

**THE MISSIONARIES.**—The following letter written by Col. Nelson, in relation to the alleged abuses of power by the Georgia Guard the Cherokee Nation, give quite a different view to the affair.

September 10th, 1828

To His Excellency GEORGE R. GILMER,

Your Excellency's letter of the 3d of this month directed to Col. J. W. A. Sanford, inquiring of him whether the several statements contained in the public prints, in regard to the confinement of the Missionaries and other prisoners, in the territory while in our custody, were correct; if so correct, what led to the severity of such a measure, and whether with the cause of the arrest of others. To your Excellency it is known that Col. Sanford's absence on official duties, at Milledgeville during these transactions, makes me responsible for the measures adopted towards these men.

In answer, I have the honor of stating, that they were confined each night, from the time of their arrest till we reached these quarters, having a common padlock and trace chain round one ancle of each of them, after their going to rest, say from 8 o'clock P. M. till daylight. In justification of the measure, I have to say that on the first arrest of the missionaries in March last, I had them treated with all the respect due their profession, and all the humanity that men mistaking their duty without intention of crime might be entitled to. Subsequent events and information however, developed the character of these men; instead of finding them meek innocently offending individuals we believed them so to be, they were found to be under the influence of the worst passions; they were to play at a game of the most desperate kind, and there has been no expedient, however original, that they have not resorted to, to accomplish their purpose.—It was known from information at these quarters (though lodged by individuals whose testimony our laws would not recognize) but of the most respectable of that character that there had been, (at their instance,) meetings held of the most incendiary and criminal character, that they had endeavored to excite more ignorant Indians to oppose in force the Guard, with a view to effect the relief of themselves, or any other persons that might be hounded in the violation of our laws, and that the guard was on the route through the country in discharge of their duties, murder them in cold blood. (If Worcester be not misrepresented, a gun for this purpose was fired from his own house near it.) On the first arrest, I overheard myself discussing the probability of violence from the Indians; one of them remarked, that the Indians knew the Supreme Court would sustain them, that they the Indians would open war; this being their character, and an apparent disposition on the part of some to avoid arrest, on the approach of the Guard, I deemed me to take such measures as I believed necessary to secure their delivery to the civil authorities. I believed the act fully justified by the circumstances, when it is recollected that the whole force consisted of 15 men, detached from this leaving with me but nine, in a remote and unfriendly part of the territory, and much harrassed and fatigued, by having traveled from 30 to 35 miles after night, and a great distance during the day, (which often occurs to us,) I believed it unsafe to risk prisoners in private rooms (where strangers often also sleep,) such Guard as my little force would enable to keep up, (considering too their droop from excessive fatigue,) without some additional security. In no instance was this security afforded but in the mildest manner, (leaving only an imaginary ill,) nor has it ever been towards a prisoner under my charge. Their detention was much longer than I wished at these quarters. Col. Sanford's absence and his being possessed of official papers necessary to their confinement caused the delay. The day after his return they were delivered over to the civil authorities. A Cherokee who was chained to the waggon caught in the act of digging for gold. He had and had been for eight years an outlaw, from his own tribe for killing one of their officers. His fear that he would be delivered to them for execution under their laws, caused him to make such desperate attempts at escape, that I was compelled to chain him.

As regards the arrest and confinement of M. Leod, I deem it sufficient for me to state the grounds of his arrest, which were distinctly known to him on his discharge, together with the names of the individuals lodging the information all which he has thought proper in his publications entirely to suppress, to be relieved from base falsehood and calumny he has heaped upon me. The facts are simply these. An individual connected with the mission, reported him to Major Brooks, as residing in the territory in violation of our laws; another person of respectability connected with the same denomination, to which M. Leod belongs, made the same charges against myself. When we met with him on the occasion of his arrest, he was not recognized by me as an individual against whom the information had been made. After joining the command, he and Wells soon brought themselves into notice for their abuse of the administration of the Georgia Government, and that of the State of Georgia, and by M. Leod's giving some spirited recommendations to the prisoners in what way they should conduct themselves. This created some stir with the members of the Guard near Milledgeville, my attention was attracted; on learning the cause and not knowing that either of them were violators of our laws, I endeavored in most peaceable terms to get rid of them; finding this could not, I inquired of Trot, if that individual (alluding to M. Leod,) was one of their party who was itinerating in the territory of Georgia. By his answering in the affirmative and mentioning his name, I had him arrested and treated with the balance of the prisoners. After arriving at these quarters and making such inquiries as caused me to believe the information not as well founded as I had believed, and making him acquainted with the whole, he was discharged but with none of the threats or declarations attributed to me by him. They are all false.

The affair of Wells being entirely of a private and personal character, I deem it unnecessary to inform your Excellency further, than that the whole statement as made public is maintained.

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As regards the language attributed to me by these men, I will only remark, that I would disdain to reflect upon the feelings of any man however base, or however much he might have injured me, where in my power; and as to these persons I am not conscious of having spoken to them, or of them in their hearing from the time of their arrest, till they were before the committing officer, and only then in the performance of my official duty. As to their sayings of Major Crooks, it is expected that a jury of Gwinnett county, will determine how far they misrepresented him.

I cannot close this communication to your Excellency, without expressing my regret, that the officers with which these men are connected, could not be fully informed of their conduct. I am very sensible that they would withdraw from me their support, and leave them deservedly the contempt of all good men.

I have the honor to be your Excellency's obedient servant.

C. H. NELSON.