell, (in the aggregate thirty-five,) and the other under the command of Captain William Strong, sixty-two in the aggregate. These truly patriotic

officers, with their companies, have rendered important services in restraining the Klickitat Indians from joining in the war with the Yakamas. I have ordered these companies to be disbanded. I would, however, recommend that provision be made for them by Congress, also for the companies of Captains Hays, Wallace, Henness, and Hewitts, all volunteers, and employed in conjunction with the regulars against the Indians at Puget Sound. It would seem they were indispensably necessary to assist in restraining and repelling the Indians from their savage depredations in that region. I have received no return of the strength of these companies.

Herewith I forward a copy of a letter from Captain E. D. Keyes, 3d artillery, marked No. 2, which exhibits the state of affairs in the neighborhood of Steilacoom. It contains the last information which I have received from that quarter.

I have no reliable information of affairs on Rogue river further than was transmitted in a former communication, except that it is rumored the Indians had left their mountain fastnesses and dispersed.

I also transmit two communications, marked No. 3, from Joel Palmer, esq., superintendent of Indian affairs in Oregon. They contain much truthful and interesting information, and deserve attention. He, however, is mistaken in regard to the Walla-Walla Indians; they have commenced hostilities against the whites. I have granted all that he asked for. I think, however, that it is very doubtful whether the Indians will consent to remove to the reservation selected for them. The Indians are uniformly averse to leaving the home of their fathers and of their nativity.

You will also receive herewith an able and interesting report from Captain Cram, chief of the topographical engineers in this department. It is an important document, and will, no doubt, receive special attention. I approve of his recommendations to make and improve certain roads, viz: To improve the portage road around the Cascades, on the Columbia river, at an expense of \$30,000, (see report, page 4;) to improve the military dragoon trail between Fort Vancouver and Fort Dalles, at an expense of \$25,000, (see report, page 6;) to open a military road from Fort Dalles, through the Yakama country, to Selah fishery, on the Yakama river, at an expense of \$25,000, (see report, page 12;) to improve the military road between Fort Dalles and Touché river, at an expense of \$15,000, (see report, page 15.) These improvements and roads are indispensably necessary to afford facilities in passing through the country, and for future military operations. The cost of all which will be about \$95,000.

In conclusion, it is justly due to make known that the sudden, unexpected, and arduous duties which the officers of the line, as well as the staff, have been called on to discharge were zealously, promptly, and efficiently executed. All deserve high commendation, and especially Captain D. A. Russell and Lieutenant W. A. Slaughter, of the 4th infantry, both of whom distinguished themselves in their gallant bearing on the field of battle.

I have this moment received, by express, from Captain Keyes, commanding at Steilacoom, information that the Indians, on the 5th in-

stant, killed Lieutenant Slaughter and two corporals, and wounded six privates. It appears to have occurred about seven o'clock, p. m. Lieutenant Slaughter and Captain Hewitt, of the volunteers, had just encamped and made fires, which attracted the attention of the Indians, who were enabled by the darkness of the night to crawl up within rifle shot, and kept up their firing until ten o'clock, producing the result as already stated. Lieutenant Slaughter was a gallant and enterprising officer, and had rendered important services in the defence of the inhabitants of Puget sound.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
 JOHN E. WOOL,
Major General.

Lieut. Col. L. THOMAS,
Assistant Adjutant General,
Headquarters of the army, New York.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
New York, January 15, 1856.

This report and a previous one, dated November 17, (and their enclosures,) from Brevet Major General Wool, are highly interesting and important. I fully concur in all the views of the reports. Fortunately the 9th infantry (having sailed from Panama without, up to that time, sickness or other accident) will soon be at hand to meet hostilities in the north and south of the Pacific department.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War,
 WINFIELD SCOTT.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
January 17, 1856.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.
 S. COOPER, *Adjutant General.*

No. 1.

HEADQUARTERS REGIMENT O. M. V.,
Dalles of the Columbia, O. T., November 21, 1855.

GENERAL: On my return to this place from the Yakama country, on the evening of the 19th instant, I received an express from 2d Major Chinn, who had been ordered by the governor of Oregon Territory to advance in the direction of Walla-Walla, that his front was menaced by a force of one thousand Indians, led on by the notorious Pee-pen-mox-mox; that, as his command consisted of only about 150 men, he had called a halt on the Umatilla river, and desired to be immediately reinforced. I have this morning sent forward to his relief a force of seventy men, and shall send one hundred more to-mor-

row. It is represented that Pee-pea-mox-mox, with his one thousand warriors, had taken a strong position. To dislodge him, it is desirable to have the service of artillery. I have, therefore, to request you will furnish me with two or three howitzers, or other equivalent artillery, with officers and men requisite to manage the same, for that purpose. I can furnish a mounted escort to forward the artillery to the command on the Umatilla, provided you, in the plenitude of your power, see proper to grant my request. If, in the exercise of your superior judgment, you should conclude to comply with my request, I would suggest it is very desirable the movement should be executed with all possible dispatch. Hoping we may shortly have the pleasure of seeing you at this place,

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. W. NESMITH, *Colonel,*

Commanding Regiment Oregon Mounted Volunteers.

Major General JOHN E. WOOL,

Commanding Pacific Division, U. S. A.

I certify the above is a true copy of the original.

RICHARD ARNOLD,

First Lieutenant 3d Artillery, A. D. C.

—

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE PACIFIC,
Fort Vancouver, November 24, 1855.

SIR: I have but this moment received your communication of the 21st instant, by Major Haller. In reply I have only to say that I have no authority either to employ or to receive volunteers in the service of the United States. I am, therefore, unable to comply with your request.

I will, however, observe, owing to the condition of the United States troops, animals and other requisite supplies, necessary to carry on an efficient campaign, or even temporary operations against the Indians, I have ordered a critical examination of the United States troops and supplies of every description, embracing wagons, horses and mules; all which is with reference to an efficient preparation for future operations. Hitherto, the operations against the Indians have been made in too much of a hurry, unable to act efficiently, and without supplies to keep the field. Unless prepared to keep the field, it would be worse than folly to attempt to encounter the Indians with any expectation of success.

In conclusion, I regret that I have not the power to give you the assistance you ask for.

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

JOHN E. WOOL,

Major General.

Colonel J. W. NESMITH,

Commanding Volunteers, Dalles, Oregon Territory.

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No. 2.

HEADQUARTERS, PUGET SOUND DISTRICT,
Fort Steilacoom, W. T., November 27, 1855.

SIR: When I had the honor to address you on the 24th instant, the day of my arrival at this post, I was led to the belief, from all the sources of information at hand, that the Indians this side the mountains had separated into small bands. I accordingly continued the plan of operations I found in practice, of keeping the troops in motion by detachments, and of directing affairs from here, as the most central point.

It appears now that the Indians are embodied, and it is not certain that they have separated. I have just received information from Lieutenant Slaughter that, on Sunday night the 25th instant, his camp on the Puyallup, twenty-one miles from here, was surrounded by more than two hundred Indians. They appeared to be excessively bold, fired on the sentinels, and yelled around the camp all through the night. It being exceedingly foggy, they got among the pack animals, cut the picket ropes, and drove off thirty-two horses and mules, the loss of which cannot be over estimated; thirteen of the animals driven off belonged to Captain Wallace's company, and the balance to Lieutenant Slaughter's train.

Immediately on the receipt of the news of Lieutenant Slaughter's situation, I sent an express to Captain Hays to march immediately to the support of Lieutenant Slaughter, and to encamp to-night, if possible, at Montgomery's, about ten miles from here. Captain Hennes, with twenty-five volunteers, will be left in the neighborhood of the Nisqually river, with orders to be active and vigilant, and to keep his men together.

I shall take the field myself to-morrow, leaving Captain Maloney with about one hundred men in charge of this post. To reduce the force here much lower would be imprudent, as we are threatened by the near approach of the Indians, and if the stores and ammunition at this station should be lost, we should have no other reliance. There being no steam communication between this part of the Territory and California, the people along Puget sound must be considered, so far as supplies and succor are concerned, as nearly cut off from all connexion during the winter months with the rest of the world.

As our pack animals are small in number and nearly broken down by hard work, and as there is a lack of feed in the places where the troops have to operate, we may be reduced shortly to the necessity of acting entirely on the defensive, and must wait for the summer and a larger force before we can subdue the Indians.

The Indians are principally located in a densely wooded country, admirably adapted to ambuscades, and full of trails crossing each other in every direction. We have no guides that know the country, and must pursue the enemy at random. It rains nearly the whole time, and will continue to rain or snow for three or four months to come.

If the enemy will stand, we can beat them; if not, I shall shortly have to act on the defensive.

After being in the field I shall be better able to judge the dispo-

sition of the Indians. If they are as numerous and determined as they are represented to be, I shall endeavor to get them to fight; and if I fail, we must remain on the defensive.

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

E. D. KEYES,

Captain 3d Artillery, Commanding.

Major E. D. TOWNSEND,

Assistant Adjutant General,

Department of the Pacific.

P. S. A volunteer, named *Price*, was killed by the Indians, near Lieutenant Slaughter's camp, on Monday morning last.

A true copy.

RICHARD ARNOLD,

First Lieutenant 3d Artillery, A. D. C.

No. 3.

OFFICE SUPERINTENDENT INDIAN AFFAIRS,

Dayton, O. T., November 21, 1855.

SIR: The proximity of the Indian tribes in Washington Territory, with whom war now exists, to tribes in this Territory who have recently entered into treaty stipulations with the United States, induces me to furnish you, as the chief of the military division embracing these Territories, with a triplicate copy of the treaty with the Walla-Wallas, Cayuses, and Umatillas, and also of that with the Des Chutes bands of Walla-Wallas and Wacoos, which are herewith enclosed.

The strong desire of a portion of our citizens to involve the tribes, parties to these treaties, with those now unfortunately engaged in hostilities against us, leads them to circulate exaggerated reports of their intentions and actions, well calculated to exasperate our people to acts of violence, with a view of provoking retaliation, which may afford an excuse for making war upon them.

