

From Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall to His Excellency Sir F. P.
Robinson K. C. B.

Drummond Island,
24th September 1815.

With regard to the charges transmitted to your Excellency through Mr. Baker, I have not the smallest doubt, but they are purposely exhibited in order to give some colour and pretext for the tragedy about to be enacted on Mississippi, to shut our eyes to that transaction, and to divert the Government from the enquiry, of how it agrees with the 9th Article of the treaty of Ghent. It appears to me that this outcry is precisely made upon the principle of some ingenious depredators, who when in danger of detection are among the first to bawl 'Stop Thief!'

I repeat to your Excellency my firm conviction, that the war of extermination with which the unfortunate Indians are threatened on the Mississippi, will be equally unjust, and unprovoked. Unjust, inasmuch as the Americans have no right to seize upon their country and build forts thereon, never having possessed it *till after* 1812. Unprovoked, as I do not believe that a single act of hostility was committed by them, since the Peace was announced by Captain Bulger on the 22nd of May at the Prairie du Chien. That officer made every exertion to recall the war-party that attacked the

Americans on the 24th of May, as mentioned in the letter of Col. Russell, but it was too late. They could not be overtaken. This affair your Excellency will observe is the latest act of hostility which occurred, and I pledge my word to your Excellency, that the Indians engaged in it knew nothing of the Peace, except from American reports which they imagined were purposely circulated to deceive them.

I have the honor to be
Your Excellency's most obedient servant,
(Signed) Rt. M'Douall, Lieutenant-Colonel.

His Excellency
Sir F. P. Robinson K. C. B.

Extract from

Proceedings of a Court of Enquiry, held by order of His Excellency, Major-General Sir F. P. Robinson K. C. B. Commanding in Upper Canada, and administering the Government thereof.

Fort Drummond,
6th and 10th October 1815.

PRESIDENT.

Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall Glengary Light Infantry.

MEMBERS.

Major Cochrane 37th Regiment.
Captain Stephens 37th Regiment.
Captain Payne Royal Engineers.
Captain Anderson Indian Department.

“The Court then proceeded to investigate the charges preferred by the American Government viz. “That the Indians had been stimulated to a continuance of hostilities since the peace, by the British Agents.”

Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall again regretted the necessity which existed for his presiding at that court, being expressly directed to do so, by His Excellency Major-General Sir Frederic Robinson. It was his wish that that duty had devolved upon another, as it became necessary for him, in the absence of other material witnesses, to state to the Court every par-

ticular, having a tendency to exonerate his government from so unjust a charge. Indeed as almost the whole of the British Agents amongst the Indians, were under his orders, he feels himself particularly called upon to meet it, to repel the accusation as totally false, and unsupported, and not only unmask the calumny, but prove to the court, and to the world, that no sooner was the news of the Peace received at Mackinac, than the most active exertions were used to promulgate and make known the same among all the Indian Nations. In fact, perhaps on no former occasion, was more zeal and anxiety displayed than in the performance of this most important duty, not only in announcing the Peace, but enjoining an immediate cessation from hostilities and impressing, in the strongest manner upon their minds, the strict observance thereof.

One circumstance must be ever regretted, as its consequences must be ever deplored. The first despatch sent by Major Forster, Military Secretary, dated York, 11th of March, communicating the news of Peace, and enclosing a copy of the treaty, did not reach me at Michilimackinac until the 11th of May: the next confirmation of that event, was written by Lieutenant-Colonel Harvey, Deputy Adjutant General, and dated Kingston, 25th March. The original of this despatch was nearly as long upon the road, as that of Major Forster, but a duplicate thereof, reached me by a trading vessel from Detroit on the 1st of May. This was the first official account I received of Peace; a vague rumour of such an event had before been circulated, but which only tended to increase our watchfulness and redouble our exertions for defence.

