

the facilities of communication in all directions, is so great that it should be retained.

*Fort Dalles, Oregon.*—This post has not been garrisoned since June 1867, but has been used as a depot for the transshipment of supplies to interior posts and for public animals awaiting distribution. Some of the buildings have been destroyed by fire, and the others, with the exception of the storehouses and stables, are of but little value. The post has no military importance, and it is probable that after another year, with increased facilities of communication, it may be dispensed with altogether.

The accompanying reports exhibit the operations of the several staff departments during the past year.

Very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

E. R. S. CANBY,

*Brigadier General Commanding Department.*

ASSISTANT ADJUTANT GENERAL,

*Headquarters Military Division of the Pacific,*

*San Francisco, California.*

REPORT OF COLONEL J. C. DAVIS.

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES FORCES,  
*Territory of Alaska, August 20, 1870, (late Dep't of Alaska.)*

SIR: I have the honor herewith to submit the following general report of affairs pertaining to the military service in the Department of Alaska, (now discontinued,) which have transpired since the 31st of October last, the date of my last general report.

The troops within this department occupy the same stations they did last year. No new posts have been made.

The following is a roster of the troops serving in this department on the 1st of July, 1870, at which time, in accordance with instructions from the headquarters of the Army, contained in General Orders No. 41, current series, the department was discontinued, and the general staff was ordered to report to the headquarters of the Army in accordance with Paragraph VIII of the said order.

*Roster of troops serving in the Department of Alaska, July 1, 1870, Brevet Major General Jeff. C. Davis, United States Army, commanding; headquarters, Sitka.*

*Personal Staff*—Brevet Captain S. B. McIntire, first lieutenant Second Artillery, aide-de-camp; First Lieutenant L. R. Stille, Twenty-third Infantry, aide-de-camp.

*Department Staff*—Brevet Brigadier General C. H. Tompkins, lieutenant colonel and deputy quartermaster general, chief quartermaster; Assistant Adjutant General and Acting Assistant Inspector General, Captain G. H. A. Dimpfel, military store-keeper and United States Army depot quartermaster; Brevet Major W. H. Bell, captain and commissary of subsistence, chief commissary of subsistence; Brevet Lieutenant Colonel A. Hartsuff, assistant surgeon United States Army, medical director, (temporarily;) Brevet Brigadier General G. P. Ibric, major and paymaster United States Army, chief paymaster; Brevet Lieutenant Colonel W. H. Dennison, captain Second Artillery, acting ordnance officer.

DISTRICT OF KENAI.

Brevet Brigadier General J. C. Tidball, major Second Artillery, commanding, headquarters, Fort Kodiak.

Station.	Commanding officer.	Troops.
Fort Kodiak .....	Brevet Brigadier General J. C. Tidball, major 2d Artillery ...	Batt. G, 2d Art.
Fort Kenai .....	Brevet Colonel E. B. Williston, captain 2d Artillery .....	Batt. F, 2d Art.
St. Paul Island ....	First Lieutenant E. L. Huggins, 2d Artillery .....	Detachment Batt. G, 2d Art.

## INDEPENDENT POSTS.

Station.	Commanding officer.	Troops.
Sitka .....	Brevet Lieutenant Colonel G. K. Brady, captain 23d Infantry	Co. E, 23d Inf., Batt. H, 2d Art.
Fort Tongas .....	Captain C. H. Pierce, 2d Artillery	Batt. E, 2d Art.
Fort Wrangel .....	First Lieutenant W. Borrowe, 2d Artillery	Batt. I, 2d Art.

The health of the troops in this department has been, during the past year, remarkably good, notwithstanding they have had to undergo, at most of the posts, considerable exposure while engaged in the labor of building quarters, storehouses, wharves, procuring fuel, &c. All the troops are now comfortably quartered, with good hospital accommodations and medical attendance at all the posts. In fact, at most of them, parade grounds, walks, and gardens have already been made so as to give these heretofore dreary homes quite a civilized appearance. The future disinterested visitor in Alaska will not fail to observe the fact that the much-abused soldiers in this department have not only done their stern and sometimes difficult duties well, but that they have always readily given their humble assistance and encouragement in planting and nurturing the feeble germ of civilization in our newly acquired and unpopular Territory of Alaska.

