

R203.3

Hd. Qrs. Dist. Yellowstone
Fort Keogh. M[†]

December 27th 1877

Asst. Adj't General
Dept of Dakota
Saint Paul Minn.

Sir: - In accordance with orders from Department Headquarters I have the honor to make the following report of the operations of my command during the year ending Oct. 17th 1877.

The force ordered to winter on the Yellowstone in the autumn of 1876, in addition to its other duties, was required to build a cantonment and escort and guard public stores necessary for its subsistence. At that time there were upwards of one thousand (1000) lodges of hostile Indians in the field under Sitting Bull & Crazy Horse and it is to be regretted that the fifteen hun-

2

and (1500) troops originally ordered to winter on
the Yellowstone were not placed here, as their services
would have been invaluable. With the forces reduced
more than one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) the work of hunting was commenced,
and the Fifth Infantry prepared at once to take the
field. I learned through spies, and other means, the design
of Sitting Bull to move to the vicinity of the mouth of Pow-
der River, and harass the troops and transportation
along the Yellowstone, and received accurate information
of his intended movement. The attack upon a govern-
ment train, made by a party of his warriors, under "Gall"
confirmed the reports, and on the 17th of October 1876, I
moved across the country to the North-West to clear
the route of travel, and, if possible, intercept the march
of the hostiles. On the 21st my command was brought
into contact with the hostile Minneconjous, Sans Arcs,
Uncpapas, and warriors from other tribes, and after a

parley with Sitting Bull, To Neck, Bull Eagle, Red
Spirit, Gall, Pretty Bear, and other prominent leaders of the
hostile Sioux camp, which had no satisfactory result.
An engagement followed, which resulted in driving the
hostiles out of their camp at the head of Cedar Creek,
East branch of Maynadier Creek. The Indians lost a
few killed and a large amount of property within their
camp and on the line of their retreat, including horses
mules, and ponies. In the engagement both officers and
men (numbering 398 rifles) behaved with the greatest
fortitude as they were outnumbered two to one; the
Indians were pursued as far as the Yellowstone, a dis-
tance of forty-two (42) miles, where to avoid further
punishment the principal party made a conditional sur-
render, giving up as hostages five (5) of their principal
chief and leading men. The responsibility for the terms
not being fully complied with rests, in my opinion, not

with his command than brought about the surrender. Sitting Bull left the main body during the retreat - with thirty (30) lodges, and was soon joined by Gall and Pretty Bear with as many more.

On returning to the Gaumont at mouth of Tongue River I immediately organized a force of 434 men of the Fifth Infantry and moved North in pursuit of Sitting Bull and followed the trail down a tributary of the Big Dog, until it was obliterated by a snow storm. A camp of Iron Dog - 119 lodges - crossed the Missouri in advance of the command and dissolved itself into the Gaumontais camp, so that when the command reached Fort Peck a week later (going in there for supplies) some of the same Indians, who were present at the council and engagement with Sitting Bull, were found with tickets in their hands and rifles on their backs, drawing rations. This band subsequently moved North, crossing the British line.

The report of Sitting Bull's moving toward Carroll for ammunition, induced me to move a part of my command - six (6) companies and one (1) gun - to opposite the mouth of Musselshell on the north bank of the Missouri, and the remainder - four (4) companies and one (1) gun - up the west branch of the Big Dry.

On arrival opposite Squaw Creek a report reached me that Sitting Bull had moved East and designed crossing the Missouri; as this report conflicted with the ones previously received, I determined to act upon both, and again divided my force, taking three (3) Companies and one (1) gun across the headwaters of the Big Dry and sending three (3) Companies and one (1) Howitzer - under Lieut. Baldwin - East along the Missouri. This movement resulted in driving Sitting Bull's camp south of the Missouri and, being followed up by a movement to intercept him, after the detachment had returned to Peck for supplies, resulted in surprising Sitting Bull's