The great delay which occurred in forwarding these despatches, was their being unfortunately entrusted to persons of little energy and perseverance; *the season of the year too, rendered the journey infinitely difficult and dangerous*: the ice on many parts of that long communication, was scarcely passable: in others it was gone. These impediments tended greatly to protract the arrival of these important despatches: I knew them to be *so great*, as to have doubts of ever receiving them.

On their arrival, however, all was energy, as much as possible, to counteract the mischiefs of delay. The Peace was immediately made known to the Indians of the neighbourhood. The intelligent Chief Assegenack was sent to proclaim it to the tribes on the eastern side of Lake Michigan,

another to Sagana, an express was sent to Lieutenant Law of the Indian Department at Green Bay, to give all publicity to the news in that quarter, and to direct Interpreter Lesallier to do the same at Millwaukie and among the other Indians on the western side. I proceeded myself for L'Arche Croche, and with great ceremony made known the Peace to the Ottaway Nation—all of whom smoked the pipe in token of their acceptance thereof. The intelligence was likewise forwarded to the officer commanding at the Prairie du Chien, where it arrived the 22nd of May: the day following, it was communicated in Grand Council to all the Indians in the place, and every means adopted to impress its strict observance on their minds. A captain of the Indian Department was immediately sent down to the Mississippi to announce the Peace to the Sauks, but unfortunately too late to reach the war-party of that nation who were engaged with the Americans on the 24th of May. This was the last act of hostility committed by any of the Indian Tribes. A party of Ottawas were engaged a short time previous (and what is rather strange, not mentioned in Mr. Munroe's list) near Fort Harrison. THERE CANNOT BE THE SHADOW OF A DOUBT THAT BOTH WERE IGNORANT OF PEACE BEING CONCLUDED—that both believed the operations of the war to be in full activity; of course, the aggressions adduced of an earlier date than these events, fall to the ground, *and the Indian Nations must stand fully acquitted of the charge of persevering in hostilities after the Peace was made known to them.* On carefully examining the dates, this important fact is clear to a demonstration, and is naturally accounted for, in their sincere and earnest wish to observe the Peace themselves, and that its stipulations should be adhered to by the American Government securing to *them* their rights, privileges, and immunities as in 1811, and of course exempting the tribes on the Mississippi, from having their lands occupied by the troops of the United States, or forts built thereon.

Anxious, however, as I was to inculcate on the minds of the Indians, the earnest wish of the British Government that the peace should be scrupulously observed, and lest any doubt of misconception on the subject should rashly induce any particular tribe to the renewal of hostilities, I determined, early in July, to send Captain Anderson, of the Indian Department to the Mississippi, with some presents to convey to the Indians

in person, the positive and renewed injunctions of the King, that they should faithfully abide by the late treaty. That officer conversed with all the principal chiefs, and not only *ascertained their pacific sentiments* but in *having every reason to believe, that they strictly acted up to them*; this afforded me more gratification, as His Excellency Lieutenant-General Sir Gordon Drummond, judging from some statements in the papers of a continuance of hostilities (all however previous to peace being known to them 24th May), and with a view to a complete and total cessation thereof, directed me to send Lieutenant-Colonel M'Kay to the Mississippi, for the express purpose; Captain Anderson having before been sent upon a similar duty, *yet notwithstanding*, and as *another* proof of the sincerity and good faith of Government upon that subject, I despatched Lieutenant-Colonel M'Kay, to acquaint the officer of the United States Troops, at Mackinac, that he was ready to proceed upon his mission, if he thought it necessary, but which Major Morgan declined, conceiving the previous steps taken to be fully sufficient.

The court then proceeded to the examination of the following witnesses.