Many regard the act of Peo-Peo-mox-mox, head chief of the Walla-Wallas, in fixing his winter residence north of the Columbia river, as proof of hostile intent. Reference, however, to the 5th article of the treaty of the 9th June last, shows this right secured to him for five years—to erect and occupy a building as a trading post at or near the mouth of the Yaackimaw river; and the first section of the same treaty secures the right to these Indians to occupy any tract therein, in their possession, till the expiration of one year after its ratification.

The usual winter quarters of the Walla-Wallas are on the north side of the Columbia; consequently the present location of this chief's camp is no evidence of hostile intent, or intention of disregarding the provisions of the treaty. His refusal to meet the agent was certainly not a mark of friendly feeling; but this may, in my opinion, be attributed to the false coloring given the message sent him, and to exaggerated and distorted reports of our intentions.

It may turn out that he and his people intend war; they may possibly already have engaged in hostilities; but if so, I am persuaded

that it is from a mistaken idea of our designs, and impressions made on the mind of the chief by evil-disposed persons, who would humble and reduce him to the condition of a slave to their caprices—a mere tool for the accomplishment of their dishonest and selfish aims—rather than from a design to violate the treaty, or in any way to violate good faith towards us. He is a highminded, haughty chief, with an exalted idea of that position, and while he strives to maintain it with dignity, others aspiring to influence seek to prejudice the whites against him. Certain privileges and annuities, secured him by the treaty, have tended to excite envious feelings among other chiefs, a feeling encouraged by quite a number of white settlers and traders, who regard other aspirants with favor; this being calculated to impair his influence in his tribe, has served to irritate his feelings. But my confidence in him is such, that I am unwilling to believe that he will engage in hostilities against us, unless driven and provoked to do so by overt acts of aggression on the part of our citizens.

I am also satisfied that the Cayuses, as a tribe, are desirous of maintaining peace, and that there must be on the part of the whites a departure from the principles of justice, and a violation of rights secured this tribe by the treaty, before they will become a hostile party in this war. Such a step will be, in their apprehension, a desperate last resort for preservation.

This is also true of the Nezperces. Their uniform good conduct and friendship for our citizens render all intention on their part to make war on us quite improbable.

The reported combination of all those tribes with intent to wage a war of extermination against the whites is, I apprehend, but a phantom conjured up in the brains of alarmists, unsupported by one substantial reason; and the plot, said to have been nearly consummated, of cutting off those engaged in the negotiations last June, I regard as of the same character, originating in the same source.

As to the Yackimaws, there is no excuse for their acts of aggression, and there is no disposition on the part of those engaged in the Indian department to screen them or their confederates from the punishment they so justly merit.

Individuals of the bands embraced in those treaties may be cooperating with the enemy, but whether numbers are such as to involve the tribes to which they belong or not I am not advised. I, however, think it highly probable that their tribes will repudiate the acts of such, give their names, and aid us efficiently, if necessary, in their arrest.

The Wacoës and Des Chutes bands of Walla-Wallas are generally collected in encampments near the Dalles; a few of the Des Chutes have fled to remote points, but whether actuated by fear or hostile design I am unable to determine.

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

JOEL PALMER,

Superintendent Indian Affairs, Oregon Territory.

General Wool.

True copy :

RICHARD ARNOLD,

1st Lieutenant 3d Artillery, Aide-de-camp.

COLUMBIA BARRACKS, W. T.,
December 1, 1855.

GENERAL: The existence of a war of extermination by our citizens against all Indians in southern Oregon, which by recent acts appears to evince a determination to carry it out, in violation of all treaty stipulations and the common usage of civilized nations, has induced me to take steps to remove the friendly bands of Indians, now assembled at Fort Lane and upon Umpqua reservation, to an encampment on the head waters of the Yamhill river, distant about sixty miles southwest of Vancouver, and adjoining the coast reservation.

This plan has been adopted with a view of saving the lives of such of those Indians as have given just and reasonable assurances of friendship. The tremendous excitement among the miners and settlers in that country, goaded on by restless and lawless miscreants who slaughter alike innocent and guilty of both sexes, induced those friendly bands to abandon the reservation and claim protection of the United States troops stationed at Fort Lane. Over three hundred of those people are now encamped at that point, and as many more in the Umpqua valley, but little less menaced. These people are deprived of their usual means of obtaining subsistence, and must necessarily be furnished by the government. The enormous expense attending the transportation of supplies at this season of the year will, I think, alone justify their removal. In my instructions to the Indian agents, directing this movement, they were required to call upon the commandant at Fort Lane for such an escort as was deemed requisite to secure a safe passage through the disturbed district. Since those instructions were given, I have received intelligence that meetings of the citizens of the Willamette valley residing along the route to be travelled by these Indians in reaching the designated encampment, as well as those in the vicinity of the latter, have resolved upon resisting such removal, and avowing a determination to *kill* all who may be brought among them as well as those who sought to effect that object. This feeling appears so general among our citizens, I am apprehensive they may attempt carrying it into effect. To avoid which, I have to request, that if it be deemed by you practicable, that a command of twenty men be directed to accompany those Indians on their removal, with directions to remain at or near the encampment so long as their presence may be required to ensure the safety of the Indians.

Believing, as I do, that the cause of the present difficulty in southern Oregon is wholly to be attributed to the acts of our own people, I cannot but feel that it is our duty to adopt such measures as will tend to secure the lives of those Indians, and maintain guarantees secured to them by treaty stipulations. The future will prove that this war has been forced upon those Indians against their will, and that, too, by a set of reckless vagabonds, for pecuniary and political objects, and sanctioned by a numerous population, who regard the treasury of the United States a legitimate object of plunder. The Indians in that district have been driven to desperation by acts of cruelty against their people; treaties have been violated, and acts of barbarity committed by those claiming to be citizens, that would dis-

grace the most barbarous nations of the earth; and if none but those who perpetrated such acts were to be affected by this war, we might look upon it with indifference, but unhappily this is not the case.

In connexion with the request for an escort, I may say that the winter's encampment for the Indians herein referred to is situated upon lands designed as a permanent location for residence of Indians, and to be attached to a district declared an Indian reservation; that it is the gap through which the communication from the white settlements to an Indian reservation destined to contain a population of four thousand souls, and the only practicable route through which supplies can reach them for the northern half of that population. The establishment of a military post for a few years at this point is deemed requisite to ensure the preservation of peace between our own citizens and these Indians, as well as good order among the numerous bands congregated. Entertaining this view, I would respectfully request that a competent officer be directed to accompany me to the contemplated encampment prior to the arrival of the Indians from the south, that I may have the benefit of his experience and suggestions in the particular location and arrangement of the encampment, and the improvements designed for the use of Indians upon the reservation. This examination may be made in a few days, and may be of the utmost importance to the government in its intercourse with Indian tribes, and the preservation of peace.

I have the honor to be, dear sir, your obedient servant,
 JOEL PALMER,
Superintendent Indian Affairs, O. T.
 Major General JOHN E. WOOL,
Commanding Pacific Division U. S. A.

A true copy:

E. D. TOWNSEND,
Assistant Adjutant General.

FORT VANCOUVER,
Washington Territory, November 30, 1855.

SIR: Having completed the topographical military reconnaissance directed to be made in virtue of special order No. 95, of 19th instant, by command of Major General Wool, commanding the department of the Pacific, I have the honor herein to submit the following report, with sketches necessary for illustration:

I.—RECONNAISSANCE OF COLUMBIA RIVER.

This river is now, and will continue to be, the most feasible route for the movements of troops and the transportation of supplies from the Pacific ocean and the posts on Puget's sound, eastwardly, to Fort Vancouver, Fort Dalles, into the countries of the Walla-Walla, the

Klickitat, the Snake, the Yakama, and the Nez Percés tribes of Indians.

The navigation of the Columbia, however, is interrupted effectually by the "Cascades," (see sketch No. 1,) about midway between Fort Vancouver and Fort Dalles. As the Columbia river is necessarily to be the principal military route into these countries, I shall here briefly consider the question of remedying the obstructions presented at the "Cascades."

Pacific ocean steamers, of ten to thirteen feet draught, can cross the bar at the mouth of the Columbia, and pass up the river to Fort Vancouver, where they discharge, and military supplies and troops are embarked again at Fort Vancouver in steamers which can only ascend the river to the foot of the Cascades, and there all must be landed; and the supplies and freight have to be packed on the backs of animals, or else put into small boats or scows, and, at great expense of labor, be poled or "cordelled" up the rapids to the foot of a wooden railway, of about one and a half miles in length, and transhipped again from the scows to the railway, and drawn across it by a horse car to the landing above the falls, where again, at low water, another packing is required, to put the freight aboard the steamer that is in readiness to ascend to Fort Dalles. This is the manner in which the freight is generally passed over the portage of the Cascades. The river is good for steam navigation from Fort Vancouver to the foot of the Cascades, about forty-five miles by the channel, and it is also good for steamers from the head of the Cascades for about the same distance to Fort Dalles, leaving about five miles of portage or land carriage, as before explained, around the rapids, or "Cascades."

The cost per ton for transportation by these steamers from Fort Vancouver to Fort Dalles, including the cost of carrying across the portage, has never been less than \$40; it is now at this cost, and in past seasons it has ranged as high as \$60 per ton.

Were the road across the portage, not exceeding five miles, which is, of necessity, a military road, improved as I shall herein explain, I am assured, by those now engaged in the steamboat transportation, that a reduction in the price of transportation between Fort Vancouver and Fort Dalles would immediately ensue, consequent upon the improvement, of twenty dollars on every ton of quartermaster's supplies to be passed over said portage.

