
No. 43.

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
San Francisco, California, August 2, 1864.

SIR: Yours of July 9 is received. You say "at this distance I am unable to perceive the reason requiring several months for the location of a reserve under the provisions of the recent laws," &c. Section second of the act of April 8 authorizes the President to set aside four tracts of land for the use and benefit of the Indians, "to be located as remote from white settlements as may be found practicable," &c., "at least one of which shall be located in what has

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heretofore been known as the Northern district." If I fully understand, by the law and from the reading of your instructions of April 26, my primary movement should be to locate a reservation. I left nothing undone in regard to locating Round valley, of which you were fully informed by my letter of June 1 and June 30.

As I had not fully determined to locate more than one reservation in what has heretofore been known as the Northern district, I trust you will see the reason why some time is required.

The receipt of your letter of to-day, declining the proposition to allow the hostile Indians to be removed south, leaves me but one alternative—that is, to locate a reservation in Hoopa valley or Trinity river, where these Indians reside. A long interview with General McDowell, yesterday, at which Colonel Black, the recent commander of Humboldt military district, was present, encourages me to take this step.

The hostile Indians, with whom we have been so long at war, live principally in Hoopa valley. The warriors, some seventy-five in number, are now there, with arms still in their hands, waiting to see what is to be done. Hoopa valley is about five miles in length and two in width, with Trinity river in the centre. The improvements of settlers there can be bought cheap, and there is sufficient arable land to raise plenty of food for all the Indians in the valley and vicinity. A portion of the prisoners at Humboldt bay I will remove to that place, if I can make satisfactory arrangements with the settlers, and a portion to Round valley.

I regret that the statements of the former superintending agents should induce you to think that these hostile Indians could, either by being subdued or by treaty, be kept on any of the northern reservations. As my statement in regard to the failure of former superintendents to accomplish this does not seem to be sufficient evidence of its impracticability, I respectfully ask that you seek information from Colonel H. M. Black, who has recently been in command of that district, and who leaves for West Point to-morrow. General Wright, and his successor, General McDowell, fully concur with me in the opinion that the policy of making the attempt to move the hostile Indians, unless they can be taken south of San Francisco, is suicidal. I may be able to make some terms with them by allowing them to remain where they are, and giving them possession of the improvements in the valley, and for this purpose I leave to-day, and will advise you of the result of my mission at the earliest practicable moment.

General McDowell and myself are both at a loss to know precisely how to proceed under instructions. He does not feel authorized to issue rations to Indians under his orders, (to the commissary,) and I am informed that, "as at present advised, you cannot consent that I should relieve the military authorities of the care and subsistence of the Indians now held as prisoners."

The treaty of which you speak, with the Indians of northern California and northern Oregon, and which you feel sanguine "will, to a great extent, if not entirely, remove all occasion for a further prosecution of military operations against the Indians in northern California," cannot possibly have any effect upon the military operations now in progress in the Humboldt district. The Klamath Lake and Modoc Indians are distant several hundred miles from the Indians in this district, and are as entire strangers to each other as the Cherokees and Flat Heads.

General McDowell is taking a lively interest in Indian matters on this coast, and is anxious that I should concentrate the Indians somewhere, as far as is possible, so that he may draw his troops closer together.

I have asked him to request the Secretary of War to order Colonel Black to Washington soon after his arrival at West Point, on which occasion you will see and converse with him, and learn more in one hour by talking with him

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than I could write you in a week concerning the hostile Indians of the north. He will inform you, from personal knowledge and experience, that the Trinity and Humboldt Indians could not be kept at Round valley.

Matters in my superintendency are flourishing. I am harvesting the crops in good shape; the Indians are gaining their shattered health, and recovering from loathsome disease. I am giving them plenty to eat—a system of managing reservations entirely new to most of them. I shall have plenty to feed them through the winter on the reservation at present under my control.

In locating the new one at Hoopa, I will be compelled to buy food, but there will be little expense attending their transportation.

Be assured I shall do what I think is best, both for Indians and the government, and I feel satisfied that my transactions will receive your fullest indorsement, when you fully comprehend them, which I am aware is difficult at so great a distance.

I remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

AUSTIN WILEY,
Superintendent Indian Affairs, California.

Hon. W. P. DOLE,
Commissioner, Washington.
