

14 December 1855

D'Herbomez

Monsieur l'Administrateur:

Since I learned what has happened at the Ataham mission I have been uneasy, as you are not able to get information and to know the true facts. I believe that I must write to you and tell you that it is very probable that the supposedly savage who is said to have been killed near the mission was no one else than our good brother Surel. Here are the reasons which give me suspicions.

You will judge yourself if they are well founded. First, I think I know the savages enough to assure that none of them would have stayed alone at the mission knowing that the soldiers and volunteers were coming to fight. Second, that at this season of the year the fathers are at the winter camp where the savages are assembled while the brother stays alone at the summer house to guard everything and it is precisely this house that the volunteers have burnt and it is near this house that they have killed a man without arms who was asking to speak to the chiefs. This man whom they would like to make pass as a savage, is nevertheless our good brother Surel. They are ashamed of the cruelty so we do not see that they have talked in the newspapers. But such barbarous action must not stay without being known as the shame of those who could have been cowards enough, barbarous enough to do such an atrocity. I leave ~~no~~ everything to your wise discretion. Would you kindly take information and disprove my suspicions. I did not say anything to the Rev. Father Sup. for I fear that these would cause him too much sorrow. He will have time to learn if (may God do what I mistake) But nevertheless I can't lose that thought that our dead brother has been killed. Blessed are they will tell me, that those who suffer for justice it is also this thought which consoles me and makes me envy his fate. What I regret is the loss which our congregation would have in the person of this brother.

When our Brother Sorel(sic) came here in the last month of July he had a beard and hair a little long. His beard was thick his hair blonde. His hair only would make you know him for all the pro000 savages have black hair which usually hangs on their shoulders (and gives a very bad odor I think so that an American wouldn't have bought one of \$5) if a soldier had seen the body this would have been sufficient to find out the truty for the brother was far from resembling a savage.

Your very humble and obedient servant

L.S. D'Herbomez, O.M.I.