

1877

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
DAKOTA SUPERINTENDENCY,
Yankton, Dakota, August 27, 1877

Sir: In compliance with your circular letter of August 13, I submit the following report:

I was appointed superintendent of Indian affairs, Dakota superintendency, in April last, and under orders from the Indian Bureau established my office in Yankton, capitol of Dakota Territory, during the same month.

My first duty being to visit the agencies already established, and to obtain suitable locations for Spotted Tail and Red Cloud, to be removed from Nebraska, I commenced at Yankton agency, on the east bank of the Missouri, about 80 miles above Yankton, and ended at Standing Rock, 84 miles below Bismarck. Both banks of the river between the points named, a distance of about 600 miles, had been looked over for agencies that now contain something over 8,000 Indians. I found myself called on to provide homes for 13,000 Indians on the west bank alone. I selected Yellow Medicine River, 270 miles above Yankton, for Spotted Tail, and Moreau River, 435 miles above Yankton, for Red Cloud. I was unable to have Moreau examined.

The locations finally decided on were Old Ponca agency, on the west bank of the Missouri, 60 miles above Yankton, for Spotted Tail, and Yellow Medicine for Red Cloud. The lands on Ponca reserve, about 96,000 acres, are among the very best in Dakota for either agriculture or stock-raising, with enough timber, and, considering the water-fronts and bottom lands on the Niobrara, Ponca, and Missouri, this reserve is the best on the river. The location on Yellow Medicine, being farther west, is subject to more frequent and earlier drought. The lands are fertile; and should the rain-fall ever become sufficient, there is enough farming land for the whole Dakota nation. It has enough timber and a good permanent landing.

The oldest established agency is Yankton, Rev. J. G. Gasmann, agent, 80 miles by water, 65 by land, above Yankton, being on the east bank of the