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Notes on the Early Military History of Nebraska

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pitching and rolling on the bed and floor at the same time, howling like so many demons from the bottomless pit. That is the way some men used to procure the Indian trade.

Major Culbertson was general agent for the American Fur Company. The opposition company was Ellis Harvey, Joe Recotte, and others. The company in those days sent every year a steamboat loaded with goods to Cabana's fort, about ten miles above Omaha City, and return to reload at St. Louis and meet the June rise of the Missouri river; then ascend to the mouth of the Yellowstone river and forts above that.

Before steamboats ascended the Missouri river some forty years ago, they used to cordelle keel boats from St. Louis up the river to the Rocky mountains. Some days they would make ten, fifteen, or twenty miles. They would wade through mud, water, nettles, and brush with a million mosquitoes at their backs, and pull the cordelle all day, and eat boiled corn with a little grease for supper. If they had coffee they paid extra for it, and if they did not obey the barger or boss they were threatened to be left on the prairies at the mercy of the Indians.

NOTES ON THE EARLY MILITARY HISTORY OF NEBRASKA.

BY EDGAR S. DUDLEY, FIRST LIEUTENANT SECOND UNITED STATES
ARTILLERY.

[Read before the Society, Jan. 12, 1887.]

At the request of the secretary of the State Historical Society, Prof. Geo. E. Howard, I undertook recently to look up the military history of the state, hoping and expecting to find in the records of the state department, and especially in the adjutant general's office, all necessary data and information. But upon examination I find that, through lack of appropriation for its proper maintenance, and for the care of the records, etc., it fails to supply what I expected, and any effort to obtain information as to the special service of Nebraska's citizens in the late war, beyond what is already recorded, is impracticable without great labor. I therefore end my "notes" with the beginning of the year 1860.

The early military history of the state is so intimately connected with every effort for its settlement, and with the life of every pioneer who had to contend for possession of his lands and home with hordes of savages who originally occupied it, that to completely write it would be to give the history of the private life of each individual settler, of his trials, dangers, and escapes. In early days every house was built for defense and every stage station a stockaded fort. The soldiers of the regular army were here, as elsewhere, the pioneers, and within the radius of their protecting power, settlers came wherever they established a permanent post.

Nebraska first came into the possession of the United States as a part of Louisiana, ceded April 30, 1803.

What people first occupied this vast territory, what changes took place in the character of its inhabitants, we can only guess from what we find of relics from time to time discovered. It is likely that a race superior to the Indian in civilization and knowledge of construction once occupied this region, for Lewis and Clarke in 1804 discovered in what is now Knox county the ruins of an ancient fortification, fully described in the account of their expedition, and they were informed by the Indians that many similar works existed on the Platte and other rivers, though they could not tell when or by whom they were constructed.

The first white men who probably visited this country were fur traders. Two brothers, Pierre and August Choteau, are supposed to have passed beyond the forks of the North and South Platte rivers in pursuit of furs as early as in 1762.

In 1803, after the cession of this territory to the United States, President Jefferson planned an exploring expedition for discovering the source of the Missouri and the most convenient water communication with the Pacific coast. This was essentially a military expedition. Capt. Merriwether Lewis, First United States infantry, being in charge, with Lieut. (afterward captain) William Clarke second in command. The party consisted, besides these, of fourteen regular soldiers, nine young men from Kentucky, two French "voyageurs," an interpreter and huntsman, and a colored servant of Capt. Clarke. All were enlisted, except the latter, into the service of the United States as privates. They left the mouth of the Missouri river May 14, 1804, passing along the eastern border of what is now the state

of Nebraska, and beyond it. They found it occupied by various tribes of Indians, of which they give the names, and July 30, 1804, went into camp and held a council at a place now known as Fort Calhoun, which, from that fact, was then called "Council Bluffs," a designation since given to a city on the opposite side of the river, much lower down.

In 1805 one Manuel Lisa established a trading post on the western bank of the Missouri, and being pleased with its location, and the beautiful view from it, called it Bellevue.

In 1810 Astor (the American Fur Co.) established a fur trading post there with Francis De Roin in charge, who was succeeded by Joseph Roubideaux, and in 1816 he by John Cabanne, after whom, in 1824, Col. Peter A. Sarpy took charge.

In 1819 the exploring expedition of Major Long found Bellevue occupied by these parties, and that treaties had been made with various Indian tribes.

In 1821 Missouri was admitted as a state and the territory of Nebraska was practically without government. In fact there were no American settlers to be governed. In June of this year the war department established the first fort, of which there is any record, in this state, on the Missouri river at the place then called Council Bluffs and named it Fort Atkinson. Its name was afterward changed to Fort Calhoun, in honor of John C. Calhoun, secretary of war, and in June, 1827, it was abandoned. The magazine of the fort was still standing in 1854, a solid structure, 10 by 12, with walls two feet thick.

In 1825 one J. B. Royce established a trading post near what is now the site of Omaha City. In 1826 Col. John Boulware, who finally settled at Nebraska City, established himself at Fort Calhoun and is said, next to Col. Sarpy, to have been the first white man who attempted to settle in the valley of the Missouri above the south line of the territory.

Of the ancient battles between Indian tribes the history of one has been preserved. It is said that one of the most desperate battles ever fought on the American continent took place in 1832 in what is now known as Richardson county. The Sioux and their confederate tribes led by Oconomowoc attacked the Pawnees and their allies. No less than 16,000 Indians are said to have been engaged in the fight, and the battle lasted three days. At the end of this time the Sioux with-

drew from the field, leaving 3,000 of their braves dead or prisoners. The Pawnees lost 2,000, and revenged themselves by burning 700 prisoners during the engagement. They were led by Tacpohana, one of the most crafty and daring chiefs of the Pawnee confederation. The result of this battle was to make the Pawnees masters of the country and left them one of the most powerful of the Indian tribes of the plains.

Col. Henry Dodge, First United States dragoons, visited this region in 1835, with 117 men, to induce the Arikaree Indians to accept a reservation and enable white men to settle the country. He encamped at Cottonwood Springs, which afterward became Fort McPherson. From this time on until 1841, at which date the government transferred its agency, formerly at old Council Bluffs, to Bellevue, nothing important seems to be recorded.

In 1842 Fremont's exploring expedition traversed this country, meeting on their way fur traders, who had already established a fort at the mouth of Laramie Fork on North Fork, under the direction of the American Fur Company, calling it Fort Laramie. Gen. Fremont, on returning from his expedition the next year, sold his outfit and broke up his party at Bellevue, returning east by way of the river.

In 1844 the Mormons from Nauvoo, Ill., began to cross at the present site of Council Bluffs and continued through 1845-6-7. Many wintered near the present site of Omaha, some remaining as late as 1851.

In 1847 Col. John Boulware established a ferry at old Fort Kearney—Nebraska City. This was the first fort after Fort Atkinson established within the present limits of the state, and there is some difference of opinion as to when and by whom it was located. So far as the official records at my service go, and the incidents of early history, of which the establishment of the ferry above mentioned is one, it seems probable that the place was occupied by United States troops previously to 1847, but not as a permanent post. The record of Gen. Daniel P. Woodbury, U. S. army, shows that, whilst first lieutenant of engineers he was engaged as supervising engineer of the construction of Fort Kearney, Neb., and Fort Laramie, Dak., for protection of the route to Oregon from 1847 to 1850, and it is probable that at this time the block house was erected which, early settlers will remember, stood on Fifth street, between Main and Otoe, near Main. Officers'

quarters were also erected (near where the Morton House now stands) and a hospital building was located near the corner of Fourth and Main streets. This place was occupied by United States troops on the breaking out of the war with Mexico, and they being ordered to New Mexico, the post was practically abandoned for a time, being left in charge of Wm. Ridgway English as storekeeper.

