

MARSEL WHITSON HALL

The following two documents relate to the family of Mansel Hall (Mansel Whitson Hall, Sr.) while he was living for a short time in the Alabama Territory. They were discovered by Mrs. John A. (Mary Roberts) Davis while she was engaged in research for a seminar paper on "The Transition of Alabama from Territory to State," in 1954. The first document is a letter from an army officer to the Secretary of War and the second is a petition by a group of citizens to the Governor of the Alabama Territory. Both documents are concerned with clashes between white settlers and Creek Indians on their way to their new Trans-Mississippi homes.

The first document mentions "fore persons of the family of one Mr. Hall" and the second "three of our children and one negro woman." One of the "fore persons" mentioned in the first is the "one negro woman" mentioned in the second.

Named William and Lucy Hall.

The two documents ^{below} are copied exactly as they appear in the text. The Territorial papers of the United States. Compiled and edited by Clarence Edwin Carter. Vol. 18. Territory of Alabama. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1934- .pp. 419-420, 429-430.

Document 1.

JOHN M. NEEL TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR

River Black Warrior Tuskaloosa County Alabama Territory
Sept the 22^d 1818

Secretary of War

Hon'd Sir I hasten to lay before your Department some statements relative to the late Battle fought. With a band of Indians. Consisting of 70 Warriors. and there Women and Children. From the best information. that I have recived. they aire a remanant of the Hostile Creeks. that on findaing they could no longer be protected in Floraday. the have laterly applyed to they Checkasaw tribe for land to settle on. and on being demeyed. they formed a resalution to fight there way through our settlements over the Masasipia. Where they waire told by the Checkasaws that they could git land-and in order to execute there designs they crossd the rivers Allabama & Cahabia. and on there way to the Warier they killed two white men & three Chuktaws. they then on coming to this river at the place called Cornalls Settlement. comitted several outrages on our Citizens and murdered fore persons of the family of one Mr Hall they then steard there course for this place: On Our giting entelagence of there approach. we took up arms in our own defence: and on the 16th instant

MANSEL WHITSON HALL &
 ↓ The following two documents relate to the family of Mansel Hall (Mansel Whitson Hall, Sr.) while he was living for a short time in the Alabama Territory. They were discovered by Mrs. John A. (Mary Roberts) Davis while she was engaged in research for a seminar paper on "The Transition of Alabama from Territory to State," in 1954. The first document is a letter from an army officer to the Secretary of War and the second is a petition by a group of citizens to the Governor of the Alabama Territory. Both documents are concerned with clashes between white settlers and Creek Indians on their way to their new Trans-Mississippi homes.

The first document mentions "fore persons of the family of one Mr. Hall" and the second "three of our children and one negro woman." One of the "fore persons" mentioned in the first is the "one negro woman" mentioned in the second.

*named
William +
Lucy*

The two documents below are copied exactly as they appear in the text. The Territorial papers of the United States. Compiled and edited by Clarence Edwin Carter. Vol. 18. Territory of Alabama. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1934- .pp. 419-420, 429-430.

Document 1.

JOHN M. NEEL TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR

River Black Warier Tuskaloosa County Alabama Territory
 Sept the 22^d 1818

Secretary of War

Hond Sir I hasten to lay before your Department some statements relative to the late Battle fought. With a band of Indians. Consisting of 70 Warriars, and there Women and Children. From the best information, that I have recived, they aire a remnant of the Hostile Creeks, that on findeing they could no longer be protected in Floraday, the have laterly applyed to they Checkasaw tribe for land to settle on, and on being denyed, they formed a resalution to fight there way through our settlements over the Massasipia, Where they waire told by the Checkasaws that they could git land-and in order to execute there designe they crossed the rivers Allabama & Cahabia, and on there way to the Warier they killed two white men & three Chucktaws, they then on comsing to this river at the place called Cornwells Settlement, committed several outrages on our Citizons and murdered fore persons of the familey of one Mr Hall they then steared there course for this place: On Our giting mtelagence of there approach, we took up arms in our own defence: and on the 16th instant

