

and...

## John Huston, disgruntled father

In the faintest of pencil, on the back of an account of survey work done in 1838 in Dummer Township, Smithstown, and Cavan Township, an unsigned draft of a letter:

*New Castle Contract for road with John Huston Esq. of W. Kingston*

1838  
 1st Sem. 21. on 25th working @ 7/6 - 20-7-6  
 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.

Dear Sir, Thank you for the kindness which you manifested towards me at the last July sessions—in recommending me to teach my son how to take field notes and to [describe] the limits of a survey.

However painful to myself and hurtful to my feelings in reply to your recommend ... I cannot refrain from informing you the simple fact, My son would not be taught.

I have endeavoured all in my power by council, flattery and force to get my son to learn. I sent him to school to Hope, Port Hope & Peterboro, all to no purpose, learn he would not, and particularly surveying he was quite aversed to....



# TRENT UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES NEWS

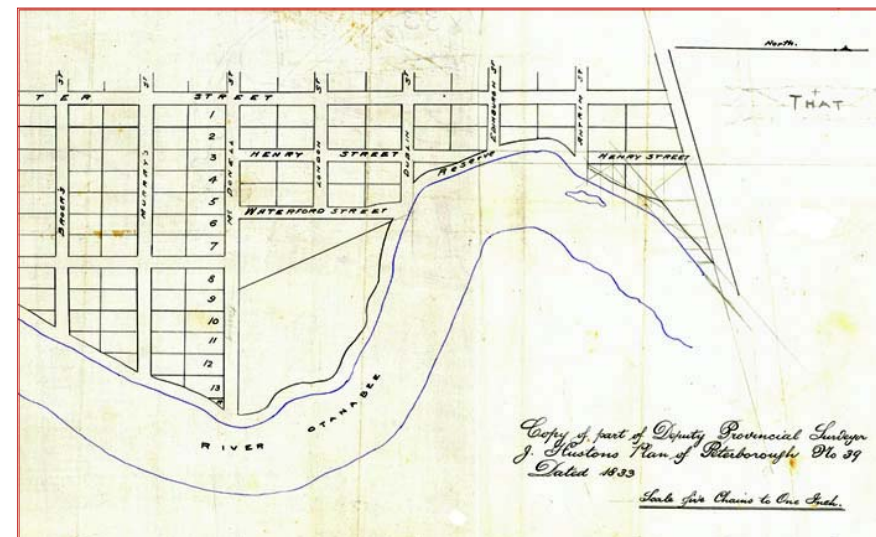
Number 23, September 2007

## Upper Canada's John Huston

Surveyor, Justice of the Peace, Military Officer

Irish immigrant John Huston (1790-1845) arrived in Upper Canada via New York around 1818, settling first in Port Hope, and then Cavan a few years later. A letter in Trent's archival holdings indicates that Huston was authorized by the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Upper Canada, Sir Peregrine Maitland, to assist in surveying Peterborough and the surrounding area in 1820. Records indicate, too, that he helped to establish some of the newly arrived Irish immigrants in Emily Township in 1825 at the request of the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Surveyor General of Upper Canada, Peter Robinson. Huston was also a Captain in the Durham Volunteer Militia, and a Justice of the Peace. He died in Cavan Township in 1845 at the age of 55.

Trent University Archives houses two important collections of Huston papers, the John Huston *fonds* and the John Pierce historical survey collection, which includes not only papers related to Huston, but documents and maps of several surveyors of the Peterborough area. These collections comprise a key resource of correspondence, survey notes, plans and maps pertinent to the early 19th century settlement of the counties of Peterborough, Victoria, and Northumberland and Durham.



The 1833 Huston map on the left depicts an area of Peterborough between Water Street and the Otonabee River, just south of Trent's former Peter Robinson College

"Copy of part of Deputy Provincial Surveyor J. Hustons Plan of Peterborough No 39 Dated 1833"

We gratefully acknowledge the Cameron sisters for their donation of the John Huston *fonds* to Trent University Archives, and the Pierce family for their recent donation of the John Pierce historical survey collection.

Newsletter Editor: Jodi Aoki, M.A.

### Hours of Operation:

Monday to Friday - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Please make an appointment to ensure access. We are located on the first floor of Bata Library.

