

(McKenney to Sec. of War

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(Indian Office Miscellaneous Files. 1836-1837. Pension Building.)

(Thos. L. McKenney to Secretary of War.)

persons had gone within the pickets for protection from the apprehended incursion. Every countenance was anxious, but a deeper feeling pervaded every breast for the safety of the Governor. At one time, news were received that he had been taken prisoner, at another, that his canoe had been fired into and that his cook, Baptiste, had been killed, and two of his men wounded. Two Menomonees, it was said had been killed and this had roused into activity the dormant passion of these people for war. Those who are here painted themselves for battle and the war whoop and yell were given.

On tracing these rumours to their source, and comparing them with one another, I concluded that all had been magnified, and that no apprehensions need be entertained for the safety of this place. It was my belief also that the Winebagoes had been induced to make the onset at the Prairie in retaliation for some real or supposed grievances, and that there was no concert formed, and no confederacy established. I knew the deep rooted hostility of the Menomonies to these lawless people, and could hardly believe the Sioux would take up the hatchet at their bidding -- Of the Potawatamies, I had some fears, but could not learn that they had shewn any sign of discontent. I endeavored to satisfy the settlers upon all these points, but they were not willing to doubt, from the known character of these freebooters,

where forty men were sent up in addition to the eighteen which had been requested by us before we left here. The Garrison was put in a state of defence for active operations and several

Menomonie Village

Fox River July 19, 1837

To the Hon:

The Secretary of War.

Sir.

I arrived here from Mackinac last evening, in the expectation of meeting the Governor. My intended visit to Chicago, and to the Agency, and the Potawatamies at that Post was frustrated by stormy weather. I was obliged to voyage it by night when the winds were comparatively stilled, and was, after all, upwards of six days coming. My conveyance, as usual, a canoe. From a trader going to Mackinac, and about one hundred miles from this, I learned that war had broken out above, and that Prairie des Chien^s was its theatre; that the Winebagoes had murdered two of our people and scalped a child at that place, and had hoisted the black flag at the Portage, between the Fox and Ouisconsin river, and that they had resolved to let no one after him, pass. This excited my apprehensions for the safety of the Governor. On arriving here I found the inhabitants in a state of great excitement. It had been deemed important to strengthen our guard at the treaty ground, 33 miles above this place, where forty men were sent up in addition to the eighteen which had been requested by us before we left here. The Garrison was

have never been worthy of the slightest trust. The importance of breaking down their power (they are about 1200 warriors strong) may be inferred from the utter impossibility of doing any thing with them except by force, as time has proved; and from the liabilities of being murdered which every Citizen has to encounter, always, in travelling from the Lakes to the Mississippi. They inhabit all this great thoroughfare of about 400 miles in extent, and from the Mississippi to the Winnebago lake which is about 40 miles from this place.

Of the cause or causes of this excitement I have not been able to satisfy myself. They are attributed variously to the encroachments of the Miners on their territory, and to the belief, it is said, they have entertained that two of their men had been killed by our people at the St Peters, and to other causes. Gov. Cass may probably have obtained correct information on this subject and conveyed it to you.

I have the honor to be

With great respect

Your obt. St.

To: L: McKenney.

Hon: James Earbourn
Secretary of War.

Washington City.

their readiness to hazard every thing to gratify their murderous feelings and looked confidently for an irruption into these settlements after the Indian fashion.

I had prepared to proceed to the treaty ground which had now become a camp, about two hundred strong, composed of about sixty regulars, and our people, and Menomone Indians, all armed, but as Maj. Irwin was expected down this evening I determined to postpone my movement until tomorrow. About sun-down, he came in, bringing despatches from Gov. Cass and Mr.

Marsh, the Sub Agent at Prairie du Chien, copies of which I have the honor to enclose herewith. You will have received from Gov. Cass, from St. Louis, a full account of every thing from the time he left the Prairie, including his subsequent movements. Marsh's letter being six days later than the Governors shews that the war cloud has measurably vanished, and that a state of comparative security is felt at the Prairie. Prompt movements and a sudden throwing in among these people who are the Ishmaelites of these regions of a strong force, and fierce and spirited retaliation, will be a most happy event -- and it is to be hoped that their war feelings may not have evaporated until Genl. Atkinson may arrive, as I trust he may, in time, and that he may, in his own defence, be enabled to chastise them well.

Nothing short of such measures can subdue these people. They are unlike all other Indians known to me, and are not now, and