

Tuskaloosa

16th June 1834

I have received information from sources to be relied on, that the settlers in the Counties of Macon and Tallapoosa are much alarmed at appearances of hostility among the Creek Indians. They ^{have} appeared to be some foundation for the belief, that there is a concerted design among them, to rise upon the whites about the period of their green corn dance. My intelligence is derived from several letters lately received from that quarter, copies of which ~~are forwarded~~ I send you, that you may be in possession of the reasons which induce the settlers to apprehend danger, and be able to direct your attention to the proper mode of enquiry.

In order to obtain more certain intelligence than these letters furnish, I have concluded to dispatch two confidential agents to go among the Indians, when the best opportunities will be furnished of ascertaining ^{their intentions} ~~whether they are entering~~ any plan of hostilities against the whites and I have appointed you to perform this service. The clerk of the Circuit Court of Norfolk County

has recently been killed by an Indian, as you will perceive among the documents herewith furnished, without provocation and under circumstances of great cruelty. The murderer is said to be protected by his friends who express a determination to protect him and to prevent his ~~arrest~~ arrest.

I place you in charge of a communication to the Chiefs, whom you wish take the earliest steps to convene after your arrival. In your interview with them, you will probably be able to learn something of their intentions touching the hostilities they are said to be meditating, & of the true causes of their dissatisfaction. ~~In your intercourse with these people is it desirable~~ While among the Indians and in all your interviews with them, it is important that you observe a conciliating course of conduct, and that you impress upon them that the authorities of Alabama desire to protect them in all their rights, to relieve their wants, as much as possible, and redress their grievances. At the same time they should be made to comprehend fully, their relations, in their present situation ^{with} the white people, to our laws. They cannot live among us without rendering obedience to the laws, and they must not indulge the expectation that they can commit offences of any description, with impunity.

A state of society exists in the country ceded by the Creek Indians, that has no parallel in our history, and in case they can be induced to emigrate, will be attended with inconveniences that will counterbalance the advantages to be derived from the acquisition of New lands.

In their present ignorance & with their savage habits, they cannot be brought to submit to the restraints of civilization, nor are they fitted to participate its benefits. The impositions to which they are liable, and ^{which} will be constantly practiced upon them, in their intercourse with the whites, will keep them perpetually excited and discontented, and looking as they do to no consequences beyond the destruction of those upon whom they seek to revenge themselves, they have at all times the power which they will ~~probably~~ frequently exert, of suddenly rising upon and destroying whole neighborhoods. This will, ^{in turn} provoke, ^{in return} the vengeance of the whites, which could be appeased by nothing short of the extermination of the savages.

It is therefore of the almost importance that you ~~conceive~~ persuade them to go to the country which has been provided for them west of the Mississippi, before they ^{experience} the disasters which await them in their present situation.

Mr Lucas was a gentleman, I understand of
character and respectability. His relations ^{& friends} are
numerous and respectable. It is due to them
as well as to the community and the laws,
that his murderer be brought to justice. You
will learn, if possible, ^{whether} the information be true, that
his friends will not surrender him or permit
him to be taken.

Instructing to Mr. Briggs
to go to the
Indians.

But the supposed intention of the
Indians to commence hostilities ~~will be~~
~~the~~ is my principal inducement for
employing you to go among them, and
to this object your inquiries will be
heavily directed. I request that you will
keep me advised of every thing that occurs, and
let me urge you ~~not~~ to reach the scene of
your investigations with the least possible delay.
You are authorized to employ runners &
expresses as often as you may deem it necessary
taking care to keep an account of expenditures
for objects of this kind. The sum of five
dollars a day including your ordinary expenses
will be allowed you during your employment.
With great respect I am
Gentlemen your obt. servt

John Gay

Corrected copy

Tuskaloosa,
16th, June 1834

I have received information from sources to be relied on, that the settlers in the Counties of Macon and Tallapoosa are much alarmed at appearances of hostility among the Creek Indians. They have some foundation for the belief, that there is a concerted design among them, to rise upon the whites about the period of their green corn dance. My intelligence is derived from several letters lately received from that quarter, copies of which I send you, that you may be in possession of the reasons which induce the settlers to apprehend danger, and be able to direct your attention to the proper object of enquiry.

In order to obtain more certain intelligence than these letters furnish, I have concluded to despatch two confidential agents to go among the Indians, ^{where} - as you will perceive the best opportunities will be furnished of ascertaining their intentions, and have appointed you to perform this service.

The clerk of the Circuit Court of Russell county has recently been killed by an Indian, as you will perceive among the documents herewith furnished, without provocation and under circumstances of great cruelty. The murderer is said to be secreted by his friends who express a determination to protect him and to prevent his arrest.

I place you in charge of a communication to the chiefs, whom you will take the earliest steps to convene after your arrival. In your interview with them, you will probably be able to learn something of their intentions touching the hostilities they are said to be meditating, & of the true causes of their dissatisfaction. While among the Indians and in all your interviews with them, it is important that you observe a conciliating course of conduct, and impress upon them that the authorities of Alabama desire to protect them in all their rights, to relieve their wants, as much as possible and redress their grievances. At the same time they should be made to comprehend fully their relations in their present situation with the white people & our laws. They cannot live among us without rendering obedience to the laws, and they must not indulge the expectation that they can commit offences of any deception, with impunity.

(no underline) → A state of society exists in the Country ceded by the Creek Indians, that has no parallel ^{is it} in our history, and unless they can be induced to emigrate, ^{will} such? be attended with inconveniences that will counterbalance the advantages to be derived from the acquisition of their ~~commands.~~ ^{lands.}

In their present ignorance & with their savage habits, they cannot be brought to submit to the restraints of civilization, not are they fitted to participate its benefits. The impositions to which, they are liable, and which will be constantly practiced upon them, in their intercourse with the whites, will keep them perpetually excited and dissatisfied, and looking as they do to no consequences beyond the destruction of those upon whom they seek to revenge themselves, they have at all times the power which they will ^{probably} frequently exert, suddenly rising upon ~~and~~ destroying whole neighborhoods. This will in turn provoke the vengeance of the whites, which could be appeased by nothing short of the extermination of the savages.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that you persuade them to go to the Country which has been provided for them west of the Mississippi, before they experience the disasters which await them in their present situation. W. Lucas was a gentleman, I understand, of character and respectability. His relations & friends are numerous and respectable. It is due to them as well as to the community and the laws, that his murderer be brought to justice. You will learn, if possible, whether the information be true, that his friends will not surrender him or permit him to be taken.

But the supposed intention of the Indians to commence hostilities is my principal inducement for employing you to go among them, and to this object your inquiries will be mainly directed. I request that you will keep me advised of every thing that occurs, and let me urge you to reach the scene of your investigations with the least possible delay.

You are authorized to employ services & expresses as often as you may deem it necessary taking care to keep an account of expenditures for objects of this kind. The sum of five dollars a day including your ordinary expences will be allowed you during your employment.

With great respect, I am gentlemen
Your obt. svt.
John Gayle.

Instructions to A. Riggs + (John ?)

Corrections by
Sheila O'Brien