Camp, at that time numbering 122 lodges, as head of Red Water, and the capture of a good part of his Camp equipment. The Indians scattered, going south across the Yellowstone in a desultory condition. About this time I received information of a message having passed between Crazy Horse & Sitting Bull, that the former had learned of the discomfiture of the latter and requesting him to join his Camp, that he had plenty of warriors and ammunition. Sitting Bull replied that he would join Crazy Horse during the cold moon (December) via mouth of Rosebud. The command being kept between the two camps, and on their route of travel, the junction was never accomplished. Disaffection to some extent existed in the hostile Camps and several bands had already broken away from the main Camp and gone to their agency, and on the 16th of December a party of Indians came into the Cañon mouth of Tongue River apparently with good intent, and it is believed, for the purpose

of making terms of surrender, but unfortunately before they reached the command they were set upon by some Crow scouts, who had been brought down from Western Montana and were instantly killed. This act of treachery was particularly unfortunate at that time as it broke off all communications of a peaceable nature for several months.

Though the command was somewhat exhausted by the hardships of the previous long marches in November and December and had suffered greatly by the intensely cold weather, the transportation worn down by hard work and very little food, a force consisting of five (5) companies 5th Infantry and two (2) companies 2nd Cavalry - was organized (after one week's rest) to move up Tongue River against the large camp under Crazy Horse, consisting of Oglalla and Cheyenne tribes and several other Indians from other tribes. The command consisted of 436 officers and men and two (2) field guns. As the

command approached their camp, which extended along the Tongue for three (3) miles, between Otter and Hanging Woman's Creek, the Indians broke camp and moved up Tongue River. They were followed as rapidly as the command could move through the snow and over frozen streams, and at a point eight (8) miles above Hanging Woman's Creek the scouts in advance captured a small party of Indians (1 young warrior, 4 women and 3 children) which afterward proved to be quite an important prize, as they were the relatives of some of the most prominent families in the hostile camp, and the effort of about 300 warriors to recapture them resulted in a very sharp skirmish on the evening of January 7th. On the morning of the 8th the command encountered the main body of the warriors, led by Crazy Horse, Little Big Man, The Ice, Big Crow, and others in an engagement lasting until one o'clock, when the Chief Medicine Man Big Crow, with others, was killed and the

Indians fled from the field. The engagement was fought under trying circumstances, the troops were largely outnumbered, the Indians occupying a spur of the Wolf Mountain Range, the snow being quite deep making it very difficult to move the troops on foot, and during a part of the time a severe snow storm prevailed, yet the attack was made in excellent order. The principal fighting occurred on the left of the line in, I think, as rough a country as troops ever fought over, and for a time was very close and desperate. Captain Casey and Butler and Lieutenant McDonalds are entitled to great praise for the cool and determined manner in which they led and handled their companies under fire, and Lieutenant Baldwin for his gallantry in leading a charge. The Indians abandoned the field leaving their dead chief behind. The troops advancing far enough to ascertain that they had retreated in the direction of the Big Horn Mountains, but as no supplies could have been obtained for the troops in that

direction, and the command had accomplished the object of the movement no further pursuit was deemed necessary or advisable at that time.

The capture of the Indians, on the evening of January 4th, as above stated, proved to be an important affair as affording an opportunity of communicating with the hostile camps. I sent Scout John Bruguer, with two of the captives, February 1st offering the terms upon which a surrender would be accepted; namely, unconditional, with subsequent compliance with such orders as should be received from the higher authorities, at the same time informing them that in case of non-compliance the troops would move against them again. Bruguer performed this valuable and most dangerous service, as well as subsequent services of a similar nature, with equal skill and courage; making the long journey, through deep snow, he found that the hostiles had continued their retreat from the battle field of January 8th to the base

of the Big Horn Mountains, and camped on the Little Horn,
a tributary of the Little Big Horn. He also found after get-
ting into their camp, that they were disposed to accept
the terms of the government, being convinced that they could
not contend with the troops, and having suffered severely
on their retreat. His mission was so successfully ex-
ecuted that on February 19th he returned with 19 In-
dians, mainly chiefs and leading warriors who desired
to learn the exact conditions upon which they could sur-
render. The terms as above given were repeated, and in
various councils and frank and free communications
a feeling of confidence and good faith was engendered
which, I will here add, has never been disturbed as far as re-
lates to the Indians who subsequently surrendered here.
On their return, the cries announced through their camps
that the war was over, and the camps began to move to-
wards this place. While on the way they were overtaken