TRENT UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES THOMAS J. BATA LIBRARY PETERBOROUGH, ON CANADA K9J 7B8  
Telephone: (705)748-1011x7413 fax: (705)748-1126 email: [archives@trentu.ca](mailto:archives@trentu.ca)  
Visit our web site: <http://www.trentu.ca/library/archives>

## John Huston, Upper Canadian surveyor



Huston received authorization from Sir Peregrine Maitland to “practice the art of surveying land” in Upper Canada, 28 October 1820

A licensed Deputy Surveyor, John Huston assisted in surveying the townships of Ops and Emily. He was also inspector and valuator of the Clergy Reserve lands.

Port Hope, Sept. 23 1825

You would greatly oblige by coming out as far as Riordan's & Ingle's farm tomorrow to assist in taking a level of the Creek and marking out the line of the race-way for the intended Mills. I shall be there by 10 or 11 o'clock....

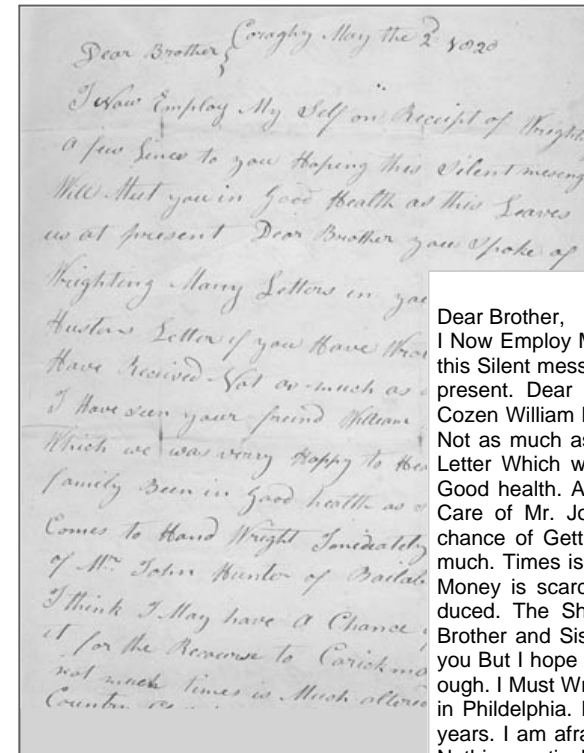
Chas. Fothergill

**Charles Fothergill, Port Hope writer and naturalist, to Deputy Surveyor John Huston, Cavan**

## John Huston, emigrant correspondent

Huston was the recipient of some of the earliest letters received in the Peterborough area - a letter from his brother-in-law

The letter below was sent from Ireland to John Huston in 1820. It was written by his brother-in-law, William Middleton, and carried from Ireland to Upper Canada by Robert McCamus, who became a farmer in the Cavan area.



Coraghy May the 2d 1820

Dear Brother,  
I Now Employ My Self on receipt of Wrighting a few lines to you Hoping this Silent messenger Will Meet you in Good Health as this Leaves us at present. Dear Brother you spoke of Wrighting Many Letters in your Cozen William Hustons Letter if you Have Wrote to Me I Have Received Not as much as one of them. I Have seen your friend William Hustons Letter Which we was very Happy to Hear of you and family Been in Good health. As soon as this Comes to Hand Wright Immediately to the Care of Mr. John Hunter of Bailborough and I think I May have a chance of Getting it for the Recourse to Carickmacross. We have not much. Times is Much altered in this Country. Cloth is very Cheap so as Money is scarce. There is a great Many of the Yeomenry Cares Reduced. The Shercock Core at present is about 76 in Number. Dear Brother and Sister My Mother was very uneasy about not hearing from you But I hope it Will not Be the Case hereafter if you Direct to Bailliborough. I Must Wright a few Lines to Brother Robert as I am informed He is in Philidelphia. I have not Received a Letter from Him this two or three years. I am afraid his sircumstance is Low Which I am Sorry for I Have Nothing particular to trouble you about. I Would Like to know How Lands is Sold. I Mean reclaimed Lands for I am sometimes in the Notion of going to that Country if Could get a situation Convenient to you. This Goes By the hands of Robert McCamus Which I think he Will Deliver it to you. John Corbit is about going to that County. William Bradly and family is Well. George Mewhild and family is Well. Robert and Hugh Bloomer and familys is Well. My Mother Desires to Be Remembered to you, Martha and family. So I conclude With sending My Love and Best Respects you and family and all Enquireing friends. I Have the honour to subscribe My Self your afectinate Brother William Middleton

We wish to acknowledge the late Quentin Brown, whose Huston research collection was helpful in providing contextualization for this issue of Archives News.

## John Huston, military officer

An adjutant in the militia under the command of Colonel G.S. Boulton of Cobourg, John Huston was a captain in the 2nd Durham Regiment, which included the Townships of Cavan, Manvers, Cartwright and Emily.

