

MILITARY POSTS

CHAPTER 49.

A Memorial and Joint Resolution to the Secretary of War, Commanding Generals Pope and Sully.

Your memorialists, the legislative assembly of the Territory of Dakota, would most respectfully call your attention to the necessity of erecting a military post on the Niobrara river in this Territory, at or near the mouth of Pine creek on the Sawyer route.

Asking for a
military post on
the Niobrara,
near mouth of
Pine creek.

Your memorialists would most respectfully represent, that the above named place is a famous camping ground for several hostile tribes of Indians. The Brules and Minneconjues inhabit this section of country, from which they issue forth in bands and make war on the settlers of the Niobrara valley; the killing and driving off of stock is common; but they do not stop here. Last summer they made a raid on the Ponca agency, killing two Poncas in view of the whole tribe; and no longer than the fifteenth of last November, (eighteen hundred and sixty-five,) these Indians attacked the trading post of Messrs. Smith and Kerler, in sight of the post Fort Keha Paha, killing one of our best citizens, John Gleeson, and robbing the store of several thousand dollars worth of goods.

These raids have thus far prevented the settlement of one of the finest valleys of the western country, and keeping the people constantly in fear of these raids, which prove so destructive to life and property.

Taking in view the bounteous liberality of the government in extending protection to the immigrant seeking a home in our sunny valleys, and to all of her children migrating westward, whether to cultivate the soil or to develop the hidden treasures of earth; and when your memorialists represent that the establishment of the post prayed for is necessary to protect the adventurous pioneer in prospecting for and developing the hidden wealth which is believed to exist in the Black Hills, to wit:

gold, silver, copper, iron, lead, and other minerals of value, to say nothing of the pine forests of that region which would of themselves be sufficient to build up the country ; and when your memorialists represent that the emigration to these mines will be up the valley of the Niobrara river to a great extent, they have not the least doubt that the government, in its liberal sense of justice ever being ready and willing, as it has shown itself, to extend that protection so essential to the industrious and enterprising pioneer of the border who puts forth his energy to extend the boundaries of civilization and hew out homes for himself and his neighbors, will grant the prayer of your memorialists.

Your memorialists would further represent, that the military force now at Fort Keha Paha is inadequate for the protection of the post and government property at that place against a strong body of Indians, and we would ask that the Fort be reinforced.

Hoping that our memorial will be favorably considered, your memorialists will, as in duty bound, ever pray.

Copies sent to
secretary of war
gen Is Pope and
Sully, delegate,
and A. W. Hub-
bard.

Resolved, That a copy of the foregoing be forwarded to the secretary of war, and each of the commanding generals of this military district, Pope and Sully ; to our delegate in Congress, and to A. W. Hubbard, M. C. 6th district, Iowa.

CHAPTER 50.

A Memorial to the Secretary of War praying for the erection of a Military Post at the North base of the Black Hills of Dakota.

To the Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War :

Asking for a
military post at
the north base
of the Black
Hills.

Your memorialists, the legislative assembly of the Territory of Dakota, would most respectfully represent, that in order to suppress any and every outbreak of the hostile Sioux Indians west of the Missouri river at the very beginning—to protect, with the least cost to the government, the emigration from the states to Montana and Idaho over the northern or Big Sheyenne route, also to protect all persons desiring to explore the

Black Hills and the surrounding country, a Military Post should be established at the north base of the Black Hills in north latitude $44^{\circ} 30'$ and longitude $108^{\circ} 30'$ west, or about half way between Fort Sully on the Missouri river and Fort Conner on Powder river. The distance between Fort Sully and Fort Conner is nearly three hundred miles, over a good country for a natural road for a greater part of the entire distance.

Military post at
the Black Hills.

It is a well known fact that the Sioux Indians in the vicinity of the Black Hills have ever been more or less hostile. In 1857 they turned Lieut. Warren's party back from exploring the Black Hills country, and they have ever been opposed to the whites passing through their country. Lieut. Warren as early as 1857 in his report of that year speaks of the Black Hills as a good point from which to strike a blow at the Teton Sioux. The establishment of such a Post in their midst would very materially tend to overawe and prevent the Sioux Indians from violating their treaties with the Government, and it is much easier and more economical to the Government to check and prevent an Indian outbreak in the first start, than to wage a long Indian war, and to do so requires a few soldiers stationed in the heart of the Indian country.