A few cases of mal-conduct have occurred among officers and men, but the records of the Judge Advocate General's Office at Washington will show that the court-martial has been called upon to perform its stern duty in every instance. The constant rumors during the past year of the intention of the Government to discontinue this department, and to abandon some of the posts entirely in Alaska, have tended, to some extent, to discourage zeal in these kinds of improvements, as well as to make it quite difficult for me at times to determine where or what expenditures of labor or money to authorize.

So far as the withdrawal of troops is concerned, I am still in the dark, awaiting orders on the subject.

The Indians throughout the Territory have generally shown a desire to observe peaceful relations with the whites. Having no farcical treaty obligations to observe, none, of course, have been violated, and one of the principal causes of war between the races has thereby been avoided. Both whites and Indians in Alaska are fortunate in this respect.

Within the past few months I have visited in person most of the tribes living on the islands forming the Alexandrian Archipelago, as well as the mainland east and north of them, from Fort Tongas to the Takoo and Chilkat Rivers. I have also visited those in Cook's Inlet, Island of Kodiak, and several of the Aleutian Islands, including St. Paul's and St. George's, in Behring's Sea. With the exception of the two last named, (which will be more fully reported upon in detail hereafter,) I found a very satisfactory state of affairs existing among the nations. At the villages of many of these tribes I observed well-stocked stores of goods, and at some of them fisheries, all doing apparently a good business, and, as far as I could learn, the natives generally received good prices for their peltries and such other commodities as they had to sell. This was plainly the case at all stations where there was competition among the traders. With the exception of the islands above mentioned, the trade among the Indians of this coast, and also among the islands, has been conducted with considerable rivalry by competing traders, and the Indians have not been slow to learn and to avail themselves of the advantages of this competition. The high prices obtained by the natives within the past three years for their articles of commerce has, beyond question, had much to do with bettering their condition and modifying, to some extent, their wounded pride at not having been consulted in the treaty of purchase. The fact is, before the transfer they looked upon themselves as the *de facto* rulers of this Territory, and the Russians only as traders here by permission or sufferance.

The right of discovery and occupancy they, in their ignorance, knew nothing about, and as to the right of conquest, it had never been asserted in any formidable manner by the Russian government. These remarks apply more particularly to the Koloshian Indians, and not the Aleuts, who are a very docile, honest, and peaceful race of people, very nearly approaching a state of semi-civilization, which they had already acquired under great disadvantages. They seem to care very little who governs them, so they are kindly treated and honestly dealt with. The Koloshian tribes are a very different race of Indians. They are proud, warlike, and treacherous, and must be ruled by a strong, vigilant, and just government over them, or they will fight and be the rulers themselves if they can.

Those tribes living nearest our military posts have improved wonderfully within the past twelve months. They are becoming much more subordinate and less distrustful of our good intentions toward them than heretofore. They dress better and neater

and show more encouraging signs to engage in pursuits of common industry. Unfortunately the Government has but little labor to offer them, and private enterprise not much more, at present, along this coast. It is an easy matter for the troops in Alaska to procure their fuel from the woods near their posts, but I think it would be good policy, in the long run, to buy it from the Indians. This policy would teach the young men how to work and earn money by honest labor, and the Government would then become their employer and paymaster, and would, of course, be able to exert more influence over them in a business-like and peaceful way. Their prejudice against learning the English language I perceive is beginning to yield, and some of the young ones are endeavoring to speak it a little. This is a good sign in an Indian. Our mode of doing business in matters of trade, as well as our currency, are now quite well understood among them.

Since the declaration by Congress, at its last session, of St. Paul's and St. George's Islands as special reservations of the Government, they have been under the control of officers of the revenue service sent there for the purpose of executing the laws prohibiting the landing or killing of fur-seals on them. During my official visit there in the beginning of the present summer, and while engaged in investigating the affairs of the natives, as well as the manner in which the troops had performed their duties there, I learned that under one pretext or another privileged parties had been permitted to land and remain on these reservations, and had been allowed to kill the animals at pleasure. During last summer at least 25,000 were killed on the two islands, and probably more than that number. The pretext under which this was authorized was that of enabling the natives to subsist themselves without expense to the Government. In an economical point of view this would seem quite right; but the facts are, that these natives are cooped upon these little islands, where they are compelled to work for these private parties or starve. In other words, they are to-day in a complete state of slavery.