In the fall of 1847 five companies of troops raised in Missouri for service in New Mexico were sent to Fort Kearney with orders to winter there, under the command of Col. L. W. Powell. They remained about a year and in 1848 old Fort Kearney was abandoned, the property being left in charge of Mr. Hardin, succeeded a year later by Col. John Boulware, and he in 1850 by Col. H. P. Downs, who remained in charge until the government withdrew all claims to the site. On its abandonment new Fort Kearney was established, May, 1848, south of the Platte and east of the present site of Kearney Junction. This fort was occupied by the United States until May 17, 1871. It was originally intended to protect the Oregon route, the gold fields of California not yet having attracted that multitude of gold seekers that established a new trail across the continent and made Fort Kearney one of the most important points on the route as a place of safety, rest, and recuperation. The history of its establishment, as related by the historian of Kearney county, is that the secretary of war, Wm. L. Marcy, in 1848, ordered Capt. Childs of the Missouri volunteers to establish a fort on the Oregon overland route at some distance from the Missouri river. He started early in that year and made an encampment first near where Aurora, Hamilton county, now stands, but abandoned it May 8, 1848, and moved up the Platte to what was known as Carson's crossing, and there on the 17th of June selected a site for the fort on the south side of the river and near it, but on the 8th of July a big rise of the Platte swept away his partially completed buildings and he moved to higher ground farther south, and on this site it was completed and called Fort Childs. This name does not appear upon the list of military forts of the United States, but this is probably due to the fact that it was not established and reported by an officer of the regular service and the name not authorized by the war department. Capt. Childs was succeeded the same year by Bvt. Maj. Charles P. Ruff, United States mounted rifles, and its name was changed to Fort Kearney, "Oregon route."

It is stated that it was named after the famous Indian fighter Phil Kearney, but this is undoubtedly a mistake. The records show that Brig. Gen. Stephen W. Kearney, U. S. A., a gallant soldier, died October 31, 1848 and, as was and is the custom, it is beyond question that it was in honor of the memory of that dead hero that this name was given it, probably by orders issued from the war department that year, at some time during the fall, after his death. This post was continually occupied and was at different times commanded by men of national reputation until 1871, when it was abandoned. It was occupied by the Second Nebraska volunteers and afterward by the First Nebraska under the command of Col. R. R. Livingston and has been commanded by other officers of Nebraska troops in United States service. The lands upon which this fort was located belonged to the Pawnees and in exchange for it they received the lands now known as Nance county. [Appendix "A"]

In 1850 a military road was established from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Kearney through lands belonging to the Indians, but afterwards purchased by the United States and ceded by the Indians.

All during this period, and for years later on, there were continual battles between the regular soldiers and the Indians. So numerous were the engagements that a simple copy of the records of officers engaged therein would occupy considerable space and awaken surprise that they had been unheard of or were forgotten. This simple record of duty done and dangers encountered—of lives given up in the service—must remain forever, for the greater part, unpublished.

In 1854 the bill establishing Nebraska territory passed and was approved May 30. Francis Burt of South Carolina was appointed governor, and Thomas B. Cuming of Iowa secretary of the new territory. During this year also actual settlers reoccupied Fort Calhoun, and a colony under the guidance of Logan Fontenelle, a half breed chief of the Omahas, located a place on the Elkhorn river, calling it Fontenelle. Maj. Gatewood, Indian agent for the tribes in that vicinity, called them together in council at Bellevue and it is probable that lands were secured for them at this time.

October 18, Gov. Burt died at Bellevue and Secretary Cuming became acting governor, and on the 23d of December he issued a proclamation stating that different Indian tribes had made manifest their purpose to commence hostilities, threatening the frontier settlements,

committing depredations, etc., and therefore recommending that the citizens of the territory organize in their respective neighborhoods into volunteer companies, constituting in all two regiments, one north and one south of the river Platte, elect their own company and regimental officers and keep such arms, equipments, etc., as they can procure ready for service, to establish night sentinels, and provide block houses for shelter in case of attack. [Appendix "B."] He also states that he has this day appointed one colonel, lieutenant colonel, major, and adjutant for each regiment. The records at the state capitol are not very definite as to who these officers were, but the following are the first officers shown as filling these positions:

First Regiment Nebraska Volunteers—Col. A. J. Hanscomb, Lieut. Col. Wm. C. James [Feb. 7, 1855], Maj. Hascall C. Purple, Adjt. Thos. L. Griffey.

Second Regiment Nebraska Volunteers—Col. John W. Boulware, Lieut. Col. J. W. Roberts, Maj. M. Mickelwait, Adjt. William McClellan [Jan. 30, 1855].

In January, 1855, he appointed John M. Thayer brigadier general, commanding First brigade; J. D. N. Thompson, adjutant, Peter A. Sarpy, quartermaster general, and Wm. English, commissary of the brigade. [Appendix "C."]

The first session of the general assembly of the council and house of representatives of the territory of Nebraska was held at Omaha beginning January 16, and ending March 16, 1855. In his message to the general assembly Acting Gov. Cuming recommends that they memorialize congress that "instead of or in addition to garrisons at isolated points, parties of dragoons shall be stationed at stockades twenty to thirty miles apart on a route designated by the executive of the United States as a post road between the Missouri river and the Pacific; that express mails shall be carried by said dragoons riding each way and meeting daily between the stockades, and affording complete supervision and protection of a line of electric telegraph constructed by private enterprise." This recommendation was acted upon by the legislature and its substance embodied in a long preamble to a joint resolution, in which it is stated "that it is the duty of the general government to furnish adequate protection for the frontier settler" as it had done for the shipwrecked sailors in Japan and "in the rescue of Kozta from the fangs of European tyranny," and the resolution passed and was approved March 7, 1855.

January 29 a joint resolution was introduced in the house by Mr. Richardson, which was amended in the senate, passed, and was approved February 8, 1855, as follows :

Resolved, By the council and house of representatives of the territory of Nebraska, that the governor be requested, and that we recommend his excellency, if he deem expedient and necessary, to commission officers to raise two or more volunteer companies (not to exceed five) of mounted rangers, not to exceed 100 men to each company, for the protection of the frontier settlements, to be stationed at such points in this territory as are best calculated to accomplish this object, said companies to elect their own officers, who shall be commissioned by the governor.

The committee of the house on military affairs reported as to the relative efficiency of volunteers and of organized militia in protecting the frontier settlements and approved the course already adopted and the organization of volunteer companies as provided by the above resolution, stating as one of their reasons therefor "that experience has shown that militia 'trainings' under the old plan are too often a nullity and a farce, while, on the other hand, they confidently rely on the patriotism and honor of self-organized companies of our gallant settlers to fly to the rescue whenever the farms of friends and neighbors are invaded, or whenever emigrants are attacked in passing through our borders." Not being dated it is signed,

"JOHN B. ROBERTSON, Chairman.

GIDEON BENNETT.

J. H. DECKER."

March 14 another joint resolution was passed, the preamble of which stated that the people had been recently much annoyed by actual depredations committed by Indians, that "the emigrants in this territory are under serious apprehensions, and their lives and property are in imminent peril from these lawless savages," and that "they are fully impressed with the conviction that the unprotected and defenseless condition of the frontier settlements will greatly tend to check and retard the current of emigration, and calls loudly for aid from the war department." "Be it therefore resolved by the council and house of representatives of the territory of Nebraska in general assembly convened ; that we request the Hon. Jefferson Davis, secretary of the war department, that, if in his power, he will send on without delay a sufficient military force to afford protection to the frontier settlers of this territory from Indian depredations."

At this time the overland freight and emigrant route across the plains extended up the Platte river on its south side, and ranches were established every few miles along the route as stations where the stages were supplied with fresh horses and drivers.

Plum Creek station was one of the most important, being a stage and telegraph station, and as the road after leaving the station passed through the bluffs and near cañons where the Indians could easily conceal themselves, this was the scene of more trouble from them than almost any other point on the route.

