

REPORT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL SHERMAN

Pages 32-38.

As the spring of 1867 opened, reports of Indian hostilities came pouring in from every quarter, but in order to give a connection to these I will begin at the extreme north. On the 3d of May, 1867, the honorable Secretary of War, Mr. Stanton, transmitted to me despatches of the most alarming nature from the acting governor of Montana, General Meagher, and the chief justice of the Territory, to the effect that large bands of hostile Sioux and Crows were threatening the valley of the Gallatin, and that the people were fleeing for their lives.

The Secretary authorized me, under advice of extreme caution, to call out volunteers for the emergency if the regular troops were inadequate. Under date of May 14, 1867, I telegraphed to Acting Governor Meagher that re-enforcements were coming as fast as possible, but if the danger was as great as he had represented, to "call out in your interest the people and clear the way," adding, "there is no law authorizing the enrolling of troops in a Territory subject to the governor, but you should meet the emergency without a formal organization and muster into service of the United States, confining yourself to self-protection." Governor Meagher had already called out volunteers, and subsequently asked me for arms, equipments, and to be mustered in. This I emphatically refused in a despatch of the 9th of May, but instructed General Augur at Omaha to order from his nearest post, viz., Salt Lake City, a discreet officer to go to Virginia City, Montana, and to judge of the necessity of a call for volunteers. General Augur despatched that most judicious officer, Major and Brevet Lieutenant Colonel William H. Lewis, thirty-sixth infantry, who reached Virginia City about May 19, 1867, and, after remaining there a month, confirmed me in the belief that Gallatin valley had not been invaded by hostile Indians at all, but that the murder of a Mr. Bozeman, more than sixty miles beyond Gallatin, in the direction of Fort C. F. Smith, was the only real act of hostility that he could hear of that had been committed in that quarter. I then recalled Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Lewis, and left the whole matter to General Terry, in whose department Montana was, and who was then known to be en route for that Territory. For the further consideration of this matter I refer to General Terry's report herewith, and only allude to it here to show that the United States are not in any measure responsible for the call for volunteers in Montana, which Acting Governor Meagher made in spite of the decision to the contrary by the rightful department