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AUTHOR Clark, Linda Darus  
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## ABSTRACT

From the 1860s through the 1870s the U.S. frontier saw many Indian wars and skirmishes. A study and report on the conditions of the Indian tribes, released in 1867, led to an act to establish an Indian Peace Commission to end the wars and prevent future Indian conflicts. In the spring of 1868 a conference was held at Fort Laramie (Wyoming) that resulted in a treaty with the Sioux. This treaty was to bring peace between the settlers and the Sioux who agreed to locate on the Black Hills reservation in the Dakota Territory. This lesson studies the Sioux Treaty and examines the power granted to the President and the Senate in Article II, Section 2, Clause 2, of the U.S. Constitution, the power to make treaties with foreign nations. The lesson correlates to the National History Standards and to the National Standards for Civics and Government. It furnishes four primary source documents: (1) the Sioux Treaty of 1868; (2) a photograph of Spotted Tail, a Sioux chief; (3) Alfred Terry's telegram account of the Battle of Little Bighorn; and (4) a letter giving a Sioux account of Custer's defeat at the Battle of Little Bighorn. The lesson provides the historical background for the treaty signing and lists four books for further reading. It outlines ten diverse teaching activities, including brainstorming, student research, document analysis, role playing, creative writing, and research and analysis. (Contains a written document analysis worksheet and a photograph analysis worksheet.) (BT)



National Archives and Records Administration

ED 462 344



# THE CONSTITUTION COMMUNITY

Expansion and Reform (1801-1861)

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## The Sioux Treaty of 1868

By Linda Darus Clark

National Archives and Records Administration  
700 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20408  
1-866-325-7208

<http://www.nara.gov/education/classrm.html>

2001

The Constitution Community is a partnership between classroom teachers and education specialists from the National Archives and Records Administration. We are developing lessons and activities that address constitutional issues, correlate to national academic standards, and encourage the analysis of primary source documents. The lessons that have been developed are arranged according to historical era.

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SO 033 584



## Sioux Treaty of 1868

### Constitutional Connection

This lesson relates to the power granted to the president and the Senate in Article II, Section 2, Clause 2, of the U.S. Constitution, the power to make treaties with foreign nations.

### This lesson correlates to the National History Standards.

**Era 4** -Expansion and Reform (1801-1861)

- **Standard 1B** -Demonstrate understanding of federal and state Indian policy and the strategies for survival forged by Native Americans.

### This lesson correlates to the National Standards for Civics and Government.

**Standard III.A.1.** -Explain how the U.S. Constitution grants and distributes power to national and state government and how it seeks to prevent the abuse of power.

### Cross-curricular Connections

Share this exercise with your history, language arts, and government colleagues.

### List of Documents

1. Sioux Treaty of 1868 ( page 1 , page 2 , page 3 )
2. Photograph of Spotted Tail
3. Alfred Terry's telegram account of the Battle of Little Bighorn
4. Letter from Captain John S. Poland to the Assistant Adjutant General of the Department of Dakota in Saint Paul, Minnesota, which gives an account from seven Sioux Indians of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer's defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn on June 25, 1876

## Historical Background

"This war was brought upon us by the children of the Great Father who came to take our land from us without price."

--Spotted Tail, *The report and journal of proceedings of the commission appointed to obtain certain concessions from the Sioux Indians* , December 26, 1876

The history of Native Americans in North America dates back thousands of years. Exploration and settlement of the western United States by Americans and Europeans wreaked havoc on the Indian peoples living there. In the 19th century the American drive for expansion clashed violently with the Native American resolve to preserve their lands, sovereignty, and ways of life. The struggle over land has defined relations between the U.S. government and Native Americans and is well documented in the holdings of the National Archives.

(From the American Originals exhibit script at <http://www.nara.gov/exhall/originals/sioux.html>)

From the 1860s through the 1870s the American frontier was filled with Indian wars and skirmishes. In 1865 a congressional committee began a study of the Indian uprisings and wars in the West, resulting in a *Report on the Condition of the Indian Tribes* , which was released in 1867. This study and report by the congressional committee led to an act to establish an Indian Peace Commission to end the wars and prevent future Indian conflicts. The United States government set out to establish a series of Indian treaties that would force the Indians to give up their lands and move further west onto reservations.

In the spring of 1868 a conference was held at Fort Laramie, in present day Wyoming, that resulted in a treaty with the Sioux. This treaty was to bring peace between the whites and the Sioux who agreed to settle within the Black Hills reservation in the Dakota Territory.