Captain T. G. Anderson of the Indian Department, being duly sworn, deposes, that he was at the Prairie du Chiens, on the 21st of May last, when the first official news of peace was received by Captain Bulger from Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall, Commanding at Michilimack. On the following day the whole of the Indians were assembled, consisting of Sioux, Winnebagoes, Renards and Follavoines, in the Council Room. The Pipe of Peace had been previously prepared. The great Wampum Belt, by which they had been summoned to War, was *divested of its red colour, and rendered blue*, as a symbol of peace, according to their customs. The evidence was himself two hours busied in these preparations. The ceremony commenced with displaying the great wampum belt, which having changed its colour, was now the Belt of Peace. Captain Bulger, the Commanding Officer, then directed the evidence to make known to the Indians, that Peace had been made between Great Britain and the United States, in which they were all included. This the evidence did from a written speech, in which they were solemnly enjoined to observe the same: they were told that it contained the words of their

Father at Mackinac. It was tied with blue ribbon, and the seal of the Commanding Officer affixed to it. To render the ceremony more impressive, on Peace being mentioned, and the name of the King pronounced, a salute was fired from the Fort. Lieutenant Renville of the Indian Department, then went round with the Pipe of Peace, and to the best of his recollection, the whole of the Indians accepted the same, and smoked it, in token of their assent and acceptance thereof.

Nearly two hours before the council assembled, about six or eight Renards arrived to inform the Commanding Officer, that a party of Sauks and Renards had left the Rack River to go to war against the Americans. Immediately after the council the same Indians were despatched that evening with a Pipe to overtake the war-party, inform them of the Peace, and the orders of the Commanding Officer to return.

On the ensuing morning, Captain Dease of the Indian Department was sent off to the Sauk village with the same wampum-belt pipe and speech. He was ordered to proceed with the utmost expedition in the hope of recalling the war-party or any other which might be meditating hostilities. He proclaimed the Peace as directed, but the war-party could not be overtaken. The evidence since learned that they were engaged with the Americans on the 24th of May; being two days after the Peace was announced at Prairie du Chien. The evidence believes the scene of action to have been four hundred miles down the Mississippi.

Question from the Court. At the council, did the Indians in general seem pleased with the news of peace?

Answer. They did, and some of the principal Chiefs expressed themselves to that effect.

Question. On proclaiming the Peace on the 22nd May were not immediate steps taken to evacuate the Prairie du Chien and withdraw the garrison to Mackinac?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Were not strict orders given immediately on making known the peace, for the whole of the Indian Department and every officer and agent thereof to be withdrawn from amongst the Indians and to accompany the garrison to Mackinack?

Answer. There were, and immediately acted upon. The whole—consisting of R. Dickson Esq., L. Nonore, Louis Barthe, Captain Anderson, Captain Dease, Lieutenant Lowe, Lieutenant Brisbois, Lieutenant Renville, Interpreter Grignon, L. Grignon, Desonier, Campbell, and Rock—returned to Mackinac, and arrived on the 17th June, two Interpreters excepted, who did not conform with the order, having their families and property at Prairie du Chien.

Fort Adjutant James Keating being duly sworn, deposeth, that he was Lieutenant Commanding the Mississippi Volunteer Artillery, stationed at the Prairie du Chien. He fully and in every particular corroborates the above evidence of Captain Anderson.

Interpreter Amable Dusang, being duly sworn, deposeth, that he was at the time alluded to, an Ensign in the Mississippi Volunteers, stationed at the Prairie du Chien. He fully and in every particular corroborates the evidence of Captain Anderson.

Lieutenant Brisbois of the Indian Department, being duly sworn, deposeth, that he was at the time alluded to stationed at the Prairie du Chien, and also fully and in every particular corroborates Captain Anderson's evidence.

Interpreter Louis Desonier, being duly sworn, also fully corroborates Captain Anderson's evidence.

Captain T. G. Anderson again called and examined.

Question from the Court. Were you not since sent on duty to the Mississippi by Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall, and at what time?

Answer. I was sent with some presents, and left Michilimackinac on the 4th July.

Question. Had you not orders from Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall, strongly to impress on the minds of the Indians the anxious wish of the King their Father, that they should strictly observe the Peace which before had been repeatedly communicated to them?

Answer. Yes. I addressed them by his orders in several different councils in these words.

“My Children,

You have already been told more than once, that your great Father the King, has made peace with the Americans, and

that all his Red Children are included in it. I am purposely sent again to repeat this to you, and to acquaint you that it is his absolute command and desire, that you all bury the Tomahawk and not only live in harmony with them but with one another."