Besides the overland emigration requires that this Post should be at once built. From Fort Sully on the Missouri river to Virginia city, Montana Territory is less than six hundred miles, making some six hundred miles less land transportation to the Territory of Montana than any other route, and will be traveled more or less within the next year, consequently such a Post is necessary for the protection of emigrants, also to guard against any infringement of the rights of Indians that inhabit this section of country.

A hundred thousand dollars or more would be saved by government yearly in its transportation of supplies for Fort Conner, by having them taken over this route instead of the Omaha and Fort Laramie route, besides such a Post would be the connecting link of a line of Posts between Fort Ridgely in the State of Minnesota and Fort Conner in Montana Territory.

Further, this section of country should at once be opened to emigrants. On page 217 in a valuable report on foreign and domestic commerce issued by the treasury department in 1864 we find the following in relation to the Black Hills of Dakota:

Military post at
the Black Hills.

"It is now well ascertained that the Black Hills of Dakota Territory, situated on the 44th parallel of latitude, and between the 103d and 105th meridian of longitude are rich in gold and silver as well as coal, iron, copper, and pine forests. With the pacification of the Sioux nation and the establishment of emigrant roads, Dakota will be the scene of great mining excitement as the gold fields of the Black Hills are within one hundred and fifty miles of the steamboat navigation of the Missouri river;" sufficient information has been recently obtained to establish the proof of the above quotation. The Black Hills are but a continuation of the Snow and Big Horn mountains which are a continuation of the Rocky mountains, and it is now the opinion of the best geologists that this entire range abounds in gold and silver. Prof. J. W. Taylor speaking of the "Black Hills of Dakota" says, "The whole geological range of rocks from the granite and metamorphosed azoic, to the cretaceous formation of the surrounding plains are developed by the upheaval of the mountains mass. Thus at the junction of the silurian rocks, gold becomes accessible, and the carboniferous strata bring coal measures within reach.

But aside from the immense mineral wealth of these Hills, the settlers of the valley of the lower Missouri, need and must have the pine lumber from these Hills, which is known to be of the best quality, and can easily be rafted down the Big Sheyenne river, consequently the protection of the colonization of the Black Hills becomes an unavoidable military necessity, as emigration is determined to explore and settle the same; and it will be a saving to the Government to send sufficient military force to prevent all difficulty between the whites and Indians.

Your memorialists entreat your prompt attention to the subject, confidently believing that the interests of the general government and the people of the northwest will be greatly subserved by the establishment of the post asked for in early spring. And as in duty bound we shall ever pray.

Delegate to
bring subject to
secretary of war

Be it resolved by the council and house of representatives of the Territory of Dakota, That our delegate in congress be and he is hereby requested to use all honorable means to bring this subject to the favorable consideration of the Secretary of War.

To whom copies
of memorial
sent.

And be it further resolved, that a copy of this memorial be sent to secretaries of War and Interior, to our delegate in Con-

gress, generals Pope and Sully, commanding generals of this department and district.

CHAPTER 51.

Memorial of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Dakota praying for the Establishment of a Military Post on the Vermillion river.

To the Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War :

Your memorialist, the legislative assembly of the territory of Dakota, would most respectfully represent, that the safety of the people residing on the Vermillion river and its vicinity, would be greatly enhanced if a small military post was established and garrisoned at a point where the road leading from Yankton the capital of said territory to Sioux Falls, crosses the said Vermillion river.

Asking for a military post on the Vermillion river.

Your memorialist would further represent, that with the establishment of the posts on the Dakota and Sioux rivers. peace and quiet have reigned below, and as the Vermillion is about midway between the posts on the said Sioux and Dakota, it is the only war path for roving hostile bands of Indians not guarded from the Sioux to the Missouri river.

Your memorialist would further represent, that the Vermillion river is about midway from Yankton to Sioux Falls, that it requires two days to perform the journey, and it is the opinion of your memorialist that a small military post at such point would not only make it a safe place for encamping, but also secure the settlements below from attack of hostile bands of savages. And your petitioners in duty bound will ever pray.

Resolved, that a copy of the foregoing memorial be forwarded to the Hon. Secretary of War, and W. A. Burleigh, delegate in Congress.

Copies forwarded to secretary of war and delegate.