The Black Hills of Dakota are sacred to the Sioux Indians. In the 1868 treaty, signed at Fort Laramie and other military posts in Sioux country, the United States recognized the Black Hills as part of the Great Sioux Reservation, set aside for exclusive use by the Sioux people. In 1874, however, General George A. Custer led an expedition into the Black Hills accompanied by miners who were seeking gold. Once gold was found in the Black Hills, miners were soon moving into the Sioux hunting grounds and demanding protection from the United States Army. Soon, the Army was ordered to move against wandering bands of Sioux hunting on the range in accordance with their treaty rights. In 1876, Custer, leading an army detachment, encountered the encampment of Sioux and Cheyenne at the Little Bighorn River. Custer's detachment was annihilated, but the United States would continue its battle against the Sioux in the Black Hills until the government confiscated the land in 1877. To this day, ownership of the Black Hills remains the subject of a legal dispute between the U.S. government and the Sioux.

### For Further Reading

Agel, Jerome. *Words That Make America Great* . New York: Random House, 1997.

Colbert, David, ed. *Eyewitness to America* . New York: Pantheon Books, 1997.

Tindall, George Brown and Shi, David E. *America: A Narrative History* , New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1992.

Ward, Geoffrey C. *The West: An Illustrated History* . Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1996.

## **Teaching Activities**

### **Brainstorming**

1. Before beginning document analysis, display the picture of Spotted Tail (photo citation number 111-SC-82538) and ask students to comment. Students may use the Photo Analysis Worksheet developed by the National Archives education staff. Ask them what they can infer from the photograph. Responses may include comments about his posture and the way he is dressed. They may infer that he must be a person of some importance or that he looks serious, almost regal in his posture. Explain to students that this is a picture of a Brule Sioux chief named Spotted Tail. Ask students to speculate what his duties as chief might include. Responses should include ensuring the care and safety of his people, finding good hunting grounds, and signing treaties with the white man.

### **Research**

2. Provide students with background information about the Sioux and their lives in the Black Hills before 1868; or, as a homework assignment prior to this lesson, ask students to research the life and history of the Sioux and report their findings to the class.

### **Document Analysis**

3. Divide students into small groups. Photocopy the Treaty with the Sioux at Fort Laramie in 1868, and provide one set to each group, with a copy of the Written Document Analysis Worksheet developed by the National Archives education staff. Ask students to complete the analysis and share their findings with the class. This activity can also be conducted in a computer lab where groups would locate the document and worksheet on line.

4. Ask students to read through the document again and then to identify the terms agreed to by the chiefs and headmen and the terms agreed to by the agents of the United States. Lead a class discussion using the following questions: What does each side gain or lose in this treaty? Ask them to compare the signatures of the U.S. government agents and the chiefs. What is the significance of the two names of each chief or headman? What might this suggest about cultural differences between the two parties? What types of problems could these differences create? Finally, ask students to speculate on what each party hoped to accomplish through this treaty.

## **Role Playing**

5. Students may want to speculate how such treaty negotiations would be different today. Divide the class into small groups representing either the U.S. government agents or the Indian chiefs and headmen. Ask each group to decide five key points they would emphasize in their treaty negotiations, and then instruct groups to negotiate their treaties. Once the treaties are negotiated, written, and signed, display them around the classroom for students to view. Conclude with a class discussion on the process of treaty negotiations and the difficulties encountered.

## **Creative Writing**

6. As a creative writing activity ask students to write the speech they think Spotted Tail would give to his people explaining the treaty signing and terms of agreement. Ask for volunteers to present their speeches to the rest of the class.

7. Write the following quote from Spotted Tail and the date on the board: "This war was brought upon us by the children of the Great Father who came to take our land from us without price." December 26, 1876. Ask a student to read the quote and the date of the quote to the class. Ask students to write a paragraph explaining what this quote might suggest as to what the future held for Spotted Tail, his people, and the other chiefs who signed the treaty in 1868.

## **Research and Analysis**

8. Ask students to write an editorial for a newspaper following the Battle of Little Bighorn in 1876 taking the perspective of either the U.S. government or the Sioux.

9. Divide students into two groups. Assign one group to review Alfred Terry's telegram reporting on the Battle of Little Bighorn. Ask the other group to review the accounts of seven Sioux on the Battle of Little Bighorn. Each group should share their findings and then answer these questions: How are the accounts similar? How are they different? What do these reports say about General Custer's orders and his actions? Ask students to suggest reasons for the differences in the reports, determine which is more reliable, and consider what decisions they would have to make as historians when reviewing these documents.