bymen from Spotted Tail who, as they understood, offered more liberal terms, including the right to retain their arms and ponies and to procure ammunition. The camps were accordingly moved for a general council to near the fork of the Powder River, and a large delegation of leading chiefs and warriors came in (March 18th) to learn what like terms could be obtained here. They were informed that ^{there would be} no change from what had been before offered, also that it would be equally satisfactory should they choose to surrender at the southern agencies, but that they must do one of the two or be prepared to meet the troops that would be immediately sent out after them. In answer "Little Hawk," under Crazy Horse, with others guaranteed to either bring the camp here or take it to the lower agencies, and left in our hands as pledges of good faith nine (9) hostages, prominent men and head warriors of both tribes. Three hundred (300) led by "Two Moons," "Hump"

"White Bull" or "The Tee" and "Horse Road," surrendered here April 25; a large part of the others numbering more than two thousand (2000) led by "Droopy Horse", "Little Hawk" "Little Big Man", "The Rock" and others moved south and surrendered at Red Cloud and Spotted Tail Agencies. In the meantime Sitting Bull had gathered his camp south of the Yellowstone and when Droopy Horse's following decided to place themselves under subjection to the government he, in order to avoid surrendering and to escape further pursuit retreated to the northern boundary and sought refuge on Canadian soil: his following was then in a very destitute condition, almost entirely out of ammunition, having lost nearly everything except their guns & ponies, & have since declared their allegiance to & proposed to remain under the protection of the British government.

From those that surrendered I learned that a band of renegades of different tribes - chiefly Minneconjou - under Lam-

Deer had determined not to surrender and had broken off from the party that came to this place and moved westward as they were approaching. At that time (April 22), and for more than a month previous my limited amount of grain and hay had become so far exhausted that I was obliged to him a good part of my animals out on dead grass and cottonwood brush in order to keep them alive. April 28 Lieutenant Baldwin brought up a train with grain from Bismarck and on May 1st with a force consisting of the Battalion of four (4) companies 2^d Cavalry (that had arrived from Fort Ellis M^d. April 23rd) two (2) companies of the 5th and four (4) of the 22^d Infantry. I started up Tongue River and on the 5th at a point 63 miles from its mouth, cut loose from my wagons and with the Cavalry, detachment of mounted Infantry (5th & 22^d) and three (3) companies 2^d Infantry, struck across to, and marched up, the Rosebud, after a secret, most laborious and circuitous march through the broken country.

along the western affluents of the Rosebud and with scarcely a
halt during the two nights and one day the command surprised
Sane Deer's camp at Am. on the 7th. The camp was sit-
uated on a near the mouth of Muddy Creek, an eastern
affluent of the Rosebud. The surprise was complete. The
village was charged in gallant style by the detachment
mounted infantry, commanded by Lieut Dally, 4th Col H.
2nd Cavalry, commanded by Lieut L. H. Jerome; their force
cut off and secured the herd. Through White Bull of the
surrounded议ennes (whose service, with that of
Brave Wolf and Hump, in discovering the village
and leading the command to it) was invaluable), I
called on the Indians to surrender and Sane Deer and his
head warrior Iron Star, appeared desirous of doing so, but
either having already meditated treachery, or fearing
it now past after shaking hands with some officer of
the command, they began to fire at them but a few

steps distant. This necessarily ended the mode of peace making and the Indians, who at the first attack had taken refuge in the hills along the edge of the valley, were hotly pursued in a running fight some eight (8) miles across the broken country to the Rosebud. Fourteen (14) were reported killed, including Lime Deer and Iron Star, four hundred & fifty (450) horses, mules and ponies & their entire camp fifty one (51) lodges, richly stored with food, robes, saddles, and every species of Indian property fell into our hands. Lieut A.M. Fuller 2nd Cavalry was slightly wounded, six (6) enlisted men were wounded & four (4) enlisted men were killed. The Indians who escaped subsequently moved eastward to the Little Missouri. After the resumption of the command to the Department the severe & protracted rains of the latter part of May rendered the roads impassable and flooded the streams so that any extended movement was impossible. Four (4) companies

