

mand, at 37½ cents per bushel—a price which I think quite reasonable.

You intimate that Fort Kearney is not on the route the Oregon emigrants take. The Missouri river is crossed by these people at very many points, and from some experience, and much information from others, I am satisfied that a better starting point for the troops could not be selected. It should be observed by the department of war that many local causes will influence opinions in this new and prosperous portion of the country, such as ferry privileges, contracts for supplies of all sorts, &c., and therefore caution should be exercised in adopting measures on the suggestions of persons not well known to the government. Respectfully,

Your obedt. servt.,
C. WHARTON,
Lt.-Col. First dragoons,
Commanding.

Brig.-Gen. Jones,
Adjutant-General,
Washington, D. C.

26.

Headquarters, Fort Leavenworth, {
November 6, 1847.

Sir: I informed you a few days ago that I had written to Lieutenant-Colonel Powell, commanding the Oregon battalion, to know whether he could accommodate his battalion comfortably this winter. On the 2d instant I received his reply in which he says: "there are already some sixty good substantial log cabins, with straw and dirt roofs, nearly completed, and that my entire command will in a very short time be in comfortable quarters."

Lieutenant-Colonel Powell having thus reported I shall not deem it necessary, or proper, to make any change for the winter in the location of his command. Respectfully,

Your obedt. servt.,
C. WHARTON,
Lt.-Col. First dragoons,
Commanding.

Brig.-Gen. Jones,
Adjutant-General, U. S. A.
Washington, D. C.

27.

Headquarters Fort Leavenworth, {
November 18, 1847.

Sir:—My position is a most embarrassing one. I have been charged by orders from your office with duties which had previously been assigned Brig. General Arbuckle, in reference to military operations on the Oregon and Santa Fe routes, and, yet, I have not infrequently been without the authority, except by assuming responsibilities, to effect objects necessary to the discharge of those duties. At this moment the Third military department is without a commanding officer, General Arbuckle, having on the 15th ult. issued an order relinquishing the command of it, and without designating the officer to release him. The commanders on the Oregon and

Santa Fe routes have only been informed by letter from me of the charge given me in reference to their respective commands, for, what orders could I issue? I understand that Lieut. Colonel Gilpin, since his departure hence, has, in violation of my orders, directed the two Hone companies of his battalion to winter at Fort Mann on the Arkansas instead of repairing to Fort Scott, as I had directed. I derived this information yesterday from a volunteer just in from Santa Fe, but, I had heard several days previously of a similar statement. His horses, in my opinion, under such arrangement of his forces for the winter, must perish. He does not, or, rather, thus far, has not communicated with me since his departure. His command has been provided with rations to May 31, next.

Lieut. Colonel Powell, commanding the Oregon battalion, I informed you some days ago, had made several detachments from his command. After General Arbuckle relinquished to me the control of operations on the Oregon and Santa Fe routes, I wrote Colonel Powell, stating the fact, and requested, that he would make no detachments, except in case of emergency without consulting me. One of those detachments has recently returned, the one against the Sioux, and as I expected, without seeing an Indian. This information is derived from Assistant Surgeon Walker, just from Fort Kearney. Lieut. Colonel Powell, I learn also, has ordered Lieut. Woodbury of the engineers to Washington without consulting me—for what, doubtless, Lieut. Woodbury will be able to inform you.

I have no desire to have any command the department does not design for me, but, I feel it a duty I owe the service, as well as myself, to represent this anomalous state of things.

Pray, is it not possible to send me some officer to aid me in my various and conflicting duties? Respectfully,

Your Obdt. Servt.,
C. WHARTON,
Lieut. Colonel First Dragoons,
Commanding.

Brig. General Jones,
Adjutant General,
Washington, D. C.

28.

Hd. Qrs. Batt. Mo. Md. Vols., {
Fort Kearney, Mo. Ter., {
January 24, 1848.

Sir:—By your letter of instruction dated June 1, 1847, you say: "The act referred to appropriates a sum not exceeding \$2,000 for the purchase from the Indian tribes, of each of the sites to be selected for military posts.

"This money will be disbursed by the assistant quartermaster, under the direction of the commanding officer, who is authorized to enter into a treaty with the Indians for the purchase of the ground for those sites, which will be as

extensive as the appropriation will procure."

I would respectfully suggest for the consideration of the department, the propriety of allowing the money thus appropriated, to be expended in the purchase of Indian goods, suited to their taste and wants. From the knowledge I have of the character of the tribes with whom I have to treat, I feel assured that with \$500 in goods, judiciously selected, I can procure more territory than with the \$2,000. I am induced thus to believe, from the fact, that I have seen them, when an ounce of vermillion, or beads of assorted colors, was presented in one hand, and a \$10 gold piece in the other, and they uniformly chose the former.

Should the money be expended in the purchase it will do the Indians no good, from the fact that they are totally ignorant of its value; consequently to the traders and sharpers in their country the benefit of the expenditure must accrue.

The foregoing is respectfully submitted for the consideration of the department. I have the honor to be, sir,

Your most Obedt., Servt.,
LUDWELL E. POWELL,
Lieut. Col., Bat. Mo. Md. Vols.,
Commanding.

Hon. Wm. L. Marcy,
Secretary of War,
Washington, D. C.

Having been a trader with the Indian tribes of the plains and Rocky mountains for sixteen years, I take pleasure in concurring with Lieut. Colonel Powell in the above suggestions.

A. W. SUBLLETTE,
Capt. Co. A, Bat. Mo. Md. Vols.

29.

Roster of the battalion of Missouri Mounted volunteers under the command of Lieut. Colonel L. E. Powell, which left Fort Leavenworth, September 5, 1847, to establish the first of the military posts on the Oregon route.

Officers and men, 468; horses, 454.
Captains.—D. McCausland, James Craig, Andrew W. Sublette, R. M. Stewart, W. H. Rodgers.

First Lieutenants.—T. L. Mara, A. Lefaire, F. M. Impey, H. Smith.

Second Lieutenants.—J. S. Jones, H. Thomas, R. J. Watson, S. Lingefelter.

Brevet Second Lieutenants.—S. Mackett, Thos. L. Young, W. Mara, J. M. Searcy.

First Lieutenant T. J. Todd, Adjutant. Captain Stewart Van Vliet, U. S. A. Quartermaster.

Assistant Surgeon J. Walker, Medical Officer.

First Lieutenant Daniel P. Woodbury, Engineer Officer.

NOTES FROM THE RETURNS OF ABOVE BATTALION.

First return is dated Fort Kearney, Missouri river, September 30, 1847. Ar-