

William Charles Cole Claiborne to Andrew Jackson, August 29, 1814, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

GOVERNOR CLAIBORNE TO JACKSON.

New Orleans, August 29, 1814.

D'r sir, I await with much anxiety intelligence from you. The State of things at Pensacola, surely will not long be borne with by our Government; The Creeks are not only provisioned at that place, but are cloathed, armed 5 and exercised by British officers, with the knowledge and approbation of the Spanish authorities. Are you certain that the Big warrior will remain in his friendship for the U. States?¹ I ask this question, because it has been stated to me, that some of his principal adherents, had lately a private audience with Captain Woodbine, the English agent at Pensacola! Have you reason to doubt the fidelity of any portion of the Choctaws? I make this enquiry, because it is stated to me, that some of their Chiefs were lately at Pensacola, and Woodbine has said that a part of the nation were or would soon be with him.

¹ The following letter from Big Warrior, leader of the Creeks, formerly relied on by the United States, will show how much he had come under the British influence. It was written to Col. Benjamin Hawkins, the Creek agent, Aug. 25, 1814. The phrase "a Second Bowles" alludes to William Augustus Bowles, the American-British adventurer who for some years in the late eighteenth century was the chief commander of the Creek forces. See p. 214, n. 2, *post*. William McIntosh, half-breed, was in 1814 and later the principal chieftain of the friendly Lower Creeks.

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“When we had a talk with General Jackson we sent a man down this river by the name of the Mad Bear to have a talk with the Lower towns. None attended but Chickasawhaw- [or Chisketallofaw] and the town he lived in himself. When the Mad Bear got home he tried to get all to come to his talk but he could not get any except two towns as mentioned. the Mad Bear wants to move his property this side of the line but he cant for the peoples watching him. The British officer who came on here promised them soldiers but they have got none they have 300 negros of the Nation under arms at Forbes's store. There was one negro March and one of Stedhams runaway and went down, come back and stole Hardridges two negro woman and 14 of J. Stedhams negros and went down to the British. The British came on here and said they were the Indians friend but they came not for that they came for Negros and they think it is a second Bowles. The British who came on shore have plenty of arms and ammunition and our youngmen what [want?] to go and get it from them. We want to know your opinion on the subject. McIntosh will head the party if you will say the word. McIntosh wants to go and see what the British mean by arming the Negros. it is not the Indians they are afooling but the negros, we ant at war as yet but we want to go and see, and if they fire on us we will return the fire. We want to know your advise how to do, for you give us nothing but good advise and as soon as possible. The King of Cowetas will tell you all the talks of the Lower towns and he is the bearer of this letter. We are your friends.”

The Militia of Louisiana, seem much better disposed, than they were the last year to take the field, and I hope to be enabled to array this States quota of the Requisition without difficulty.

I have the honor to be