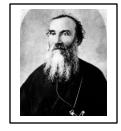


Yakima Valley Libraries – Relander Collection

"To the soldiers"

A letter written by Father Charles Pandosy for Yakama Chief Kamiakin (October 6, 1855)



Chief Kamiakin

Box 55 Folder 19 Oblates of Mary Immaculate (Typescript by Click Relander)

Father Pandosy

Description: Click Relander was one of a few researchers able to examine and make copies decades ago of this letter held by the Archives of the Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle.¹ Pandosy's letter had been rewritten by Fr. Pascal Ricard in a correspondence sent to Rev. J.B. Brouillet dated 19 October 1855.

Relander's typescript (1952) kept at Yakima Valley Libraries can be compared to two others, one published by Gaston Carriere² (1975) and the other by Edward J. Kowrach³ (1992). All three shared nearly identical language with some minor variations.

The date that Relander typed at the top of Pandosy's letter, "August 7, 1855" differs from the original and may be Relander's misinterpretation of Ricard's writing in French. Eyewitness statements by Granville O. Haller who saw the letter at Ahtanum mission a few days after it was written, described Pandosy's letter in his diary on November 13, 1855:

"This letter was dated October 6th, '55 which was the Saturday that we met the Indians at the Toppinish."

A friend and associate of Pandosy's, Father Toussaint Mesplie at The Dalles also provided details to his supervisor, Pascal Ricard in a letter written November 20, 1855.

"Major Rains found a letter on the table in the bedroom of the Rev. Fathers written and signed by Rev. Father Pandosy. This letter was dated of Oct. 6 written in English and to the name of Kamayaken, first chief of the Yakimas." ⁵

Major Gabriel Rains, after reading Pandosy's letter, wrote a response to Kamiakin on the day that the letter was discovered at the mission. A copy of his letter has been kept at the National Archives and Records Administration.⁶

Both letters, Pandosy's (Kamiakin) and Rains' can be found in the book, *Kamiakin Country Washington Territory in Turmoil 1855-1858*, by Jo N. Miles, published by Caxton Press, 2016, pp 18-22.

¹ Fr. P. Ricard, OMI to Rev. J.B. Brouillet, 19 October 1855, RG840 Priests, Religious-Oblates-Personnel-Ricard, P.-Correspondence, 11/11, Archives of the Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle.

² Gaston Carriere, "The Yakima War", *Oblate Life* 34, (Ottawa, Canada: June 1975), 163-4.

³ Edward J. Kowrach, *Mie. Charles Pandosy O.M.I. A Missionary of the Northwest*,(Fairfield, WA: 1992), 95.

⁴ Granville O. Haller, Diary November 13, 1855, microfilm, accession 3437-001, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, Seattle, Wash.

⁵ Mesplie to Ricard, November 20, 1855, Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Relander Collection, Box 55 Folder 19, typescript, Yakima Valley Libraries.

⁶ G.J. Rains to Kam-i-ah-kan, November 13, 1855, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, (Record Group 75), Washington Superintendency 1853-1874, misc. letters rcvd. 1853-1861, NARA microfilm, M5 R23.

(Copy of a letter that the savages made $^{\rm F}$ ather Pandosy write to be sent to the chief of the soldiers, $^{\rm August}$ 7, 1855)

"fter a conversation that F. Pandosy had made on the results of war and advantages of peace the savages said to F. Pandosy.

"Write to the soldiers tell them that we are quiet, friend to American, that we were met thinking of war at all; but the way in which the governor has talked to us at the Cayuses has irritated us and made us determine to general war which will end with complete destruction of all the savages or all Americans.

"If the governor had told us my children, I am askingyou a piece of land in each tribe for the Americans, but the land and your country is still yours, we would have given willingly what he would have asked us and we would have lived with all others as brothers. But he has taken us in number and thrown us out of our native country in a strange land among a people who is our enemy, for between us we are enemy, in a place where its people do not even have enough to eat for themselves.