The evidence adds that the principal Chiefs, of all the different nations on that part of the Mississippi, were at different times addressed in the above words.

Question from the Court. Do you know of a single act of hostility having been committed by any of the Indian nations since the Peace was made known to them on the 22nd May by Captain Bulger, and by Captain Dease at the Sauk village immediately afterwards?

Answer. None, except that near Fort Howard on the 14th May, by a party of Sauks and Renards. It was the same that Captain Dease and a party of Indians had been sent after, to tell them of the news of Peace, but failed to overtake them. I am confident, had any happened since, that I must of heard of it from some of the Chiefs.

Question. In your conversations with the principal Chiefs, did they not express their determination to abide by the Peace?

Answer. They did, provided that the Americans observed it on their part, and did not attempt to build forts upon their lands, or advance farther than Fort Maddison, being the farthest Military Post upon the Mississippi which the Americans had occupied previous to the beginning of the war in 1812.

Question. Are you of opinion that if these encroachments were not made the Indian nations would with sincerity and good faith observe the Peace?

Answer. I am. They saw it was their interest in that case to observe it.

Interpreter Amable Dusang of the Indian Department being called, and duly sworn, deposeth, that he accompanied Captain Anderson on duty, when sent in July last to the Mississippi, that he was present at the different councils held by him with the Indians, and fully confirms the pacific sentiments and language with which he addressed them.

Interpreter Louis Desonier being duly sworn, deposeth, that he also accompanied Captain Anderson on duty to the Mississippi, and was present at the different councils with the Indians, upon that occasion. He also

fully confirms the pacific sentiments and language with which Captain Anderson addressed them.

Captain John Askin of the Indian Department at Drummond Island, being duly sworn, deposeth, that the first official news of Peace arrived at Michilimackinac the first of May by the Mink Schooner. Mr. Reanme of Sandwich was the bearer of the dispatches.

Question from the Court. Were not steps immediately taken to communicate the news of Peace to the Indian nations?

Answer. On the return of Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall, from Saint Josephs on the 2nd of May, accounts were immediately sent to L'Arbe Croche of that event, with a notice, that in a few days it would be proclaimed in person by the Commanding Officer. The principal Indians and Chiefs of the Grand Traverse being then at Michilimackinac, it was there communicated to them, and a message to the same purport sent to their Village. Nicoquam, a principal and intelligent Chief was sent with similar speeches to the Sagana Indians and the Ottawa Chief Assegenack despatched with wampum and the pipe of peace, to all the nations on the east side of Lake Michigan. Interpreter Louis Nolin was despatched with information to Lieutenant Law of the Indian Department at Green Bay and by him communicated to Interpreter Lessallier, at Millwackie, and to all the tribes inhabiting the west side of the Lake. On the 7th of May I accompanied Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall, and Lieutenant-Colonel M'Kay, (superintendents of the Indian Department) to Arbe Croche, where the Peace was proclaimed with every appropriate ceremony. A belt of wampum was presented by the Commanding Officer to the nation, to be preserved amongst those which had been given them on similar important occasions, to commemorate that event.

EVIDENCE CLOSED.

The Court not having been called on to give an opinion relative to the matters inquired into, together with its being obviously objectionable in this instance, when the President thereof, would have sat in judgment upon his own acts; trust that the clear and circumstantial evidence of so many witnesses on oath, will afford the subject sufficient elucidation.

In this view of the matter, no opinion or sentence being required, the

Court consider the testimony of Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall as a material part of the evidence, and is of opinion, that it should be substantiated upon oath.

Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall was accordingly duly sworn to the truth of the preceding statements, and also that the extracts which form the appendix to these proceedings are correct transcripts from the original documents.

(Signed) Rt. M'Douall, Lieutenant Colonel
and President.

(Signed) Geo. G. Cochrane, Major 37th Regt.