By the month of February the small supply of stores sent there by these traders for the benefit of these natives began to run short, and by the middle of June, (at which time I was there,) they were in a state of destitution, living on the meat of the seals as their only subsistence for weeks past. They informed me that they were entirely out of bread, tea, coffee, sugar, soap, and tobacco, and in fact all such articles of common necessity. The whole white population, including the Government officers, were also out of mess stores even. Fortunately the steamer Newbern had on board a large supply of army stores for the small detachment of troops, and also a good supply of ship's stores, by which I was enabled to relieve the necessities of all for a short time. The natives further complained to me that they were getting only 40 cents for their seal skins, and some of them expressed the opinion that they ought to get \$2 per skin. This was the small amount allowed them by the revenue officers, and they were compelled to take it or suffer for food. I informed them I had no control over these matters. They then asked me to intercede and see that they had competition in trade allowed them, giving as a reason that they would more surely get supplies and be able to purchase them cheaper. I thought they talked very wisely under the circumstances.

Competition in trade has been universally established, and is now pretty well understood by both natives and traders throughout the Territory. Wherever the former can paddle his canoe, or the latter penetrate with his goods, this is the case. These isolated Islands of St. Paul's and St. George's, in Behring's Sea, the richest possession in natural wealth, considering their small area, on the continent, form the only exception. The natives are peaceful, honest, and capable of transacting ordinary business quite well, and would doubtless improve themselves if they had a fair chance, but their present complete enslavement and robbery by an unscrupulous ring of speculators will ever prevent such progress. I made special inquiry into the conduct of the troops there, and was glad to learn it had been very commendable. The officer in charge had confined himself to his duties strictly, and was in no way connected with these speculations. It was my intention on my return to Sitka to dispatch supplies to these islands for the natives, but before being able to do so I learned the United States revenue cutter Lincoln had already gone there for that purpose.

It is rumored here that Congress has passed a bill regulating the trade of these islands. If so, I hope the rights of the natives have been closely guarded in its provisions. They deserve it, and will need Government protection for some time to come.

I am glad to be able to report a very decided decrease in the liquor-smuggling business during the past year. This is owing to increased vigilance on the part of the Government officers, both revenue and military, and the increased restrictions imposed upon the shipment of it into the Territory by the Government. The collector of customs at Sitka has been very energetic and successful in his efforts to suppress this traffic.

The United States sloop of war Cyano still lies at anchor in the harbor of Sitka. Being a sail-vessel, she is perfectly useless for the service she was sent here to perform. She cannot cruise in our inland waters where the Indians live. She has a very intelli-

gent and accomplished complement of young officers, who I know would like to be more actively and usefully engaged if they had a suitable ship. Their service here in this vessel is a species of exilement, without much advantage to the Government or themselves.

I desire here to allude to the valuable services rendered by the revenue cutters when in these waters, both in suppressing illicit trade and in cooperating with the military in looking after the Indians, whenever called upon by me. On several occasions the cutter Lincoln rendered valuable and prompt service.

The fisheries of Alaska are destined in all probability to become the greatest resource of the Territory. Already they are beginning to attract the attention of our fishermen, and also the attention of the Indian. In this business, especially the coast fishing, I think the greatest future cause of difficulty between the races exists. Fish forms the chief and most easily-procured food of the natives, and has from time immemorial. There is plenty for all, but both parties will soon doubtless begin to lay exclusive claim to the best localities for taking them, and conflicts will arise. Sufficient signs of this have already arisen to induce me to suggest to the Government the necessity of making provision for the settlement of these questions before it is too late.

Since writing the above report orders breaking up all the posts except Sitka have been received, and are being now carried out, so that in a few weeks there will be but one military station in Alaska.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JEFF. C. DAVIS,

*Colonel Twenty-third Infantry, Commanding.*

ASSISTANT ADJUTANT GENERAL,

*Headquarters Department of the Columbia, Portland, Oregon.*

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE COLUMBIA,

*Portland, Oregon, September 8, 1870.*

Official copy.

JOHN P. SHERBURNE,

*Assistant Adjutant General.*

