

Colonel John M. Chivington to Major General S. R. Curtis

This copy of a letter by Colonel John Chivington, commander of the 1st Colorado Cavalry, was included in the report of a military commission called to investigate the Sand Creek massacre in Colorado Territory. In the letter, Chivington describes his pursuit of "hostile" Indians and his actions at Sand Creek. According to Chivington, he took no prisoners, leaving between five and six hundred Indians "dead upon the field." He also captured around 550 ponies and horses, as well as other Indian property. This letter is included in a larger published report, titled Report of the Secretary of War, Communicating, in compliance with a resolution of the Senate of February 4, 1867, a copy of the evidence taken at Denver and Fort Lyon, Colorado Territory, by a military commission, ordered to inquire into the Sand Creek massacre, November, 1864.

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Colonel John M. Chivington to Major General S. R. Curtis

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SAND CREEK MASSACRE.

White Antelope, Knock Kno, and Little Robe, and between four and five hundred other Indians, and captured many ponies and mules. Our loss nine killed, thirty-eight wounded. All did nobly. Think I will catch some more of them. Eighty miles on Smoky Hill, found white man's scalp, not more than three days' old, in one of the lodges.

J. M. CHIVINGTON,
Colonel Comd'g District of Colorado, and first Indian Expedition.

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF THE PLAINS,
Denver, Colorado Territory, April 28, 1865.

Official copy :

GEO. F. PRICE,
Acting Assistant Adjutant General, District of the Plains.

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF COLORADO,
Denver, December 16, 1854.

GENERAL: I have the honor to transmit the following report of operations of the Indian expedition under my command, of which brief notice was given you by my telegram of November 29:

Having ascertained that the hostile Indians had proceeded south from the Platte, and were almost within striking distance of Fort Lyon, I ordered Colonel George L. Shoup, third regiment of Colorado volunteer cavalry, (100-days service,) to proceed with the mounted men of his regiment in that direction. On November 20th I left Denver, and at Booneville, Colorado Territory, on the 24th of November, joined and took command in person of the expedition, which had been increased by battalion first cavalry of Colorado, consisting of detachments of companies C, E, and H. I proceeded with the utmost caution down the Arkansas river, and on the morning of the 28th instant arrived at Fort Lyon, to the surprise of the garrison of that post. On the same evening I resumed my march, being joined by Scott J. Anthony, first cavalry of Colorado, with one hundred and twenty-five men of said regiment, consisting of detachments of companies D, G, and K, with two howitzers.

It may perhaps be unnecessary for me to state that I captured no prisoners; between five and six hundred Indians were left dead upon the field. About five hundred and fifty ponies, mules, and horses were captured and all their lodges were destroyed, the contents of which have served to supply the command with an abundance of trophies, comprising the paraphernalia of Indian warfare and life. My loss was eight killed on the field and forty (40) wounded, of which two have since died. * * * Of the effects of the punishment sustained by the Indians you will be the judge. Their chiefs, Black Kettle, White Antelope, One-Eye, Knock Kno, and Little Robe, were numbered with the killed and their bands almost annihilated.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. M. CHIVINGTON,
Colonel First Cavalry of Colorado, Comd'g District of Colorado.
Major General S. R. CURTIS,
Commanding Department of Kansas, Fort Leavenworth, Ks.

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF THE PLAINS,
Denver, Colorado, May 1, 1865.

A true copy :

GEO. F. PRICE,
Acting Assistant Adjutant General.