B. F. Gano & 5th Infantry were mounted on the cap-
tured Indian ponies, and served as Mounted Infantry un-
til after the Nez Perce campaign. During the remain-
der of May and early part of June, my force was augmented
by the arrival in the Yellowstone valley of eleven (11) companies
of the 7th Cavalry commanded by General Sturgis, four (4)
companies of the 1st Infantry, commanded by Maj. H. M.
Loyall, and two (2) companies of the 11th Infantry, com-
manded by Maj. G. B. Bartlett. Major Bartlett and the
companies of the 11th Infantry were (July 17th) ordered to
the Pass on the Big Horn and were not called into the field.
In the early part of June I learned of the existence of a band of
hostiles in the vicinity, and East of Powder River. A hot
trail of a small horse-stealing band was followed to that
stream by the mounted battalion, under Capt. Snyder, but
the high stage of water rendered crossing too danger-
ous and slow to warrant further pursuit. Unfor-

turnately, at this time, a force equal to more than two (2) battalions of veteran troops was ordered discharged by the ill timed reduction of the army. As the battalion (six companies) of the 2^d Infantry, was ordered to leave the department, I decided to organize a force, of which they should be a part, and thoroughly examine the Little Missouri country: the force consisting - besides the companies of the 2^d Infantry - of three (3) companies of the 1st Infantry and one (1) company of the 7th Cavalry, was placed under command of Major H. M. Lazelle, 1st Infantry, who, with the main portion of his command, started from Tongue River June 16th, dropped down the river by boat below the mouth of Powder River and marched thence to beyond the Box Elder on the upper Little Missouri, struck the trail of Lame Deer's band (led by his son) moving north east and followed it nearly to Devil's Buttes, his scouts, (including a portion of the Indians surrendered at this place) overtook & skirmished with a portion of the band. Learning from

Major Lazelle of his approach towards the Yellowstone in pursuit of the band, I detached three (3) companies of the 2nd Cavalry - under Captain Ball - and one (1) piece of Artillery - under Lieut Hamilton 2nd Cavalry - started them by boat to Glendive (July 2) with orders to move them towards the Little Missouri, with a view to intercept the Indians. This movement was unfortunately delayed by the grounding of a steamer containing a part of the Cavalry & pack-train, and the Indians escaped eastward across the Little Missouri near Sentinel Butte. Major Lazelle having detached the Battalion 2nd Infantry, and sent it to Fort Lincoln, whence it subsequently left the Department, returned to the Yellowstone opposite mouth of Cedar, or Haynader Creek for supplies, and Captain Ball's force to Glendive where it was joined by Major J. S. Busbin. July 18th two (2) co-operating detachments under Majors Busbin and Lazelle were now organized. Busbin's Battalion was augmented by

Three B) Companies "A" "C" & "D" mounted Battalion 5th Dragoon, (Companies "A" & "B" having been added to that Battalion in early part of July) and a force of Crow allies. These commands moved to and across the Little Missouri and following the trail of the Indians up that stream to Short Pine Hills, where Major Lazelle's command with the wagon train returned to Wolf Ranch and subsequently to Tongue River, arriving at the end of August. His report & maps of the country passed over have been already forwarded.

From the Little Missouri near Short Pine Hills, Brisbin's command with pack animals continued the pursuit across to the Little Powder, thence to the main Powder River and over the Wyoming boundary, gaining upon the Indians, and causing them to abandon some of their property. From this extreme southern point the command, much worn down by its persistent pursuit, the animals without grain, hurried by the valleys of the Powder & Tongue Rivers to the caissonment, arriving Aug-

July 30th. Band of Indians continually harassed & pursued by different detachments of the command herein reported, moved to, & surrendered at the agencies at the South.

July 23rd, August 28th, and September 5th and 10th.

As the Battalion 2nd Cavalry was approaching from Fort Ellis in the early spring, I had detached 1st Lieutenant G.C. Doane, 2nd Cavalry, and such men to secure the services of the Crow warriors. In this he was very successful ⁱⁿ their services as allies, with the force south of the Yellowstone, also in scouting the country along & north of the Yellowstone to the best of this point and in fighting & harassing the Nez Percés were of very great value and obtained at a relatively small expenditure, in rations ^{and} ammunition on the part of the government. Lieutenant Doane's services, first in organizing the Crows and subsequently in the approach of the Nez Percés, with whom they had been in friendly relations, in retaining their loyalty to the government,

were highly important & valuable.

