

CAMP SABINE, *April 20, 1836.*

SIR: In obedience of your order dated 5th instant, I proceeded to the Caddo villages, where I arrived on the 14th instant. On my route I ascertained from many different sources that one "Manuel Flores," a Mexican, had passed up to the Caddo villages about two months since, and had been endeavoring to prevail upon the Caddo Indians to join him and go against and fight the white inhabitants of Texas. He promised them free plunder, and said that the Spaniards (Mexicans) wished all the Americans (white inhabitants of Texas) destroyed; that the Americans *there* were all deserters from their own country, &c. This information came direct from the Caddo Indians, who said that no impression had been made upon them, and that they had refused to go with him. Upon my arrival at the first village, I found only two or three squaws and a few children. The squaws stated that the warriors had all gone to the prairies in consequence of what "Manuel Flores" had told them, viz: that the Americans were going to kill them all. Through my interpreter I told her that I came there as a friend of the Caddoes; that the Americans were their friends, and wished the Caddoes to return to their villages and live in peace, and hunt on their own grounds as usual. She *then* said that there were several warriors in the neighborhood. I sent for them, and explained my instructions to them. They were very glad to see me, and said that they had heard so many reports that they did not know what to believe; now that they knew the *truth*, they were very glad. I never saw Indians appear so happy. I then proceeded to the second village, distant twelve miles, and found several warriors there, among them a chief called "Cortes," a very intelligent Indian, and said to have great influence with his nation. I again caused my instructions to be fully explained, and again the Indians appeared very happy and very glad. "Cortes" said, that when the principal chief went to the prairies to hunt, he told them to be quiet, and not to trouble the whites (Americans) in any way whatever; that they depended upon the whites, and were it not for the whites they would starve. Cortes told me that he would send to the prairies and inform the chiefs and all the warriors of what I had said. I asked him what I should say to General Gaines, the great chief. He replied, "Tell General Gaines, the great chief, that even should the Caddoes *see* the Americans and Spaniards *fighting*, they would only look on, but not take a part on either side; tell him that I will send and let our chiefs and warriors know what you have said through him; the Caddoes were all very friendly to the whites (Americans) when they left here for the

prairies to hunt; they are now very friendly; they had no corn; they went to hunt meat to eat; every thing that he said to me was true; and that he was very glad that I had come among them, as now they knew the truth; that they had heard so many reports that they did not know what to believe; now they were satisfied, and plant corn and hunt as usual." I then returned to the first village, where I found another very intelligent Indian, partly Spanish, who informed me that "Manuel Flores" had passed through the village in company with another Spaniard, a thick, short man, about middle-aged, who had formerly lived at Nacogdoches. He said there were three Spaniards on the prairies now hunting with the Caddoes. He said if it had not been for the lies that "Manuel Flores" had told, that the Caddoes would have been in long before this time, and have planted their corn. The chiefs did not believe what "Manuel Flores" had said; they had sent in from the prairies three runners to the villages to learn the truth; they had gone back some days before well satisfied that what "Manuel Flores" had said were lies.

Manuel Flores told the chiefs on the prairies that long before their runners could arrive at the villages the Americans would have killed all the people left there—men, women, and children. This Indian said that it was true that Manuel Flores wanted the Caddoes to join him, and go and fight the whites in Texas. They said no; that the Americans were the same on both sides of the river, and if they went and killed and plundered those in Texas, that the Americans on this side would kill them. Not succeeding in this, Manuel Flores wanted ten or twelve of their warriors to go with him to Nacogdoches to hold a talk with some Spanish chiefs; they replied that if he wanted to have a talk, he might go and have it by himself. Not being able to prevail on any of them to go with *him* he went with *them*, and is said to be with them now on the prairies. Manuel Flores passed himself off for a Mexican officer, and said that he was authorized by the Mexican Government to get the Caddoes to go and fight the white inhabitants of Texas. This same Manuel Flores was formerly a trader among the Caddoes, and holds a lieutenant's commission in a militia company near Fort Jesup, Louisiana. I left the Caddo village on the 15th instant.

I am, &c., sir, your most obedient servant,

J. BONNELL,
1st lieut. 3d infantry.

To Major General E. P. GAINES.