Three companies stationed above the Cascades, at Fort Dalles, or at any other post that may be hereafter established in the Indian countries, require four hundred tons, annually, to be passed over said portage. In times of hostilities it would be considerably augmented. But I will only take, as a basis, four hundred tons to three companies annually. It will then be seen \$8,000 per annum would be saved to the quartermaster's department by making the improvement, and in this proportion for every three additional companies that may hereafter be stationed in those Indian countries. Nine companies stationed above the Cascades would require 1,200 tons to be passed, annually, over the portage, and were the road improved as I shall suggest, a saving would ensue to the quartermaster's department of \$24,000 per annum.

The plan for improving the military road, five miles in length, over

the portage of the Cascades, is to construct, from the lower steamboat landing, a plank road to the upper steamboat landing, in which the grade shall in no place exceed one foot vertical to sixteen and a half feet horizontal. My reconnaissance of the ground teaches me this can be done within a reasonable cost, considering the very great annual saving that would follow to the quartermaster's department. Were the improvement made in the ensuing spring, it is not unreasonable to say that within the time (seven years) when the plank would require renewing, and in view of the probable necessity of augmenting the number of military posts in said Indian countries, \$168,000 would be saved to the government in the single item of transportation which must pass over this portage.

I am of the opinion \$30,000 will be sufficient, if judiciously expended, to construct the plank road.

Last session Congress appropriated \$25,000 for the construction of a military road from Fort Vancouver to Fort Dalles, of which this portage must necessarily form a part. Of this appropriation \$22,500 remains unexpended. This sum, with much propriety, could be expended in the very improvement I have suggested. I am satisfied from the reconnaissance, a good wagon military road on the banks of the Columbia, from Fort Vancouver to Fort Dalles, cannot be well and properly made short of \$450,000. And even supposing it made at this great cost, the principal part of the transportation for military purposes, and, I may likewise add, for all other purposes, would, notwithstanding, continue to be done by steamboats. But there is an improvement that could be made in the bad places on the trail now existing on the banks of the Columbia, between Fort Vancouver and Fort Dalles. It consists in improving this pack trail into a road that will enable dragoons to pass readily over it at all seasons. It would then become a "*military road for dragoons*;" and it would save the very great cost now necessarily incurred for the transportation of horses and mules, and cattle, for military purposes, upon steamers.

From the reconnaissance I have made in reference to the feasibility of making this military road for dragoons, I am of opinion \$25,000 is the amount necessary for the purpose. Such an improvement is precisely what is wanted by emigrants and the growers of stock, to drive their herds of cattle on, down the valley of the Columbia.

My reconnaissance was carried up the Columbia river above Fort Dalles. I can confidently say the river does not admit of steam navigation above the Dalles, and for all routes extending into the Indian countries beyond Fort Dalles land transportation must be resorted to for military purposes.

II.—RECONNAISSANCE FROM FORT DALLES TO THE CATHOLIC MISSION, BURNT BY THE VOLUNTEERS.—(See Sketch No. 2.)

On this I have received valuable information from Lieutenant Mendell, topographical engineers, who accompanied the command of Major Raines, as the topographical engineer, into the Yakima country, in October last.

1. At the present (winter season) it would be very difficult, on account of snow, to pack over the routes. It is probable that not before the middle of May does the snow melt, so that pack trains could pass; after that, during the spring, the small streams are passable, but it does not follow that the Nahchess river, twelve or fifteen miles beyond the Mission, and the Yakima, about fifteen miles nearest distance to the Mission, are passable so early. The Yakima is difficult to cross at any time, except at the fords. It is highly important in crossing this river by a body of troops to have at hand artificial means, (wagon floats of gutta percha, or of cotton duck, to enclose a wagon body, to serve as a boat.)

2. In regard to improving the route or trail from Fort Dalles to the said Mission, it may be said with confidence there is from six to eight miles of mountain trail within twelve miles of Fort Dalles that could, with considerable expense of labor, be improved so as to allow a wagon load to pass; after that, for whole route to the Mission, the only obstacle now existing to a wagon passage is timber standing in the way, which would have to be cut. No digging of any consequence would be required. It is probable the whole extent to be opened by cutting would not exceed twenty or twenty-five miles. In some places of this the timber is "openings," and at others a dense growth, but not of large trees, and in some places (of this extent of twenty to thirty miles) the timber is so open, little or no cutting would be necessary to allow a wagon to pass.

3. The whole distance from Fort Dalles to the said Mission, on the route we have been considering, is seventy miles. On this route from the fort to the Topimish—the stream near which is Major Haller's battle-ground—is about fifty-eight miles, and the Simcoe is about four miles beyond. The Simcoe and the Topimish are tributaries to the Pisco, which empties into the Yakima. From the battle-ground to the Mission there is little or no cutting of timber required, except at the crossings of the streams, where slight cutting might be necessary for a wagon road.

4. Grazing in the valleys of the Simcoe and Topimish, and about the Mission, cannot be depended on in winter; but in summer, grazing and water can be had sufficient for a command requiring several hundred head of animals. There is plenty of timber at the Simcoe and at the Mission. (It is proper here to remark that the priests of this Mission have been in the habit of leaving this in winter and resorting to the place marked on the sketch "Winter Mission," down on the Yakima river.)

5. From the Mission on the Atahnam to the Selah fishery on the Yakima it is about twenty-five to thirty miles; and the region round about this fishery may be regarded as the heart of the Yakima Indian country, in which there are excellent grazing, good fishing and an abundance of water. Good timber for building purposes may be had within twenty to thirty miles of the fishery, and it can be floated down the Nahchess river to its mouth, within a few miles of the fishery.

The portion of country called the Kettetas is about thirty miles above the fishery, and the Selah fishery is the principal one on the

Yakima river. It is well to bear in mind that this important fishery is where the military road from Fort Steilacoom crosses the Yakima to Walla-Walla.

Table of approximate distances.

	<i>Miles.</i>
From Fort Dalles to the Topimish, (Haller's Field) - - -	58
From Fort Dalles to the Simcoe - - -	62
From Fort Dalles to the Mission, (Atahnam) - - -	70
From Fort Dalles to the Selah fishery - - -	100
From Selah fishery to Fort Steilacoom - - -	139
From Selah fishery to Walla-Walla - - -	95

The cost of opening a wagon road for military purposes from Fort Dalles, by the Atahnam Mission, to Selah fishery, would be about \$25,000.

The cost of opening it from Fort Dalles to the Mission (seventy miles) would be about \$15,000.

These estimates contemplate a road that a six mule team could haul over it two thousand pounds of supplies, at the rate of four days to the Mission and six days to the fishery, starting from Fort Dalles.

III.—RECONNAISSANCE FROM FORT DALLES TO WALLA-WALLA, AND THENCE TO THE BLUE MOUNTAINS, &c., INCLUDING THE VALLEY OF THE TOUCHÉ.—(See *Sketch No. 3.*)

As I have before said, there is no steam navigation applicable to the Columbia above Fort Dalles. This post is at the head of navigation on the Columbia, and above it, in any direction into the Indian countries, transportation must be by land for all military operations. The country all the way to Walla-Walla, and thence back to within a short distance of the base of the Blue mountains, is destitute of timber, except cotton wood, which is found on the banks of the streams. This cotton wood answers for fuel, but is generally unfit for building purposes. The distances from stream to stream, &c., are marked in miles on the sketch. The distances of the several important points on the emigrant road across the Blue mountains, from Fort Dalles as a starting point, are seen in the following table, expressed approximately in miles, as measured by Lieutenant Mendell; and those which pertain to the Walla-Walla and the Touché valleys are obtained from reliable sources:

Table of distances.

	<i>Miles.</i>
From Fort Dalles to the Des Chutes - - -	14
From Fort Dalles to the John Day's river - - -	43
From Fort Dalles to Willow Creek - - -	69
From Fort Dalles to Wells' Spring - - -	86

	<i>Miles.</i>
From Fort Dalles to Butter Creek - - - - -	103
From Fort Dalles to Indian agency on Umatilla - - - - -	111
From Fort Dalles to McKay's - - - - -	129
From Fort Dalles to crest of western slope Blue mountains -	146
From Umatilla (agency) to Hudson's Bay Company, Fort Walla-Walla - - - - -	30
From Hudson's Bay Company, Fort Walla-Walla, to Bomford & Brooks' - - - - -	25
From Umatilla (McKay's) to Whitman Mission - - - - -	35
From Hudson's Bay Company fort to Whitman Mission - - - - -	25
From Bomford & Brooks', on the Touché, to Whitman Mission - - - - -	25

The Blue mountains are exceedingly difficult to pass in the winter, on account of snow; but from Fort Dalles to the base of the western slope, and all through the valleys of the Umatilla, the Walla-Walla and Touché, there is no difficulty of any consequence on this account.

The valleys of the Touché, its branches, and of the Walla-Walla, afford excellent grazing the year round, and the only objection to this district of country for a military post is the want of timber in the valleys. From Bomford's, seen in the sketch, on the right bank of the Touché, it is only eight miles to the forest of excellent timber on the western slope of the mountains. This timber is easy to reach, and it would be all the way descending from it, to almost any point in said valleys.

To make the road good for wagons on the route from Fort Dalles to these valleys, it will be necessary to expend considerable labor near the crossing of John Day's river, and it would be well to attempt to improve the steep descents at or near most of the streams; in other respects the road is now tolerably good.

From McKay's to Whitman's mission, there is a wagon road thirty-five miles.

Should a military post be established in either of these valleys, it would be desirable to make the road good for wagon transportation from Fort Dalles to it. For this purpose the sum of \$15,000 would be required.

The distance from Fort Dalles to Bomford's, on the Touché, would be about one hundred and eighty-nine miles around by McKay's, and one hundred and sixty-six miles around by Hudson Bay Company's post. It is probable these distances, by searching for new routes between the Umatilla and the Walla-Walla, might be somewhat shortened; but the country between these streams is high, rolling, grassy, and cut up into ravines.

The rate of a mule team on this route, should the improvements be made, may be set down at seven days from Fort Dalles to McKay's, one hundred and twenty-nine miles; and thence to Walla-Walla, two days; and thence to Touché, two days.