The Indians were quite troublesome during the year, and there were several encounters between them and the regular troops, the most notable one being at Ash Hollow, where Gen. Harney, then stationed near Fort Randall, Dak., defeated a large body of Indians, punishing them badly. Whilst at that station also at another time he secured the delivery of three Indians who had caused the death of Mrs. Benner, wife of the first settler of Dakota county, had them tried, condemned, and executed.

The records of the war department show that Fort Grattan was established at Ash Hollow, on the Oregon route 188 miles west of Fort Kearney, September 8, 1855, and abandoned October 1, 1855. This was undoubtedly located by Gen. Harney at or near the scene of this battle to protect those passing over this route, and abandoned when all danger had passed.

Several other sharp fights are mentioned as having taken place near Julesburg.

In the spring of this year Gen. John M. Thayer and Gov. A. D. Richardson were appointed by the governor to hold a council with the Pawnees concerning certain acts of depredation said to have been committed by them, and a council was held with these chiefs at their villages on the Platte. They denied the depredations and claimed that they were done by the Poncas. [Appendix "D."]

Later on, in July, 1855, two young men breaking prairie near Fontenelle were attacked by hostile Sioux, killed and scalped. The Indians then retreated, pursued by volunteer citizens. The country was aroused and messengers sent to Omaha for help. Other hostile parties of Indians being found lurking in the vicinity, Gov. Izard at once issued the following proclamation and order to Gen. Thayer:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, OMAHA CITY, NEBRASKA TERRITORY, July 30, 1855.—WHEREAS, It has been made known to me that there is a party of hostile Sioux Indians lurking in the vicinity of Fontenelle, in Dodge county, and that they have actually made an assault upon the settlement by wantonly murdering and scalping two of the citizens of this territory in the most barbarous manner, without the slightest provocation :

Therefore, I, Mark W. Izard, governor and commander in chief of the territory of Nebraska, with a view to prevent the repetition of similar outrages, have issued and caused to be directed to Brigadier General Thayer the following order ;

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, OMAHA CITY, NEBRASKA TERRITORY, July 30, 1855—To Brigadier General J. M. Thayer, First Brigade, Nebraska Militia, Sir—You are hereby commanded, authorized and required to cause to be raised a volunteer company, to be able-bodied men not to exceed forty, rank and file, armed and equipped for effective service, in addition to the First company of Nebraska Volunteers, which is hereby placed at your disposal, and forthwith cause the same to take a position at some eligible point in the vicinity of Fontenelle, Dodge county, Nebraska territory, for the purpose of protecting the lives and property of the settlers from further aggression, and continue to occupy said position until relieved by an adequate force of government troops, or otherwise. Should the above force prove insufficient, you are hereby authorized to call out such additional force as may in your discretion be deemed necessary to afford ample protection to the frontier settlements in that vicinity, and you are further requested to place the troops under your command in a position strictly defensive, carefully abstaining from and guarding against all aggressive measures.

Given under my hand at my office the day and date above mentioned.

MARK W. IZARD,

Governor of the Territory of Nebraska and Commander in Chief of the Militia.

There is no record at this date as to the First company, Nebraska volunteers, except that July 30, 1855, F. W. Fox was appointed second lieutenant of that company. Capt. William E. Moore raised the Second company, Nebraska volunteers, under the call of Gen. Thayer, in pursuance of the above authority of the governor, and the commissions of all its officers were dated July 30, 1855. Gen. Thayer, accompanied by these troops, proceeded at once to the scene of trouble. They acted as cavalry in conjunction with a company at Fontenelle, commanded by William Kline, patrolling and scouting the country in that vicinity, until all danger and fear of attack had passed. During this period of trouble companies were organized at several different places in the territory and held in readiness for service if needed. [See Appendix "C."]

In December, 1855, the territorial legislature again met, and Gov. Izard, who had succeeded Gov. Burt, speaks strongly in his message of the exposed condition of the frontier, and recommends the establish-

ment of posts by the general government along the line of ceded territory as a means of establishing "an impassable barrier against the hostile incursions of the countless hordes of savages that inhabit the country north and west of us," and says that he, soon after his arrival, had called the attention of the war department to the necessity of an early establishment of military posts at suitable points, but that the request had not been complied with, "not from any disinclination on the part of the authorities, but in consequence of their inability to detail troops for that service." He says that with the opening of spring the troubles began and complaints were almost daily made to him, "accompanied by the strongest appeals from our injured citizens," for that protection which their exposed condition required, that he was reluctantly compelled to waive these petitions for the time being, but on the 30th of July, receiving an express from Fontenelle communicating the painful intelligence that a party of hostile Sioux had attacked citizens, robbed them of their property, wounded, and scalped men and wounded one woman, who marvelously escaped with her life, and other depredations being committed, he had issued the call and order to Gen. Thayer, which has been quoted above. That Capt. Wm. E. Moore, with forty men, for whom arms, ammunition, and equipments had been secured from every quarter, was dispatched to Fontenelle within fifteen hours from the receipt of the intelligence. That on their arrival it was found necessary to establish a post in that vicinity and also to station a small company at Elkhorn City (Capt. Fifield) and one at Tekama (Capt. B. R. Folsom), which stations were kept up until the 9th of October, when it was ascertained that the Indians had returned to the interior and no further danger being apprehended the troops were withdrawn. He commends the services of these volunteers and says an appeal had been made to congress for an appropriation to meet the unavoidable expenditure consequent upon this demand for their service. He also says that the quota of arms belonging to the territory had been distributed to the several companies organized for the defense of the frontier and he urges the passage of a law encouraging the organization of volunteer companies, and providing for the distribution of arms to such companies. He also recommends a memorial to congress for a military road from Fort Pierre, Dak., to Fort Leavenworth.

It is a historical fact that the construction of these military roads

and bridges across the various rivers by the army under the direction of the war department did much to develop the territory, as did the establishment of military posts at suitable points. In this manner, as well as by its protecting power, the army has led the van of civilization. The money expended in the maintenance of that army has more than repaid the people by the services rendered in such matters alone. It was expended for objects which inured to the ultimate benefit of the people rather than for the personal luxury, ease, or even the comfort of the soldier.

During this year Col. Sarpy established a fur trading post at Decatur, on the Missouri river, between Elm and Wood creeks, Burt county.

An act approved January 23, 1856, was passed by the legislature then in session, entitled "An act to organize the Nebraska volunteers."

It provided that an independent volunteer militia organization should be formed, to be known as "the Nebraska volunteers," and that the territory of Nebraska should constitute one division, said division to consist of two brigades, all that portion of the territory north of the Platte river to constitute the first brigade, and that lying south of it to constitute the second brigade. Regiments and battalions were to be formed in each brigade according, as in the opinion of the commanding officers of the brigade and division, the increase of population and wants of the service might require, the number in each regiment, including officers and men, not to exceed 1,000.

The companies were to be formed by the voluntary enrollment of individuals, not to exceed sixty-four in number, including officers and men, and could determine to which branch of the service they would belong, infantry, cavalry, artillery, or rifles.

The officers provided for were as follows: One major general, in command of the division; two brigadier generals, one in command of each brigade, and a brigade inspector to be attached to each.

The regimental officers were to be a colonel, lieutenant colonel, major, adjutant, surgeon, quartermaster, and commissary.

The company officers were to consist of a captain, first lieutenant, second lieutenant, and one orderly sergeant and one corporal. Rather an impossible organization for active service, so far as non-commissioned officers were concerned, if confined to this prescribed limit.

The major general and brigadier generals were to be chosen by the

two houses of the general assembly in joint convention, at the first election, and after that by election by the commissioned officers of each brigade and regiment, and all other brigade and regimental officers were to be so elected by the commissioned officers of each brigade and regiment. Each company was to select its own officers, and all were to be commissioned by the governor.

Each company was required to meet three times in each year, viz. on the first Tuesday of April, May, and June, for exercise in drill and military evolutions, and there was to be an encampment of each brigade of three days' duration for drill, inspection, and review. Commanding officers of each regiment were to report on or before the 1st of May and the 1st of October in each year the strength and condition of each company belonging to the regiment, and the major general was required to report the same to the governor and commander-in-chief.