(Signed) W. R. Payne, Capt. Royal Engineers

(Signed) Robert Stephens, Capt. 37th Regt.

(Signed) Thos. G. Anderson, Capt. Ind. Department.

Extract of a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall to Lieutenant-Colonel Harvey, Deputy Adjutant General, dated Mackinac 4th August 1815.

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your (duplicate) despatch of the 28th March, which arrived at this garrison on the 1st instant by a trading vessel from Detroit. The embarrassing situation in which this first official intelligence of the Peace places me, is greatly enhanced by the unfortunate delay which has taken place in communicating that event. The original despatch was entrusted by the Indian Department at York, to a character every way unfit to be the bearer of events of such importance."

Extract of a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall to Lieutenant-Colonel Foster, Military Secretary, dated Mackinac, 15th May 1815.

"Your despatch of the 11th March containing for us the highly important intelligence of Peace being concluded between Great Britain and the United States of America, reached me at this place on the 11th of this month. By it, for the first time, I was enabled to peruse the treaty at full length; it is to me a matter of great regret that I did not receive it sooner. I leave you to judge whether the Indian Department at York entrusted

such a despatch to proper hands, when I inform you that the person who took down my letters in March, left that place thirty days after their departure, and arrived here ten days before them. In addition to other inconveniences, such a shameful and unprecedented delay might have occasioned (and may have for what I yet know) the loss of many lives."

Extract of a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall to Major-General Sir George Murray K. B., dated Michilimackinac 5th May 1815.

"I have the honor to acquaint your Excellency that I received the first official intimation of the Peace only on the 1st instant, in a communication from the Deputy Adjutant General, Lieutenant-Colonel Harvey."

Extract of a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall to Colonel Butler commanding at Detroit, dated Mackinac 6th May 1815.

On the 1st instant I had the honor of receiving your letter of the 16th April: by the same conveyance I received the first official communication from my Government of the termination of hostilities, and of the restoration of the blessings of Peace by the treaty concluded at Ghent. I regret much the unusual delay which has occurred in forwarding the original despatch from York, and which only arrived this day, as I could sooner have commenced my preparations for the evacuation of this Island, agreeable to the stipulations of the treaty."

Extract of a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall to Captain Bulger, commanding Fort M'Kay, dated Michilimackinac, 1st May 1815.

"The official despatch from Lieutenant-General Drummond to which I alluded in my last has not yet arrived, but this day an American vessel from Detroit, has brought me a duplicate of the same, confirming the previous report of a Peace and a mutual restoration of all forts and places taken on either side: you will therefore adopt instant and immediate steps for the evacuation of the Prairie du Chien, bringing with you the stores. The guns captured in the fort must be sent down the Mississippi to St. Louis if practicable, if otherwise to be brought to Mackinac.

"The whole of the Western Indian Department will accompany you to join me at this place.

“That rascal Cowen, whom you may recollect in charge of provisions at Nottawaysaga, has been five weeks on the road from York with the despatches, and has not yet arrived.

“The utmost pains must be taken that this Peace should be generally promulgated, and every nation cautioned how they infringe it, but above all, let them not imbibe the fatal error, that the supply which is sent them is an inducement to further hostilities.”

Extract of a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall to Lieutenant-Colonel Harvey, Deputy Adjutant General, dated Michilimackinac, 5th May 1815.

“I visited the Ottawa nation a few days ago and proclaimed the Peace amongst them with the usual ceremonies, and in a manner that was peculiarly impressive; in fact I have spared no pains to render it palatable to the Indians of this neighbourhood, in general, in which I have been greatly assisted by my friend Lieutenant-Colonel M'Kay, who is so deservedly popular amongst them.”

Extract of a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel M'Douall to His Excellency Major-General Sir Frederick Robinson, K. C. B., dated Drummonds Island, 22nd September 1815.

