

Whatever services might attend a desultory movement, I am of opinion that nothing but a stationary force will keep the labourers in subjection. The country having settled on both sides, and the two works not only duplicating the number, but making the difficulty of detection the greater.

I have no doubt that upon representation the Secretary at War, would send up a company of troops. It might be made a recruiting station. The difficulty of admitting a volunteer company, and the expense to the State would be the objection to a State force.

With great respect

Sam. Sir of Oct. Sec<sup>t</sup>

C. M. Thurston  
Col. 50<sup>th</sup> Reg<sup>t</sup> M. M.

Brig. Gen<sup>l</sup>

Williams

Com<sup>d</sup>

Cumberland, Aug. 24<sup>th</sup> 1839--

Sir

In compliance with your order of the 21<sup>st</sup> instant, we immediately proceeded down the line of Canal, as far as Orleans. The sections No. 281 & 293 particularly referred to in your order, we found as follows: . . . At section No. 281, there had been <sup>on</sup> Sunday the 11<sup>th</sup> inst, a riot. About 100 Irishmen came to said section, and entered the shanties of the contractor and labourers and beat and wounded them very much, took what money, watches, and every thing else of value they could take away, and leaving a number of persons very much injured.

The contractor and labourers on this section, are Germans. On section No. 293, a number of Germans were also employed; here we found but few hands they principally having left the section to save their lives.

We heard of no other riot, since the one above named, nor do we deem it necessary to make any particular remark about any section on the line between this place and Orleans; but from reports that may be relied upon, equally aggravated cases have occurred on several sections between Tracey's Bluff and Orleans, and that the greatest anxiety and fear exist among the contractor, superintendants and citizens on both sides of the River, in Maryland and Virginia, also in Oldtown and Orleans; although in the presence of an Irishman they manifest the greatest courage and fearlessness.

This fear and anxiety results from the fact that the Irish are generally armed. As near as we could ascertain, there must be from 600 to 800 fire arms in the possession of Irishmen on the line of Canal between this point and Orleans. These arms they take good care to keep secured, except on leaving their respective sections, and then they carry them with them.

We also learned that there is a well organized society among the Fiddlers or Long-jaw men, and that they are well disciplined in the use of their arms, and from their movements appear to have their Officers to command. We further understood that the members of this society have a very considerable fund, and are ever ready to give bail for any of their party, who may be taken, and are equally ready to forfeit the same.