Fort Assinniboine Telegrams Received, 1881

Overview of the Collection

**Creator**  
Fort Assinniboine (Mont.)

**Title**  
Fort Assinniboine Telegrams Received

**Dates**  
1881 (inclusive)  
1881 1881

**Quantity**  
.2 linear feet

**Collection Number**  
Collection 2457, MtBC, us (collection)

**Summary**  
Fort Assinniboine Telegrams Received consists of "true copy" telegrams, duplicates of original transmissions that were mailed from the office of origin to Lt. Col. Henry M. Black, 18th United States Infantry and commanding officer of Fort Assinniboine during 1881. The telegrams address the movements of troops, disposition of supplies, court martial proceedings, and other routine military matters. Of particular interest are several messages dated in January 1881 concerning the movements of Sitting Bull and the army's failed attempt to capture his camp in the Milk River area. Other military movements against Canadian Crees, Piegan, and half-bloods are also discussed in the telegrams.

**Repository**  
Montana State University Library, Merrill G. Burlingame Special Collections  
Montana State University-Bozeman Library  
Merrill G Burlingame Special Collections  
P.O. Box 173320  
Bozeman, MT  
59717-3320  
Telephone: 406-994-4242  
Fax: 406-994-2851  
https://www.lib.montana.edu/archives/contact-form/

**Access Restrictions**  
This collection is open for research.

**Additional Reference**  
An alternative form of this finding aid can be found at  
http://www.lib.montana.edu/collect/spcoll/findaid/2457.html

**Languages**  
English

**Sponsor**  
Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities

**Historical Note**

Fort Assinniboine was established by the United States Army during the summer of 1879 in Hill County near present day Havre, Montana. A huge complex of brick buildings, Assinniboine was easily the largest post in Montana Territory, and while its original mission included control of the Indian tribes who crossed the Canadian border, the fort became obsolete within a few years of its construction. During the early 1880s, soldiers at Assinniboine were called on to monitor the movements of Sitting Bull's band of Sioux and to continually escort Crees and other Canadian Indians back across the border. On
August 23, 1879, a New Jersey fisherman named Louden Minugh enlisted in the United States Army at New York City. The twenty-two year old Minugh was assigned to Company C, Eighteenth Infantry and posted to Fort Assiniboine that fall. He remained at the post for his entire enlistment term, mustering out as a sergeant with an "excellent character" rating on August 22, 1884. Minugh later became a rancher and storekeeper in Harlem, Montana. Sometime before or after the closure of the post, Minugh came into possession of the 1881 telegrams from Fort Assiniboine and eventually they came to his granddaughter, Jeanne Minugh Irving.

Content Description

The telegrams in this collection are "true copies," duplicates of original transmissions that were mailed from the office of origin to Lt. Col. Henry M. Black, 18th United States Infantry and commanding officer of Fort Assiniboine during 1881. The majority came from the headquarters of the military District of Montana in Helena, and are signed by Lt. George L. Turner, Acting Assistant Adjutant General. Other telegrams are from the headquarters of the Department of Dakota at Fort Snelling, Minnesota; Fort Buford, Dakota Territory; and forts Maginnis, Shaw, and Keogh, Montana Territory. The telegrams address the movements of troops, disposition of supplies, court martial proceedings, and other routine military matters. Of particular interest are several messages dated in January 1881 concerning the movements of Sitting Bull and the army's failed attempt to capture his camp in the Milk River area. Other military movements against Canadian Crees, Piegans, and half-bloods are also discussed in the telegrams. The telegrams have been chronologically arranged. Unless otherwise indicated, all telegrams are from the headquarters of the District of Montana, Colonel Thomas H. Ruger, 18th U.S. Infantry, commanding, and signed by Lt. Turner, or from the Department of Dakota, Brigadier General Alfred Terry, commanding, and signed by Major Samuel Breck, Assistant Adjutant General. Parentheses after a date indicates more than one telegram bears that particular date of transmission.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Telegrams received by the post of Fort Assiniboine in 1881 were purchased by the Merrill G. Burlingame Special Collections from Mrs. Jeanne M. Irving of Olympia, Washington on April 5, 2004.

Processing Note

This collection was processed 2009 April 28

Names and Subjects

**Subject Terms :**
- Cree Indians
- Dakota Indians
- Indians of North America-Canada
- Piegan Indians

**Personal Names :**
- Black, Henry M. (Henry More), d. 1893
- Sitting Bull, 1831-1890
Corporate Names:
United States-Army-Infantry Regiment, 18th

Geographical Names:
Fort Assinniboine (Mont.)
Fort Buford (N.D.)
Fort Keogh (Mont.)
Fort Maginnis (Mont.)
Fort Shaw (Mont. : Fort)
Fort Snelling (Minn.)
Montana-History, Military-19th century

Form or Genre Terms:
Telegrams-Montana

Other Creators:
Personal Names:
Breck, Samuel, 1834-1918 (creator)
Turner, George L. (George Lemuel), b. 1849 (creator)

Corporate Names:
United States-Army-Dept. of Dakota (creator)
United States-Army-District of Montana (creator)

Kim Allen Scott, 2009