“I had before the honor of informing your Excellency of the arrival of Captain Anderson of the Indian Department from the duty on which I had despatched him from Michilimackinac in July, of impressing still more strongly on the minds of the Indian nations on the Mississippi, the conclusion of the Peace. I strictly enjoined Captain Anderson not to enter on the subject of politics, but to confine himself to the delivery of the presents, and strongly to recommend the strict observance of the Peace, the cultivation of their lands and attention to their hunt, the burying in oblivion of all jealousies and dissensions, and that the Indian nations should in future live as one family studying only the general good. These instructions have been implicitly attended to.”

Extract of a speech by the Head Sauk Chief (La Moit) spoken in

presence of Captain Anderson of the Indian Department at the Prairie-du Chien August 3rd 1815.

“ My Children,

If they come up here as *traders*, I shall always be happy to see them, and to treat them well, but since you are not to have Forts on our lands, *they* shall not come up with soldiers higher than Fort Maddison, (their farthest post on the Mississippi before the war). We will strictly listen to your voice: but we are not women. We will not commence quarrelling with them, but if they begin to molest us in the least, we fear them not, and will defend ourselves like men.

“ The Sauk Chief La Moite and the Black Hawk, having stated that the *Red Head* (Governor Clark) had allowed them thirty days to repair to St. Louis, and that period being, as they said, nearly elapsed, and as they understood that the Americans looked upon them as their enemies from that period (15th or 20th August) they asked Captain Anderson what his advice to them was? He replied, that he did not think that the Americans would do them any injury, and as Bailvin their Agent, was soon expected up, their best plan would be to receive him friendly, and present him with the pipe of Peace on his arrival at their village. This proposal they would not agree to, stating, that they would not humble themselves so much as to *offer* THEIR Pipe, but if Bailvin would present them with his Pipe, they would without hesitation receive it. Captain Anderson to get rid of this difficulty advised them to present the American Agent with the pipe which Captain Bulger (who commanded at Fort M'Kay) had given them in May last to smoke with the Americans on informing them of Peace. This they agreed to.”

Extract of a speech sent to the different Tribes of Indians on the Mississippi by the Great Menomini Chief *Thomas*, in July 1815.

“ My Brethren

send you a few strings of wampum, to assure you that my heart is clean, and that my wish is to live in strict harmony with all the world. Our Father has given you his advice. Let us therefore warm with one fire, eat out of the same dish, and smoke with the same pipe. By conducting ourselves in this way, we shall all live happy.”

Extract of a speech by the Great Sioux Chief (Wabashaw) on the 10th July 1815.

“ My Father,

I am happy that you show us the fine path of peace, in which our ancestors walked with so much ease.”

Extract of a speech by the first War Chief of the Sauk nation (Black Hawk) August 3rd 1815 at the Prairie du Chien.

“ We shall therefore listen to your words, and remain quiet, as my great chief told you just now, and next canoeing season I will go and see my great Father at Michilimackinac, and perhaps farther.”

Extract of a speech from Bordach a principal War Chief of the Renard nation, August 3rd 1815, at Prairie du Chien.

“ I have been listening with patience to what you have said to the Sauks, and their answers, which comprehends fully the wish of my band, and they leave me but few words to say. I ask for charity. In case my body is no longer bloody (meaning that if he again went to war, and washed himself as is their custom) do not blame these my brethren, I will be the only person to be scolded.”

Captain Anderson seeing his determination to revenge the death of his son on the Americans, feigned anger, got up and reproached him in these words.

“ What! You a great Warrior and talk in this way! Had your brave son loitered behind trees and died with fear, would you not have been more ashamed. He died like a brave man, in defence of his wife and children. If there was no risk in going to war, bravery would be out of the question, and the Indians would not wear feathers in their caps (which denotes the number each has killed in battle).”

“ Your conduct has made me ashamed, but I attribute it to your not being acquainted with the customs of the English.”

Captain Anderson then gave him a gun and a handsome present,— saying

“Put off your mourning with this, and listen to the words of your Father which you have just now heard.”

He answered,

“My Father,
I am a fool for acting as I have done, you have given me sense,—I will follow your advice.”



