

Missouri State Archives: Finding Aid 5.1

Mormon War Papers, 1837-1841

[Full-text transcription of: Letter from M. Arthur Esquire to the Representatives from Clay County, Liberty, MO]

Liberty 29th. November 1838.

Respected Friends,

Humanity to an injured people prompts me at present to address you thus. You were aware of the treatment (to some extent before you left home) received by that unfortunate race of beings called the Mormons, from Devils in the form of human beings inhabiting Davis, Livingston and a part of Ray Counties, not being satisfied with the relinquishment of all their rights as citizens, and human beings, in the Treaty forced upon them by Genl. Lucas, by giving up their arms and throwing themselves upon the mercy of the State, and their fellow Citizens generally, hoping thereby protection of their lives and property, are now receiving treatment from those demons that makes humanity shudder, and the cold chills run over any man not entirely destitute of any feeling of humanity.

Those demons are now constantly Strolling up and down Caldwell County in small Companies armed, insulting the women in any and every way; and plundering the poor devils of all the means of substance (scanty as it was) left them; and driving off their Horses, Cattle, Hogs, &c and rifleing their houses and farms of every thing therein, taking beds bedding wardrobe, and all such things as they see they want, leaving the poor mormons in a starving and naked condition.

These are facts I have from authority that cannot be questioned, and can be maintained and Substantiated at any time; there is now a Petition afloat in our Town Signed by the Citizens of all parties and grade, which will be

sent you in a few days, praying the Legislature to make some speedy enactment applicable to their Case, they are entirely willing to leave our State, so soon as this inclement Season is over, and a number have already left and leaving daily; scattering themselves to the four winds of the earth.

Now Sirs, I do not want by any means to dictate to you the course to be pursued, but one fact I will merely suggest. I this day was conversing with Mr. George M. Pryer who is just from Far West, relating the Outrages there committed daily, I Suggested to him the propriety of the Legislature's placing a guard to patroll on the lines of Caldwell County, Say of about 25. men. And give them say [\$1: or 1 for \$] per day each man and find their provision &c until say the first day of June next those men rendering that protection necessary to the Mormons, and allowing them to follow and bring to Justice any individual who has heretofore, or will hereafter be guilty of plundering, or any violation of the laws;

I would suggest that George M. Pryer be appointed Captain of Said guard, and that he be allowed to raise his own men; he is willing thus to act: He is a man of Correct habits and will do justice to all sides, and render due Satisfaction.

Should this course not be approved of, I would recommend the restoration of their arms for their own protection, one or the other of these Suggestions is certainly due the Mormons from the State; she has now their leaders prisoners to the number of

50. or 60, and I apprehend no danger from the remainder in any way, until they will leave the State.

Copy of Mr.
Arthur's letter
except what related to
the chartering of some
company in Liberty

Addressed to members of
Gen'l Assembly from Clay Cty