

Indians and Black Troops in Fort Scott

Fort Scott DEMOCRAT

August 24, 1861

Indians - - A large number of Osages, in full war costume, came into town last Thursday to offer their services to their Father at Washington. They rode around the plaza several times singing their war song, and followed by large numbers of curious soldiers. In the evening, they gave a war dance in the Plaza, which was witnessed by a large concourse of soldiers and citizens. They offer their service on condition that they be furnished with "wabusca" (flour) and "pacheney" (whisky).

Fort Scott BULLETIN

June 21, 1862

A large number of Seneca and Shawnee Indians, from the southern Reserves, have passed through town during the week, on their way north. They say they have been driven off.

Col. Weer is in Humboldt trying to get the Indian regiments into shape. Their principal use is to devour Uncle Sam's hard-bread and beef, and spend his money. They will be as valuable as a flock of sheep in time of action. They ought to be disbanded immediately. The 2d Kansas and Allen's Battery are probably at Humboldt ere this.

Fort Scott BULLETIN

July 19, 1862

There has been much difference in opinion in regard to the reasons which led Standwaity's Indians to desert him and join the Union forces. Some have imagined that it was because they were really loyal, and only went into the rebel ranks because they couldn't help it. Others think it was because they were poorly fed, worse clothed and not paid at all. These suppositions are all wrong. They came over because they knew they would have an opportunity of visiting Fort Scott, where they could refresh themselves with draughts of ice-cold lager and delicious lemonades, which are always to be had at "Hartman & Co's Varieties." "An Indian's stomach is his God," hence their desertion of their rebel comrades.

Fort Scott BULLETIN

July 26, 1862

Recruiting under the new call for 300,000 troops goes on briskly. The different States are offering large bounties to volunteers, and the ranks are filling up rapidly. 30,000 are reported ready for the field. While white men are so ready to fight for their country, why will abolitionists continue to insult our soldiers by their efforts to place them side by side with negroes. If slaves of rebel masters can be used to build roads or dig entrenchments, we say all right, go ahead; but we never will agree to their being armed and employed as soldiers.

An effort is being made in Leavenworth to raise a regiment of negroes. There are contrabands enough in Fort Scott to fill up two companies; you can have them as soon as you choose; the sooner the better. We advise those interested to keep their black regiment away from the Kansas troops now in the field. We know whereof we speak, when we say that, with one exception, there is not a Kansas regiment from which they have as much to fear as from the rebels.

There is a prospect of trouble with the Mormons and Indians on the Overland Mail Route, and a large force may be necessary to bring them under.

Fort Scott BULLETIN

August 16, 1862

Colored Regiments - - Gen. Lane is still going on with the work of organizing two Colored Regiments, notwithstanding the refusal of the President to accept black soldiers. Last Tuesday, about fifty recruits were raised here. They have been taken to Mound City. We are heartily glad to be rid of them. In Leavenworth the negroes won't go into it at all, on the ground that they have to do all the work while "de white trash" get all the offices.

Fort Scott BULLETIN

November 29, 1862

LO! THE POOR INDIANS.

The Cherokee Indians, a large portion of them, are still encamped on the Drywood, a distance of about twelve miles from town. They are composed of old men women and children, the families of those men who are now in the Union army, and constituting the 1st, 2nd, and the 3d Indian regiments.

It is pretty well established among those who have had opportunities of witnessing their efforts in trying emergencies, that these Indians are fighting stock. They have acquitted themselves well and satisfactory in several skirmishes and several engagements, in which they have taken part.

These women and children, squatted down in the timber, in our vicinity, have selected this locality as a place of safety, and security, against the marauders of their own nationality in the rebel army. There's no safety or security for these suffering creatures in their own country; consequently they are in a destitute condition. They are supplied with all the provisions they consume and need, by the commander of the Post. His ability and jurisdiction extends no farther. He can do no more. But they now need Tents, Blankets, shoes, and clothing, to shelter them from the cold and rains during the near approach of the inclement season of the year. As they are at present situated, as we are informed by those who have visited them, two-thirds of them, will perish before spring time comes again. Unless something is done for them very soon. These poor people will before winter is over, make one move more, to the country where they will be troubled no longer by the wicked, and where the weary are at rest forever.

Fort Scott BULLETIN

February 27, 1863

(From our own Correspondent.) Neosho, Feb. 11, 1863.

Editor BULLETIN:

It is so long since you heard anything from "your own," that you must think us dead or lost but we are happy to inform you that we not only still live and have our being, but relish our victuals amazingly. Now when you talk of gay places, "that's" Neosho. The population consists of White, Indians, Negroes, and Codfish Aristocracy, the latter class may be unknown to your readers, so I will try to explain.

They are what Sam Slick terms the ragged bottom, have not got a dollar, very little sense, and think themselves too good to associate with their superiors in intellect, etiquette and wealth. But we are happy to state they form but a small portion of our population . . .

The Indians make excellent soldiers, never grumble at any duty, no matter how laborious, always ready for a scout, and woe be to any unfortunate individual who is caught in the brush. The officers are untiring in their efforts to discipline and encourage the men. Capt. Henning organized a company of State Militia, such a ragged, filthy looking set you never seen I know. As he was enrolling them, he had them all drawn up in line. I noticed an Indian officer watching them very intently, and stepped up to him and asked, what he thought of the "outfit." Oh no he says very mysteriously, shaking his head "Bushwhack, me watch," laying his hand on his revolver.

The weather is delightful, warm and sunshiny, we had quite a snow last week, but it disappeared as rapidly as it came. Give my kindest regards to all the folks at the Fort and tell them "we are coming soon."

S. Big Injun,

Lieut. 3d Indian.