While the operations before described were in progress, I had kept myself informed of the movements of Sitting Bull's band as the North and (July 4th) started out with nine (9) companies of the 7th Cavalry and six (6) companies - mounted - of the 5th Infantry, intending (I) to examine thoroughly the country to the East of this point between the Yellowstone & Missouri, then reported (from Fort Buford) to be invaded by bands from the North, and to interpose that force between Lane Deer's following and Sitting Bull's camp, which had been strengthened in men & material & was beginning to assume a threatening attitude on the northern side of the boundary; (II) to be in supporting distance of the force South of the Yellowstone &, on the completion of its work, to cross it & move up to the Missouri in front of, and opposite

to Sitting Bull's camp. This movement was at the time considered unnecessary and disapproved by higher authorities and I was ordered to confine my operations to the valley of the Yellowstone, & scour the country on either side of that stream. In pursuance of this the troops not engaged in the movement before described were to be placed as to protect the valley and ordered to scout thoroughly the adjacent country.

From unofficial reports & newspaper accounts I judged the hostile Nez Perce Indians would, should they evade the troops in Western Montana, endeavor to reach the Judith Basin and if pursued, move north of the Missouri River. I ordered (August 3rd) 1st Lt Col G. Doane, 2nd Cavalry with Co E. 7th Cavalry and the Crow allies to the Missouri and west of the Musselshell, with instructions to "intercept capture or destroy the Nez Perce." On the 10th of August to the same end, I sent General George with six (6)

companies of his regiment to Judith Gap - a point they subsequently passed - at the same time ordering Lieutenant Doane - then in route under instructions above cited - to report to him. Such general instructions as the facts at hand rendered practicable were furnished General Sturgis, and he was directed to act upon the information he might obtain. His movements were timely and well made, unfortunately he was deceived as to the movements of the Indians on Black's Fork, but subsequently pursued them vigorously toward Judith Gap: his full report has been forwarded. As this disposition of troops anticipated the orders subsequently received from Division and Department Hdqrs, and as there were at that time - apparently trustworthy reports of a southward movement of Sitting Bull and his following no further dispositions to meet the Nez Percés were made. Genl Sturgis was directed to keep me informed of the movements of the

Indians, which he did by subsequent reports. After Genl
G. O. Howard's command joined that of Genl Sturgis,
Genl Howard assumed command of the latter.

On the 17th of September an evening, communications
(copies before forwarded) of the 12th from Genl Howard &
General Sturgis were received by me at Mouth of Tongue
River, informing me that the Texy Peaces had evaded the
troops under their command. What available force
I had (a part of which had just returned after labor-
ious and successful pursuit of Indians to the South)
with train and supplies, was at once ferried across the
Yellowstone, and with it I started on the evening of the 18th
towards the mouth of the Mussel Shell: at the same time
sending scouts to Buford and Fort Peck to have supplies
sent up the Missouri, not only for my command (including
Genl Sturgis') but also General Howard's command: and
overaking en route the Battalion 2nd Cavalry & Co. K

7th Cavalry had had previously been used as escort to the
Sitting Bull Commission. As the command approached,
and after it reached, the Missouri River - which it
reached at the mouth of Squaw Creek (6 miles below
the mouth of the Musselshell) on the 23rd - scouting
parties were kept well out on our left flank to keep me
informed as to the movements of the Indians. On the morn-
ing of September 25th information was received through a
party of civilians who had escaped from Cow Island and
arrived at Carroll, where was a small detachment
of my command under Lieut J. G. R. Bailey, 5th Infantry
that the Nez Perces had crossed the Missouri at Cow
Island, some seventy (70) miles to the west, on the 23rd
and, after destroying the public & private stores there,
moved north. The Battalion 2nd Cavalry had been placed
on the North bank of the Missouri, the remainder of the
command, transportation and supplies were