I take pleasure in herein acknowledging my obligations to Lieutenant Mendall, topographical engineers, for much valuable information

embodied in articles I and II of this report; also, to Lieutenant Arnold, aid to General Wool, and to General Gibbs, of Washington Territory; likewise to Messrs. Bomford and Brooks, gentlemen well acquainted with all the country in the valleys of the Walla-Walla and the Touché.

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

T. J. CRAM,
*Captain Topographical Engineers, Chief
 Topographical Engineer Department, Pacific.*

Major E. D. TOWNSEND,
Asst. Adj. Gen., Department, Pacific.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
New York, January 21, 1856.

Respectfully forwarded to be placed with the paper to which it belongs, having been retained to be copied.

L. THOMAS,
Assistant Adjutant General.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War, in connexion with Brevet Major General Wool's letter of December 13, 1855, and which was laid before the War Department the 17th instant.

S. COOPER,
Adjutant General.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
January 22, 1856.

BENICIA HEADQUARTERS, DEPT. OF THE PACIFIC,
Fort Vancouver, December 25, 1855.

COLONEL: Since my communication to the headquarters of the army, dated the 13th instant, winter has fairly set in, the ground is covered with snow, and the Columbia river is frozen over as low down as the mouth of the Willamette, six miles below this place. This cuts off all communication with the post at the Dalles until the river is cleared of ice. Owing to high water in the streams to be passed, it has been impracticable to send any reinforcements by land to Steilacoom. I intended to have sent by sea Captain Ord's company of the 3rd artillery, but have failed in my efforts to procure transportation. I had anticipated a conveyance by the steamer Panama, but the captain could not be induced to make the trip on any terms. At the same time he reported to me that Captain Alden, with the United States steamer Active, had left San Francisco for Puget sound two days before the Panama left for this place, intending to volunteer his services with the steamer to take part in the war. I immediately sent an express to Captain Keyes, with orders for the Active to proceed to this place, to transport Captain Ord's company and ordnance stores to

Steilacoom. The unexpected closing of the Columbia river, I am apprehensive, will prevent the Active from reaching this place, at least, until the ice breaks up, which may take place in a week, though it may not in three weeks. Until it does, I can send no reinforcements to Captain Keyes.

I mentioned, in my communication of the 13th, that I was actively engaged in preparing an expedition for the Indian country. I soon found it would be impracticable to execute my intentions as soon as I desired. I could neither obtain in this country the means of transportation nor forage, without paying enormously for them, and which the state of the war in this region does not call for. This state of things has been caused by the extraordinary course pursued by Governor Curry, who is making war against the Indians on his own account, and without the slightest reference to myself, not having received any communication whatever from him on the subject.

The quantity of the supplies required for the volunteers, and the enormous prices paid in scrip by those authorized by the governor to make purchases for them, has rendered it necessary for me to resort to Benicia for horses and mules, and for forage to San Francisco. In this section of country no danger existed which required either the services of the volunteers or the extravagant prices which have been paid in scrip for the horses and forage, as well as everything else required for the volunteers. If volunteers were required at all, it was in the Rogue river country and along Puget sound, but not to defend the inhabitants of either Oregon or Washington Territories against the Indians, who had made or threatened them with war, residing east of the Cascade mountains.

As I have already reported, after the repulse of Brevet Major Haller, which created great excitement and alarm in Washington and Oregon, lest all the Indian tribes should combine and come down at once upon the settlements, Major Rains called upon Governor Curry, of Oregon, for four companies of volunteers, which were not required, as I shall presently show, but which the governor refused, because, as he said, Oregonians would not serve under the command of United States officers; at the same time, instead of furnishing to the United States four companies, he ordered out a regiment of volunteers, all mounted, whose operations were to be exclusively under the command of territorial officers. Major Rains entered upon his expedition against the Yakimas, and six companies of the volunteers followed, under the command of Colonel Nesmith. The major met the Yakimas some seventy miles from the Dalles, and, after several skirmishes with them, they fled over the mountains, some forty miles distant, to the Yakima river. The major could follow them no further on account of the snow, then rapidly falling, being several feet deep on the intervening mountains, and commenced his return, during which he passed over mountains covered with snow, from two to five feet deep. He left the greater part of his command of regulars, on the 20th November, about twenty-five miles from the Dalles, to build a block-house, and arrived at Vancouver the 24th. The block-house I deemed unnecessary, and ordered all the regulars to the Dalles, for a critical inspection and preparation for future operations. During the

expedition of the major he lost fifty-four mules, mostly, it is said, by excessive fatigue, not being able to travel. The volunteers killed, it is said, most of their horses that gave out.

I have said that the volunteers called for by Major Rains were not required in his expedition against the Yakimas, he having three hundred and fifty regulars and three howitzers. I was induced to make the remark from the fact that Brevet Major G. O. Haller, as he reports, with only one hundred and four effective troops in his expedition, after his first engagement and during the time, thirty-six hours, he remained on a hill without wood, water, or grass, during which he lost, wounded and killed, twenty-two men, made his escape with eighty effective men, and after being separated from his rear guard, left with only forty men, his wounded and baggage, he made good his retreat to the Dalles, followed by the Indians until within thirty miles of that post, without losing a man. It is true he had to leave the howitzer, the carriage being broken, and to burn part of his baggage and provisions.

If Major Haller could free himself from 1,500 Yakimas with only forty men, I did not think such an enemy was to be dreaded. I could not doubt, from what had taken place, that five hundred regulars with three mountain howitzers, besides other artillery, would be all sufficient to defend the inhabitants of Washington and Oregon from any and all barbarities of Indians east of the Cascades. None but the Yakimas and Klikatats had, in this region, made open war upon the whites, and these were residents of Washington Territory. It was, however, rumored shortly after my arrival, the 17th November, that the Pelouses, Cayuses, Umatillas, and Walla-Wallas, had commenced hostilities. It was said that the proud and haughty chief of the Walla-Wallas, Piu-piu-mox-mox, had plundered and burned Fort Walla-Walla, McKay's, and Brooks & Bomford's residences. This I supposed to be true; hence my remark in my letter of the 13th instant, that I thought Joel Palmer, superintendent of Indian affairs in Oregon, was mistaken in his opinion that Piu-piu-mox-mox was not hostile to the whites. Since which, I have learned to my entire satisfaction that he was right, and that Mox-mox was for maintaining peace. This opinion is confirmed by the reports of the volunteers of Governor Curry, sent by him against the Walla-Wallas. It would seem that, unknown to Major Rains or myself, Governor Curry, when he authorized or ordered Colonel Nesmith to follow Major Rains in his expedition to the Yakima country, he ordered four companies in the direction of Walla-Walla. These companies, under Major Chinn, took post at the Umatilla, and there waited reinforcements. After the return of Colonel Nesmith from the Yakima country, he ordered several companies to reinforce Major Chinn. During this period of more than two weeks, although the volunteers reported more than 1,000 Indians at or near Fort Walla-Walla, they were not attacked nor molested by these Indians. As soon as Major Chinn was reinforced, and with Lieutenant Colonel Kelly in command, the volunteers moved on to Walla-Walla, but found no Indians there. From thence they moved up the Touché river, where they met Piu-piu-mox-mox and three others, with a white flag. He said he was for

peace, and he would not fight, and if his young men had done wrong he was prepared to make restitution. He was taken prisoner by Lieutenant Colonel Kelly, and sent to the volunteer camp, when a skirmish took place with the Walla-Wallas. During the engagement this proud and haughty chief, with his companions, was killed. The skirmishing was kept up for several days, with no great loss on either side, and until the Indians crossed Snake river, taking with them their women and children.

The only result, I think, of this expedition will be, to unite all the tribes in that region against us, except the Nezperces, who still remain friendly, and probably will continue so. The expedition has been organized and fitted out at an enormous expense, and when there was no apprehension of any danger from that direction so far as Oregon was interested. The Cascade mountains, covered with several feet of snow, could not be crossed during the winter. There was no way of reaching the Oregon settlements, except by way of the Dalles, where we have a sufficient force to repel any number of Indians that might come in that direction. It is reported that Governor Curry purchased a thousand horses, varying from \$150 to \$700 each; that he ordered to be purchased 250,000 bushels of oats at one dollar per bushel; the transportation to the Dalles would be another dollar per bushel. Everything purchased, as I am informed, is in the same ratio, and as the volunteers themselves say there is no system in furnishing rations, and every man helps himself.

On fitting out the last reinforcement from the Dalles, Bomford and Brooks sold them a certain number of cattle, for which scrip was given. Not having all they required, they called on Brooks and Bomford for about the same number which they had previously received. They refused to furnish them. The volunteers paid no attention to their remonstrances, and took the cattle; this is but one of many like cases which have been reported.

In conclusion, I would remark that the above statement is not made from any official reports, but from those who have served with the volunteers and others, who appear to be well acquainted with the course pursued in supplying the volunteers. If one-third is true of what is daily reported, the expedition under Colonel Nesmith to the Yakima country, and the one to Walla-Walla, will be by far the most expensive ever fitted out in the United States; at least, they will exceed the expenses of any expeditions I have ever heard of, and, in my opinion, without accomplishing any favorable results, at the same time subjecting the regular service to great additional expenses and great inconvenience.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN E. WOOL,
Major General.

Lieutenant Colonel L. THOMAS,
Assistant Adjutant General,
Headquarters of the Army, New York, N. Y.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
New York, February 15, 1856.

Respectfully referred to the Adjutant General.

L. THOMAS,
Assistant Adjutant General.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
February 18, 1856.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.

S. COOPER,
Adjutant General.

BENICIA HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE PACIFIC,
San Francisco, January 19, 1856.

COLONEL: You will perceive that I have returned to San Francisco, on the way to my headquarters, after being ice-bound three weeks.

The severity of the season in Washington Territory and Oregon has cut off all communication with the military post at the Dalles. Owing to the snow, several feet deep on the Cascade mountains, there is no route during the winter season to that post other than by the Columbia river, and that has for several weeks past been frozen over as low down as St. Helens. It is now, however, open to Vancouver.