Head Quarters  
Cobourg, 6th Jan'y 1838

Sir,

Upon the receipt of this you will please to notify each Captain of the 2nd R.D.M. or officer commanding a Company to assemble their respective Companies in Cavan at Millbrooke and in Emily at D. Armstrongs... All are to furnish themselves with arms. Every Officer or private not appearing to answer to his name will without exception be fined unless they have leave of absence from their Commanding officer. Every officer in Command of a Company to have a correct Roll of his men, stating those absent without and with leave or sick, also those with or without arms. The Rolls to be delivered to you, immediately after parade.

The reason for assembling the Regiment at this time is for the purpose of obtaining 65 Rank and File with Officers to form a company of volunteers.

The muskets & accoutrements given out at Port Hope in No.63 & that are now in Cavan will be handed over to the Volunteers who will proceed forthwith to Toronto for hay.....

The men are to march by way of Port Hope and on their leaving Cavan you will immediately report to me the result of your proceedings, not forgetting the Rolls or returns of each Company....

R. Henry  
Cor. 2d. R.D.M.

“...Muster Roll of Capt'n Hustons Company  
Number one Durham Volunteers  
Head Quarters Cobourg April 30 1839...”

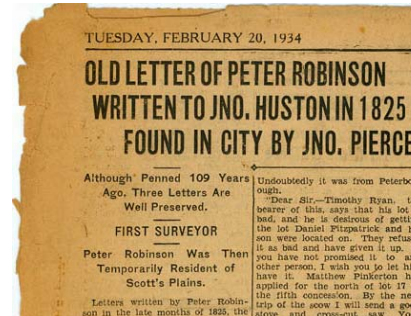
Company Ordered = 15<sup>th</sup> Decemb<sup>r</sup>  
Muster Roll of Capt'n Hustons Company  
Number one Durham Volunteers  
15 Decemb<sup>r</sup> 1839  
Head Quarters Cobourg April 30 1839

No	Rank	Name	Remarks
1	Capt	John Huston	March 1839
1	Lieut	Robert Hawthorne	
2		Thomas Stills	
1	Ensign	Thomas Armstrong	
1	Sergeant	Hamilton Kennedy	

The first portion of a multi-page document

A letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Henry to Huston instructing him to assist in the formation of a company of volunteers

In 1823 and 1825, Peter Robinson arranged for the emigration of hundreds of Irish citizens to Upper Canada. The 1823 contingent, consisting of over 500 people, settled in eastern Ontario in the Lanark County area. The second larger group of more than 1800 was relocated to south central Ontario. Responding to a request for assistance from Robinson, John Huston helped to establish several of the families in Emily Township.

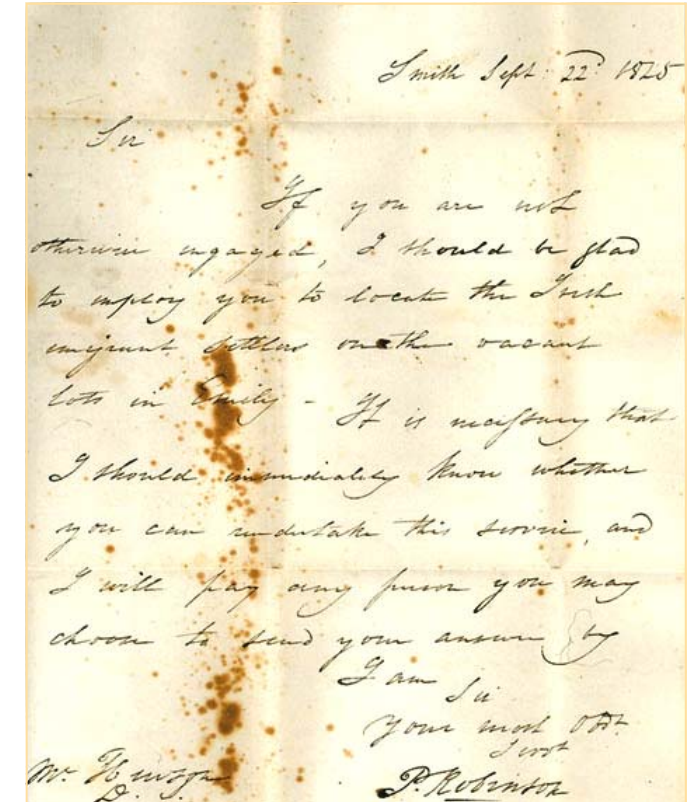


The Examiner, Peterborough: 20 February 1934

... If you are not otherwise engaged, I should be glad to employ you to locate the Irish immigrant settlers on the vacant lots in Emily.

