

FROM THE CHARLESTON COURIER dated September 6, 1861:

### RETALIATION.

The following probably explains the reason why Gen. Thompson's prisoners were not exchanged the other day:

To Major General Fremont, United States Army,  
Commanding United States Forces in Missouri--  
Sir, Captain Charles Price, of the Missouri State Guard,  
has received a letter from Messrs. B.S. Curd and Wm. M.  
Price, dated Cape Girardeau, Saturday, August 10, 1861,  
in which they write: "The Colonel says that if you attack  
Commerce to-night, he will hang us" With the note there  
is another, recognized to be in the hand writing of Col.  
C.C. Marsh, and of which the following is a copy.

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES FORCES,

Cape Girardeau, Aug. 10, 1861.

SIR: Your relatives have written you the above note. It is true.  
If you injure the people of Commerce or their property, I will hang them,  
and take a bitter revenge on you in either respects.

C. C. MARSH,

Col, Com. U. S. Forces,  
Cape Girardeau.

The gentlemen held by Col Marsh are, as I am credibly  
informed, citizens of this State, and unconnected in any  
way with military operations. Even were they so connected  
in a manner justifying their being made prisoners of war  
the Articles of War and Army Regulations of the United States  
require humane treatment of prisoners.

I also learn that the detachment of Colonel Marsh's troops  
which captured Mr. Wm. M. Price, wantonly burned his father's  
warehouse and took away a large quantity of corn and sixty  
mules. Similar outrages are believed to have been lately  
committed at the farm of Gen. N.W. Watkins, near Cape Girardeau,  
and also by Col. Marsh's troops.

I, therefore, in the interest of humanity, lay these  
matters before you, and request a frank answer to these  
inquires:

Does the conduct of Col. Marsh and his troops meet your  
approval?

If not, what steps do you propose to take in respect  
to the guilty parties, and in order to prevent the repetitions  
of such conduct?

It is the desire of the Missouri State authorities to  
conduct the present war according to civilized usages, and  
any departure from them by Missouri forces, will be promptly  
punished by their officers, if aware of it.

I deem it proper to add that on seeing Col. Marsh's letter,  
I immediately instructed the General commanding the Missouri  
State Guard in this District to hold in close custody a  
number of prisoners recently taken by him belonging to your  
force. Should Col. Marsh's further treatment of Messrs.  
Curd and Price necessitate the hanging of any of these prisoners  
in retaliation, I am content that impartial men shall judge  
who is morally responsible for their melancholy fate.

I am, sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS C. REYNOLDS,

Acting Governor of Missouri

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