

## Andrew Jackson to Willie Blount, June 4, 1812, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

### TO WILLIE BLOUNT.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This letter seems to be the original, sent to Governor Blount. A copy, with slight variations, in the handwriting of a clerk, exists in the Jackson Manuscripts. The depredations of the Creeks, here alluded to, are explained in the following deposition of Mrs. Martha C. Crowley, taken in Humphrey Co., Tenn., Aug. 11, 1812: "State of Tennessee Humphrey County

"This day Martha Crowley personally appeared before us Samuel Parker, and Thomas Holland, Justices of the Peace for said County, who being duly sworn on the Holy Evangelist of Almighty God, the truth to speak concer[n]ing the treatement she received while a prisoner with the Indians, deposith and saith That after those savages had in a most cruel and barbarous manner murdered two of her infant children, a young Mr. Hays that lived with her and three of Mrs. Manlys children, and shot Mrs. Manly, they immediately took her a cross the Tennessee River in bark canoes, which they appeared to have provided for that purpose, and that when they took up, or encamped that evening, they tied her by the arms and neck to a tree; threatening her at the same time, if, she attempted to make her escape that they would immediately put her to death; That the next morning they set out with her and on the 13th day arived at Bear creek, where they continued about twenty six hours, during which time they were visited by a number of chickasaws, some of whom drank and smoaked the pipe with the party that held her as a prisoner. That George Colbert came to where they were and conversed in a very familiar manner with the chickasaws and then rode off again without once speaking to her, and that she veryly believes Colbert might have rescued her from the creeks had he made

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the least exertion, the number of chickasaws far surpassing that of the creeks. That when they left Bear Creek they immediately left their trace, apparently to avoid being pursued by either the whites or chickasaws, and that on the 4th day after leaving Bear creek they reached one of the Creek towns on the Waters of Bigby, but did not go into the town.

“Immediately after they had encamped they were visited by a Number of creek Indians, who conversed familiarly and smoked with the party that had her along. That the party that held her as a prisoner told the Chiefs or head Men of the town that they had taken her from the Ohio at the Battle of Tippacanoë, and that in the course of four Moons they intended to return again to the Ohio, and that they intended to try to excite the Indians belonging to the different tribes, to go to war with the whites, but was doubtful they could not. That when they left that place they took her near to a town on Black Warriër, where she continued one day, when she was informed by a squaw, that they intended to put her to death, and that they were then digging her grave. That she was ordered by one of the men to stir a pot of hommany that was then on the fire.

“Knowing that there was no time to be lost she determined to effect by stratagem what she could not do by force. She immediately therefore picked up a tin cup under the pretence of going to the spring for water, when she fortunately made her escape under cover of the Night, and crept into a hollow log where she continued some time and then wandered until the next day two o'clock when she attempted to make her way towards the Bigby, in hopes she should meet with some person that would protect her from savage cruelty and barbarity. That on the 3rd night from the time she effected her escape after travelling through swamps and suffering all the pains of cold and hunger (having eat nothing but black berrys from the time of her escape) she reached a town (in the night) on black Warriër, which she ventured up to in order to dry herself, when she was informed by some Indians she saw, that there was a person in town that could speak English, and that they would take her to him; that they then took her to a house where there were several Indians, neither of whom could speak English. She then concluded it was a plot laid to kill her and immediately told a squaw (by sign) that she wanted to go out, when she again

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effected her escape, and continued to travel (or wander) until the sun was about one hour high in the evening of the next day, when she was overtaken by an Indian with a gun on his shoulder, who ordered her to go back to town, that she refused to do so, when he made a noise which was answered by another, who immediately came up, and took her back towards town, where she met with a Mr. Walker, upon the Bigby who was there purchasing of Beef Cattle, and who having heard of her offered a reward of twenty five dollars to any one that would find her, and that the party that took her along received no part of the money as she knows of, neither was she ever purchased of them, by either of the chiefs, as has been related. That Mr Walker treated her very politely and succeeded in sending her back once more to her friends and further this deponent saith not”

Hermitage, June 4, 1812.

I have this evening reached home, from my trip to Georgia and my heart bleeds within me on the receipt of the news of the horrid cruelty and murders committed by a party of Creeks, on our innocent, wives and little babes, since I left home. It is with regret I find that Genl Johnston at the head of 500 men was near the place where this horrid scene was acted, and did not either send a detachment in pursuit or follow the trail of these marauders, with his whole force even to their towns. as far as I have yet heard they have Escaped with impunity. *But they must be punished*, and our frontier protected, and as I have no doubt but the[y] are urged on by British agents and tools, the sooner the[y] can be attacked, the less will be their resistance, and the fewer will be the nations or tribes that we will have to war with. It is therefore necessary for the protection of the frontier that we march into the creek nation demand the perpetrators, at the Point of the Bayonet, if refused, that we make reprisals, and lay their Towns in ashes. I think I can in three weeks, raise a sufficient force for this purpose and in six weeks lay their Towns in ashes. I only *want your orders*, the fire of the militia is up, they burn for revenge, and now is the time to give the creeks the fatal blow, before the[y] expect it. as far as I can learn from the Cherokees, the Creeks are making every preparation for war. the cherokees will Join us, if we shew an immediate spirit of revenge, and it may deter the bad men of the Choctaws

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and Chikesaws, from aiding the Creeks. give me the power to procure provisions and munitions of war, by your orders and I will pledge myself for the ballance. powder is scarce but I believe, a sufficient quantity could be obtained for this Expedition in Nashville. lead can be had. I think 2500 men (volunteers) could quell the Creeks, and bring them to terms without presents or annuities. This number I think I can raise on a short notice. I intend Issuing an order to prepear the minds of the militia for such an event and await your orders or the orders of the Genl Govrt. In the mean time I shall give orders, that a sufficient protection be afforded to the frontier. I shall be impatient for your answer, I am Sir with high consideration and respect yr mo. ob. serv.