

here. The bay is eighteen miles long, and from five to six wide, with good anchorage for any vessel. No river of any size enters into it.

Some parties are establishing themselves on Trinity bay, an indentation of the coast, somewhat like Monterey bay, but opening to the southwest instead of northwest.

I respectfully ask that Benicia be made a chaplain post. It would be very much to the interest of the government if it were made a port of entry. Vessels could come then directly to the depot without delaying at San Francisco to enter, losing their crews and incurring demurrage on the part of the government.

A vessel, the Charles Cooper, is now discharging at Benicia a large cargo of lumber, shipped by the Quartermaster General from Bangor, Maine, to San Francisco bay. From a calculation furnished by the captain, the difference between the expense of landing his cargo at Benicia and San Francisco is, in money, in favor of the former \$9,600, and in time two months.

Every day's experience establishes the superiority of Benicia over every other point on the coast for a great military depot.

Your obedient servant,

PERSIFOR F. SMITH,

*Brevet Major General, Commanding Division.*

Captain IRVIN McDOWELL,

*Assistant Adjutant General, headquarters of the army.*

P. S.—As this seems to be the only *division* in which there is any *fighting*, I have left out *Pacific division*.

P. F. S.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,  
New York, July 17, 1850.

Official:

W. G. FREEMAN,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

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HEADQUARTERS CLEAR LAKE EXPEDITION,  
*Anderson's Rancho, May 22, 1850.*

Sir: In compliance with department orders (special) No. 44, I proceeded from Monterey to Benicia, where I arrived on the night of the 4th instant, and the next morning took command of the expedition designed to proceed against the Indians on Clear lake and Pit river, by virtue of Major Seawell's order of that date, (a copy of which is herewith enclosed,) and setting out next day (6th) from Benicia, I reached this position, at the south end of Clear lake, on the 11th. The next day the dragoon company (Lieut. Davidson) was detached round the western shores of the lake to co operate with the infantry, to proceed by water up the lake. The Indians, on learning our approach, fled to an island at the northern extremity of the lake, opposite to which, and on the western shore of the lake, the command took position on the afternoon of the 14th, the Indians still gathering rapidly on the island. Lieut. Davidson, with Lieut. Haynes (mountain howitzer,) attacked a rancho on the morning of this day, killing four and securing an Indian chief. Early on the

morning of the 15th, the two shores being guarded, the landing on the island was effected, under a strong opposition from the Indians, who, perceiving us once upon their island, took flight directly, plunging into the water, among the heavy growth of tula which surrounds the islands, and which on the eastern and northern sides extends to the shores. Having rapidly cleared the island, I saw no alternative but to pursue them into the tula, and accordingly orders were given that the ammunition be slung around the necks of the men, and they proceed into the tula and pursue and destroy as far as possible. The tula was thus thoroughly searched, with severe and protracted efforts, and with most gratifying results. The number killed I confidently report at not less than sixty, and doubt little that it extended to a hundred and upwards. The Indians were supposed to be in number about 400. Their fire upon us was not effective, and no injury to the command occurred. The rancheria, extending about half way around the island, was burnt, together with a large amount of stores collected in it. Being satisfied that the Indian tribes on Russian river had participated in the murders of Stone and Kelley, and were now harboring one or two tribes known to be the most guilty, I now proceeded to the headwaters of that river, seeking first a tribe whose chief is called Chapo; but finding the rancheria deserted to which my guide led me as his, I caused a thorough but ineffectual search to be made in the vicinity, and then proceeded down the river for about twenty-two miles to a tribe called the Yohaiyaks, among whom was Preesta and his tribe, the most active participants in the atrocious murders. I found them early on the morning of the 19th, on an island formed by a slough from Russian river, which was covered with dense undergrowth, and in the part where the Indians were mostly concealed were many trees, both dead and alive, in a horizontal position, interwoven with a heavy growth of vines. Their position being entirely surrounded, they were attacked under most embarrassing circumstances; but as they could not escape, the island soon became a perfect slaughter pen, as they continued to fight with great resolution and vigor till every jungle was routed. Their number killed I confidently report at not less than seventy-five, and have little doubt it extended to nearly double that number. I estimate their whole number as somewhat greater than those on the island before mentioned. They were bold and confident, making known their position in shouts of encouragement to their men and of defiance to us. Two of their shots took effect, wounding somewhat severely Corporal Kerry and private Patrick Coughtin, company "G," the former in the shoulder and the latter in the thigh. A body of Indians supposed to have been concerned in the outrages at Kelley's rancho, and who it was believed were harboring one of the tribes known to have been concerned in the Kelley murder, lay about ten miles below; and in order that action might promptly be taken against them, according to the circumstance in which they might be found, I detached Lieutenant Davidson with his (dragoon) company, to proceed hastily to the spot, so as to anticipate an alarm from the events just mentioned. and obtaining, with the assistance of Fernando Feliz, upon whose land these Indians lived, the facts, he was instructed to act accordingly. On arriving at Fernando Feliz's rancho he found the Indians had fled through fear. The intelligence that the hostile tribe was harbored by them proved unfounded, and no definite intelligence that they had participated in the murder aforesaid was ascertained. Du-

ring our passage down Russian river an Indian was taken captive, who communicated some very unexpected intelligence—that some citizens (Spanish) had instigated the Indians against the Americans, confirming in this respect the hints previously thrown out to me by several persons. Lieutenant Davidson informed me that if this statement were true, the evidence of it must be found among the agents of these individuals, (Spanish,) and that the agents were living on the road to Sonoma; and at that place I accordingly detached Lieut. Davidson, to proceed to Benicia by way of Sonoma, taking with him the wounded, and charged to obtain all the information possible upon the subject above mentioned, and to act accordingly; while the Indian who communicated the intelligence was despatched with the promise to bring his chief and principal people to the head of the lake and meet me to-morrow; and should they meet me and confirm his statement, I shall endeavor to secure enough of them to establish the facts, and send them in safety to Benicia.

Leaving the valley of the Russian river, I proceeded across the mountains dividing the waters of the river from those of the lake; and after two days' march, arrived yesterday, about 2 o'clock, p. m., at this place.

Submitting respectfully the above brief account, I reserve for a more convenient opportunity a detailed report, to be accompanied with a map, which I shall furnish at an early day.

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

N. LYON,

*Brevet Captain 2d Infantry, Commanding Expedition.*

Major E. R. S. CANBY,

*Assistant Adjutant General, Monterey, California.*

HEADQUARTERS TENTH MILITARY DEPARTMENT,

*Monterey, May 30, 1850.*

Official copy:

ED. R. S. CANBY, *Assistant Adjutant General.*

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,

*New York, July 9, 1850.*

Official:

W. G. FREEMAN, *Assistant Adjutant General.*

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