immediately crossed over. The Battalion 2nd Cavalry moved out at evening on the 25th and the remainder of the command on the 26th. The force as organized on the left bank of the Missouri, consisting of Battalion 2nd Cavalry, Tyler's, Jerome's, & McClemand's companies, Capt. Geo. L. Tyler commanding; Battalion 7th Cavalry, Hall's, Godfrey's & Maryland companies, Captain Owen Hale commanding; Battalion 5th Infantry (^{captured} mounted on iron ponies) Ayden, Bennett's, Gates' and Romeo's companies, Capt. Ammon Ayden commanding, one 12 pounder breech loading Howitzer gun, Sergeant John McHugh, 5th Infantry, commanding, and a detachment of white and Indian scouts, Lieut M. P. Maus 5th Infantry, commanding. The train escort commanded by Captain D. H. Brotherton 5th Infantry, consisted of company K and detachment Co. D 5th Infantry, with 12 pdr & a pole.

The direction taken by the Indians indicated that their intention probably was to join the hostile Sioux at the North: in order to intercept or take up their trail and pursue them I decided to place my force as speedily as possible in the gap between the North eminences of the Little Rock and Bear's Paw mountains, between which ranges the Indians had started northward: - and therefore, on the 27th I started with the three (3) mounted Battalions, the Hotchkiss gun and Scouts, with pack train, leaving the wagon train to follow. forced march on the 27th, 28th & 29th brought the command to the Bear's Paw Range, but without crossing the Indian trail. My Scouts and Indians were kept on the west side of the Little Rocky Mts. and from them I received reports of the movements of the Indians and the direction of their trail. On the 29th the Scouts following the trail reported that it lead into the Bear's Paw

Mountains several miles to our left, starting at 4 o'clock A.M. on the 30th, passing through a gap near the Northern end of the range and skirting the western base some three (3) miles, the command, after a march of 267 miles, was, at 7 A.M. on the trail where it emerged from the mountains; at the same time my Cheyenne & Sioux Scouts reported the village but a few miles away. The advanced attack beginning with the ordinary gait, was increased to the trot and gallop, the leading Battalion (2nd Cavalry) was soon to make a slight detour to attack in the rear & cut off and secure the herd, which it did in most gallant style, Lieut Jerome attacking the rear of the village while Captain Tyler and Lieut M. C. Glorand, in a running fight, captured upwards of eight hundred (800) head of ponies; the Battalions 7th Cavalry & 5th Infantry charged directly upon the village, preceded by the Cheyenne & Sioux Scouts.

whose skill in discovering the camp was fully equalled by their reckless courage in fighting. In this charge and subsequent close and desperate fighting, Captain Hale and Lieutenant Biddle and twenty-two (22) soldiers were killed, my Acting Assistant Adjutant General George W. Baird while carrying orders & inspiring the command with his own bravery was severely wounded, as were Captain Maynard Godfrey 7th Cavalry and Lieutenant Romeyn, 5th Infantry while leading their commands, also thirty eight (38) enlisted men. The position of the village, within the curve of a crescent-shaped cut bank in the valley of Snake Creek, and of the warriors in numerous ravines leading into the same valley rendered it impossible to determine the size of the one or number of the other. The vigorous attack was as vigorously met and every advance made was stubbornly contested, but with a courageous

persistence worthy the highest commendation, the troopers dismounted now held the line fireraker and were advanced to command every point of the Indians' position except the beds of the ravines, whence, it soon became apparent they could only be forced by a charge or siege, while a part of the 2nd & 7th Cavalry were closely engaging the enemy & pressing forward from the North East Captain Carter with Lieutenant Woodruff & a small detachment 5th Infantry charged down the slope, along the open valley of the creek and recoked the west end of the Indian village, but the deadly fire of the Indians, with magazine guns, disabled thirty five (35) per cent of his men and rendered it impossible for them to take the remainder of the village: they, however, inflicted severe loss upon the enemy and held their ground until withdrawn: the attack showed that any charge, even if successful, would be assuaded with severe loss on our part. Having inflicted a severe

loss in dead and wounded upon the Indians and placed the troops in such a position as commanded their camp and having secured the principal part of their herd, I determined to maintain the positions secured, prevent the escape of the Indians and make preparations to meet the re-enforcements from the North that the Nez Perce's evidently expected.

