

THE INDIAN WAR OF 1858.

In accordance with his custom, Lieutenant-General Winfield Scott, commanding general of the United States Army, on the 10th of November, 1858, issued General Order No. 22, giving brief account of the numerous combats with hostile Indians throughout the Western States and Territories during the year before. Four of the affairs were in Washington Territory, the first being the unfortunate expedition, north from Fort Walla Walla, of Lieutenant Colonel E. J. Steptoe; the second the daring movement of Lieutenant Allen in the Yakima country, when the captives outnumbered the captors five to one; and the third and fourth were the wonderful march, battles and successes of Colonel George Wright, to Spokane, when, without losses of any kind among those under him, he so punished the Indians that they never forgot, and never again raised their hands and weapons against the military forces of the United States.

General Scott's brief narration of these operations follows:

XI. **May 16, 1858.**—At To-hots-nim-me, Washington Territory, companies C, E and H, 1st dragoons, and E, 9th infantry—aggregate 159—were attacked and overpowered by some twelve hundred of the Spokan, Pelouse, Coeur d'Alene, Yakima, and other Indian tribes. This unequal contest, which did not result in our favor, nevertheless furnished many instances of personal bravery and heroism which must not be lost. It was, moreover, marked by the loss of the tried, gallant and distinguished Brevet Captain O. H. P. Taylor, and of that most gallant and promising young officer 2d Lieutenant Wm. Gaston, both of the 1st dragoons.

The following non-commissioned officers and privates are mentioned for their conspicuously gallant conduct:

Company C, 1st dragoons.—1st Sergeant J. A. Hall; bugler R. A. Magan; farrier E. R. Birch; privates R. S. Montague, Alfred Barnes killed; Victor C. DeMay mortally wounded, (since dead).

Company E, 1st dragoons.—1st Sergeant William C. Williams mortally wounded, since dead; private R. P. Kerse, "who, with a few others, gallantly defended the body of Brevet Captain Taylor (lying mortally wounded) when the Indians made a desperate charge to get possession of it."

Company H, 1st dragoons.—1st Sergeant Edward Ball, who displayed the greatest courage and determination throughout

the action, and with a few men repulsed the attempt of a large number of Indians at one of the most important points; privates Frances Poisell, who assisted in rescuing and bearing off Captain Taylor under a heavy fire from the enemy; C. H. Harnish and James Crozet, company H, 1st dragoons, (both killed).

In addition to those mentioned above, the following were wounded:

Company C, 1st dragoons.—Privates James Lynch and Henry Montreville.

Company E, 1st dragoons.—James Kelly (severely,) William D. Micon, Harriet Sneckster (severely,) James Healy, Maurice Henley, Charles Hughes, and John Mitchell.

Company E, 9th infantry.—Privates Ormond W. Hammond (severely,) and John Klay and Gotlieb Berger (slightly.)

XII. **August 15, 1858.**—A party of fifteen mounted men, commanded by 2d Lieutenant Jesse K. Allen, 9th infantry, sent out by Major Garnett, of that regiment, from the Yakima expedition, surprised a camp of hostile Indians on the upper Yakima river, Washington Territory, capturing 21 men, about 50 women and children, 70 horses, 15 head of cattle, and a quantity of other Indian property.

The success was dearly bought, for the gallant young leader lost his life, and the service one of its most valuable, zealous, and faithful officers.

XIV. **September 1, 1858.**—The expedition under Colonel Wright, 9th infantry, composed of companies C, E, H and I, 1st dragoons; A, B, G, K and M, 3d artillery; and B and E, 9th infantry—aggregate five hundred and seventy—with a company of thirty Nez Perces Indians, marched from fort Walla-Walla on the 7th and 15th of August; crossed Snake river on the 25th and 26th; established a post at the crossing, which was left in charge of Bvt. Major Wyse and his company D, 3d artillery; and after a march of nearly a hundred miles mostly over a forbidding country, during which they were twice attacked, came upon a large body of united Spokane, Coeur d'Alene and Pelouse Indians, of which some four hundred were mounted.

After securing his baggage and supplies by leaving them under the guard of company M, 3d artillery, with a mountain howitzer and a detachment of fifty-four men, commanded by lieutenants H. G. Gibson, G. B. Dandy and Lyon, the whole under Captain Hardie, 3d artillery, Colonel Wright moved with the rest of his force against the Indians, who had taken possession of a high hill and an adjoining wood and awaited his attack. They were driven by the foot troops from both their positions into the plain, and then charged and utterly routed by the dragoons, with a loss of some seventeen killed and many wounded.

The troops sustained no loss in either killed or wounded.