"Then we have said, now we know perfectly the heart of the Americans; since a long time. They panged us without knowing if we are right or wrong; but they have never killed or hanged one American, though there is no place where an American has not killed savages. We are therefore dogs. They tell us that our ancestors had no horses nor cattle, nor crops nor instruments to garden, that we have received examplaints everything of these riches from the Americans; that the country was already full of us and at the same time they chase us from our native land, as if they were telling us: I have sent you all these things so that you increase them until I send my people arrive, as soon as they will be on the placethey will find what to eat. You want, therefore you Americans, make us die of famine little by little. It is better for us to die at once. It is you, governor, who has wanted war, by these words: the country will be for us from all tribes, all nations you will

go to such place and leave here your land. Our heart has been torn when you have said these words. You have shot the first gun. Our heart has been broken. There is only one breath left; we did not have the strength to answer. Then we took commoncause with our enemy to defend all together our nationality and our country.

"However the war was not going to start to soon, but the Americans who were going to the mines having shot some savages because they did not want to give them their wives, we have taken the care of defending ourselves. Then came Mr. Bolon who has strongly insulted us, threatened us of war, death when amouncing us that he mx was going back to the Balles from where he would send soldiers to destroy us. Nevertheless we have left him pass quietly, after having thought of what me had just told us, we went to join him. We were without arms and without any idea to kill him but as he went on talking to us with too much harshness and threatened us with soldiers we have seized him and have killed him so that we can say it is not we who have started war, but we have only defended ourselves.

"If the soldiers and the Americans after having read the letter and taken knowledge of the motives which bring us to fight, want to retire or treat friendly, we will consent to put arms down and to grant them a piece of land in different tribe, and that they do not force us to be exiled from our native country, otherwise we are decided to be cut to pieces and if we lose the men who keep the camp in which are the wives and our children will kill them rather than see them fall into the hands of the Americans to make them their toys. For we have heart and respect ourselves. Write this to the soldiers and the Americans and they give you an answer to know what they think. If they do not answer it is because they want war; we will then, 1050 men assembled.

Some only will go to battle, but as soon as the war is started the news will spread among all our nations and in a few days we will be more than 10,000. If peace is wanted, we will consent to it, but it must be written to use so we may know shout it

19 October, 1855 Copie d'une lettere que les sauvages firent esrire au pere Pandosy pour etre envoyes au chef des soldats le 7 8bre 1855

Copy Ja leter rejetter of fathe Pandosy for the Indian and sent to the chief I soldiers.

Après un discours que le pere Pandosy avait fait sur les suites funestes after a speech the fathe Pandosy had made on the fatal usults de la guerre et les avantages de la paix les sauvages dirent au pere Juan and on the advantages of peace the sarages said to father Pandery "Ecris aux soldats, dis leur que nous etions tranquilles, amis des Write to the soldiers, till them that ve vere quiet, friends of the americains, que nous no pensions nullement a la guerre; mais la maniere americans, tholar never thought of new; but the way in which dont le gouverneur nous a parle chez les cayuses nous a irrites et the governor talktoing at the cayuses, instated us an determines a une guerre generale qui ne se terminera que par la disparition end in a general was which vill not end eithe in the Complit complete de tous les sa uvages ou de tous les americanns . Si le gouverneur Herminstion of all the Indians as all the anewears. If the governor nous avait dit; mes enfante, je je vous demande un morceau de terre dans had said to us; "my children, I ask of you a piece of land from chaque tribu pour les americains, mais la terre votre pays est toujours each tribe for the anericans, but the land of your country will a vous , nous les nurions donne de bon gre ce qu' il nous aurait demande iluays be yours, we would have given, with good will, what he would et nous aurions vacu avec vous autres comme des freres, mais il nous a are asked for and we would have lived with you as brothers. But he took is in pris a poignee et nous a jetes hors de notre pays natal, dans une terre is fist and threw us out of our native land, into a strange strangere, au milieu d'un peuple qui est notre ennemi (car entre nous, nous land, in the midst of a people who sireouvennemy (for between us, we sommes ennemis? dans une place ou les gens du lieu n'omt pas meme pour rememies in a place her three is not ever enough to eat for those eux de quoi manger. Alors nous avons dit; maintenant nous connaissons dusty there. and so we said we now perfectly understand parfaitement le coeur des americains; depuis longtemps ils nous pendent the least of the americans; for a long lime now they hang us sans savoir si nous avons tort ou raison; mais ils n'ent jamais tus ou pendu un seul americain quoiqu'il n'y ait pas de place ou les americains or hanged one american though there is nowhere left where

