

IN CAMP AT LONE PINE,
Owen's River Valley, July 1, 1862.

SIR: I have the honor to report to the colonel commanding at Camp Latham that I arrived at Owen's Big Lake on the 24th day of June, 1862, at 2 p. m., having made a forced march of thirty-five miles on the last day. Owing to my rapid movement, on the 24th I surprised a party of Indians that were gathering worms from the shore of the lake, killed 2 men and took 2 men, 7 squaws, and 2 children prisoners, together with a large quantity of Indian food, grass, nuts, seeds, worms, &c. I laid over on the 25th to rest my animals, and at night, leaving my wagons with a strong guard, took 120 men and made a forced march of forty-five miles to the Stone Fort, so called, situated on Little Pine Creek, on the western side of Owen's River, at which place it was represented to me, both by the Indians and the white citizens, there was a large body of Indians, some estimating at 1,000 strong. I reached the fort between daylight and sunrise on the 26th, and found that the Indians had scattered to the hills or mountains after having destroyed the fort by burning everything that could burn, and then throwing down the stone walls. For the last five days I have [been] scouring the valley in every direction, and am only the more convinced that the opinion formed by myself (and expressed in my official report to the general commanding the Department of the Pacific), from actual observation, when last here, as to the necessity of a post being established in this valley, was entirely correct. The Indians claim the valley as belonging to them, and still insist upon it that no white man shall settle, or, as they term it, sit down in the valley. They say that the whites may pass through to and from Aurora if they want to, or they may locate in the hills and work the mines, but must not sit down on the grass patches. Now, without arguing the point as to their right by prior location to the exclusive use of the valley, I will say that it is very evident to my mind that the mines will be of small value unless the valley can be settled and grain and vegetables grown and beef raised to feed the miners with. It is also evident from actual experiment that these Indians cannot be brought to the sticking point; that no fight can be had with them, and that they cannot be caught and chastised in a week or in a month, or if at all, for the reason that the valley from Owen's Big Lake up is near 150 miles long, varying in width from five to fifteen miles, with almost impassable mountains on either side, and the valley being open country, without a tree, the Indians can place their lookouts upon the peaks of the mountains along the valley and signalize the appearance of troops for twenty or thirty miles ahead, and upon their approach they can and will scatter into the hills, where it is impossible to follow them. These Indians subsist at this season of the year entirely upon the grass seeds and nuts gathered in the valley from the lake up, and the worms gathered at the lake. They gather this food in large quantities during the summer and prepare it for winter use, which, together with the piñon nuts gathered in the mountains in the fall of the year, is their only subsistence. Without this food gathered and laid up they cannot possibly subsist through the winter. From the facts set forth above, the nature of these Indians and the surrounding country, it does seem to me that the only way [in] which they can be chastised and brought to terms is to establish at least a temporary post, say for one winter, at some point near the center of the valley, from which point send and keep scouts continually ranging through the valley, keeping the Indians out of the valley and in the hills, so that they can have no opportunity of gathering and preserving their necessary winter supplies, and they will be compelled to sue for peace before spring