As the casualties in my command were twenty per cent (20%) of the force engaged, the care of the wounded, owing to the absence of tents, the utter lack of fuel and the prevalence from the evening of the 30th - of a cold wind and snow storm - became an exceedingly difficult matter. Regarding this and the methods subsequently adopted for the moving of the wounded troops and Indians, I would invite attention to the enclosed extract of a report of Surgeon H. R. Wilson, U.S.A. Chief Medical Officer, before forwarded.

Capt. Brosterton arrived on the evening of October 1st

On the morning of October 1st I opened communication with the Nez Perces and Chief Joseph & several of his warriors came out under flag of truce. They showed a willingness to surrender and brought up a part of their arms, eleven rifles & carbines), but as I believe, becoming suspicious from some remarks that were made in English in their hearing, those who camped stated to come forward & lay down their arms. While Joseph remained in our camp, I directed Lieutenant, 2nd Cavalry, to ascertain what was being done in the Indian village: he went into the village, was detained (but not harmed) until Joseph returned to his camp on the afternoon of the 2^d. In communications from the battle field of Oct 3rd and 6th the progress and result of the siege have been reported. I notified General Sioux as, Carroll, and General Howard - as they were on the Missouri River near Cow Island - of the fact that I had overtaken &

surrounded Joseph's band: that force moved Northward, but was subsequently turned back, the surrender of the Nez Perce rendering its services unnecessary. General Howard came through with a small escort, arrived on the evening of the 4th and was present at the surrender. Accompanying him were interpreter G. A. Chapman, and two (2) friendly Nez Perce Indians who were very useful in communicating with the hostiles.

As I received no reply to my request for orders or information that should govern my movements, I acted on what I supposed was the original design of the government, to place these Indians on their own reservation and so informed them, and also sent assurance to the war parties that were out and those who had escaped, that they would be taken to Tongue River for a time & sent across the mountains as soon as the weather permitted: by subsequent orders they have been removed to Fort Lincoln and Leavenworth.

As these people have been hitherto loyal to the government and friends of the white race from the time their country was first explored, and in their skilful campaign have spared hundreds of lives and thousands of dollars worth of property that they might have destroyed, and as they have, in my opinion, been grossly wronged in years past, have lost most of their warriors, ^{their} homes, property and everything except a small amount of clothing: I have the honor to recommend that ample provision be made for their civilization, and to enable them to become self-sustaining. They are sufficiently intelligent to appreciate the consideration which, in my opinion, is justly due them from the government. The Nez Perces are the boldest men and best marksmen of any Indians I have ever encountered, and Chief Joseph is a man of more sagacity and intelligence than any Indian I have ever met: he counseled against the war and against the usual cruel

is practiced by Indians and is far more humane than such Indians as Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull. The campaign of the Nez Perces is a good illustration of what would be the result of bad faith or ill-treatment toward the large tribes of mountain Indians that occupy the whole Rocky Mountain Range.

With the driving in of Lame Dees band, (subsequently Fast Bulls), the last tribe of Sioux, who have been the terror of this whole region, were forced out of the country and with the capture of the Nez Perces, the Department of Dakota was cleared a second time during the past twelve (12) months of hostile Indians. Whether the results thus secured are to be rendered permanent or not, will depend entirely upon the action of the government toward these people.

The movements against Indians herein reported involved marches in winter & summer

in the aggregate exceeding four thousand (4000) miles, not including escort duty and marches to and from the District. Beside the large amount of property destroyed or captured, no less than 1600 horses, mules and ponies have fallen into the hands of this command, and without further mention of other affairs of importance, each of the principal engagements has been followed by important surrenders of Indians; and upwards of 7000 hostile Indians have been either killed, captured, forced to surrender or driven out of the country. These achievements have required what have been cheerfully rendered, namely, faithful and arduous service, patient endurance of hardship and fortitude in the face of suffering and death: considering the results attained the loss of mortality has however been exceedingly small. In an experience of many years of military life I have never witnessed officers more gallant and faithful with less hope of reward, and

Soldiers more loyal and brave than these have shown themselves in scenes of great trial and danger. Of the Indians that have been encountered, the followers of Sitting Bull are the wildest and the most hostile, led by a man who is not a hereditary chief, but who holds his present prominent position through superstition and by his persistent, bitter hostility toward the white race & his determination to maintain the Indian supremacy in his section and this disposition renders his band the nucleus for all the disaffected Indians in his region of country: everything that tends toward civilization is most repulsive to him and them and the fact of their having taken refuge on foreign soil does not end the trouble, that large camp has been drawing to itself strength both in men and materials of war for several months, and a marked illustration of the danger is found in the fact that a band of Indians

that took part in the Minnesota massacre and fled to British Possessions, participated in the Custer massacre on the Little Big Horn, Montana, June 25, 1876 and have again returned to that Territory, anticipating this result, on March 24, 1877 I requested that should they take refuge on foreign soil, most prompt & decided measures be taken to return them, or "to prevent their retorting for hostilities against the people of the United States.