The 9th infantry under Colonel Wright has arrived and passed on to Vancouver and Puget sound. Colonel Wright with eight companies to Vancouver, and Lieutenant Colonel Carey with two companies to Puget sound; and Captain Ord's company of the 3d artillery has been ordered to return, with an intention of sending it to the Colorado, where an Indian war is threatened. As soon as an opportunity occurs, I shall also order Captain Keyes' company to return, in order, if it should become necessary, to send it to the Colorado.

With the 9th and 4th infantry, I have no doubt of being able, in a short time after we can take the field, to terminate the war in the north and in southern Oregon, unless the crusade of Governor Curry of Oregon against all the Indians inhabiting Washington Territory should prevent. By sending his volunteers against the Walla-Wallas, who had not made open war against the whites, he has added several tribes to the ranks of the enemy.

This opinion is founded on information derived from men who were well acquainted with the Walla-Wallas, Cayuses, Pelouses, and Umatillas, who are now united against us.

This is confirmed by the volunteers themselves, four companies having established themselves at the Umatilla, and for more than two weeks sent out, almost daily, small parties to reconnoitre the country, and within a few miles of Walla-Walla, without being attacked or molested, and at the same time reporting one thousand Indians at that place, and within twenty-five or thirty miles of their camp.

Again, when the volunteers marched against the Walla-Wallas, the chief, Piu-piu-mox-mox met them under a flag of truce, and declared "He was for peace, and did not wish to fight; that his people did not wish to fight, and if his young men had done wrong, he would make restitution," and at the same time offered them cattle for food. He, however, was taken prisoner, and afterwards barbarously murdered, scalped, his ears and hands cut off, and these preserved, and sent to the friends of the volunteers in Oregon, all which was reported by volunteers.

In my communication of the 25th December to the headquarters of the army, I mentioned that Governor Curry called out but one regiment of volunteers, and purchased or hired one thousand horses. I have learned since that he called for two regiments—one for Washington Territory and the other for southern Oregon—both mounted, and which required about two thousand horses. The horses of Colonel Nesmith's regiment, it is reported by the volunteers, are no longer fit for service, and the governor intends (so it is reported) to furnish them with a fresh relay. The expense of all which, together with the enormous prices paid for everything the volunteers have received, will amount to more than two millions, some say three millions, and General Adair, collector of customs at Astoria, says it will amount to four millions.

In my communication of the 25th December I also mentioned that during the expedition of Major Rains he lost fifty-four mules, mostly, he said, in consequence of excessive fatigue, not being able to travel. Since which, on further enquiry, I find the fifty-four mules were captured and driven off by the Indians. The cause of which may be in some measure accounted for by the want of foresight and attention of Major Rains. This opinion is confirmed in the charges preferred against the major by Captain Ord, which I herewith enclose for the consideration of the War Department, not having a sufficient number of officers of the proper rank under my command to form a court martial for his trial, without depriving important posts of their commanders. In transmitting these charges it is due to Major Rains to say, that I believe him to be exceedingly honest, and a conscientious officer, who, no doubt, has performed his duty to the best of his ability, but it cannot be concealed that he does not possess the necessary qualifications for conducting, with efficiency, extensive operations of troops in the field, and especially against Indians.

Captain Keyes, commanding at Steilacoom, in his last communication informed me that, in the region of Puget sound, not to exceed two hundred Indian warriors were in arms against the whites. With the two companies of the 9th infantry Lieutenant Colonel Casey will have five companies to operate with against the Indians, and there will be, I think, all sufficient to bring the war to a close in Puget sound, without the aid of volunteers.

I have no reliable information in regard to the war on Rogue river. It is reported by Indian agents that only about one hundred Indians are in arms in that part of Oregon. These carry on the war with great skill on their part. To contend with them I will have at Forts

Jones and Lane three companies of infantry and one of dragoons, amounting to 320 rank and file.

Captain Judah reports, November 2, that "the recent murders by Indians of women and children, in Rogue River valley, were literally retaliatory of, and immediately succeeded, the massacre by Major Lupton and his party of eighteen (Indian) women and children out of twenty-five killed." "The Scott valley Indians, unless located upon the military reserve, are at any moment liable to an attack similar to that made by Major Lupton; and the whites in the valley and its vicinity to the same deplorable results." "The Indians have as yet enjoyed no opportunity of laying in food for the winter, and the necessity for provision of some kind, in the way of blankets and clothes, is imperative."

"As soon as I can receive any wagons from Fort Lane, I shall endeavor to supply them with slabs, from a saw-mill about four miles distant, for sheds to protect them from snow."

It appears to me that something ought to be done for the Indians by the superintendent of Indian affairs in California. It is a cruel policy to leave these poor creatures in so miserable a condition, more especially as they have, under all circumstances, remained friendly to the whites.

In Oregon, as well as in the northern part of California, many whites are for exterminating the Indians. This feeling is engendered by two newspapers that go for extermination, and is more or less possessed by the volunteers as well as others not enrolled under the banners of Governor Curry. As long as individual war is permitted and paid for by the United States, and which is expected by all the citizens of Oregon, we shall have no peace, and the war may be prolonged indefinitely, especially as it is generally asserted that the present war is a God-send to the people. (See orders and instructions to Colonel Wright.)

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN E. WOOL, *Major General.*

Lieutenant Colonel L. THOMAS,

*Assistant Adjutant General United States Army,
Headquarters of the Army, New York city.*

—
HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
New York, February 15, 1856.

Respectfully referred to the adjutant general.

The charges referred to preferred against Major G. J. Rains, 4th infantry, by Captain Ord, 3d artillery, have, by direction of the general-in-chief, been returned to Major General Wool, to dispose of according to his judgment.

L. THOMAS, *Assistant Adjutant General.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, *February 18, 1856.*

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.

S. COOPER, *Adjutant General.*

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, February 7, 1856.

SIR: I have read with much interest and satisfaction the report you were kind enough to send me, of Commander Isaac S. Sterrett, commanding United States ship Decatur, in the northern Pacific, of his operations for the protection of the citizens of Washington Territory from the incursions and threatenings of the Indians in that country.

His presence and aid were most opportune and valuable, from the fact that this department had not at hand, in that distant region, a sufficiency of troops to meet the emergencies of the case.

I have, therefore, to tender, through you, to Commander Sterrett, my acknowledgments for his meritorious and timely services.

Commander Sterrett's letter is herewith returned, as requested.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JEFF'N DAVIS,
Secretary of War.

Hon. J. C. DOBBIN,
Secretary of the Navy.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
Olympia, February 20, 1855.

SIR: Herewith I have the honor to transmit to you a memorial of the legislative assembly of the Territory of Washington, relative to the stationing of a man-of-war on the northwestern coast of the United States.

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

C. H. MASON,
Secretary Washington Territory.

Hon. JAMES DOBBIN,
Secretary of the Navy.

*To the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy
of the United States of America:*

Your memorialists, the legislative assembly of the Territory of Washington, would respectfully and most earnestly urge upon the government the absolute necessity of affording protection to the settlements on our northwestern frontier, by stationing a man-of-war in that vicinity, to cruise in the Straits of Fuca, Dearro, and along the adjoining coast; subject, as the settlements in that direction are, to frequent incursions of hordes of warlike Indians from the British and Russian possessions north, which have caused the death of many of our citizens, and the loss of much property, and tending in no small degree, by the insecurity of life and property, to retard the growth of this valuable section of our territory; besides being contiguous to the disputed boundary line between the United States and Great

Britain, and visited frequently by the British men-of-war now cruising in the Pacific.

In view of these facts, and the absolute insufficiency of soldiers to contend successfully upon the water with such foes, pursuing them, as they would have to do in many cases, for hundreds of miles, we most earnestly claim, on the broad principle that true government furnishes protection to its citizens, that our request be granted. All of which is respectfully submitted, and your memorialists will ever pray.

Passed House of Representatives February 1, 1855.

Passed Council February 1, 1855.

HENRY R. CROSBIE,
Speaker of House of Representatives.
SETH CATLIN,
President of Council.

—
SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
Olympia, February 20, 1855.

I hereby certify the above to be a true copy of the original rolls on file in this office.

C. H. MASON,
Secretary Washington Territory.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, *April 18, 1855.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the memorial of the legislative assembly of the Territory of Washington, relative to the stationing of a man-of-war on the northwestern coast of the United States, which was enclosed with your letter of the 20th February last.

Appreciating very fully the importance of affording the countenance and protection asked for in the memorial, and desiring to meet the views of the legislative assembly of Washington Territory, I have this day instructed the commander of our squadron in the Pacific ocean to send a vessel of that squadron to the Straits of Fuca and along the adjoining coast.

The limited force in the Pacific will probably prevent the stationing a vessel permanently upon that coast, but it is hoped that an occasional visit of a vessel-of-war may effect all the desirable objects set forth in the memorial.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
J. C. DOBBIN.

C. H. MASON, Esq.,
Secretary Washington Territory,
Olympia, Thurston, Washington Territory.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, *April 18, 1855.*

SIR: The legislative assembly of the Territory of Washington has represented to the department the absolute necessity of affording pro-

tection to the settlements on our northwestern frontier, subject as they are to frequent incursions of hordes of warlike Indians, which have caused the death of many of our citizens and the loss of much property, and tending in no small degree, by the uncertainty of life and property, to retard the growth of that portion of our country.

Appreciating the importance of affording the countenance and protection needed, and desiring, as far as possible, to meet the views of the legislative assembly, the department instructs you to send, *at a convenient period*, one of the vessels of your command to the Straits of Fuca and along the adjoining coast. The appearance of a vessel-of-war will, no doubt, have the effect to infuse confidence into the minds of our citizens there, and prevent the incursions and acts of barbarity on the part of savages.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. C. DOBBIN.