Colonel Wright mentions the following as entitled to credit for their coolness and gallantry:

Bvt. Major Grier, 1st dragoons; Captain Keyes, 3d artillery; Captain Dent, 9th infantry; 1st Lieutenant Mullan, 2d artillery, acting as topographical engineer and commanding the friendly Nez Percés; 1st Lieutenant P. A. Owen, 9th infantry, acting assistant adjutant general; Captain Kirkham, assistant quartermaster; and Assistant Surgeon J. F. Hammond, medical department.

The following are also mentioned as having been highly commended by their immediate commanders:

Medical Department.—Assistant Surgeon Randolph.

1st Dragoons.—Lieutenants Davidson, Pender, and 2d Lieut. Gregg.

1st Sergeant James A. Hall; Sergeants Bernard Korton and Patrick Byrne; bugler Robert A. Magan; and privates James Kearney and Michael Meara, company C.

1st Sergeant C. Goetz; Sergeant J. F. Maguire; and privates J. G. Trimbell, J. Buckley, Wm. Ramage, and T. W. Smith, company E.

1st Sergeant E. Ball; Sergeant M. M. Walker; and bugler Jacob Muller, company H.

1st Sergeant W. H. Ingerton, and Sergeant William Davis, company I.

3d Artillery.—1st Lieutenants Tyler, White and Ihrie, and 2d Lieutenant Kip.

9th Infantry.—Captain Winder and Lieutenant Fleming.

Nez Percés.—Hutes-E-Mah-li-kan, Captain John Edward, and We-ash-not.

XV. **September 5 to 15.**—Colonel Wright, 9th infantry, after defeating the united hostile tribes at the Four Lakes, in Washington Territory, on the 1st, (as noticed above, par. XIV,) continued to advance in the Indian country with the same force, and on the 5th of September was again met by the Spokane, Pelouse, and Coeur d'Alene Indians, who had been joined by the Pend d'Oreilles.

After a continuous conflict of seven hours, over a distance of fourteen miles, and a fatiguing march, in all, of twenty-five, the Indians were completely routed, with the loss of two chiefs, two brothers of the Chief Garey, and many others of lesser note killed or wounded. The troops had but one man—name not given—wounded, and he but slightly.

Colonel Wright bears witness to the zeal, energy, perseverance and gallantry of his officers and men. He especially mentions the following:

Brevet Major Grier, 1st dragoons, commanding squadron; Captain Keyes, 3d artillery, commanding artillery battalion, acting as infantry; Captain Winder and Lieutenant Fleming, 9th infantry, detached to support the howitzer battery; First Lieutenant and Adjutant Owen, 9th infantry, acting assistant ad-

jutant general; Captain Kirkham, assistant quartermaster; Assistant Surgeons J. F. Hammond and J. F. Randolph; and First Lieutenant J. Mullan, 2d artillery, acting as engineer officer and commanding the friendly Indians.

The following officers are spoken of in the highest terms by their several immediate commanders, viz.:

1st dragoons.—Lieutenant Pender.

3d artillery.—Company K, Captain E. O. C. Ord and Lieutenant Morgan; company G, Captain J. A. Hardie and First Lieutenant Ransom; company M, 1st Lieutenant Gibson and 2d Lieutenant Dandy; company A, 1st Lieutenant Tyler and 2d Lieutenant Lyon.

First Lieutenant White, commanding howitzer battery, composed of a detachment from company D, 3d artillery, and Second Lieutenant Kip, adjutant of Keyes' battalion.

Captain Dent, 9th infantry, with his company B, and First Lieutenant Davidson, 1st dragoons, commanding company E, together with the friendly Nez Percés, guarded the train effectually.

After resting on the 6th, Colonel Wright continued his pursuit of the Indians through their country, arriving at the Coeur d'Alene Mission on the 15th of September. During this march he had a skirmish with the enemy on the 8th of September, took from them some 900 horses, a large number of cattle, with quantities of wheat, oats, roots, &c.; all of which were converted to the use of the troops or destroyed.

Those severe blows resulted in the unqualified submission of the Coeur d'Alenes, the dispersion of the other tribes, and it is not doubted, ere this, in the subjugation of the whole alliance.

Results so important, without the loss of a man or animal, gained over tribes brave, well armed, confident in themselves from a recent accidental success, and aided by the many difficulties presented by the country invaded, reflect high credit on all concerned.

Colonel Wright is much to be commended for the zeal, perseverance, and gallantry he has exhibited.

To Brigadier General Clarke, commanding the department of the Pacific, credit is primarily and eminently due for the sound judgment shown in planning and organizing the campaign, (including Major Garnett's simultaneous expedition,) as well as for his promptness and energy in gathering, from remote points in his extended command, the forces, supplies, &c., necessary for its successful prosecution. In this merited tribute to the General his staff is included.

THOMAS W. PROSCH.