

people February 19, 1867. They are settled too close to each other, and it is an evil already felt in regard to the future ownership of fields now cultivated. At first, owing to the fear from incursions made by war-parties of Chippewas and Mandans, &c., they did so for mutual security. But as that dread no longer exists, and with their present advantages, they feel the necessity of enlarging their fields; but unfortunately all wish to possess the lion's share of what has been held in common. But if once surveyed they would soon seek to take possession of the more desirable homesteads, and the wish to raise stock, pigs, chickens, &c., would assist in requiring this desirable separation of interests to be made.

In conclusion, I would also respectfully ask, at the request of the principal men of the reservation, that they be allowed to visit their "Great Father" in Washington. It was urged in council last fall, and also this spring before the commissioners, at the time these people ceded certain lands to the United States, and they were promised that an effort would be made. If the request would be granted, I think it might be productive of much good. So many parties have been lately called there, that they feel slighted, especially as they have tried to improve their people, and obey instructions.

I have the honor, sir, to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. H. FORBES,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. E. P. SMITH,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

28.

GRAND RIVER INDIAN AGENCY,  
*Standing Rock, Dakota, September 27, 1873.*

SIR: In compliance with the requirements of the Department, I have the honor to submit the following as my annual report:

On the 9th of June last, I relieved my predecessor, J. C. O'Connor, and entered upon the discharge of my duties. I found all the warehouses to be in a dilapidated condition, and entirely unfit for the reception of supplies, and set about repairing them; but, on receipt of a dispatch from the Department, stating that the agency was to be removed to Standing Rock, I discontinued the repairs, and proceeded at once to select a new site for the agency. I selected this place as in my opinion the best adapted for an agency. It is situated on high table-land, about seventy-five miles above Grand River, by water; the river is narrow and deep, and, with a good landing, is accessible to steamboats at all stages of water. There is an abundance of cottonwood timber, suitable for building purposes, both above and below the agency, and a fine tract of land near by, sufficient to accommodate all the Indians for farming purposes. On the 18th of July all the property pertaining to the old agency was removed to this place, with the exception of the buildings, which are old log structures and not worth the cost of removal; they have, therefore, been left in charge of a watchman until such time as some disposition can be made of them.

The Indians under my charge consist of the following tribes and number, viz: Upper Yantouai Sioux, 1,386; Lower Yantouai Sioux, 2,534; Uncpapa Sioux, 1,512; and Blackfeet Sioux, 847. These embrace the Cut-heads and Sans-Arc Sioux, formerly reported. I am pleased to be able to state that they have behaved well, so far, and I am not aware of any hostile act being committed by these Indians since my connection with them. A great many were dissatisfied at the removal of the agency, and expressed their unwillingness to leave their old locations; but, on pointing out the great disadvantages they would be under by pursuing that course, they nearly all agreed to move to this place when the balance of their crops was gathered.

The Indians have had about six hundred and fifty acres of land under cultivation during the present year. The plan heretofore adopted has been to break as much ground as was supposed to meet the wants of the respective bands, or as time and force would permit, issue seeds and hoes to the Indians, and leave the rest to them. The Indians have then allotted the ground to families, each taking as much as would be required for a small garden-spot by a white family, and marking the boundaries of their respective possessions by rows of turf removed from their patches. The work has been mostly done by the women, but some of the men are beginning to learn that work is not dishonorable, and have labored on their farms with considerable faithfulness. Their manner of farming is very slovenly, but they are anxious to learn to farm as the whites do. The land was planted by them in corn, pumpkins, squash, and melons, but, receiving very little cultivation, was overrun by weeds, and, as a consequence, the crops have amounted to little or nothing as a means of subsistence beyond

a little fresh garden-truck, which was mostly consumed before properly matured. I am, therefore, unable to give an estimate of the amount raised by them.

Although they appear to have manifested an interest in these simple and limited operations, I am of the opinion that no material advancement can be made in farming without the aid of considerable skilled labor, and the necessary appliances to render such labor of the greatest possible or practicable utility. Fields of respectable dimensions should take the place of garden-patches, and all operations should be directed and assisted by skilled and intelligent agriculturists, with the use of suitable implements, until such time as the Indians may become sufficiently skilled to manage their own farms profitably. This plan will require considerable expenditure of money, but if progress is hoped for, in the effort to render the Sioux Indians self-sustaining on a civilized basis, the outlay seems to me to be most essential.

As the Indians have abandoned their old farms, and moved to this place, with the exception of a portion of the Lower Yanctonal, who are encamped on the other side of the river, opposite the agency, and who will, no doubt, remain there until they see if their friends on this side are bettered by the change, it will be necessary to have some land broken for them here. In view of the foregoing I would strongly recommend that half an acre of land, for each family, be broken for them at once; or say five hundred acres in all. I would also recommend that a sufficient number of log-houses be built, enough to accommodate all the chiefs and head-soldiers, say about three hundred. I know of nothing that would tend more to their civilization than by getting them into houses, as it would, in a great measure, break up their roving disposition.

Although the principal Indians of this agency take no interest in the establishment of schools, I think it of the utmost importance that some steps should be taken toward the establishment of at least one school-house. There are a great number of youths here between the ages of 7 and 14 years, of whom, I have no doubt, the greater part, by a little judicious handling, could be made to attend. I would, therefore, recommend that the sum of \$7,500 be placed to my credit from the general school fund, for the erection of a school-house and pay of teachers.

On the 12th and 17th of last month the Gros Ventres made two raids upon this place, and carried off 14 horses, one of which belonged to the United States Indian Department, and the others to employes and Indians. This raid, as a consequence, created great excitement among the Indians, and it was with considerable persuasion that I succeeded in preventing them from retaliating, promising to exert myself to have the stolen stock returned. On my requesting J. E. Tappan, United States Indian agent at Fort Berthold, to endeavor to secure them, he promptly responded, and the horses were returned to their proper owners, which had the effect of allaying all bitter feelings among them.

I have just finished issuing the annuity goods, with which the Indians seem well satisfied. They are also much pleased at the sight of the wagons, oxen, cows, &c., and are anxious to go into farming on a large scale next spring.

The new saw-mill, which was received on the 12th instant, has been set up, and is now in successful operation, turning out a large amount of lumber daily.

The work on the new agency buildings is progressing rapidly, but has been somewhat delayed on account of the long detention of the saw-mill at Bismarck.

Since the removal of the agency to this place I have had only a guard of 12 soldiers, and I could dispense with them, only they are required as a check against the roughs who infest this river.

On the 12th ultimo, as the Indians were ferrying their beef across the Missouri River, just above the old agency, the boat, by some accident, was overturned, and Mr. J. H. Hardie, the agency farmer, and two Indians, were drowned. It was impossible to render them any assistance, as there was no other boat at the place. The steamer "May Lowery" passing soon after the accident, I found it necessary to engage her services in ferrying the Indians and their beef across the river. The bodies of the two Indians have been recovered, but I regret to state that although every endeavor has been made to recover the body of Mr. Hardie, it has not been found.

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

EDMOND PALMER,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

Hon. E. P. SMITH,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit this my first annual report as agent for the Two-Kettle, Minneconjou, Sans Arcs, and a part of the Blackfeet bands of Sioux Indians.