

The conduct of the men under my command has for the past year been excellent; three cases of desertion have occurred, which I have reported to you already.

In June the command was put through the usual annual course of drill.

The officers drilled in sword exercise, both mounted and on foot.

I was called upon to furnish escort and transport on several occasions to the Indian Commissioner to Fort Walsh, Calgary and the Blackfoot Crossing.

A good guard house, a want that has been long felt, has been built during the past year.

It is a substantial building of heavy hewn timber, containing six cells, a day room for prisoners, and commodious guard-room; indeed it answers all the requirements of a small jail.

The old quarters with mud roofs, on the north side of the fort, have been repaired and made habitable.

It was found necessary to change the herding post, as it formed a portion of the Peigan Reserve. A site was chosen on Willow Creek bottom, and a building erected to accommodate a non-commissioned officer and three men.

All this work was performed by the men of my command.

Of the buildings at the Government Farm, and of the farming operations during the past year, I refer you to Inspector Shurtliffs' report, which I enclose herewith.

But few cases of crime of any importance have been brought before me during the past year.

A Half-breed, "St. Germain," was arrested at St. Mary's River, for horse stealing. The prisoner, being armed, showed fight; he was secured and brought to MacLeod by Corporal Heney and Constable Maxwell, convicted by you, and is now undergoing his sentence of one year's imprisonment with hard labor.

The collection of customs duties this year, exclusive of the entries for Government supplies, has fallen off; this may be accounted for by the yearly decline in the fur trade in the North-West, the merchants necessarily not importing so largely. Also, by the increase in the importations of Canadian manufactures, shipped through the States *via* Benton, in bond, entitled to free entry.

Prairie fires devastated the country during the fall of the year, destroying the grass for many miles in every direction, thereby causing great inconvenience in travelling. These fires are generally believed to have been the work of Indians when leaving for the southern country to hunt.

Canadian horses are, in my opinion, far more serviceable and preferable for police work to the native stock of Montana; of course, they require time to become acclimatized and accustomed to the change of grass.

In the portion of this report that I have devoted to buildings, I omitted to mention that a small house 24 x 16½ feet, 10 feet in height, with a shingle roof, has been built for married officers' quarters.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. WINDER,

*Superintendent.*

Forwarded,

JAMES F. MACLEOD,  
Commissioner.

FORT MACLEOD, 27th December, 1879.

SIR,—In compliance with your request to report on the Police Farm, I have the honor to submit the following:—

We commenced working in October of last year. The work during the winter was cutting and hauling fence rails and timber for farm buildings.