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n' aient tue des sauvages. Nous sommes donc des chiens. Il nous dit que
americains have not killed Indiano. Are we dogs, He told use that
    nos ancetres n'avaient ni chevaux ni betes a corne, ni semences, ni
our ancestor had neither horses now cattle, now seeds,
    chevaux ni betes a corne, ni semescas, ni instruments pour faire des
                                       now tools to make gurdens,
    jardins, que nous aurions recu toutes ces richesses de la part des
            so that we have received all those rishes from the
    americains; que le pays en etait dejarempli, et en meme temps il nous
americans; now the country is full, and at the the same time
    chasse de notre terre patale, comme s'il nous disait; je vous ai envoye
be Thoses but I our naturaland, as if he would say; I have send
    toutes ces choses afin que vois les fissiez multiplier en attendant que
you all those things so that you could mak them multiply in
   mes gens arrivent, des qui'ils serent sur les lieux ils trouveront
naiting until my people come, as soon as they arrive they with find
    de quoi man ger. vous voulez donc, americains, nous faire mourir de faim
something to ear youtherefor nort, americans, to plouly stowe
    peu a Seu. Il vaut mieux pour nous mourir d'un seul coup. C'est toi,
us to death . It is better that we die in one blow. It is you (thee)
    gouverneur, qui a voulus la guerre, par ces mots; le pays sera anous,
governor, who has vanted was with these words; the country will be do toutes les tribus, de toutes les nations vous vous rendrez a
from all thetribus, from all the nations you will go to such &
    telleplace, lasera votre terra. Notre coeur a cte dechire quan tu as
ush a place, abandonered yourland. Our reart has been town when you
   promonve ces mots. "u as tire le premier coup de flusil. Notre coeur a ete
morounced these words. Jow find the first shot, Our heart was
   brise, il ne nous est reste qu'un soupir, nous n'avons pas eu la force
broken, we had only a breath left, we had not the strength
   de repondre alors nous avons fait cause commune avec nos ennemis pour
to answer. So we united with our emmines to defend
   defendre tous ensemble notre nationalite et notre pays.
all together our nationality and our Country.
Capendant la guerre ne devait pas sitot commencer, mais les douever un lad net started so soon that the anexcars americains qui alliaient aux mines ayant tire aur des sauvagee prace que
   who went to the mines had fined on some Andians because
   ceux ci ne voulaient pas leur livrer leurs femmes, nous nous sommes mis
 these had refuse to give them their nomen, we therefor took
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en droit de nous defendre. Puis est venu Mr. Bolon qui nous a fortement measure to defend ourselves. Then Mr. Bolow come and insulted us injuries, no s a menaces de la mort en nous annoneantem qu'il retournait strongly, menaced us with death in announcing that he was aux Dalles d'ou/ il everrait des soldats pour nous exterminer. going back to the Dalles from when he sent soldiers to externinate us Neammoins nous l'avons laisse passer tranquillement; apresavoir reflechi Honeved we led him pass peacefully; after having thought on. a ce qu'il venait de nous dire, nous sommes alles le rejoindre. Nous what he had just told us, we went to four him we were etions sans armes et sans aucune ides de le teur mais comme il a continue without arms and with out thought of killing him but since he a nous parler avec trop de durete et anous menacer des soldat, nous still takked to us too hars hey and to threatened woulth soldiers, we nous sommes saisis de lui et l'avone tue de sorte que ce n'est pas nous, took hold of him and have killed him, such it is that it pouvons nous dire, qui avons commence la guer re, nous n'avons fait que is not us who have started the war, we have only defended nous defendre. ourselves. Si les soldats et les americains, apres avoir lu la lettre et pris If the soldiers and the onenians, after havingread this letter connaissance des motifs qui nous portent a nous battre, veulent se retirer et traiter amicalement, nous consenterona a mettre bas les armes et a and talk in a friendly way, we will agree to lay down our arms and leur accorder un morcéau de terre dans les differentes tribus, pourvu to give a piece of land from each different tribe, as long qu'ils ne nous obligent pas a nous exiler de notre pays natal, sinon nous asthey do not oblige us to exile ourselves from our native land, sommes resolus de nous faire hacher, et si nous avons le dessous, les Themselve are resolute to let ourselves be card daws, and if we love, hommes qui gardent le camp dans lequel se trouvent nos femmes et nos the new left to us the the camp in which are outwomen and our enfants les mettront a mort plutot que de les voir tember entre les mais children will kill them rather them see them fall in the des americains pour en faire leur jouet. Car nous avons du coeur et nous hands of the anciscans to make I then playthings. For we have nous respectons. Ecris cela aux soldats et aux americains, et qu'ils te hearts and suffrespeed. - Write this to the soldiers and to the

