

40/4716 4 August 1840

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The Honourable Colonial Secretary  
E. Deas. Thompson Esquire.

Dear Sir

Having received a communication from S.A. Donaldson Esquire respecting the report spread by Humphries of the poisoning of the Aborigines with Prussic acid etc etc at the neighbouring station to that in which he was the superintendent.

I do myself the honour of enclosing a copy of the information together with my reply from His Excellency the Governor on the subject,

And remain Sir, your obedient Servant.

L. E. Threkheld

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Crown Land Department  
New England  
30 April 1840

Sir,

I do myself the honour of acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> February, (addressed in mistake to Mr Commiss and Mague and forwarded to me by that office) enclosing a copy of an extract of the letter from Rev. Mr. Threkheld's, representing that "Poison mixed in rum and water" had been administered to the Aborigines by "certain parties in the neighbourhood of the Beardy Plains" and this information had been "communicated by an overseer of Mr Donaldson's in reply I beg to acquaint you, for the information of His Excellency The Governor that Beardy Plains forms a part of the northern division of New England under my jurisdiction – but Mr Donaldson owns no station whatsoever, in that neighbourhood – or indeed in the District. Altho (sic) I have instigated every enquiry into the circumstances of the case, both through the police and personally on the spot, I have been unable to trace the faintest shadow of a plea on which to found so grave and atrocious an accusation.

I have the Honour to be your most obedient Servant.

MacDonald JP  
Commander

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40/3277 April 1840

Commander of Crown Lands L.P.Q.  
Peels River 23 March 1840

Poison of Aborigines Beardy Plains

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter 26 February enclosing an extract from the Rev. L. J. Threkheld asserting that poison had been employed by certain parties in the neighbourhood of the Beardy Plains for the principle of destroying the aborigines.

I am all times most anxious and willing to attend to His Excellency the Governors wishes but as the Beardy Plains is in Mr MacDonalds district of New England to the regret therein contrived by forwarding

the dispatch without delay to Mr MacDonald Commissioner of the District and whom I feel confident will be a look upon with energy and dispatch.

The Honourable  
Colonial Secretary

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40/2059 24 February 1840

E Deas. Thompson Esquire.

27 February 1840  
Ebenezer  
Lake Macquarie Inlet

My reason for attaching the word Inlet to this the name of this place is to remove a false lolea, to establish a cognomen designating its true character, and to prevent the many advantages of this locality being overlooked in this age through the use of terms which lead to suppose there is no communication with the Ocean. A very short line of lineal, say from or to 10 miles, of detached lengths of two, three and four miles; would join the Green Hills to Sydney in one line of inland navigations through lagoons without going out to Sea at all – thus ensuring safety and certainty in all weathers. A similar line could proceed up the Williams River to Port Stephens, thence to Port Macquarie through inland lagoons which afford advantages to the Colony far superior to the cost of such an undertaking. The increase of the value of the continuous land would, if it is presumed, amply repay the outlay, whether the work was undertaken by the Government, or by a Company.

I am just reporting on a transaction not revolting to every feeling of humanity, namely: the mixing of poison with rum and water and giving it to the Aborigines, at a Station in the interior, where the blacks after drinking it put their hands to their bellies, in their excruciating agonies, and to use the expression of the narrator, "died about the place like Rats!" it was stated by the overseer of Mr Donaldson's station, late of the firm Richard Jones and Co., and having taken place on the Beardy Plains and the parties who gave him the information exalted in the transaction as a Capital way of getting rid of the Blacks without the interference of Government. Surely the relatives of these murdered Blacks cannot possess the feelings of human nature if they do not endeavour to be revenged. This is all the clue I have to ascertain the correctness, of this horrible report, but it is quite sufficient to follow up if possible in order to prevent if possible, the continuance of such a treacherous murdering system.

I remain dearto  
Yours truly  
L. E. Thelkheld

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(note) Immediate.

Send and copy this to the Commissioner of the District with directions to institute a strict enquiry with the truth of the circumstances have ?? and to take such legal steps as to ?? ?? again.

GS 25 Feb

Inform Mr Thelkheld that directions of the above effect and require him to communicate all of the particulars of all which s known to him aswell as the names of the persons who he derived this information.

