

## Letter from General John Ellis Wool

California  
Benicia 4<sup>th</sup> April 1856

My dear Cunningham,

I give you many thanks for your several kind notes of the 17<sup>th</sup> February and 2<sup>nd</sup> of March. Since my return alluded to in yours of the 17<sup>th</sup> February I have again been to visit the northern parts of Crescent City, Fort Osford, Vancouver, Steilacoom and Seattle. The two last are in Puget Sound. My object was to see and inspect and to give fresh instructions to the officers as circumstances seemed to require.

But for the Governor of Oregon and of Washington Territory, who are anxious for a long and expensive war, and the barbarous determination of the Oregonians to extermination its Indians, I would soon put and end to the Indian War. This practice of the Volunteers of killing friends as well as enemies has greatly increased the ranks of the hostiles. As was the case of Major Lupton and his party in October last killed 25 friendly Indians, 18 of whom were women and children going to the military reservation for protection; and as in the case of two Volunteer companies on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of December last under the guise of friendship killed about 40 friendly Indians in two camps, burnt their lodges, and turned their women and children out, who in their endeavors to get to Fort Lane, 15 miles, froze their hands and feet.

To show how determined the Oregonians are to exterminate the Indians, Captain Smith at Fort Lane reported to me that to prevent the citizens from killing 400 Indians waiting to be conducted to the Coast reserve it required the greater part of his command two companies. When they left for the reserve, although escorted by over one hundred soldiers, a citizen followed and killed one of the Indians, at the same time declared he would follow them and kill all he could. The citizens living on the route to the Coast range held [a] meeting, when it was resolved that should it be attempted to conduct the Indians to the reserve, they would not only kill them but all who might accompany them. These circumstances together with take Peu Peu Mox Mox prisoner when he met the Volunteers under a flag of truce, when he said he "was for peace, that he did not wish to fight, that his people did not wish to fight, and that if his young men had done wrong he would make restitution. That if he could not then goods wrongfully taken by his young men he would pay for them being abundantly [able] to do so, he being rich in money, cattle and horses. When the Volunteers said they were in want of provisions he offered them cattle. All would not so the Volunteers said you must go back and fight. He refused and they took him prisoner and afterwards killed him, took some twenty scalps from his head, cut of[f] his ears and hands and sent them to their friends as trophies. It is these shocking barbarities that gives us more trouble than all else and is constantly increasing the ranks of the hostiles. The Indians however in Rogue River Valley are taking fearful vengeance at the present time on the innocent as well as the guilty whites. I am pressed for time and therefore must close.

To John S. Cunningham, Esq.

Your friend,

John E. Wool