They were to be supplied with arms from the quota belonging to the territory, and all companies heretofore organized were considered as enrolled under this act. This organization was to be subordinate to civil authority and obey the orders of the governor and commander-in-chief, who was authorized to order them into active service whenever in his judgment it should be necessary in order to protect the lives and property of the people of the territory and preserve the public peace. January 24, in joint session of the council and house of representatives, in accordance with the provisions of this act John M. Thayer was unanimously elected major general of the territory, and Hon. L. L. Bowen also unanimously elected brigadier general of the First brigade or northern district. For the place of brigadier general commanding the Second brigade, the southern district, the candidates were Hon. John Boulware, of Otoe county; H. P. Downs, H. P. Thurber, and Thomas Patterson, of Cass county. It resulted in the election of H. P. Downs, who appears to have been appointed inspector general of the Nebraska volunteers January 31, 1855, which position he resigned February 20, 1856. [Appendix "E."]

Military roads were asked for by this legislature and congress asked to pay the expenses of the volunteer militia which had been called into service and to give to each who had served at least fourteen days 160 acres of land.

During the entire year of 1856 there were troubles with the Indians

and a company is said to have been formed, but not called into service, in Nemaha county, with O. F. Lake, then deputy United States marshal for the South Platte district, as captain.

A family by the name of Whitmore, living near the salt basin in the vicinity of where Lincoln now stands, were driven from home, and anticipating further trouble, Weeping Water was announced as a rendezvous and about 500 men assembled there from Omaha, Nebraska City, and all parts of Cass county. Gen. Thayer sent a six pound gun, which got as far as Plattsmouth, and followed with the force from Douglas county under command of Capt. Robert Collins. Scouts were sent out toward Ashland and the salt basin and secured one prisoner, who being brought in escaped during the night. It being ascertained that the act was that of an irresponsible party of Indians, and that the Pawnees were not on the war path the command was disbanded and returned home.

The chief village of the Pawnees at this time was located south of the Platte and a few miles from Fremont. The encroachments of settlers at Fremont upon the timber caused the Indians to threaten the lives and property of the whites if they continued to attempt to build a city there. The latter asked and obtained three days' grace, and immediately sent a messenger to Omaha for help. Gov. Izard furnished him with a box of ammunition and a squad of eight men and he returned within the time and gathered enough to increase their force to twenty-five. The Indians concluded to postpone their destructive operations for the time being. There were other incidents of trouble which cannot be given for lack of time and space.

January 3, 1857, Gov. Izard sent his message to the territorial legislature, and in it says, "We have occasion to fear serious trouble with them (Indians) and our people during the present year unless they are speedily removed." Gov. Izard left the state October 28, 1857, and Secretary Cuming again became acting governor.

The territorial legislature met again in December, and Acting Governor Cuming in his message recommended a military bridge across the Platte river, for the reason that "All good citizens ardently desire that the sectional alienation heretofore existing between the two sections of the territory shall cease forever," and it was hoped this would contribute to this desired result. This is especially interesting in the light of today, when bridges and railroads closely connect these two

sections without as yet entirely doing away with the feeling, especially in political matters, where the first question as to the candidate usually is, Is he from the North or South Platte country? and each section has to be distinctly recognized. During these sessions the military committee of the council seems to have had but little of military affairs to occupy its attention. We find it principally considering and reporting upon other matters—as to new land districts, daily mails, and even matters relating to a university—whilst that of the house seems to have made no reports.

Gov. Cuming complains that whilst the military spirit of the citizens seems unabated, the drill and discipline of the volunteer companies have been greatly neglected, and in many cases their organization was imperfect on account of changes in residence, and says their deficiencies should be supplied and “we should be provided at all times for self defense or co-operation with the government against internal enemies.”

The last official act of Secretary Cuming is dated December 17, 1857. He died at his residence in Omaha, March 23, 1858, aged thirty years. As secretary of the territory from its first organization, and much of the time after that until his death acting governor, his name is interwoven with every part of its history. No military history is complete without his name and a partial record of his services. Many of the officers serving in the military organizations of the territory were commissioned by him. No fitting tribute to his memory can be paid in this paper, but the historian will record the deeds of this man, who died young in years but old in experience and a leader in the affairs of the early history of this state.

In 1858, February 19, W. A. Richardson was sworn in as governor, and on the death of Secretary Cuming his (Cuming's) private secretary, John B. Motley, became acting secretary of state until the arrival of J. Sterling Morton, who succeeded Cuming and who qualified July 12, 1858.

The border troubles between this territory and Missouri occurred during this period and old John Brown is said to have had one of his fugitive slave stations near Falls City.

September 22 Gov. Richardson sent in his last message to the general assembly and returned to his home in Illinois, Secretary J. Sterling Morton becoming acting governor by virtue of a provision of the organic act.

During the conflict between the United States and the Mormons, against whom an expedition was sent during 1858, the settlers sympathized with the government and Nemaha county raised a company for service but it was not called for. Its officers were: Captain, M. A. Clark; first lieutenant, W. A. Finney; orderly sergeant, B. B. Thompson.

In 1859 troubles with the Indians were frequent and people in all parts of the territory collected at night, some to sleep whilst others kept guard.

Samuel W. Black having been appointed governor by James Buchanan, president of the United States, arrived and entered upon his official duties May 9, 1859.

In March Acting Gov. Morton had sent a letter to the commissioner of Indian affairs relative to the depredations of the Pawnees and asking when they would be removed. Later on in the year occurred what is known as

"THE PAWNEE WAR."

In June the Pawnees left their camp, marching across the country between the Platte and Elkhorn rivers, ostensibly for their spring hunt, and camping just below the village of Fontenelle. A day after their departure therefrom a party of bucks crossed the river above that place and attacked and robbed a man by the name of Uriah Thomas, running off his stock. A day or two later parties of settlers began to come in from West Point and DeWitt saying that the Indians were scattered through their section of the country committing depredations. At West Point, in the absence of the men, the Indians had demanded food and an ox had been given up to them. The next day they returned in a larger number, but a body of citizens had collected at the house of one of the settlers, and seeing an armed party of Indians approaching, concealed themselves with the view of permitting the Indians to enter and then to capture them. The Indians, having entered, were surprised and ordered to lay down their arms. They replied with a general attack upon the settlers, which was met by them, and four Indians killed. One white man, J. H. Peters, was wounded. This opening of actual hostilities placed the settlers in a dangerous position, as the Indians were said to number about 700 to 800 warriors, whilst the whites could muster a force of but about fifty-five or sixty.

A statement of these facts, and of other instances of depredation, was made and an appeal for help, signed on behalf of the citizens of Fontenelle by John Evans, John M. Taggart, S. Searte and W. M. Saint, committee, was sent to Gov. Black.

The governor happened to be absent for the purpose of delivering an address on the 4th of July, at Nebraska City, but the matter coming to the knowledge of the citizens of Omaha, they united in a petition, dated July 3, 1859, and signed by the prominent residents there, asking Secretary Morton to take immediate action as acting governor in the absence of Gov. Black. Secretary Morton did so. He immediately addressed a letter to Col. Charles A. May, United States army, commanding at Fort Kearney, stating the circumstances and asking him to send down from Fort Kearney to Fontenelle, on the Elkhorn river, "a sufficient detachment of cavalry for the punishment of the Indians and the protection of a defenseless community," and in a postscript advises him to take the route by way of Fremont to Fontenelle.

This letter was received at Fort Kearney July 5, but Col. May was not then in command there. The post at that time was commanded by Maj. William W. Morris, Fourth United States artillery, and his adjutant, Lieutenant William G. Gill, Fourth artillery, replied, by his direction, that all of his available force had, by a recent order from department headquarters, been sent in the direction of Nebraska City to protect the transportation trains of Russell, Majors, and Waddell, government contractors, but that he would immediately send an express to Lieut. B. H. Robertson commanding company "K," Second dragoons, to proceed without delay to afford the settlers the protection asked for.