10. In 1990 House bill H.R. 4660 proposed Custer Battlefield be renamed the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument and a memorial to the Indians be erected at the site. There was a hearing before the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. Congressman Ben Nighthorse Campbell of Colorado testified, as did representatives of the National Park Service and several people speaking on behalf of the Indian tribes and the Morning Star Foundation. The bill was approved on December 10, 1991, and became Public Law 102-201. Most of the major newspapers printed articles or editorials about this in 1991. They are a good source of the pro and con arguments on this change. You may want students to research this event and

then create a readers' theater or a reenactment of the hearings. Students may also want to locate the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument web page at <http://www.nps.gov/libi> which is part of the National Park Service's home page.

The documents included in this project are from Record Group 77, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers; Record Group 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's-1917, and Record Group 393, Records of United States Army Continental Commands, 1821-1920.

They are available online through the National Archives Information Locator (NAIL) database at < <http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html>>. Their control numbers are NWDNS-77-HQ-264-801; NWDNS-77-HQ-264-854; NWCTB-94-CORR-PI17E12-3840AGO1876; and NWCTB-393-DMO-PI172E2547-5019DMO1876. Selected photographs of Custer's 1874 Expedition are also available in NAIL, control numbers NWDNS-77-HQ-264-801 and NWDNS-77-HQ-264-854. NAIL is a searchable database that contains information about a wide variety of NARA holdings across the country. You can use NAIL to search record descriptions by keywords or topics and retrieve digital copies of selected textual documents, photographs, maps, and sound recordings related to thousands of topics.

The 1868 treaty is also featured in the online American Originals Exhibit at <http://www.nara.gov/exhall/originals/sioux.html> .

This article was written by Linda Darus Clark, a teacher at Padua Franciscan High School in Parma, Ohio.



## Photograph Analysis Worksheet

### Step 1. Observation

A. Study the photograph for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photo into quadrants and study each section to see what new details become visible.

B. Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

PEOPLE

OBJECTS

ACTIVITIES

### Step 2. Inference

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

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### Step 3. Questions

A. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

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B. Where could you find answers to them?

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## Written Document Analysis Worksheet

1. TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):

- |                                     |  |   |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper  | <input type="checkbox"/> Map           | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter     | <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram      | <input type="checkbox"/> Congressional record |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patent     | <input type="checkbox"/> Press release | <input type="checkbox"/> Census report        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum | <input type="checkbox"/> Report        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                |

2. UNIQUE PHYSICAL QUALITIES OF THE DOCUMENT (Check one or more):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting letterhead | <input type="checkbox"/> Notations        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten            | <input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Typed                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seals                  |   |

3. DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

4. AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION (TITLE): \_\_\_\_\_

5. FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. DOCUMENT INFORMATION (There are many possible ways to answer A-E.)

A. List three things the author said that you think are important:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

B. Why do you think this document was written?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

D. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written:

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E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document:

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4

Articles of a Treaty made and concluded by and between Lieutenant General William T. Sherman, General William S. Harney, General Alfred S. Terry, General C. C. Buger, S. P. Henderson, Nathaniel G. Taylor, John B. Sanborn and Samuel F. Tappan, duly appointed Commissioners on the part of the United States and the different Bands of the Sioux Nation of Indians by their Chiefs and Head men whose names are hereto subscribed, they being duly authorized to act in the premises.

Article I. From this day forward all war between the parties to this agreement shall forever cease. The Government of the United States desires peace and its honor is hereby pledged to keep it. The Indians their place and they now pledge their honor to maintain it.

If bad men among the whites or among other people, subject to the authority of the United States, shall commit any wrong upon the person or property of the Indians, the United States will, upon proof made to the Agent, and forwarded to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs at Washington City, proceed in all cases the offender to be arrested and punished according to the laws of the United States and also reimburse the injured party for the loss sustained.

If bad men among the Indians shall commit a wrong or depredation upon the person or property of any one, white, black or Indian, subject to the authority of the United States and on proof thereof, the Indians herein named, solemnly agree that they

Document 1: Sioux Treaty of 1868, Page 1.

between the respective parties hereto, so far as such treaties and agreements obligate the United States to furnish and provide money, clothing or other articles of property to such Indians and Bands of Indians as become parties to this Treaty, but no further.



In Testimony of all which we the said Commissioners and we the Chiefs and Head men of the Brule Band of the Sioux Nation have hereunto set our hands and seals at Fort Taramie, Lakota Territory this twenty ninth day of April in this year one thousand eight hundred and sixty eight

A. Taylor Seal

W. T. ... Seal

M. S. ... Seal

John B. ... Seal

S. F. Tappan Seal

L. C. August Seal

Rep. ... Seal

Abbot White, Secretary







**Document 2: Photograph of Spotted Tail**

3840 also 1876

Telegram

Missouri Division  
July 8. 1876

Communicate General Terry's report of Col. Custer's defeat on the 25<sup>th</sup> inst. his death number of killed &c. subsequent action &c.