GS 25 Feb  
Commissioner Mayne  
Received L.E. Threlkeld  
Copy of 2522

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30/2522 9 March 1840

The Honourable Colonial Secretary  
Deas. Thomson Esquire

4 March 1840  
Ebenezer  
Lake Macquarie Inlet

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the "26<sup>th</sup> Ultimo, requesting me to communicate all of the particulars of such transaction/ Poison administered to the Aborigines/ which have come within my knowledge aswell as the names of the persons whom I have derived my knowledge".

Mr George Chisholm of the firm R. Bourne and Co, 37 Pitt Street informed me that during their stay at Mr Hewson's Inn Newcastle, two persons Humphrey's, a superintendent of Mr McKenzie and Donaldson's, and a Mr Buchanan were the persons who stated the circumstances to him: Mr Humphrey's relating to the use of the Poison Prusou acid, as a capital way of getting rid of the Blacks without the interference of the Government and had been administered in the rum and water to several Aborigines, who after they had drunk the Poison felt excruciating pain in their bowels, and pressed their bellies with their hands, in agony and died about the place, like Rats!." This communication was made in the presence of Mr Buchanan to Mr Chisholm who was shocked at the revelation.

Since the reception of your letter, I have called in Mr Hewson at Newcastle and met Mr Chisholm again at the Inn. We enquired of Mr Hewson who confirmed the testimony as the persons spoke of it to him. Mr Humphrey's boasting of the matter, and stating it was done at an adjoining station to that which he superintended at Beardy Plains.

Mr Chisholm will not hesitate to give such information as received from the party being requested: Such is the full amount of my knowledge of the abominable treacherous transaction.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir  
Your most obedient Servant  
L E Threlkeld

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E. Deas. Thomson Esquire

February 5 1840  
Ebenezer

Dear Sir

As it would not be proper to state in the official letter that Humphrey stands charged with Forgery and horse-stealing, the horses Mr Hewson states were offered to him for sale by Humphreys at Newcastle, but being too cheap he refused to have anything else to do with them. If Humphrey's is in jail might not the hope of being admitted as Kings evidence in the matter of poisoning the Blacks, for we suspect he is concerned in the transaction, be an inducement for him to discover the whole of the parties concerned, I merely suggest the matter, for unless something of the kind occurs, I am almost hopeless of the villainy to be sufficiently to convict in a Court of Law.

The following extract from the Directors of the London Missionary Society, may not be considered as obtrusive by you; on the Royal robbery of the South Seas.

Extract

"It would appear from your spirited letter of accomostance to Louis Phillip, that you in common with every Christian friend of the South Sea Islanders, have felt keenly of the late unjustifiable proceeding of the Commander of the "Venus" against Tahiti. The (original) letter that we forwarded to Mr Wilks Paris, with instructions as to ?? in the proper channel for reaching its destination we cannot expect that the 2000 crowns wrested from Promane will be returned to her, but we think that you may fairly encourage the hope, that the publicity that has been given to the affair, together with our remanences to the Ambassador to the French Government on the subject will have the effect of preventing the reoccurrence of a similar outrage."

The original letter, alluded to, was the one, Captain du Petit whose forwarded to His Excellency the Governor for his official sanction before he would convey it, and was returned to me by yourself officially. The duplicate has been forwarded to Marshall South and receiving thanks from Tahiti, convincing me that my object was obtained, to encourage the Queen of Tahiti to be faithful to her saviour. I have received an abundant reward. Had I been on the island at the time, I would have urged the Queen to withdraw her people to the Mountains, and let the valiant Captain blow her Majesty's house to atoms, then I would have displayed a play of truce, after the advert act had been committed. The circumstance itself is most favourable to the cause of Christianity on the islands. I have repeatedly warned them of the Possilis Priests that their habitual course is first, meekly to gain an entrance, then to act with violence and cruelty. The lovely "Venus" has procured the truth of my forewarning, and such will be the case with every nation under the sun whenever prossery gains strength sufficient to show its presenting spirit, never will it be content with our desire, namely Religious Freedom, Religious tyranny in this motto, of its standard and liberty in the inquisition to punish heretical nations, or individuals is the "Proclamation of the Man of Sin", and if masked under the term pollical offences he can but gull Protestant Britain to submit to outrages on her dependents and allies. Alas! For my country, no Political ministry can save her from ruin. There are groups of islands where no missionary has ever set foot, let the Roman Catholics with their French King attempt their entrance therein, we will not dispute their right to do this, but we will never receive them into our house, nor wish them Godspeed whatsoever, we have already preached the Consess of Christ Jesus Our Lord, to the gentiles who alone we have responsible. The Possplis Priest obey their Lord God the Pope, the Moken Meehan's their Lord Mohammad, and we will obey our Lord God and Saviour who commands us to come out from among them and no touch the unclean thing.