Gen. Thayer had started at once with the Omaha light artillery, Capt. James H. Ford, and upon arrival and investigation of the facts, stated that the first reports were verified and that no peace could be established without vigorous measures, and he was ready to proceed to hostilities on receipt of the governor's orders. This communication was received at Omaha July 5, and Gov. Black having returned, and bringing with him Lieut. Robertson and his dragoons from Nebraska City (which indicates that Maj. Morris must have made no delay in sending his express) they started July 6, with supplies, etc., for the scene of action.

Upon their joining the expedition Gen. Thayer reorganized his com-

mand, placing Lieut. Robertson as second in command on account of his military experience. The original petition of Omaha citizens, a copy of the letter to Col. May and the reply thereto, is now amongst the papers in the adjutant general's office of the state. [Appendix "F."]

I have not the space to give a complete and particular description of this expedition. Gen. Thayer had with him about 200 men and one piece of artillery. They marched through a country without roads, not yet having been surveyed, in exceedingly hot weather, trying both to their animals and men. The Indians were, however, proceeding slowly, so that one day's march of the troops covered about as much ground as two days' march of the Indians, and they came up with them in about four days. About sunset the day before reaching them they discovered a single lodge occupied by "Jim Dick," an under chief of the Omahas, who informed them that the Pawnees had been joined by the Omahas and Poncas and numbered at least 5,000; that they would encamp about seven or eight miles further on. Holding this Indian and his squaw to prevent their giving information of his approach, Gen. Thayer determined to break camp in time to reach the Indians about break of day, hoping to take them by surprise.

Accordingly camp was broken at 3 o'clock in the morning and the Indian encampment reached just as the sun was beginning to tint the prairie with its rays. The Indians were still in their tents, except the squaws, who were beginning to stir up the fires and make preparations for breakfast, all unsuspecting of attack. Gen. Thayer immediately ordered a charge of the entire force, baggage wagons and all, and halted his command just on the edge of the camp. He had the order to fire almost upon his lips when several chiefs, who were warned by squaws as they saw the soldiers coming, came running out of their tents with white wolf skins and other emblems of peace, and one of them, Peter Nesharo, with an American flag, which had been presented to him by President Pierce or Buchanan when on a visit to Washington, all crying out "no shoot," "me good Indian," etc.

The interpreter was directed to communicate with them and he told them of their acts. They replied that it was their bad young men and asked for a council. Gen. Thayer insisted as a prior condition that these bad young men should be given up. This was done and they gave up seven, one of whom was found to be so severely wounded, having been one of the party so badly handled at West Point, that he

could not live, and being thereupon released he soon died, leaving six in their hands.

The council was held and the chiefs agreed to control their young men and signed a paper to that effect, and also authorized the keeping back of certain moneys due them from the government to defray the expenses of the expedition. The government, however, failed to recognize the authority and the money was never paid to the whites.

The six Indians were secured by ropes to the wagons and the expedition started on its return, leaving, as they supposed, the Indians behind them. But next morning they found that they were encamped near by, and a squaw being permitted to approach the prisoners, gave one of them a knife with which he stabbed himself, and during the excitement in consequence of this, she cut the ropes binding the other prisoners and they escaped, followed by the guards. One was recaptured and the guards reported that they had killed or wounded the others, but, unfortunately, had shot an Omaha Indian, into whose camp the escaping men had run. This unfortunate accident seemed likely for a time to lead to trouble, as the Omahas were friends of the whites. Their chiefs assembled and came to the camp in warlike dress and asked for satisfaction. The matter was settled by leaving medicine for the wounded and paying one of the Omaha Indians for a pony unintentionally killed. The expedition then returned safely, and thenceforth the Pawnees were peaceable. [Appendix "G."]

Gov. Black says in his message to the next general assembly that "since that time the Indians have manifested no disposition to molest any one, and the settlers repose under a sense of security not hitherto enjoyed." The place where the expedition came up with the Indians is the very spot on which the depot of the present town of Battle Creek is located, about fifteen miles north-west of Norfolk. In returning, the expedition struck southward to Columbus and thence followed the Platte back to Omaha. They had been absent about three weeks and a great deal of anxiety for their safety was felt during this time amongst the people of Omaha, Fontenelle, and throughout the Platte valley, Gen. Thayer not having sent any messenger back because he couldn't spare a man or an animal.

With the year 1860 began the serious rumblings of a war which was to take from Nebraska's settlers men who had shown themselves able to protect their homes and the frontier and who now were ready

to stand by the government in that great struggle which threatened its life. But of this little can now be told. It is a history of itself, the records of which, in the present condition of the papers in the adjutant general's office of the state, are not easily accessible.

I have been struck with the fact throughout this record, that the Indians, after once feeling the power of the white man—his determination to protect himself and his property—and realizing that any overt act of theirs against the whites always brought its punishment by them, were able to restrain their naturally savage dispositions and the inclination to steal, plunder, and rob. Their reasoning told them the penalty would follow. The men with whom they had to deal in those days were essentially fighters in every sense of the word. Given the provocation and there was no need to repeat it. Every time they received an injury they said "we are ready," and they waited not, but made the punishment so inevitable that they conquered peace, and the savages learned to leave the settler to peaceably till the lands once regarded as their own.

They were brave men—those early settlers—not only when fighting the wily savage, but on the battlefields of civilized warfare, fighting for the union, where they made a record second to none, of which the state may well be proud.

One figure, too, stands out prominently in all this history connected with every military affair or expedition, the first brigadier general and the first major general of the territory, colonel of its first regiment to take the field in defense of the union; brigadier and brevet major general United States volunteers, and then, after the war, United States senator, and now, the recently elected governor of our state, John M. Thayer.*

* The sources of information from which the above has been derived are "History of Nebraska, 1882;" "County Histories;" Official Register U. S., 1779 to 1879; "Cullom's Biographical Register of Graduates U. S. Military Academy;" Legislative Proceedings and Reports; Records of the Governor's and Adjutant General's office, and personal information, as to details, obtained from Governor Thayer and others.

APPENDIX.

A.

LIST OF COMMANDERS OF FORT KEARNEY, NEB., FROM DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT JUNE 17, 1848 TILL ABANDONMENT IN 1871, AS GIVEN IN THE HISTORY OF KEARNEY COUNTY, NEB., IN "HISTORY OF NEBRASKA," PUBLISHED IN 1882.

1	Capt. Childs.....	Missouri volunteers, June 17, 1848.
2	Major Ruff.....	U. S. Mounted rifles (Charles P. Ruff.)
3	Col. Crittenden.....	U. S. Mounted rifles..... (Major Geo. B. Crittenden.)
4	Phil Kearney.....	..... (Captain 1st U. S. Dragoons.)
5	Gen. Harney.....	..... (Col. Wm. S. Harney, 2d Dragoons.)
6	Major Morris.....	4th U. S. Artillery..... (Wm. W. Morris, 1858-9.)
7	Capt. Wharton.....	6th Infantry (Henry W. Wharton.)
8	Col. Chas. A. May...	..... (Major and Bvt. Lieut.-Colonel 2d Dragoons.)
9	Capt. McGowan.....	4th Artillery..... (The army register does not show this name.)
10	Col. Bachus.....	6th Infantry..... (Electus Backus, his record does not show it.)
11	Col. Miles.....	2d Infantry (Dixon S. Miles, 1860-1.)
12	Col. Alexander.....	10th Infantry..... (E. B. Alexander, 1862-3)
13	Capt. Fisher.....	2d Nebraska vols..... (No such name on rolls of Adj. Gen. office.*)
14	Col. Wood.....	7th Iowa vols..... (Probably Major John S. Wood.)
15	Col. R. R. Livingston	1st Neb. vols.....
16	Col. H. B. Carrington	18th U. S. Infantry..... (Winter of 1865-6.)
17	Col. Baumer.....	1st Neb. vols. (Lt. Col. Wm. Baumer.)
18	Maj. T. J. Majors....	1st Neb. vols.....
19	Capt. Ladd.....	..... (Regt. not given.)
20	Gen. Wessells.....	..... (Col. H. W. Wessells, 18th U S. Inf., June 12 to October 27, 1866).
21	Lieut. Dibble.....	..... (Capt. Chas. E. Dibble, 27th Infantry.)
22	Major A. Dallas.....	..... (Capt. 30th Infantry.)
23	Col. Gibbon.....	..... (Col. John Gibbon, 36th Inf., Dec. 1, 1866.)
24	Lieut Foulk.....	..... (Lieut. Wm. L. Foulk, 36th Inf.)
25	Col. Ransom.....	..... (Regt. not given, probably 3d U. S. Artillery.)
26	Maj. Sinclair.....	..... (Regt. not given.)
27	Capt. Fenton.....	..... (Reuben N. Fenton, 27th Inf.)
28	Capt. Pollock.....	..... (Capt. Pollock, 21st Inf.)