The powerful tribes who left their agencies and assumed hostilities for various causes - some of which would have had great weight with the government if the complainants had been white men - can, in my opinion, be made perfectly loyal, provided they are treated with justice & humanity, and the action and disposition of the Cheyennes, Sioux and Nez Perces now in our hands are, in my opinion, proof of this. Three ^③ years ago,

I recommended that efforts be made to render this class of Indians a pastoral people, in order that they might, in that way, adopt a mode of life somewhat in accordance with their forefathers and at the same time become self-sustaining.

In addition to the military posts already constructed, I would recommend the establishment of a large post opposite the mouth of the Musselshell on the Missouri or near Peoplis Creek on Milk River; the advantage of placing it on the Missouri would be economy of troops and supplies, and it would be near enough to observe the boundary line & create a barrier between the hostile Sioux and friendly Indians of Western Montana, the line of settlement would advance, occupying the rich valleys of the Judith Basin and Musselshell. An abundance of building material will be found in the vicinity and a sufficient number of mechanics can be found in the Territory.

There should be a camp of supplies on the Little Missouri for troops moving through that section and as a protection to the direct line of communication to Bismarck.

The occupation of the Yellowstone Valley has divided the Indian country in two and, second to the subjugation of the Indians, the object of military occupation has been attained, in obtaining accurate & valuable information regarding the character of the country and opening the way to settlements. Although the Indians, when hostile, naturally seek the most broken country for their retreats and one in following them would form an unfavorable impression of such districts of Montana, yet the percentage of "bad lands" is by no means great, in comparison to the vast areas of rich grazing, agricultural & mineral lands in this territory. The natural grasses of Montana will give more strength to horses & mules than that found in any territory between

this and the Rio Grande, and judging from the condition of the game which abounds and the excellence of the beef which has been furnished the command during the past twelve (12) months, I am satisfied this country will soon become one of the best stock growing regions on the continent. I think the reports of the Medical Officers will show this climate as healthful as any that troops ever served in, and the natives of this section, I think, are as vigorous and hardy a race as can be found on the globe.

The occupation of this District has given protection to four hundred (400) miles of steamboat navigation of the Yellowstone River and thrown open to settlement beside the Yellowstone the rich valleys of the Big Horn, Rosebud, Tongue, Powder, and Little Missouri Rivers. The telegraph is a military necessity and I would earnestly recommend that these posts be connected by military telegraph with as little delay as possible. Rapid & direct mail communication is needed with

The terminus of the Northern Pacific Railroad at Bismarck, and the construction of that great national enterprise should, in my opinion, be encouraged by every legitimate means, the military advantage to be derived from its extension, though very great, would be incomparable with the political & commercial interests developed by opening this avenue of free communication between the Eastern States and the settlements of Montana & the Pacific Slope.

The Acting Engineer Officer at these Headquarters, Lieut. O. D. Long, 5th Infantry, has forwarded to Deptt Hdqrs his field-notes of distances and topography of country marched over. Orders were given that officers performing that duty with detachments from the main command should forward notes or tracings of their marches.

I have in preparation, and shall forward on receipt of reports of subordinate commanders, a list of

names of officers & enlisted men whom I desire to recommend for Brevelets & medals of Honor. I am aware that this service has been regarded by some as not coming within the purview of Sec. 120 of Revised Statutes of the United States, but those who endure the hardships & encounter the dangers of a service in which there is no middle ground between success & death by torture are liable to give in any name less noble than "War"

I am Sir.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant.

H. H. Miles

Colonel 5th Infantry

Bt. Maj. Genl. U.S.A.

Command