File with 3770 also 1876


Duplicate in Army Head  
Apr. 1530 att. @. 1876

Copy furnished  
Hence of file in the  
Resolutions of 1876  
vide 3915-76

copy also furnished  
reference to file in the  
3-27-76 vide 3927-76

Recd. also. July 10. 76

the widow of the late  
Lieut. M. H. ...



**Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer. Endorsement.**

203 Gould 436 R  
3840 AGO 1876  
Flw 3770 AGO 1876

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

The value of this Company's messages shall be written on the message sheet of this Company, and subject to the regulations printed thereon, which are to be held subject to by the sender of the following message.



WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't, New York  
A. S. BRADWELL, Sec'y.

Dated Chicago July 1 1876

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washin...

To Adj. Genl W. Army  
Washington

The following is a copy of general Terry's report of the action of June twenty fifth 25 Camp on Little Big Horn River June twenty seventh 76 to a Adjutant Geo. A. Martin. Division of the Missouri High Ills. It is my painful duty to report that day before yesterday the twenty fifth 25 instant a great defeat overtook genl Custer & the troops under his command at twelve o'clock of the.

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 1



3840 AB 018 76  
F103770 AB 018 76

Form No. 1

# THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

The rates of this Company's Messages that all messages received for transmission, shall be written on the printed form of the Company, under and subject to the conditions printed thereon, which conditions have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.



WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't, New York.  
A. B. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated

July 5 1876

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To

Twenty second -- he  
started with his whole Regt  
& a strong detachment of  
scouts & guides for the  
mouth of the Rosebud  
up that river about twenty  
miles he struck a  
very heavy Indian trail which  
had previously been discovered  
& pursuing it found that it  
led as it was supposed  
that it would lead to  
the little big horn river  
Here he found a village  
of almost unwarlike  
at once attacked it with  
that portion of his force

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 2

3840 AGO 1876  
FIG 3770 AGO 1876

Blank No. 1.

**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**

The rates of this Company require that all messages received for transmission, shall be written on the message blank of the Company, and be subject to the conditions printed hereon, which conditions have been agreed to by the several telegraph companies.

WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't. New York.  
A. H. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated

July 8 1876

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

\$.

3

which was immediately after  
maj Reno with the 200  
a Co. and m of  
the Regiment was sent into  
the valley of the stream  
at the point where the  
trail struck it. Custer  
with five companies C E  
J J V L attempted  
to enter it about three  
miles lower down. Reno  
forded the River. Charged down  
its left bank diameters  
of fought on foot until finally  
completely overwhelmed by

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 3

3840 AG 01876  
F143770 HG 01876

Order No. 1

**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**

The value of this Company's messages is such that all messages received for transmission shall be written on the message sheets of the Company, which are subject to the conditions printed hereon, which conditions shall be taken as agreed to by the sender of the following message.

WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't. } New York  
A. R. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated July 1 1876

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To

number he was compelled  
to mount reverse side  
and seek a refuge on the  
high bluff which overlooks  
its right bank just as he  
recovered Capt Bentzen  
who with three Cos.  
D H & K was some ten  
miles to the left  
of Reno when the action  
commenced but who had  
been ordered by Gen Custer  
to return came to the  
river & rightly concluding  
that it was useless

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 4

38401301876

Flu3770AG01876

Blank No. 1.

# THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

The rules of this Company require that all messages received for transmission, shall be written on the message blanks of this Company, and be subject to the conditions printed thereon, unless other conditions have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.

WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't, New York.  
A. D. DREWELL, Sec'y.

Dated \_\_\_\_\_ 187

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To \_\_\_\_\_ 5

for his force to attempt  
to renew the fight in  
the valley he joined Reno  
on the bluffs. Capt <sup>Mason</sup>  
with his company was  
at first at some distance  
in the rear with a  
train of pack mules he  
also come up to Reno  
soon the united force  
was nearly surrounded  
by Indians many of whom  
armed with rifles occupied  
position which commanded  
the ground held by

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 5

38401601876  
Flw37701801876

Form No. 1

**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**

The rates of this Company require that all messages received for transmittal of the Company, under and subject to the conditions printed hereon, which rates and conditions have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.

Wm. A. ORTON, Pres't, New York.  
J. BREWER, Secy.