* Gov. Furnas writes that there was no such captain in the regiment.

B.
VOLUNTEER REGIMENTS.

BY THE ACTING GOVERNOR OF NEBRASKA.
A PROCLAMATION.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

NEBRASKA TERRITORY, December 23, 1854.

WHEREAS, Different Indian tribes, within the limits of this territory, have made manifest their purpose to commit hostilities upon the pioneers of Nebraska; some of them openly threatening to root out the frontier settlements;

AND WHEREAS, Some bands of said tribes have committed frequent depredations upon parties of emigrants to Utah, Oregon, and California during the past season, and have threatened to renew their attacks in the coming spring;

AND WHEREAS, The gifts of the government seem only to stimulate their treachery and animosity:

NOW THEREFORE, as a protection to the pioneers who have settled upon the outskirts of our territory, and as a guarantee of security to emigrants during the coming season, I, Thomas B. Cuming, acting governor of Nebraska, have issued this my proclamation, recommending that the citizens of the territory organize, in their respective neighborhoods, into volunteer companies, constituting in all two regiments, one north and one south of the river Platte.

Said companies shall elect their own officers, the regimental officers being commissioned by the commander-in-chief.

Such companies are recommended to keep such arms and ammunition as they can procure, in good order and ready for service; also, in the frontier settlements, to establish night sentinels, and to provide block houses for shelter in case of attack, until word can be sent to other companies.

It is expressly enjoined that these companies are not to use force in invading or pursuing hostile tribes, but only in self-defense, and then no longer than may be necessary; but an express is to be immediately dispatched to headquarters, at the seat of government, whence reinforcements will be sent to pursue the invading Indians.

In carrying out these necessary measures of self-defense and of protection of white settlers and friendly Indians from robbery and murder by roaming bands of savages it is believed that every good citizen will vigorously co-operate, so that should the general government fail to grant our just petition for a sufficient number of mounted rangers, our territorial volunteers may prove themselves a capable defense of those who come among us as emigrants or actual settlers.

In pursuance of this proclamation I have this day appointed and commissioned regimental officers, viz.: One colonel, one lieutenant colonel, one major, and one adjutant for each regiment.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the great seal of the territory.

Done at Omaha City, this 23d day of December, in the year of our Lord 1854, and of the Independence of the United States the 78th, and of this territory the First.

THOMAS B. CUMING,
Acting Governor of Nebraska.

C.

The following commissions appear from the records to have been issued at the dates indicated. There is no record showing the appointment of any officers prior to those first named, though from their rank it must be inferred that the other offices of the organization to which they belonged had been filled, and that those of the 1st Regiment Neb. Vols., were already filled:

COMMISSIONS ISSUED UP TO JANUARY 1, 1855.

John B. Boulware,	Pierce Co.	Colonel	2d Neb. vols.
J. W. Roberts,	Richardson Co.	Lieut.-Colonel	2d Neb. vols.
M. Micklewait,	Cass Co.	Major	2d Neb. vols.

COMMISSIONS ISSUED IN 1855.

Brigade.

John M. Thayer,	Douglas Co.	Brig. Gen.	Comdg., 1st Brig. Neb. vols. Feb. 7, '55.
J. D. N. Thompson,	Cass Co.	Adjutant	1st Brig. Neb. vols. Jan. 20, '55.
John B. Folsom,	Burt Co.	"	" Feb. 7, '65.
Peter A. Sarpy,	Douglas Co.	Quar. Mas. Gen.	" "
Wm. English,	Dodge Co.	Com. Gen.	" "
Hiram P. Downs,	Pierce Co.	Inspector Gen.	" Jan. 30, '55.

Regimental.

A. J. Hanscom,	Douglas Co.	Colonel	1st Reg't Neb. vols. Feb. 7, '55.
Wm. C. James,	Washington Co.	Lieut. Col.	" "
Hascall C. Purple,	Burt Co.	Major	" "
Thos. L. Griffey,	Burt Co.	Adjutant	" "
John B. Robertson,	Burt Co.	Quartermaster	" "
Anselum Arnold,	Washington Co.	Commissary	" "
M. H. Clark,	Dodge Co.	Surgeon	" "
Geo. L. Miller,	Douglas Co.	Asst. Surgeon	" "
David M. Johnston,	Richardson Co.	Colonel	2d Reg't Neb. vols. Jan. 1855. (vice Boulware, resigned.)
J. W. Roberts,	Richardson Co.	Lieut. Col.	2d Reg't Neb. vols. (Holding position as previously shown.)
M. Mickelwait,	Cass Co.	Major	2d Reg't Neb. vols. (Holding position as previously shown.)
Wm. McLennan,	Pierce Co.	Adjutant	2d Reg't Neb. vols. Jan. 30, '55.
Richard Brown,	Forney Co.	Quartermaster	" Feb. 7, 1855.
Gideon Bennett,	Pierce Co.	Commissary	" Jan. 30, 1855.
Isaiah H. Crane,	Richardson Co.	Surgeon	" Jan., 1855.
Wm. Hamilton,	Cass Co.	Asst. Surgeon	" Jan. 20, 1855.

The following companies were organized during the year and assigned to one or the other of these regiments. It was proposed that the 1st Regiment be composed of companies north of the Platte river, and the 2d Regiment of those companies south of the Platte river, and from the location of the regimental officers, this seems to have been carried out and the companies named below will have been assigned to the 1st Regiment or the 2d Regiment according to its location, north or south of the river :

1ST COMPANY; FONTENELLE RIFLE RANGERS.

Wm. Kline,	Captain,	Oct. 17, 1855.
John W. Pattison,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
F. W. Fox,	2d Lieutenant,	July 30, 1855, and Oct. 17, 1855.

2d COMPANY.

Wm. E. Moore,	Captain,	July 30, 1855.
Alf. D. Goyer,	1st Lieutenant,	July 30, 1855 (resigned Aug. 30, 1855).
Cameron Reeves,	2d Lieutenant,	July 30, 1855.
Cameron Reeves,	1st Lieutenant,	Aug. 30, 1855.
Thos. J. Latham,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

3D COMPANY; TEKAMA VOLUNTEERS.

B. R. Folsom,	Captain,	Aug. 7, 1855.
Wm. B. Beck,	1st Lieutenant,	Aug. 6, 1855.
Wm. Bates,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

4TH COMPANY; ELKHORN VOLUNTEERS.

— Fifield,	Captain,	Aug. 7, 1855.
Wm. A. Jones,	1st Lieutenant,	Aug. 26, 1855.
George Eayre,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

5TH COMPANY; CALHOUN RANGERS.

Thos. Allen,	Captain,	Aug. 15, 1855.
Theodore Thompson,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
Thos. Low,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

ROCK BLUFF HORSE GUARDS.

Thos. Patterson,	Captain,	Sept. 8, 1855.
Wm. T. Laird,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
Martin M. Neff,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

NEMAHA GUARDS.