Commodore WILLIAM MERVINE,
Commanding United States Squadron, Pacific Ocean.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
Olympia, June 30, 1855.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of April 18th, informing me that you had given instructions to the commander of the Pacific squadron to send a vessel of that squadron to the Straits of Fuca, and along the adjoining coast.

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

C. H. MASON,

Secretary and Acting Governor Washington Territory.

Hon. J. C. DOBBIN,

Secretary of the Navy, Washington city.

No. 13.

[Extracts.]

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP INDEPENDENCE,
Off Navy Yard, Mare Island, September 18, 1855.

SIR: I have the honor to report the arrival of the Independence at the navy yard, Mare island, California, on the 13th instant, from Callao; fifty days from anchorage to anchorage.

* * * * *

Nothing worthy of note occurred during the passage, except on falling in with the "Decatur," latitude 37° 18' north, longitude 130° 9' west, three days out from San Francisco, bound to the Straits of San Juan de Fuca, where her services are urgently required for the protection of our settlers, who are threatened with hostile demonstra-

tions from the northern Indians, reported to have assembled two hundred war canoes and some two thousand warriors. I dispatched her immediately and hope she will arrive there in time to afford protection to our people, as well from attacks of the Indians inhabiting Oregon, as from any threatened by more northern tribes.

* * * * *

I also enclose (marked enclosure E. of No. 13) letters received from Commander I. S. Sterrett, commanding the "Decatur," of the dates of August 10th and September 7th. From these it will be seen that he made a cruise upon the coast of Washington Territory, entering the Straits of Fuca on the 19th of July last, and that having visited the Port of San Juan and Port Townsend, and Admiralty and Neeah bays, he arrived on the 6th of August at San Francisco, from whence he sailed on the 7th instant for the same waters, in pursuance of my instructions of 24th May and 20th June last, and in consequence of the reported threatening disposition of the northern Indians.

* * * * *

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. MERVINE,

Commanding U. S. naval forces in the Pacific.

Hon. J. C. DOBBIN,

Secretary of the Navy, Washington, D. C.

—
E.

UNITED STATES SLOOP-OF-WAR DECATUR,

Bay of San Francisco, August 10, 1855.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your order, dated May 24, 1855, directing me to cruise on the coast of California and Oregon until further orders.

* * * * *

On the 23d of June I sailed for the coast of Washington Territory, and entered the Strait of Fuca on the 19th of July.

While at anchor in Port San Juan, Vancouver's island, an English trader arrived from the north, and informed me that the northern Indians were preparing for a war of extermination against those of the south. He had seen some two hundred war canoes and about two thousand warriors, and was confident that they were determined upon hostilities. I afterwards heard that these Indians were menacing in their demeanor towards the governor of Vancouver's island, and that several serious depredations had lately been committed by them.

How much credit was due to this report I was unable to determine. I learned enough, however, of the disposition of the northern Indians to satisfy me that the presence of a vessel-of-war in that quarter was an event of great interest to the American settlers, and may possibly have prevented an outbreak on the part of the savages.

I visited Port San Juan, Port Townsend, Admiralty and Neeah bays, which were the points where I considered it most necessary to make a display of our force.

On the 2d instant, being short of provisions, I sailed from Neeah bay for this port, where I arrived on the evening of the 6th.

* * * * *

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
ISAAC S. STERRETT,
Commander.

Commodore WILLIAM MERVINE,
Commanding U. S. Pacific Squadron.

UNITED STATES SHIP DECATUR,
San Francisco, September 7, 1855.

SIR: I beg leave respectfully to report that I am now getting under way for the Strait of Fuca and the coast of Oregon and California, in obedience to your orders of the 24th May, reiterated in that of June 20th. I have been detained here longer than I expected, in consequence of the expiration of the term of service of many of my men and the desertion of others, and the unexpected difficulty I have had in recruiting.

As I learn from Colonel Ebey, United States collector at Port Townsend, that much apprehension prevails there on account of the threatening position of the northern Indians, I shall make the best of my way to that place, in order to be at the point of greatest danger, and shall probably remain in the Strait, Puget sound, and the contiguous waters, until I receive further orders from you or am relieved by some other vessel.

My complement is not full but I consider it my duty to delay no longer, and have determined to sail with the men I have in hopes of being able to prevent much mischief, if not more deplorable results.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
ISAAC S. STERRETT,
Commander.

Commodore WILLIAM MERVINE,
Commanding Pacific Squadron, Mare Island, California.

No. 17.

[Extracts.]

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP INDEPENDENCE,
Navy Yard, Mare Island, November 3, 1855.

SIR:
* * * * *

I have just received a copy of a letter addressed to Commander I. S. Sterrett, commanding United States ship Decatur, from C. H. Mason, acting governor of Washington Territory, calling on him for muni-

tions of war in reference to the Indian difficulties in that Territory; also Commander Sterrett's reply to the same, both of which I have the honor to forward, and are marked G, H.

* * * * *

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. MERVINE,
Commanding Pacific Squadron.

Hon. J. C. DOBBIN,
Secretary of the Navy, Washington.

G.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE,
Olympia, October 14, 1855.

SIR: The recent difficulties with the Yakima Indians have taken so serious a turn that it has become necessary for the executive of the Territory to call forth two companies of volunteers to co-operate with the regular troops already in, and about to be sent into, the field.

In this emergency, owing to the scarcity of ammunition, arms, and accoutrements in the Territory, I have to request that you will forward to me, at Olympia, such an amount of the above named munitions of war, suitable for light infantry or mounted men, as you can spare without detriment to the safety or discipline of your ship.

Surveyor General Tilton, who takes this to you, will confer with you relative to what has been done, and is proposed, in view of the present difficulties, and I hereby authorize him to receipt any papers in my name relative to arms, ammunition, supplies, &c.

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

C. H. MASON,
Acting Governor Washington Territory.

Captain I. S. STERRETT,
Commanding United States Ship Decatur.

H.

UNITED STATES SHIP DECATUR,
Seattle, W. T., October 15, 1855.

SIR: I have the honor to report the arrival of the Decatur at Port Townsend, on the 27th ultimo, and at this place on the 4th instant.

While at the above port I heard that the settlers here were apprehensive of an attack by the Indians, and on my arrival found them in a high state of excitement, most of the people residing in the country having repaired to town for mutual protection. The presence of this ship has quieted their alarm, which seems to have been, in a great measure, groundless, and most of them have returned to their farms.

This morning I received the enclosed letter from Acting Governor C. H. Mason, and have complied with his request to the best of my ability.

This place being the most accessible to an attack, I shall remain here for the present, or until my presence is indispensable elsewhere.

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

ISAAC S. STERRETT,
Commander.

Commodore WILLIAM MERVINE,
Commanding Pacific Squadron, Pacific ocean.

No. 19.

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP INDEPENDENCE,
Navy Yard, Mare Island, December 4, 1855.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you, that the hostilities of the Indians of Washington and Oregon Territories, manifested in their massacres of the settlers and their attacks upon the regular troops of the army, have assumed an alarming character, which, with other demonstrations further south, would seem to indicate a concert of action and general rising among all the Indian tribes inhabiting the western side of the Sierra Nevadas. These difficulties, in my opinion, call for all the naval force which can be spared from other duties here, to act with the land forces in transporting troops as circumstances may require.

I have therefore assumed the responsibility of accepting the services of the United States surveying steamer Active, and the United States ship Vincennes, which have been tendered by their respective commanders for the occasion, as they state that this service will not at present interfere with the duties in which they are now engaged. I have directed Commanders Alden and Rodgers to proceed to Puget sound to act in accordance with the instructions, copies of which are herewith enclosed, marked A and B, which I hope will meet with your approbation. Should you, sir, desire to recall these vessels at any time before their commanders should deem it advisable to return, instructions can reach them in a few days from this place through the governor of Washington Territory, who will, of course, be acquainted with their movements.

From the contents of a letter I have just received from Commander Sterrett, a copy of which I herewith enclose, marked C, the department will see the great necessity of a steamer in Puget sound. In the present state of affairs it is impossible to do without one.

* * * * *

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM MERVINE,
Commanding Pacific Squadron.

Hon. J. C. DOBBIN,
Secretary of the Navy, Washington, D. C.

A.

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP INDEPENDENCE,
San Francisco, November 29, 1855.

SIR: The savage demonstration of the Indians in Washington Territory, in murdering many of the settlers; the concert of action between the different tribes, together with their attacks on the regular troops, seem to indicate a general Indian war, the declared object of which is the extermination of all the white population.

This alarming state of affairs calls for all the available naval force which can be spared from other duty.

As you have promptly tendered the services of the United States surveying steamer "Active," under your command, which you state can be spared during the winter, without detriment to the service in which she is engaged, you will therefore prepare her for sea with all possible dispatch, and as soon as she shall be ready proceed to Puget sound, where you will act in concert with the sloop-of-war Decatur, and the forces under the command of Major General John E. Wool, in affording aid and protection to the inhabitants residing on the Sound, wherever the same may be required.

You will take on board as large a supply of stores—especially bread—as your vessel can stow. Upon falling in with the Decatur at Seattle transfer to her all your surplus stores.

Commander Sterrett reports that, in consequence of the settlers being without arms, he had supplied them with all those belonging to the Decatur. You will therefore make a requisition upon the ordnance officer, United States army, at Benicia, for forty muskets, the same number of pistols and cutlasses, if they can be furnished, for her use.

I shall, in all probability, sail from this port very soon. You will, therefore, communicate all matters of importance through Commander Gansevoort, or direct to the honorable Secretary of the Navy, as circumstances may render expedient, transmitting to me copies thereof to Valparaiso, by the way of Panama, addressed to the care of the United States consul at the latter place.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM MERVINE,
Commanding Pacific Squadron.

Commander JAMES ALDEN,
Commanding United States surveying steamer "Active."

B.

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP INDEPENDENCE,
San Francisco, November 29, 1855.