is is and that they send you

19 October, 1855 Copie d'une lettre que les sauvages firent esrire au pere Pandosy pour etre envoyes au chef des soldats le 7 8bre 1855

Apres un discours que le pere Pandosy avait fait sur les suites funestes de la guerre et les avantages de la paix les sauvages dirent au pere Pandosy;

#Ecris aux soldats, dis leur que nous etions tranquilles, amis des americains, que nous no pensions hullement a la guerre; mais la maniere dont le gouverneur nous a parle chez les cayuses nous a irrites et determines a une guerre generale qui ne se terminera que par la disparition complete de tous les sa uvages ou de tous les americains . Si le gouverneur nous avait dit; mes enfante, je je vous demande un morceau de terre dans chaque tribu pour les americains, mais la terre votre pays est toujeurs a vous , nous les nurions donne de bon gre ce qu' il nous aurait demande et nous aurions vacu avec vous autres comme des freres. mais il nous a pris a poignee et nous a jetes hors de notre pays natal, dans une terre trangere, au milieu d'un peuple qui est notre ennemi (car entre nous nous sommes ennemis? dans une place ou les gens du lieu n'omt pas meme pour eux de quoi manger. Alors nous avons dit; maintenant nous connaissons parfaitement le coeur des americains; depuis longtemps ils nous pendent sans savoir si nous avons tort ou raison; mais ils n'ent jamais tus ou pendu un seul americain quoiqu'il n'y ait pas de place ou les americains

Capendant la guerre ne devait pas sitot commencer, mais les americains qui alliaient aux mines ayant tire aur des sauvagee prace que ceux ci ne voulaient pas leur livrer leurs femmes, nous nous sommes mis

en droit de nous defendre. Puis est venu Mr. Bolon qui nous a fortement injuries, nous a menaces de la mort en nous annoneantem qu'il retournait aux Dalles d'ou/ il everrait des soldats pour nous exterminer.

Nearmoins nous l'avons laisse passer tranquillement; apresavoir reflechi a ce qu'il venait de nous dire, nous sommes alles le rejoindre. Nous etions sans armes et sans aucune ides de le teur mais comme il a continue a nous parler avec trop de durete et anous menacer des soddat, nous nous sommes saisis de lui et l'avone tue de sorte que ce n'est pas nous, pouvons nous dire, qui avons commence la guer re, nous n'avons fait que nous defendre.

Si les soldats et les americains, apres avoir lu la lettre et pris connaissance des motifs qui nous portent a nous battre, veulent se retirer et traiter amicalement, nous consenterona a mettre bas les armes et a leur accorder un morceau de terre dans les differentes tribus, pourvu qu'ils ne nous obligent pas a nous exiler de notre pays natal, sinon nous sommes resolus de nous faire hacher, et si nous avons le dessous, les hommes qui gardent le camp dans lequel se trouvent nos femmes et nos enfants les mettront a mort plutot que de les voir tember entre les mais des americains pour en faire leur jouet. Car nous avons du coeur et nous nous respectons.—Ecris cela aux soldats et aux americains, et qu'ils te

dennent response pour savoir ce qu'ils pensent. S'ils ne respondent pas, c'est qu'ils veulent la guerre; nous sommes en ce moment mille et cinquante hommes reuins. Quelques uns seulement iront au combat, mais des que la guerresera commences, la nouvelle s'en repandre chez toutes les nationset dans quelques jours nous serons plus de dix mille. Sil'on veut la paix nous y consentons; maisque l'ennous ecrive afin que nous le msachions."