Wm. Thurber,	Captain,	Sept. 8, 1855.
W. A. Finney,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
Hiram Alderman,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

ROCK BLUFF GUARDS.

James Kidwell,	Captain,	Oct. 8, 1855.
Wm. Rakes,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
Wm. Ellington,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

BELLEVUE RIFLEMEN.

Joseph Dyson,	Captain,	Oct. 11, 1855.
Hugh McNeely,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
Wm. Wiley,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

PLATTSMOUTH CAVALRY.

Jonathan Kearnes,	Captain,	Oct. 11, 1855.
Allen Watson,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
Lloyd Lucas,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

PLATTSMOUTH INFANTRY.		
James Cardwell,	Captain,	Oct. 11, 1855.
Henry Watson,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
Z. Cardwell,	2d Lieutenant,	" "
LA PLATTE GUARDS.		
Wm. Larimer, Jr.,	Captain,	Oct. 17, 1855.
S. N. Mahon,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
Chas. E. Watson,	2d Lieutenant,	" "
DE SOTO MINUTE MEN.		
Chas. D. Davis,	Captain,	Oct. 22, 1855.
Z. Jackson,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
A. Phinney,	2d Lieutenant,	" "
CUMING GUARDS.		
Chester M. Hamilton,	Captain,	Oct. 24, 1855.
Thos. C. Hungate,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
John Thorp,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

It seems probable that Capt. Wm. Kline of the 1st Company, located at Fontenelle, and Lieuts. Pattison and Fox, held their positions long before the date of the commission as herein given, as the 1st Company was to be at the disposal of Gen. Thayer, by Gov. Izard's order of July 30, 1855, and in connection with Capt. Wm. E. Moore's Co. (the 2d Co.) patrolled and scouted the country around Fontenelle until all danger had passed.

D.

APPOINTMENT OF GEN. THAYER AND GOV. RICHARDSON TO HOLD COUNCIL WITH THE PAWNEE CHIEFS CONCERNING CERTAIN ACTS OF DEPREDACTION CHARGED AGAINST THE PAWNEES.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, OMAHA CITY,
NEBRASKA TERRITORY, May 23, 1855.

It having been made known to me that depredations have recently been committed upon the property of sundry citizens of Dodge county, Nebraska territory, supposed to have been done by the Pawnee Indians; in order that the truth may be known and the peace of our citizens be preserved, I, Mark W. Izard, governor of the territory of Nebraska, do hereby appoint, authorize and require Gen. John M. Thayer and Gov. O. D. Richardson to proceed at once to the Pawnee village situated on the Platte river, in company with the government interpreter for said tribe, and, through him, to hold a council with the principal chiefs, touching the matter, and to ascertain whether or not the above charge is well founded, assuring the Indians that the whites entertain no hostile feelings toward them, and are anxious to live in peace with them, but that they cannot suffer them to steal and drive off their stock with impunity, but will hold them responsible for any depredations they may commit.

Given under my hand at my office the day and date above mentioned.

MARK W. IZARD,
Governor of the Territory of Nebraska.

REPORT OF GEN. THAYER AND GOV. RICHARDSON CONCERNING COUNCIL HELD
WITH PAWNEE INDIANS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DIRECTION OF GOV.
IZARD.

OMAHA CITY, May —, 1855.

To His Excellency, Governor Izard:

We, the undersigned, having been appointed by you to proceed to the Pawnee villages on the Platte to ascertain whether any of the Indians of the tribe are concerned in the depredations lately committed upon the property of the white settlers on the Elkhorn river, etc., beg leave respectfully to state that on the day of the reception of the notice of our appointment we left this place for the villages by the way of Bellevue, and there we were met by Mr. Allis, the U. S. interpreter for the Pawnees, who accompanied us on this service.

On the third day from the time of our departure we arrived at the upper village of the Loupe and Tapa bands of the Pawnees and had a talk with the chiefs in council in presence of the bands, numbering, perhaps, two or three hundred. We were received and treated in a very friendly manner by them. After stating to them the fact of the stealing of a number of oxen on the Elkhorn, and your instructions to us, they replied through the interpreter that they were glad to hear of the kind and friendly feelings that were entertained toward them by the government and people of the territory. They said they wished to be on friendly terms with us—that they were glad we had come among them; that they knew of no depredations committed by the Pawnees upon the whites; that the Poncas were frequently about and were enemies of theirs, constantly annoying them, and they presumed the Poncas did the thing complained of.

We then left them, returned to the west side of the Platte, and in the morning proceeded down the river four miles, opposite to where the lower village, or, as it is called, the Grand Pawnee village stands. After waiting a short time on the bank of the river the chiefs of the Grand Pawnees came across and, through the interpreter, we made known to them our business. In a few minutes they replied that they knew of no depredations by the Indians of their band or tribe upon the whites of Nebraska; that a few days since some of the Poncas were about and they sent out a number of their tribe to find them, and they came across an ox that was wounded; that they killed the ox and used him; that the ox had several Ponca arrows in him and they supposed from that that the Poncas had shot him with arrows; and that their band had nothing further to do with the affair than as above stated.

In answer to the question, how it happened that the ox was in the direction of their village from the Elk Horn, they said it was a trick of the Poncas to drive the ox toward their village to throw suspicion from themselves onto the Poncas. (*Pawnees?*).*

The chiefs of both bands were distinctly told that though the whites were friendly to the Indians, yet they will not suffer the Indians to take their property or injure them in any way, and that the Indians will be held to a strict account and punished for any injuries they may inflict upon the whites. We learned from a party of white men from the Loup Fork, that a band of about a dozen Poncas had passed down two days before the oxen were driven off and the Pawnees informed us that they had stolen several ponies from them.

We regret that we were unable to obtain any definite information in regard to the matter, but we applied to every source within our power, with the above result.

Respectfully submitted,

J. M. THAYER.

O. D. RICHARDSON.

E.

In 1856 under the new laws the following commissions appear to have been issued:

John M. Thayer,	Major General,	Jan'y 24, 1856.
L. L. Bowen,	Brig. General comm'g 1st Brigade,	Jan'y 24, 1856.
H. P. Downs,	" " " 2d "	" "
H. P. Downs,	Inspector General Nebr. Vols., Jan'y 30, 1856, (resigned Feb. 20, 1856).	

BUCHANAN GUARDS.

Isaac Albertson,	Captain,	Oct. 31, 1856.
George Emerson,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
H. O. Jopp,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

COLUMBUS GUARDS.

John Rickley,	Captain,	Nov. 5, 1856.
J. P. Beeker,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
John Wolfel,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

In 1857 the following commissions were issued:

ROCK BLUFF HORSE COMPANY.

John Clemnow,	Captain,	Nov. 21, 1857.
W. T. Laird,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
L. Young,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

CASS COUNTY GUARDS.

R. F. Fimple, (?)	Captain,	Mar. 21, 1857.
J. Rakes,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
J. M. F. Haygood,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

CEDAR CREEK BLUES.

I. T. Bergen,	Captain,	April 20, 1857.
Wm. Pozier,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
Wm. Herald,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

NEBRASKA CITY LIGHT INFANTRY.

W. B. Ball,	Captain,	April 20, 1857.
G. W. Boulware,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
I. C. Cook,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

OTOE RIFLES.

Frank Bell,	Captain,	April 20, 1857.
A. McGregor,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
A. F. Harvey,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

ELKHORN INFANTRY.

H. R. Benjamin,	Captain,	April 25, 1857.
M. W. E. Purchase,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
I. Hurd,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

CASS COUNTY DRAGOONS.

R. G. Doom,	Captain,	June 11, 1857.
S. Stafford,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
N. Lawton,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

ST. JOHN CITY GUARDS.