SIR: Under the circumstances of the detention here of the United States surveying ship Vincennes, under your command, and in view

of the pressing emergency which calls for the services of all the available naval forces, to render aid and protection to the settlers in the Territory of Washington, against the hostile Indians embodied and now actively engaged in massacring the white population there, I have concluded to accept the services of the Vincennes, so promptly tendered by you for the occasion, until the United States steamer Massachusetts can arrive in Puget Sound; when, unless your future services are imperatively required there, you will return to this place and await the orders of the department.

So soon as the Vincennes can be provisioned with as large a supply as you can stow, you will proceed with all possible expedition to the port of Seattle, or any other port in Puget sound where the commanding officer may be found, and report for duty.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM MERVINE,
Commanding Pacific Squadron.

Commander JOHN RODGERS,
*Commanding United States surveying expedition,
north Pacific ocean.*

C.

UNITED STATES SLOOP-OF-WAR DECATUR,
Off Seattle, Washington Territory, November 4, 1855.

SIR: I have the honor to report to you that since my letter of the 15th ultimo Indian depredations have increased to an alarming extent. Several tribes, located in the vicinity of White river, have commenced open hostilities; and this inimical feeling is rapidly spreading among the Indians this side of the mountains, and is extending to those residing west of Puget sound.

I think it will result in a general war with most of the northern tribes occupying the lands belonging to the United States.

The settlers in this Territory are short of arms and ammunition. I have been obliged to forward nearly all the small arms belonging to this ship to Olympia, and purchase others to arm the citizens of this place, who were entirely destitute of the means of defence.

A good steamer of some description is indispensable in this Sound, for in a sailing vessel dispatch is out of the question, in consequence of the strong tides, frequent calms and uncertain winds.

I shall be obliged to remain here, as it is the most exposed place on the Sound, and the Indians have repeatedly threatened to destroy it. So long as this ship is here, the town is safe.

* * * * *

I am, sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

ISAAC S. STERRETT,
Commander.

Commodore WILLIAM MERVINE,
Commanding Pacific Squadron.

NAVY DEPARTMENT,
January 3, 1856.

SIR: Your dispatch No. 19, of the 4th ultimo, is received.

The department approves your course in accepting the services of the United States surveying steamer "Active," and United States ship "Vincennes," as well as your instructions to their commanders to proceed to Puget sound, and render aid and protection to the settlers in the Territory of Washington against hostile Indians.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. C. DOBBIN.

Commodore WILLIAM MERVINE,
Commanding United States Squadron, Pacific ocean.

No. 20.

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP INDEPENDENCE,
San Francisco, December 19, 1855.

SIR: * * * * *

In my last dispatch I informed you, sir, that I had ordered the Vincennes and Active to Puget sound. The Active sailed on the 10th instant. In relation to Commander Rodgers, I have, in consequence of his letter, herewith enclosed and marked A, revoked his order.

* * * * *

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM MERVINE,
Commanding Pacific Squadron.

Hon. J. C. DOBBIN,
Secretary of the Navy, Washington.

B.

UNITED STATES SHIP VINCENNES,
Navy Yard, Mare Island, November 7, 1855.

SIR: I have written to the department on matters connected with the expedition, and it will be necessary for me to await an answer before I shall be enabled to prosecute the peculiar duties which have been entrusted to me.

In the present state of affairs at the north, the services of this ship and the schooner "Fennimore Cooper" might be valuable.

Under the circumstances, I deem it advisable to offer these vessels as part of the naval forces of the United States which may be profitably employed during the next two months in the protection of our citizens' lives and property, without interfering with our surveying duties.

The "Vincennes" is short of her complement, and will be able to accommodate on board any officers, seamen, or marines whom you may detail to increase our force.

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

JOHN RODGERS,

Commanding North Pacific Surveying Expedition.

Commodore WILLIAM MERVINE,

Commanding U. S. Naval Forces, Pacific Ocean.

—
A.

UNITED STATES SHIP VINCENNES,

San Francisco, December 8, 1855.

SIR: In consequence of information which I have received that General Wool has ordered his troops into winter quarters, and that he has sent such part of them as he deemed necessary to Steilacoom and Olympia, to garrison these towns and protect the inhabitants, I cannot but consider that our presence there has now become unnecessary.

While I believed that our presence might be useful in saving the lives of our citizens menaced by the Indians, I solicited orders from you. Now that I am assured we can be of no service, I am induced to request you will rescind them.

* * * * *

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

JOHN RODGERS,

Commanding U. S. Surveying Expedition.

Commodore WILLIAM MERVINE,

Commanding U. S. Naval Forces, Pacific Ocean.

—
TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

January 4, 1856.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith, at the suggestion of the Superintendent of the Coast Survey, copy of a letter received from him expressive of his gratification at the promptness with which the services of the coast survey steamer, "Active," were tendered by Commander Alden to Commodore Mervine, to act under his directions, as commander of the Pacific squadron, in endeavoring to quell the Indian disturbances in Washington Territory.

I also enclose a copy of Commander Alden's letter to Professor Bache, and of the orders issued by Commodore Mervine on accepting the services of the "Active."

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES GUTHRIE,

Secretary of the Treasury.

Hon. J. C. DOBBIN,

Secretary of the Navy.

UNITED STATES COAST SURVEY STEAMER ACTIVE,
Olympia, December 18, 1855.

SIR: I have the honor to report my arrival at this place, agreeably to instructions from Commodore Mervine, dated the 29th ultimo. I have communicated with the acting governor of the Territory, the senior naval and military officers present, and find that the operations against the Indians here have, for the most part, ceased for the winter, owing to the small force that can be brought into the field and the condition of the country, which is, from the incessant rains, almost impassable. All the forces, the regular as well as volunteer, have been drawn in around the towns, (Seattle and Steilacoom, which are in the vicinity of and threatened by the hostile tribes,) to act, I presume, on the defensive, making occasional demonstrations against the enemy. The presence of this vessel seems to have given great satisfaction to the settlers on the Sound, and I trust that by keeping on the move for a month or two, confidence will be sufficiently restored among them as to make it expedient and proper for me to return to my duties on the survey; should that be the case, the instructions of the Superintendent of the Coast Survey for the regular prosecution of the work will, no doubt, bring me back here in the spring at the time when it is contemplated to recommence active operations against the enemy, wherein I should be most happy to participate, if the department and the Superintendent of the Survey deem it advisable.

Respectfully, I am your obedient servant,

JAMES ALDEN,
Commander United States Navy.

HON. JAMES C. DOBBIN,
Secretary of the Navy, Washington, D. C.

COAST SURVEY OFFICE,
January 2, 1856.

DEAR SIR: I believe you will be gratified, as I have been, to see the promptness with which Commander Alden volunteered the services of the *coast survey steamer Active* to go to the north, placing her under the direction of the commander of the squadron for service. I enclose you a copy of Commander Alden's letter to me, and of the orders which he received from Commodore Mervine.

I would respectfully suggest that a copy of this letter, and of its inclosures, be transmitted to the honorable Secretaries of War and of the Navy, that they may be aware of the co-operation thus afforded by the use of the coast survey steamer "*Active*."

Very respectfully, yours,

A. D. BACHE,
Superintendent United States Coast Survey.

HON. JAMES GUTHRIE,
Secretary of the Treasury.

UNITED STATES COAST SURVEY STEAMER "ACTIVE,"
San Francisco, December 3, 1855.

DEAR SIR: The enclosed communication from Commodore Mervine will explain itself, and I trust my course in placing this vessel at his disposal will meet your approval. I hesitated to do so till the necessity of the case made my duty so apparent that I should have proved recreant to the call of humanity if I had remained passive. Independently of my knowledge of those localities which are so much exposed, I am satisfied that this vessel is more capable of affording aid and comfort to our citizens, by moving with celerity from one point to another, than two or three sloops-of-war without the aid of steam in such warfare; our capacity, too, for towing vessels of that class that may be operating there will be felt, and for the transportation of troops and supplies I think the "Active" can hardly be equalled by any vessel of her size. It is my intention to carry out these views, and I trust that, if action and energy will accomplish anything, you will never have cause to regret our participation in this affair. Commodore Mervine has done everything in the way of furnishing all the means and appliances in his power to stop this disastrous warfare, and has supplied this vessel with everything required for the successful prosecution of so desirable an end.

I leave Lieutenant Cuyler in command of the "Ewing," with a sufficient force to carry on the hydrography of the bay, (the work laid out for the "Active" this winter,) and knowing as well as you do his long experience and peculiar aptitude for the work, I need hardly add that I have the most sanguine expectation that he will produce many and highly satisfactory results. My instructions to him are also herewith enclosed, and you will perceive that, as my absence may be more or less protracted, I have directed him to communicate directly with you.

Before closing, I desire to record the high sense of obligation that I feel towards Lieutenant T. G. Corbin, United States navy, (the executive of the navy yard at Mare island,) who has so promptly volunteered his services, and is now temporarily attached to this vessel as first lieutenant.

Our preparations are almost completed, and we expect to leave here on to-morrow or next day.

With great respect, I remain, very truly, your obedient servant,

JAMES ALDEN,

*Commander United States Navy,
Assistant United States Coast Survey.*

Professor A. D. BACHE,
Superintendent U. S. Coast Survey, Washington.

NOTE.—For a copy of Commodore Mervine's instructions to Commander Alden, see Commodore Mervine's dispatch. No. 19, dated December 4, 1855.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, *January 5, 1856.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 4th instant, enclosing copy of one to your address from the Superintendent of the Coast Survey, "expressive of his gratification at the promptness with which the services of the coast survey steamer "Active" were tendered by Commander Alden to Commodore Mervine, to act under his directions as commander of the Pacific squadron, to quell the Indian disturbances in Washington Territory." Also, "A copy of Commander Alden's letter to Professor Bache, and of the orders issued by Commodore Mervine on accepting the services of the "Active."

I am extremely gratified with the zeal and energy of Commander Alden, and his promptness in placing his vessel at the disposal of Commodore Mervine. His course meets the hearty approval of the department, and it is hoped it will not interfere materially with his coast survey duties.