Dated 6 187

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To  
The Cavalry ground from which  
there was no escape. Rifle  
fire were dug to the  
fight was maintained though  
with heavy loss from  
about half past two close  
of the twenty fifth 25  
till six o'clock of the  
twenty sixth when  
the Indian withdrew from  
the valley taking with  
them their village of  
the movements of Genl  
Custer & the five companies  
under his immediate command  
scarcely anything is known

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 6

3840AG01876  
Flw 3770AG01876

Blank No. 3.

**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**

The rates of this Company require that all messages received for transmission, shall be written on the message blank of this Company, and be subject to the conditions printed thereon, which conditions have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.

WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't, New York.  
A. H. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated \_\_\_\_\_ 187

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

8.  
from those who witnessed  
then for no officer or  
soldier who accompanied  
him has yet been found  
alive. His trail from the  
point where he crossed  
the stream passes along  
in the rear of the  
crest of the bluffs on the  
right bank for nearly or  
quite three miles then it  
comes down to the bank  
of the river but at  
once surges from it as  
if he had unhesitatingly  
attempted to cross there.

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 7

3840 AG-01876  
FW37701601476

Blank No. 1.

**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**

The telegraph of this Company requires that all messages received for transmission, shall be written on the language known of the Company, and subject to the conditions printed hereon, which conditions have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.

WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't, New York.  
A. H. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated \_\_\_\_\_ 187

Received at N.E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D.C.

To \_\_\_\_\_

turns upon itself almost  
completes a circle & closes  
It is marked by the  
remains of the Officers &  
the bodies of his horses  
some of them dropped along  
the path others heaped  
where halt appear to  
have been made there  
is abundant evidence  
that a gallant resistance  
was offered by the troops  
but they were beaten on  
all sides by overpowering  
numbers. The officers known  
to be killed are Genl

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 8

38901601876  
HW37701601976

Blank No. 1.

# THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

The rates of this Company are: On all messages received for transmission, shall be written on the message blank of this Company, and be not subject to the conditions printed hereon, which conditions have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.

WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't. New York.  
A. H. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated \_\_\_\_\_ 187

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To \_\_\_\_\_

Custer Capts Keogh & Gate  
Custer Lieut. Cook  
Smith, McIntosh, Calhoun  
Porter, Hodgson, Sturgis  
Reilly of the Cavalry.  
Lieut Crittenden of the  
Twenty 20 Infy  
acting Asst Surgeon  
Lieut Harrington of the  
Cavalry & Asst Surgeon  
Ford are missing. Captain  
Benton & Lieut Harman  
of the Cavalry are slightly

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 9



3840 AQQ 1876  
FW 377011301476

Form No. 1.

**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**

The rates of this Company require that all messages received for transmission, shall be written on the blank form (back of the Company, under and subject to the following conditions, which conditions have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.

WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't, New York.  
A. H. BREWSTER, Sec'y.

Dated \_\_\_\_\_ 187

Received at N. E. 7th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To \_\_\_\_\_ 10

Wounded. Mr Boston  
Custer, a brother of  
Mr Reed a nephew of  
Genl Custer were with  
him & were killed. No  
other officers than those  
whom I have named are  
among the killed wounded  
& missing. It is impossible  
as yet to obtain a  
reliable list of the  
enlisted men who were  
killed & wounded but  
the number of killed

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 10

3840 A801876  
Hw3770A601876

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**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**

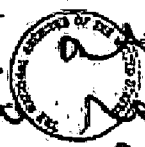
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WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't. } New York.  
A. R. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated \_\_\_\_\_ 1876

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To \_\_\_\_\_ 11

including officers must reach two hundred fifty of 250. the number wounded is fifty one 51.  at the mouth of the ~~river~~ I informed Gen Custer that I should take the supply steamer far west up the yellow stone to ferry Gen Custer's column over the river that I should personally accompany that column & that it would in all probability reach the mouth of the Little Big horn on the

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38401601876  
FW3770A301876

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WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't. | New York.  
A. H. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated \_\_\_\_\_ 1876

Received at N.E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To \_\_\_\_\_

Twenty sixth instant  
the steamer reached genl  
Gibbons camp near the  
mouth of the big horn early  
in the morning of the  
twenty fourth & at  
four o'clock in the  
afternoon all his men &  
animals were across the  
yellow stone at five  
o'clock the columns  
of five companies of  
the Seventh Infantry  
four companies of the  
Second Cavalry & a

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3840 A001476  
F1W3770A601876

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The rates of this Company require that all messages intended for transmission, shall be written on the message blank of the Company, and subject to the conditions printed thereon, which read: These have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.



WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't. | New York.  
A. R. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated \_\_\_\_\_ 187

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To \_\_\_\_\_ 13

Battery of three 3 guading  
guns marched out to  
across Tallahassee Creek  
starting soon after five  
o'clock in the morning  
of the twenty fifth 25.  
The infantry made a march  
of twenty two miles  
over the most difficult  
country which I have  
ever seen in order that  
desultory might be sent into  
the valley of the little  
big horn the Cavalry  
with the battery was the

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33401601876  
FWU37761601876

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WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't. } New York.  
A. E. BREWSTER, Sec'y. }

Dated \_\_\_\_\_ 187

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To \_\_\_\_\_ 14  
finished on thirteen 13  
or fourteen 14 miles  
further reaching camp  
at midnight. The routes  
were set out as half  
past four in the morning  
of the twenty sixth 26  
The scout discovered  
three Indian who  
were at first supposed  
to be Sioux but when  
over taken they proved  
to be Crows who had  
been with general Custer  
they brought the first

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 14

3840 AG01876  
FW3770 AG01876

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The rules of this Company require that all messages received for transmission, shall be written on the message blank of the Company, which will not be subject to the conditions printed hereon, which conditions have been adopted by the creator of the following message.

WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't, New York  
A. H. BURWELL, Sec'y.

Dated

July 8 1876

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

\$

15

Intelligence of the battle  
their story was not  
Credited it was supposed  
that some fighting perhaps  
severe fighting had taken  
place but it was not  
believed that disaster  
could have overtaken  
so large a force as  
twelve 12 Companies  
of Cavalry - The infantry  
which had broken camp  
very early soon came  
up and the whole

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 15

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# THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

The rates of the Company require that all messages sent out for transmission, shall be written on the message blank of the Company, and subject to the conditions printed thereon, which conditions have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.

WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't, } New York.  
A. H. DREW, Sec'y, }

Dated

July 2 1876

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D.C.

To \_\_\_\_\_ 16  
Column entered and  
moved up the valley of  
the Little Bighorn during  
the afternoon. Efforts  
were made to send Custer  
through to what was  
supposed to be general  
Custer's position and  
to obtain information  
of the condition of  
affairs but those who  
were sent out were  
driven back by parties  
of Indians who in  
increasing numbers  
were seen hovering in  
General Gibbons' front.

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 16

3840AG 01876

FW 3770AG 01876

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**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**

The rates of this Company require that all messages sent for transmission, shall be written on the message sheet of the Company, under and subject to the regulations printed thereon, which regulations have been raised to by the order of the following message.

WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't. New York.  
A. H. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated



July 8 1876

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To

At twenty minutes before  
nine o'clock in the  
Evening the infantry  
had marched between  
twenty nine 29 and  
thirty 30 miles the  
men were very weary  
and daylight was failing  
the Column was therefore  
halted for the night  
at a point about  
Eleven 11 miles in a  
straight line above the  
mouth of the stream -  
This morning the movement  
was resumed and  
after a march of 11

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 17



38404801876

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**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**

The rates of this Company require that all messages received for transmission, shall be written on the message blank of the Company, which are subject to the conditions printed thereon, which conditions have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.



WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't, New York.  
A. H. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated July 1 1876

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To 18

mine of <sup>Col. Reno's</sup> ~~Col. Reno's~~ <sup>major</sup> ~~major~~  
Reno's entrenched position  
was reached. The  
withdrawal of the Indians  
from around Reno's <sup>Camp</sup> ~~Camp~~  
and from the valley was  
undoubtedly caused by  
the appearance of Gen  
Gibbons' troops. Major  
Reno & Capt. Penten  
both of whom are officers  
of Great Experience  
accustomed to on large  
masses of mounted  
men. Estimated the  
number of Indians  
Engaged at not less

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 18



3840A3D 1876

File No. 1

PA03770AG01876

**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**

The rates of this Company require that all messages received for transmission, shall be written on the message blanks of the Company, and subject to the regulations printed thereon, which conditions have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.



WILLIAM OLFON, Pres't, New York.  
A. R. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated

July 5 1876

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To \_\_\_\_\_ 19

than twenty five hundred  
 2500 other Officers  
 think that the number  
 was greater than this  
 The village in the valley  
 was about three miles  
 in length and about  
 a mile in width besides  
 the lodges proper a great  
 number of temporary  
 brushwood shelter was  
 found in it indicating  
 that many men besides  
 its proper inhabitants  
 had gathered together  
 there - Major Reno is

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 19

3840 AB 01876

Flw 3770 AGO 1876

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**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**

The rates of this Company require that all messages received for transmission, shall be written in the ordinary English of the Company, and subject to the conditions printed thereon, which conditions have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.

WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't, New York.  
A. R. BREWER, Sec'y.