I remain  
Dear Sir  
Yours truly  
L.E. Threlkheld

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41/0134

22 June 1840

Sydney 19 June 1840  
2PM

To His Excellency  
Governor George Gipps

Sir,

I have the honour to request your Excellency's attention to the following subject it has come to my attention that a communication has come to His Excellency March last by Mr Thelkheld – reporting some supposed mischievous proceedings against the Aboriginal blacks at a station to be mine at the "Beardy Plains".

That upon this information an official competence took place by the Direction of your Excellency with the Commissioner of the New England district.

That upon such strict investigation it was found that there was not a shadow of a foundation in the report- which privately conveyed to you Excellency – and unknown to me – and false though it is I yet feel to be highly furious and derogatory to my character.

Under the circumstances I take the earliest opportunity of addressing your Excellency – (on my return from the Country), respectfully but urgently that I may be furnished with copies of Mr Threlkald's letters with which this foul factitious ?? was conveyed and all the correspondence that has taken place on the subject.

I have the honour to be  
Your obedient  
and very humbled servant  
Stewart A Donaldson

40/7515

July 27<sup>th</sup> 1840

S.A. Donaldson Esquire

Ebenezer  
Lake Macquarie Inlet  
Near Newcastle

Sir

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter from you, dated 16<sup>th</sup> instant, in which you complain of being annoyed, by your name being made use of, in a way exceedingly hurtful etc etc., if such be the case I regret the circumstance, but am not a party, against whom you have any just cause to complain. You further state, "I am not aware, what good would result from a communication of the kind you made last March." In answer to which it was only needful to remark that the good that will result is if the report be true or false. If true for the punishment of the guilty, if false, the parties of whom Humphries accused of poisoning the Blacks, might be in a position to justify themselves. You maintain that I, did not have the right to use, even in the most indirect way, the name of any respectable individual whatsoever. I have carefully examined the said correspondence, and do not find, in any unwarrantable manner, the name of any person. You observe, that I had taken the trouble to make an enquiry.

I am not a Magistrate with power to enquire on oath in such matters, but what became me in my capacity; that I did: namely, inform the Colonial Secretary of the report, that it might be discovered, whether the report was false or no. I know none of the parties, cannot tell whether disrespectful or otherwise, save from your information, Mr Humphries and Mr Buchanan were together, and both considered not disrespectful, excepting as Mr Humphries own declaration manifested his own disposition. It was necessary to relate the operation made by Mr Humphries in the presence of Mr Buchanan, and others, in which your name was mentioned, together with Mr McKenzies in order to identify the person supposed to be your overseer, and also to discover the locality of the place, where the murderous deed was said to be committed. Humphries stated that it took place at a station

It is untrue that I have any station or overseer in the District. There is not one point either in circumstance or fact that is otherwise untrue in connected with the receipt and it is because I deem the use of my name in the matter at all – both unjustifiable and unnecessary – that I have taken the liberty to tell you so.

I am Sir  
Your obedient Servant  
S A Donaldson



Office of the  
**Premier of Queensland**  
**Minister for Trade**

For reply please quote: *ECU/LW - TF/20/16866 - DOC/20/154303*

31 July 2020

Ms Lynette Marlow

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Dear Ms Marlow

Thank you for your email of 26 July 2020 regarding meetings with EMM Consultancy with the Indigenous community in Toowoomba. I have been requested to reply to you on behalf of the Premier and Minister for Trade.

As the issue you have raised falls within the responsibility of the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Honourable Craig Crawford MP, I have taken the liberty of forwarding your email to his office for consideration and direct response to you on behalf of the Palaszczuk Government.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write to the Premier.

Yours sincerely

**DONNA O'DONOGHUE**  
**DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF POLICY**