

up the depot during the winter, and it was not finally abandoned until the 25th of the following May, though previous to that time—on the 6th of March—the garrison was reduced to two companies by the removal of the two other companies to Tongue River. The troops thus stationed on the Yellowstone had now before them a three-fold task—to build the cantonments at Tongue River and Glendive Creek; to bring up the supplies necessary to their existence; and to operate as far as possible against the hostile Sioux, attacking and harassing them in their winter camps. How well this task was performed events have shown. The situation at Tongue River was favorable for the construction of the cantonment, for an abundant supply of timber was found within easy reach of the site selected. At first the supply of tools was scanty; but all deficiencies were supplied by the energy and zeal of the officers and men, and comfortable barracks and quarters with sufficient storage-room for the security of supplies were speedily constructed.

At Glendive the huts, though originally intended for but a temporary purpose, afforded tolerably good shelter throughout the winter.

After the navigation of the Yellowstone closed, all supplies intended for Glendive and the cantonment were necessarily sent to Buford, and thence up the north bank of the Yellowstone.

It was late in the season when this work began, and it was prolonged far into the winter, imposing much severe labor upon the troops employed as escorts to the trains, and subjecting them to great hardship. The stores brought up, however, were ample in quantity, except in the single article of forage, and no suffering or serious inconvenience resulted from any deficiency of supplies.

The first encounters of the troops on the Yellowstone with hostile Indians, occurred early in October on the road from Glendive Creek to Tongue River. These affairs were mentioned in my last report, but I had not then received the reports of all the officers concerned, and I was not able to give full details; for the purpose of doing this and for the purpose of keeping up the connection of events, I embody herein the following reports of Capt. C. W. Miner, Lieutenant-Colonel Otis, and Colonel Miles:

HEADQUARTERS BATTALION, TWENTY-SECOND INFANTRY,

Glendive Creek, Montana, October 13, 1876.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that a loaded train started from this station for Tongue River on the 10th instant, under the command of Capt. C. W. Miner, Twenty-second Infantry, and returned the next day, the reasons for which are fully set forth in the accompanying report of Captain Miner.

I have caused the train to be reorganized and will start with it myself to-morrow morning with companies C and G, Seventeenth Infantry, and G, H, and K, Twenty-second Infantry, which force will have one hundred and eighty rifles; I will also take a section of Gatling guns, calibre 50. I have so few serviceable horses here that I cannot have more than three or four mounted men. I am satisfied from all the information I can gather, that there is a large force of Indians in the country, who seem to be bold and defiant; they have been hovering round this camp on both sides of the river for the past two days; and no doubt it is their plan to attempt to break up the communication between this place and Tongue River; but I think we can pass through the country with the force I am taking. I leave this camp under the command of Captain Clarke, Twenty-second Infantry, with his company (I), and with the men attached he will have eighty rifles and one Gatling gun, calibre 45.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. ⁵ OTIS,

Lieutenant-Colonel Twenty-second Infantry, Commanding.

ASSISTANT-ADJUTANT GENERAL,
Department of Dakota, Saint Paul, Minn.