C. O'Connor,	Captain,	July 1, 1857.
John Tracey,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
J. McCarty,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

LIGHT INFANTRY.*

Wm. B. Hail,	Captain,	Nov. 5, 1857.
G. W. Boulware,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
I. C. Cook,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

NEBRASKA CITY RIFLES.†

Frank Bell,	Captain,	Nov. 5, 1857.
D. C. McGovern,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
Aug. C. Havoc,	2d Lieutenant,	" "

* See above: Nebraska City Light Infantry.

† See above: Otoe Rifles.

F.

PETITION OF CITIZENS OF OMAHA TO SECRETARY MORTON TO ISSUE HIS ORDER,
AS ACTING GOVERNOR, FOR A MILITARY FORCE TO PROTECT THE CITIZENS
OF DODGE AND CUMING COUNTIES FROM INDIAN DEPREDACTIONS.*

OMAHA CITY, July 3, 1859.

Hon. J. Sterling Morton, Secretary of the Territory of Nebraska :

In the absence of the governor, believing that serious depredations have been and are now being committed by the Pawnee Indians upon the persons and property of our citizens in the counties of Dodge, Cuming, etc., the undersigned respectfully request you to forthwith issue an order, as acting governor, for a sufficient military force to protect such citizens in their person and property.

Very respectfully,

W. THOS. CLARKE.	S. A. MEGRATH.
P. GOLAY.	GEO. L. MILLER.
O. P. INGALLS.	LYMAN RICHARDSON.
JESSE LOWE.	E. ESTABROOK.
MENZO W. KEITH.	S. S. CALDWELL.
JOHN I. PAYNTER.	P. F. WILSON.
G. M. MILLS.	O. D. RICHARDSON.
ALBERT M. SNYDER.	H. M. JUDSON.
BYRON REED.	GEO. ARMSTRONG.
JAS. A. JONES.	WILLIAM MCCLELLAND.
REUBEN WOOD.	WM. A. WEST.
W. M. KEITH.	J. C. REEVES.
ARTEMAS SAHLER.	GEO. C. BONY.
JAS. W. VAN NOSTRAND.	C. B. KING.
WM. S. WALKER.	THOMAS L. SUTTLE.
THOMAS RILEY.	LEAVITT L. BOWEN.
T. B. SELDEN.	HENRY PAGE.
GEORGE JOHNSTON.	THOS. ACHESON.
P. A. DEMAREST.	J. W. PADDOCK.
TIMOTHY KELLY.	GEORGE CLAYES.
C. A. STARING.	WILLIAM A. GWYER.
MICH'L BARRY.	A. D. JONES.
THOS. MENNELLEY.	JAMES G. CHAPMAN.
THOMAS NELSON.	A. MASON.
DANIEL KERNS.	JOHN M. CLARKE.
A. L. KING.	JOHN A. PARKER, JR.

* Original copy in office of adjutant general of the state.

LETTER OF SECRETARY MORTON TO COL. MAY.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, OMAHA, NEBRASKA,

Sunday, July 3, 1859.

COLONEL.—The Pawnee Indians are committing depredations upon the settlers in the counties of Dodge and Cuming in this territory. They have driven off one hundred head of cattle, robbed dwelling houses, destroyed two post offices, and attacked with guns and arrows a party of settlers and wounded one man. The Pawnees (so messengers from there state) muster seven or eight hundred warriors in those counties.

At the request of the prominent men and upon the representation of a majority of the people of the beleaguered district, I am induced to call upon you for aid and protection. You are therefore earnestly requested to send down from Fort Kearney to Fontenelle, on the Elkhorn river, a sufficient detachment of cavalry for the punishment of the Indians and the protection and defense of the community.

Any communication from you will be brought to me by the bearer, Mr. Thomas Acheson.

Hoping, sir, that you may immediately comply with this request, I have the honor to be, your obedient servant,

J. STERLING MORTON, *Secretary,*

(And in the absence of the Governor) *Acting Governor of Nebraska Territory.*
To Colonel Charles May, Commander of Fort Kearney, Nebraska Territory.

N. B.—Take the route by way of Fremont to Fontenelle.

REPLY TO SECRETARY MORTON'S LETTER TO COL. MAY.

HEADQUARTERS, FORT KEARNEY, N. T.,

July 5, 1859.

J. Sterling Morton, *Acting Governor of Nebraska Territory:*

SIR—I am directed by Major Morris, commanding the post, to inform you that he has just received your letter of July 3d, 1859, and in reply he desires me to inform you that all of his disposable force has, by recent order from the department headquarters, been sent in the direction of Nebraska City to protect the transportation trains of Russell, Majors, and Waddell, government contractors; but that he will immediately send an express to Lieutenant B. H. Robertson, commanding Company K, 2d Dragoons, and order him to proceed without delay with his company to afford the settlers the protection your communication asks for.*

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

WM. G. GILL,

1st Lieut. 4th Art'y. Post Adj't.

To J. Sterling Morton, *Acting Governor of Nebraska Territory.*

* These papers are now in the office of the adjutant general of the state, and this letter is endorsed upon the back: "Found in a barn by Joy Morton, Sunday, June 2, 1872, and by his venerable paternal relative respectfully referred to Dr. George L. Miller and the Gossip of the *Omaha Sunday Herald*. These 'papers' and the autographs thereunto appended call up a multitude of men and things which had been almost forgotten, and if they do not remind one of the 'big wars that make ambition glorious,' they at least make us remember 'the big Indian scare' of 1859."

"Preserve the originals."

J. S. M.

Aug. 25, '73

"Secretary Gosper will perhaps file these among the legendary papers of his office and oblige
J. S. M."

G.

LIST OF OFFICERS IN PAWNEE EXPEDITION

Gov. Sam W. Black, Commander-in-chief.

Staff, { Lieut. Colonel John McConihe, Omaha.
Lieut. Colonel R. E. Bowie, "
Lieut. Colonel Chas. D. Wolworth, "
Lieut. Colonel Samuel A. Lowe, Elkhorn.

Maj. Gen. John M. Thayer, commanding the expedition ; Lieut. Colonel Samuel R. Curtis, inspector general.

Staff, Captains { R. H. Howard.
A. S. Paddock.
Will Black.
J. W. Pattison.

Regimental organization adopted after the joining of Gov. Black and Lieut. Robertson with his troops of cavalry :

Wm. A. West, as colonel.

Lieut. Beverly H. Robertson, U. S. A., as lieut. colonel.

— Reed, as major.

Experience Estabrook, U. S. A., as adjutant.

W. R. Clarke, as quartermaster.

A. U. Wyman, as commissary.

Henry Page, as wagonmaster.

J. P. Peck,
Wm. McClelland, } surgeons.

TROOPS.

No. 1. OMAHA LIGHT ART'Y, with one 6 pdr. gun, { Capt. Jas. H. Ford.
1st Lieut. E. G. McNeeley.
Sergt. Wm. Searight.

No. 2. FIRST DRAGOONS, { Capt. George F. Kennedy.
1st Lieut. J. C. Reeves.
2d Lieut. C. A. Henry.
1st Sergt. J. S. Bowen.

No. 3. 2D DRAGOONS, { Capt. R. W. Hazen.
1st Lieut. Wm. West.
2d Lieut. A. C. Campbell.
Sergt. Abram McNeil.

No. 4. FONTENELLE MNTD. RANGERS, { Capt. Wm. Kline.
1st Lieut. James A. Bell.
2d Lieut. Wm. S. Flack.
Sergt. John H. Francis.

No. 5. COLUMBUS INFANTRY, { Capt. Michael Weaver.
1st Lieut. Wm. Graveman.
Sergt. John Browner.

No. 6. COLUMBUS GUARDS, { Capt. J. Rickley.
1st Lieut. J. P. Becker.
2d J. C. Wolfel.

The following company was organized in 1859, but does not appear as part of the expedition, at Genoa, Monroe county, Nebraska :

Joseph Huff,	Captain,	Jan. 31, 1859.
Thomas Bradshaw,	1st Lieutenant,	" "
Thomas Davis,	2d Lieutenant,	" "