sixteen of our most enterprising men met on their trails, and after choosing Maj S. Taylor and myself as officers, we were joined by Capt. Bacon and fourteen men. We being thus united followed their trails through swamps and cane brakes heretofore thought to be impenetrable to where we found they crossed the Warrior eight miles below the falls. we crossed in pursuit of them and after marching four miles through the most hored swamps and cane brakes and being separated from Capt^t Bacon's command we found the enemy incamped in a beaver run well fortified by Nature there being a thick cane brake on the right and a high bluff on the left. They no sooner saw us than they raised the War hoop and prepared for action. we then gave orders to charge them, (which was done with the spirit of true Americans.) through their hole incampments, and laid eight or ten of their warriors dead on the ground, orders was then given to retreat and load our guns and forming again on the entrance of the incampment, we were reinforced by Capt. Bacon, and part of his men, we then maintained a smart skirmish for 30 minutes during which time we killed 6 or 8 more of the enemy, but on finding that they were about to out flank us a retreat was ordered which was done without any molestation; in the action we lost two brave men killed and one badly wounded the loss of the enemy was not less than 15 killed and several wounded - On the 17th eighteen of us went to the battle ground to bury our dead but on finding that the enemy had not left their strong hold we withdrew - on the 19th our force was more formidable, we then marched up to the battle ground and after patrolling the swamps and cane brakes it was discovered that they were fled toward the Sipsy river, we buried our dead and returned to our respective abodes. On the same day Col. T. Hunter with 110 mounted men - got on their trail and coming up with their rear killed one of their Warriors: They have thus taken their flight toward the borders of the Chickasaws who being apprised of their approach, will I trust soon give a good account of them -

My reasons for making this communication to your Department is in consequence of our having acted without any kind of orders, but solely from self-preservation. And should it meet the approbation of Government I shall feel happy to think that I have rendered my country the smallest service. If not I hope it will be aluded to my want of skill, and not to the lack of good will to be of service to my fellow (MS. term) in general--

I have the honor to be your Most Ob^t Servant--

John M. Neel formerly a Lieut of the 43^d Reg^t U. S. Inf^y

Secretary of War

P. S. Should any further explanation be deemed necessary. Direct to me at Fort St. Stevens - A. - T.

(Addressed) Secretary of War Washington City (Postmarked) Jefferson J C. Ga Oct 9 Free.

(Endorsed) Black Warrior River 22^d Sep^r 1818. L^t John M Neel Reports an enterprise ag^t a party of hostile Indians-- Oct 1818.

Document 2

PETITION TO GOVERNOR BIBB BY INHABITANTS OF TUSCALOOSA COUNTY

October 7, 1818

The Petition of Sundry Inhabitants of Tuscaloosa County (Near the Black

Warrior River) to the Honorable William W. Bibb Governor of our Territory of Alabama humbly sheweth--that your petitioners are in great distress on account of large parties of Hostile Indians passing Thro' our Country Westward & who after killing ^{some} of our children & one negro woman & considerable Quantity of stock &c. has sheltered themselves in a large swamp on the River while other parties we hear has penetrated at different points.

We therefore humbly pray your Excellency to send us such aid in men & as many arms as may be in your power--to prevent our families from falling a sacrifice to them & also take such measures as may prevent any more parties from again entering our Territory & your Petitioners do humbly pray &c.

Thomas Whitson J.P.
 Littleton Fuller
 Wiles Garrett
 John Cunningham
 Daniel McCree
 Israel Gabriel
 Dillard Beasley
 * Mansel Hall
 John Moore
 David Campbell

Mark Harden
 James McMillan
 Booker Foster
 Jesse Foster
 Geo. Washington
 Samuel Parker
 Wiley Beasley
 David Taylor
 Orville Perry

Mr. Crawford will please to present this to the Governor. When I came by the people were greatly alarmed & the Indians had killed 3 children & one negro. Considerable stock

Your friend

Edna Jones Ft. Claiborne

Sageville Oct. 7th 1818

(Addressed) The Honorable Wm. W. Bibb Governor of the Alabama Territory
 St. Stephens.

(Indorsed) Petition of sundry Inhabitants of Tuskaloosa County.