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Whetstone Agency, D. T.,
August 20, 1869.

Sir: I have the honor to state, in making up this my first annual report, that I arrived here on the 14th of July last, consequently have to rely mainly upon information obtained from official documents and statements of individuals cognizant of the facts for information in regard to the Indians at and near this agency, and the establishment of the same in August last under the supervision of Brevet Major General W. S. Harney, United States Army.

The agency is located on the west bank of the Missouri River, near the mouth of Whetstone Creek, distant about eighteen miles from Fort Randall by wagon road on the east side of said river, and about thirty miles by water.

The wagon road on the west side of the Missouri is impracticable, on account of steep hills and ravines, and, on account of detours necessary to be made, is nearly thirty miles distant from the fort. Whetstone Creek extends back into the country but a short distance; is not supplied with running water, and is nearly dry except in rainy weather. Cottonwood is found on either bank in limited quantities. The valley of the creek bottom is quite narrow, and contains a limited quantity of arable land. The bottom lands of the Missouri extend back from a quarter to half a mile, and is susceptible of cultivation, that already improved producing good corn, potatoes, and small grain, and all the usual products of this latitude. Cottonwood, in limited quantities, is also found on the banks of this river. The material for the buildings constructed, and in course of construction, at this agency, is taken from an island in the Missouri River, a little north of and nearly opposite location of the buildings. A range of high hills or buttes extend back from the bottom lands some ten miles before reaching table or level prairie lands. The hills cannot be cultivated, and are of use only in subsisting stock. The Indians located immediately at this agency are known as "Loafers," composed of individuals who have seceded from various bands of the Sioux and Cheyennes, and number about one thousand souls. They are mostly inclined to cultivate the soil, and adopt the habits of civilized life, instigated thereto by long association with the whites, who have married into their families in many instances. The