
SAN FRANCISCO, *July 29, 1851.*

SIR: Referring to the enclosed copy of my respects of the 15th inst., I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22d May, per last steamer. The cordial approbation by the department of our *maiden* treaty with the Indians of California is very gratifying to me, and doubtless will be to my colleagues, to whom I have addressed copies. Our subsequent treaties have all, I believe, been based upon the general principles then adopted; and experience will, I hope,

continue to show that they are eminently adapted to the existing state of things in this country.

Yesterday, Colonel Barbour arrived on a visit to this city from the Indian country between Los Angeles and the San Joaquin, and informs me the Indians are all living quietly and well-contented on their reservations, many of them already engaged on the lighter kinds of agricultural work—others mining, either for the whites or for themselves. A few months since that region was almost depopulated; now, confidence being restored, it is again filling up, and will soon possess a very considerable American population. The Colonel has, I think, been eminently successful in effecting treaties in his district with no less than thirty-five small tribes or bands, some of them hitherto among the most troublesome on that frontier. He expresses entire confidence, that if Congress shall promptly and liberally provide the "ways and means" to fulfil our compacts, no further or future Indian wars are to be apprehended in that quarter. He will forward copies of these treaties by this steamer, and doubtless write you fully. We were apprized that the *original treaties only* can be submitted to the Senate for ratification, and have sent forward copies, retaining the originals to accompany our final report, in express accordance with our letter of instructions. The copies will enable you to make up estimates in time for your next report; and when we get through with the principal part of our labors, which we hope to accomplish by November or December, the originals will be sent forward.

At present I can form no satisfactory estimate of the amount of appropriations our treaties will require. It will, however, be pretty large—probably two to three hundred thousand dollars for the first year; and if they shall require even half a million, you may still be assured they are the cheapest treaties ever made by this government. The largest estimate will fall below the cost of a *California Indian war*, if one should unhappily become general, even of three months' duration. Our arrival in the country was remarkably opportune, and has, I am happy to believe, saved the government the expense of protecting a double line of frontier of seven or eight hundred miles in extent.

When I last wrote to you I expected by this time to have been in the neighborhood of Humboldt bay, on my way to the Klamath; but the extremely limited number of troops in this military division, and the almost total want of money in the quartermaster's department, has rendered it impossible for General Hitchcock to afford me a small escort of even fifty mounted men. I could have had a detachment of infantry, but was advised to await the arrival of Major Kearny's division from Oregon. This arrived some days since, but the horses were, many of them, exhausted by a march of eight hundred miles, and required rest. I am this day advised by Major Wessells, of Benicia, that some thirty-five or forty mounted rifles will be ready to start with me in the course of four or five days. I am anxious to get off, so as, if possible, to make the journey before the rainy season sets in. I propose taking the Clear Lake Indians on my route, who are said to number three or four thousand, and will endeavor to make pacific arrangements with them before passing over the coast range. On the Klamath and Trinity rivers, from all the accounts I have

received, I shall find large bodies of the largest, wildest, most intelligent, and warlike Indians in California; and my friends here say, if I shall succeed in making permanent treaties with *them*, I may fairly claim to have "done the State some service." I shall keep you advised of the state of things in that country, and of my operations, as I progress.

As I anticipated, Colonel Barbour's drafts on me, as disbursing agent, for expenses of his late treaties in the south, to the amount of \$6,000 or \$7,000, have made their appearance: a few of the most pressing have been paid—others I have postponed for a short time. I will to-morrow give my bankers, Messrs. Tallant & Wilde, a draft on you for the appropriation for "compensation," &c., \$6,750, which they will forward for collection, and upon it advance me such sums as I *must have* to meet pressing demands. They will charge, I suppose, the customary market rates for interest till reimbursed. This, on the very best security, is five or six per cent. per month! If the funds have not been forwarded to this city I will expect the draft paid on presentation; if they have, let all my bills come back, *with that explanation*. In the former case, pray send forward checks on the collector for the residue of all the money you can possibly spare for our operations in this State by return mail. With the utmost economy we shall necessarily be largely indebted for beef and flour for the Indians, if the appropriations made are—\$6,750

25,000

31,750

As soon as I receive and have time to settle the accounts of Colonel Barbour and Dr. Wozencraft, I will forward my general account of disbursements *for the commissioners* up to the time I received your letter of 12th April, which was early in June. In the mean time I shall hope to receive definite instructions on the points presented in previous letters, especially as to the amount I am to allow the commissioners for *mileage*. *Vide* my letter of May 29.

I am, very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

REDICK McKEE.

Hon. LUKE LEA,

Commissioner Indian Affairs, Washington City.

P. S.—Our old friend, General Sam. D. King, says we should put into the estimates at least \$40,000 to pay for surveying and marking the Indian reservations.