It is necessary that I should immediately know whether you can undertake this service. I am, Sir

Your most Obedt. Serv't  
P. Robinson



Monaghan, Superintendent's Office  
26 Nov'r 1825

Sir,

Mr. Deyell has been engaged by me to furnish some Beef for the Irish settlers located in Emily & informs me that he has some ready to issue, now stored at David Armstrongs... Mr. Ritchie goes out for the purpose of regulating the issue of provisions and takes with him the Books shewing the quantity each Family is entitled to... A few Emigrants go with Mr. Ritchie to be located by you in Emily, & in order that no time may be lost during the good weather, I send four Axemen with them to be under your orders....

I am Sir Your obed't ser't  
P. Robinson

**Peter Robinson to Huston, on the issue of providing necessities to the new immigrants**

## John Huston & the Cavan Orangemen

John Huston received a letter dated July 6th, 1830 from Peterborough's mayor, John Hutchison, expressing his "dark suspicion on the motive of the Orangemen" of Cavan in choosing the July 12th parade in Peterborough as a venue for their Orange exhibitions. The Mayor writes, "for Heaven's sake why transplant that rancorous party feeling to this peaceful country, where no earthly distinction is made between Catholic & Protestant." His letter reveals that religious tension between the Catholics and Protestants was rife in

Peterborough and the surrounding area in the earliest years of settlement. Folklore has it that between 1830 and 1870 a number of Orangemen from Cavan were organized informally in a group known as the Cavan Blazers. The Blazers name became synonymous with stories of brawls and malicious pranks carried out against the Roman Catholic settlers. There is no evidence in the archival records that John Huston participated in or was responsible for any contentious activities based on religious affiliation.

### A June 22nd, 1831 directive from the Lieutenant Governor to "John Huston, Esq're, J.P., Township of Cavan" relating to the handling of religious tensions in the District

Government House  
York, 22nd June 1831

Sir,

The Lt. Governor has directed me to forward to you the enclosed communication from Mr. Maguire, in which he expresses his apprehension of the public tranquility being disturbed by the religious disputes of the Inhabitants of Cavan and the neighboring Townships, and His Excellency being persuaded that you will use every exertion to prevent the folly of a few individuals from disturbing the peace of the District, he has thought it right that this information should be transmitted to you...

Edw. McMahon  
A Secretary

If there is any display of Protestants and Orangemen walking in procession on the 12th inst. the cause must be attached to Mr. Maguire and him only. He has roused that religious fiend which has so long destroyed the peace of unhappy Ireland which here ought to rest obscure. He has told protestants that they would be ashamed to acknowledge themselves to be protestants in a few years and how unworthy they are to be noticed in civil or Military appointments. He also boasts of his might, of interest and power.

The Catholics he tells - contend for your rights—resist the Orangemen (whom he calls all protestants) to the last. I am your friend. You are shamefully trampled upon. I will support you.

What intolerant language this is to be used in this peaceful country where no earthly distinction are made between Catholics and protestants, and not the slightest cause of complaint exists to either, a country of which we all can boast the most plentiful, peaceable and free upon earth.

The Catholics of Emily Ops & Cavan will not be drove to quarrel with the neighbours, the protestants. Some of the Catholics told me after the last town meeting in Emily that they were encouraged by Mr. Maguire so to do, but they would not. Others said they were sorry for what had happened.

You may assure his Excellency and I will be accountable that if the Orangemen & Protestants do meet and walk in procession they will only go to Church and will not give the slightest offence to any person if unmolested.

### Huston's response to the June 22nd, 1831 directive from the Lieutenant Governor

Most respectfully sir

I have the Honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd on the 29th inst. accompanied by a letter of Patrick Maguire Esquire [ ] dated Cavan 15 June 1831.

It appears from Mr. Maguire's letter that he wants to persuade you that he entertains a wish for the peace of the Country. I beg leave to give my opinion and say that I am convinced of the contrary and can prove the same.

What intolerant language this is to be used in this peaceful country where no earthly distinction are made between Catholics and protestants; and not the slightest cause of complaint exists to either, a country of which we all can boast the most plentiful peaceable and free upon earth

The Catholics of Emily Ops & Cavan will not be drove to quarrel with the neighbours, the protestants. Some of the Catholics told me after the last town meeting in Emily that they were encouraged by Mr. Maguire so to do, but they would not. Others said they were sorry for what had happened