Dated



July 5 1876

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To

To

Very Confidential & that there  
 were a number of white  
 men fighting with the  
 Indians. It is believed  
 that the loss of the  
 Indians was large.  
 I have as yet received  
 no official reports in  
 regard to the battle  
 but what is stated  
 as gathered from the  
 officers who were on  
 the ground - then and  
 from those who have  
 been over it since.

Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 20

3840 ABO1876  
FW 3770 ABO1876

Blank No. 1

**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**

The rates of this Company require that all messages sent out for transmission, shall be written on the message blank of the Company, under and subject to the conditions printed thereon, which conditions have been agreed to by the sender of the following message.

WILLIAM ORTON, Pres't; New York.  
A. H. BREWER, Body.

Dated July 21 1876

Received at N. E. cor. 14th St. and Penn. Ave., Washington, D. C.

To 21

Signed Alfred H  
Terry Brig General

R. C. Drum

a a b

1374 Paidgoryk



Document 3: Copy of General Alfred Terry's telegram reporting the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, and the defeat of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, Page 21

1876. July 21. 1876  
 Report of  
 Captain John S. Poland  
 Dakota Dept of  
 A. A. G.  
 Financial affairs of the  
 report of the C. O. Standen  
 Rock Agency giving an  
 account of the Custer fight  
 of June 25. as derived from  
 a man living with me for  
 witness from the battle  
 camp (July 21) soon of  
 when mentioned in the  
 battle is. etc.  
 Recd. McCred. Mo. Aug. 2. 76

Document 4: Letter from Captain John S. Poland to the Assistant Adjutant General of the Department of Dakota in Saint Paul, Minnesota, which gives an account from seven Sioux Indians of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer's defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn on June 25, 1876, Endorsement



Copy

Headquarters U. S. Military Station

Standing Rock, D. T., July 24, 1876.

To the Assistant Adjutant General

Department of Dakota

Saint Paul, Minn.

Sir,

I respectfully report the following as having been derived from seven Sioux Indians just returned from the hostile camp (July 21st), some of whom were engaged in the battle of June 25th with the 7th U. S. Cavalry.

The Agent of course makes no distinction between them and the other Indians at the agency. He sent them word to keep quiet and say nothing. To the other Indians he sent or delivered personally the intimation that they must not tell the military of the return of Indians from the hostile camp, nor circulate reports of operations in the late fight.

The Indian account is as follows: The hostile were celebrating their greatest of religious festivals - the Sun dance - when rumors brought news of the approach of cavalry. The dance was suspended and a general rush undertaken by Custer, perhaps, for a retreat for horse equipments and arms followed. Major Reno first attacked the village at the North end and across the Little Big Horn. This is a matter of Reno's operations, coincides with the published account how he was quickly

Document 4: Letter from Captain John S. Poland to the Assistant Adjutant General of the Department of Dakota in Saint Paul, Minnesota, which gives an account from seven Sioux Indians of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer's defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn on June 25, 1876, Page 1

comfited, surrounded, how he dismounted  
rallied on the timber, remounted and cut his  
way back over the ford and up the bluff with  
considerable loss, and the continuation of the  
fight for some little time, when runners ar-  
rived from the north end of the village, or camp,  
with the news that the cavalry had attacked the  
north end of the same, three or four miles distant.

The Indians about Reno had not before this  
the slightest intimation of fighting at any other  
point. A force large enough to prevent Reno  
from assuming the offensive was left and the sol-  
diers available force flew to the other end of the camp,  
where finding the Indians there successfully driving  
Custer before them, instead of uniting with them, they  
separated into two parties, and moved around the  
flanks of his cavalry. They report that he crossed  
the river but only succeeded in reaching the edge  
of the Indian camp. After he was driven to the  
bluff the fight lasted perhaps an hour. Indians  
have no hours of the day, and the time cannot  
be given approximately.

They report that a small number of cavalry  
broke through the line of Indians in their rear and  
escaped, but was overtaken, within a distance of  
five or six miles, and killed. They infer from this  
that this body of retreating cavalry was probably led  
by the missing officer, and that they tried to escape  
only after Custer fell.