With very great respect, I am, sir, your obedient servant,

J. C. DOBBIN.

Hon. JAMES GUTHRIE,
Secretary of the Treasury.

No. 21.

[Extract.]

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP INDEPENDENCE,
San Francisco, January 4, 1856.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that I have received a copy of a report from Commander Sterett, commanding United States ship "Decatur," under date of the 5th ultimo, (herewith enclosed and marked A,) the original of which, he informs me, was transmitted to the department, most probably by the present mail, detailing all his movements in Puget sound, growing out of the hostile demonstrations of the savages; all of which have been corroborated by information derived from other sources. This alarming state of affairs demands a much larger steam naval force, the only one adapted to that service, than is at my disposal, without resorting to other commands for it. On this account the United States steamer "Active" was dispatched to the Sound, and is now there, doubtless, doing good service.

In order that the "Decatur" might remain in the Sound, where her services are indispensable, the commandant of the navy yard at Mare island was directed, on the 22d ultimo, to fit out the steamer "John Hancock" with as large a supply of provisions and ammunition as she could store, and dispatch her to the Sound. The order was responded to by Captain Farragut with great alacrity in her outfit, but, unfortunately, when nearly ready to proceed, her boilers collapsed.

This catastrophe occasioned a necessity of chartering a steamer at an enormous expense, or of diverting the United States steam-propeller "Massachusetts" from the service designated for her in relation to the guano island; the latter alternative is chosen, though it deranges all my plans, and imposes on me the duty of carrying out the instructions of the government relative to the island, as neither of the other vessels of the squadron are within reach of orders for that purpose.

I am hourly expecting the arrival of the "Massachusetts" from San Juan del Sur, when I shall dispatch her with all possible expedition to the Sound, in order to supply the pressing wants of the "Decatur," which, in all probability, will be increased by the necessity of supplying the famishing settlers, many of whom have fled from their farms, leaving everything behind them.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. MERVINE,
Commanding Pacific Squadron.

Hon. J. C. DOBBIN,
Secretary of the Navy, Washington, D. C.

A.

UNITED STATES SLOOP-OF-WAR "DECATUR,"
Port Madison, W. T., Puget Sound, December 5, 1855.

SIR: As I do not know where Commodore Mervine is at this time, and as I deem it important that the condition of things in this quarter should be known to the department, I have the honor to make the following report of the movements of this ship since her return to the Sound.

On the 27th of September I anchored at Port Townsend and learned that a war had broken out beyond the Cascade mountains between the whites and Klikatats, and portions of other tribes, and that a descent on Seattle or Steilacoom was threatened. I got under way and anchored at the former place on the 4th October, in such a position as to command the town. Seattle is the nearest point to Snowqualume pass, and is, therefore, the most exposed of all the settlements on the Sound to the incursions of Indians from beyond the mountains. I considered it my duty to remain at that place until the citizens could organize some means of defence, as they were almost destitute of arms and entirely without organization. They had commenced a block-house, which I caused to be completed and armed with two 9-pounders, which I found here stowed away in the mud, and for which I caused carriages to be constructed.

On the 28th of October, Captain Maloney's command being beyond the mountains, a portion of the Klikatats, Nisquallis, and Pugallup tribes took advantage of the unprotected condition of the settlers and committed a number of murders on White, Green, and Pugallup rivers, many of which were within a few miles of this place. Captain C. C. Hewitt's company of volunteers being partially organized, but still

wanting arms and the means to procure them, I caused eighteen stand to be purchased and distributed to his men, who marched to the scene of these outrages, but could effect nothing but bury the bodies of the unfortunate victims, some of whom were shockingly mutilated.

The block-house having been completed, and the Seattle volunteers having been completely armed and organized, I considered my presence at that place no longer necessary, and on the 20th November I got under way for Steilacoom, where I anchored on the 22d.

At the request of Captain Maloney, United States army, commanding at Fort Steilacoom, I detached Assistant Surgeon J. Y. Taylor to accompany Lieutenant Slaughter's command on an expedition against the Indians near the head of Pugallup and White rivers, and having received official information that Captain Hewitt's company had received orders to march up White river and form a junction with Lieutenant Slaughter's command, I dispatched Lieutenant A. J. Drake, with eight marines, to Seattle to guard the block-house and protect the women and children, who were left exposed by their departure.

At the special request of Captain E. D. Keys, United States army, who had taken the field at the head of all the disposable force on this side of the Cascade mountains, I detached Acting Master T. G. Dallas to serve on his staff as aid-de-camp.

On the evening of the 25th November, a party of the citizens of Steilacoom waited on me and requested that I would remove a number of northern Indians whom they represented to be very troublesome, and who refused to go away, although threatened with violence. The next morning at sunrise, I dispatched Lieutenant H. K. Hughes with a boat's crew, (unarmed,) to endeavor to prevail upon them to remove peaceably. On his approach they levelled a gun at him, and exhibited a high degree of excitement; but on learning the peaceful nature of his errand, they became quiet, and instantly left in their canoes for Nisqually.

On my first arrival at Seattle, I received a requisition from C. H. Mason, esq., acting governor of Washington Territory for arms. Believing the war to be confined to the other side of the mountains, I immediately dispatched Lieutenant Drake in the first cutter to Olympia, with 30 muskets, 40 carbines, 50 pistols, 50 swords, 3,500 percussion caps, 1,500 carbine ball cartridges, 1,000 musket ball cartridges, and 1,000 pistol ball cartridges.

On the 28th ultimo I received from Captain E. D. Keys forty United States rifles, which I shall probably have to distribute to the settlers on the lower part of the Sound.

On the 1st instant I sailed from Steilacoom for Scattle, where I anchored next morning when I received from the settlers at this place a request for protection against the northern Indians, who had assumed a threatening attitude towards them. On the morning of the 3d I weighed anchor, and arrived here the same afternoon. After several interviews with the northern Indians, I have the satisfaction to state that they have consented to depart for Victoria, and have promised not to return during the Indian troubles. These tribes are very numerous, brave, athletic, and revengeful, and I have been very apprehensive that the imprudence of some of the whites would

involve us in a war with them, which, without the immediate employment of a large naval steam force, would inevitably result in the destruction of every settlement on the Straits of Fuca and Puget Sound.

Enclosed, I have the honor to transmit a copy of a communication which I have just received from Dr. D. S. Maynard, special Indian agent, on this subject.

DECEMBER 6, 1855.

I regret to state that I have just been advised by Lieutenant A. J. Drake, left by me in charge of a party of marines at Seattle, that Lieutenant Slaughter has been attacked near the forks of Green and White rivers, about eighteen miles from Seattle, and that Lieutenant Slaughter and three men were killed, and six wounded, one of whom died on the way to that place. The bodies of the lieutenant and one of the men, and all the wounded, are with Lieutenant Drake. I shall get underway forthwith and proceed to Seattle, and having provided for the safety of that place, shall take the bodies of the slain and the wounded to Steilacoom, where the latter can be rendered much more comfortable than at Seattle.

I trust I shall be pardoned for stating it as my opinion that the war in this Territory is assuming a most serious aspect. The numbers, valor, and prowess of the Indians have been greatly underrated, and the forces now in the field, and indeed the whole military resources of the Territory are totally inadequate to conduct the war with success, or even to afford protection to the settlers. The war in Oregon seems to engross the whole of the attention of the people and press of California, and the greater danger to which this Territory is subjected appears to be unknown. It was, as I have been informed, in consequence of information received by General Wool, *after his arrival in the Columbia river*, that Captain King's company was diverted to Steilacoom. This timely reinforcement, however, is, in my opinion, altogether insufficient; and it is the opinion of well informed men here, that it will require regiments instead of companies, and years instead of months, to conquer these tribes. I have taken the liberty to write my views plainly, because I am confident the department will be pleased to receive any reliable information from a portion of the country so distant, and whose affairs are in so interesting a condition.

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

ISAAC S. STERRETT,

Commander.

Hon. J. C. DOBBIN,

Secretary of the Navy, Washington, D. C.

KT. SUPERINTENDENCY,
Washington Territory, December 5, 1855.

DEAR SIR: The northern or Stuck-re Indians, now at or about Port Madison Mills, are causing much disturbance with the Indians under

my charge at this time, so much that I am fearful of the consequence of their being left after your departure from this place.

I therefore ask that you remove them before you leave, that we may be free from the depredations they are committing among us.

Your views, as expressed to me yesterday, with respect to irritating them in their removal, I conceive to be of much importance. None, I think, but yourself can effect their removal without exciting their indignation.

Please be actuated by your better judgment and you will confer a great favor.

Very respectfully, yours,

D. S. MAYNARD,
Special Indian Agent.

Captain STERRETT.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, *February 11, 1856.*

SIR: Your communication of the 5th of December last, reporting the movements of the United States ship "Decatur," under your command, while in Puget sound, and the protection afforded by you to the citizens of Washington Territory against the incursions and threatenings of the Indians of that country, was duly received, read with satisfaction and referred to the Secretary of War, who has addressed a letter of acknowledgement to this department of your meritorious services, a copy of which is herewith enclosed.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant.

J. C. DOBBIN.

Commander ISAAC S. STERRETT,
United States Navy.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *Washington, February 7, 1856.*

SIR: I have read with much interest and satisfaction the report you were kind enough to send me of Commander Isaac S. Sterrett, commanding United States ship Decatur in the northern Pacific, of his operations for the protection of the citizens of Washington Territory from the incursions and threatenings of the Indians in that country.

His presence and aid were most opportune and valuable from the fact that this department had not at hand, in that distant region, a sufficiency of troops to meet the emergencies of the case.

I have therefore to tender, through you, to Commander Sterrett my acknowledgements for his meritorious and timely services.

Commander Sterrett's letter is herewith returned as requested.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JEFF'N DAVIS,
Secretary of War.

Hon. J. C. DOBBIN,
Secretary of the Navy.