Document 4: Letter from Captain John S. Poland to the Assistant  
Adjutant General of the Department of Dakota in Saint Paul,  
Minnesota, which gives an account from seven Sioux Indians of Lt. Col.  
George Armstrong Custer's defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn on  
June 25, 1876, Page 2

The last man that was killed, was killed by  
his sons of a Santee Indian "Red Top" who was  
a leader in the Minnesota massacre of '62 & '63.  
After the battle the squaws entered the field to  
plunder and mutilate the dead. A general re-  
joicing was indulged in, and a distribution  
of arms and ammunition hurriedly made. Then  
the attack on Major Reno was vigorously renewed.  
Up to this attack, the Indians had lost compar-  
atively few men, but now, they say, their most  
serious loss took place. They give names of  
numbers, but say there were a great great many.  
Killing Bull was neither killed nor personally  
engaged in the fight. He remained in the Cir-  
clet tent directing operations. Crazy Horse (with  
a large band) and Black Moon were the principal  
leaders on the 25th of June. Kill Eagle,  
Chief of the Blackfeet, at the head of four tented  
lodges left the agency about the last of May.  
He was prominently engaged in the battle of  
June 25, and afterwards upbraided Killing  
Bull for not taking an active personal part  
in the engagement. Kill Eagle has sent me word  
that he was forced into this fight, that he desires  
to return to the agency, and that he will return  
to the agency if he is killed for it. He is re-  
ported actually on the way back to go to his late  
father the agent, and make confession, to receive  
absolution for his defiant crimes against the hand

Document 4: Letter from Captain John S. Poland to the Assistant Adjutant General of the Department of Dakota in Saint Paul, Minnesota, which gives an account from seven Sioux Indians of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer's defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn on June 25, 1876, Page 3



that has gratuitously fed him for three years. He is truly a shrewd chief, who must have discerned that he who fights and runs away may live to fight another day.

The Indians were not all engaged at any one time, heavy reserves were held to repair losses and renew attacks successively. The fight continued until the third day when runners, kept constantly on the lookout, hurried into camp and reported a great body of troops (General Terry's army) advancing up the river.

Lodges having been previously prepared for a move, a retreat, in a southerly direction, followed, towards and along the base of the Rosebud mountains. They marched about fifty miles, went into camp and held a council, where it was determined to send into all the agencies reports of their success and to call upon them to come out and share the glories that must be expected in the future. Therefore, we may expect an influx of overbearing and impudent Indians to urge, by force perhaps, an accession to hitting Bull's demands.

There is a general gathering in the hostile camp from each of the agencies on the Missouri River, Red Cloud and Spotted Tail, as also a great many northern Cheyennes and Arapahoes (like the a great many).

They report for the especial benefit of their

Document 4: Letter from Captain John S. Poland to the Assistant Adjutant General of the Department of Dakota in Saint Paul, Minnesota, which gives an account from seven Sioux Indians of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer's defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn on June 25, 1876, Page 4

relatives here, that in the three (3) fights they  
have had with the white they have captured  
over 400 stand of arms, carbines and rifles  
(revolver not counted) and ammunition  
without end, some sugar, coffee, bacon and  
hard bread. They claim to have captured from  
the white, this summer, over 900 horses and  
mules, I suppose this includes operations  
against soldiers, Crow Indians and Black  
Hills, Minn.

The general outline of this Indian report  
corresponds with the published report. The first  
attack of Reno began well on in the day, say  
the Indians. They report about 300 white killed.  
They do not say how many Indians were killed.

A report from another source says the  
Indians obtained from Custer's command 159  
carbines and revolvers.

I have since meeting the above heard  
the following from the returned hostiles.  
They communicated as a secret to their  
particular friends here the information  
that a large party of Reno and Cheyennes  
were to leave Rosebud mountains, on the  
hostile camp, for this Agency, to intimidate  
and compel the Indians here to join Little  
Bull, and if they refused, they are ordered to  
soldier them (kill them) and steal their ponies.  
Of course any resistance to their attempts by the

Document 4: Letter from Captain John S. Poland to the Assistant Adjutant General of the Department of Dakota in Saint Paul, Minnesota, which gives an account from seven Sioux Indians of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer's defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn on June 25, 1876, Page 5

...white will provoke an attack upon the fort, although that secret was known of it has not been revealed to friends of the fort.

I shall report any additional news received from reliable Indian sources as soon as obtained.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant

(Signed) J. S. Poland

Captain 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry

Res't Lieut. Col. U.S.A.

Commanding

Headquarters Dept. of Dakota

St. Paul, Minn. July 21, 1876

Official copy respectfully forwarded to Headquarters Military Division of the Museum for the information of the Lieutenant General.

(Signed) Geo. D. Ruggles

Asst. Adjt. Genl.

In the absence of the Dept. Commanding

Official copy for file

Asst. Adjt. Genl.

Document 4: Letter from Captain John S. Poland to the Assistant Adjutant General of the Department of Dakota in Saint Paul, Minnesota, which gives an account from seven Sioux Indians of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer's defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn on June 25, 1876, Page 6



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