

Captain Brannan's Dilemma: Key West 1861

By VAUGHAN CAMP, JR.

Captain James Milton Brannan, First Artillery, United States Army, and senior ranking officer on the island of Key West, found himself confronted with a military dilemma. The date was January 13, 1861, and the threat of civil war hung like Banquo's ghost over the land. Brannan's little company represented the total might of the Federal government in South Florida,¹ but it was placed, or, so the Captain believed, in an untenable tactical position. His troops were concentrated in the Army Barracks, which lay on the northeastern shore of the island, while the only defensible position, Fort Taylor, lay on the Western shore of this last of the Florida Keys.² The direct route between the post and the fort was covered with the typical scrub growth of the island, while the only passable road ran at a right angle through the ever increasingly hostile town of Key West.

The second largest town in Florida, Key West was essentially a Southern town. In 1860 it had a population of 2,862 inhabitants, including 451 slaves and 160 free negroes.³ Although a few of the inhabitants were immigrants from the New England area, and there was an added sprinkling of Bahamians, the majority of the citizens were either native to the Island City or were migrants from the nearby Southern states. Certainly, the major leaders of the community, with few exceptions, were wholly Southern in sympathy.

As early as 1832, in the heat of the discussion over the National Tariff Act of that year, a local newspaper editorially outlined the position of these leaders. It read:

We have always thought that the value of our union consisted in affording equal rights and equal protection to every citizen; when, therefore, its objects are so perverted as to become a means of impoverishment to one section, whilst it aggrandizes another, when it becomes necessary to sacrifice one portion of the States for the good of the rest, the Union has lost its value to us; and we are bound, by a recurrence to first principles, to maintain our rights and defend our lives and property.⁴

Although this overt secessionist feeling died down with the compromise resolution of the tariff issue it burst into flame again with the presidential

election of 1860. Florida delegates, supported by the citizenry of Key West, supported the candidacy of John C. Breckenridge at the abortive Democratic Convention in Charleston. In the divided Baltimore Convention, the Florida delegation helped the break-up of the Democratic party by walking out of the meeting and joining with other Southern delegates in the nomination of Buchanan's vice-president.

The selection of Breckenridge as the standard bearer of the Southern wing of the party was hailed enthusiastically in Key West. The influential *Key of the Gulf* extended its editorial endorsement on January 7th, and it seems to have expressed the will of the majority of the citizens.⁵ There was some slight opposition from the followers of John Bell of the Constitutional-Union Party, but there was no feeling for the candidacy of Steven A. Douglas, who lacked any kind of organization in the Democratic State of Florida. Any supporters of Lincoln and the radical Republican were careful to keep their affiliation quiet.⁶

Local sentiment was in full agreement that the possible election of Lincoln portended the dissolution of the Union. Looking backwards upon it in 1912, Jefferson Browne reported that, "the election of Abraham Lincoln, the first president to be elected upon the sectional issue of antagonism to the South and its institutions, stirred up the people of Key West, in common with the rest of the Southland."⁷

On November 30th, shortly after the results of the election became final, Florida Governor, M. S. Perry, in conjunction with the legislature, issued a call for a statewide convention to meet in Tallahassee, on January 3, 1861, to take into consideration the future relationship between the people of the State and the Federal government. Upon the receipt of the Governor's message, in Key West, a mass meeting of all citizens was called.⁸

The assemblage, which was held on the night of December 12th, "was the largest meeting ever held in Key West up to that time."⁹ Only one of the evening's speakers, Colonel W. C. Maloney, spoke out against secession and in favor of remaining within the Union. The real contest lay between those who favored immediate secession and those who believed that Florida should wait and follow the lead of the border states. After an evening of recriminatory speeches the meeting was adjourned until the following night.

On the evening of December 13th, the meeting reconvened and proceeded to the task of selecting three men to represent Monroe County in the Tallahassee convention. A count of hands showed the election of two outright seces-

sionists, William Pinckney and Winer Bethel, and one moderate, William Marvin. "The strong sentiment for secession was manifested by this vote — Judge Winer Bethel and Mr. Pinckney, pronounced secessionists, were selected by an almost unanimous vote, and Judge Marvin, who did not favor immediate secession, received a bare majority."¹⁰ The pro-secessionists eventually controlled the entire delegation. They questioned the propriety of Marvin, a Federal Judge, attending a meeting aimed at the breaking up of the Union. Marvin was replaced by Asa Tift who favored immediate rupture with the Federal government. The tension of the local situation was heightened by the departure of these delegates for the state capitol.¹¹

This, then, was the attitude of the City of Key West which lay between the tiny command of Captain Brannan and the defensible shelter of Fort Taylor. The Captain's position was not unique. Throughout the seceding Southern states other commanders of army and navy units found themselves faced with the same problem. A few, like Robert Anderson, at Charleston, and A. J. Slemmer, at Pensacola, resolved to hold Federal property and their military positions at all costs. The majority, however, turned over Union forts, arsenals, and supplies to the States, upon demand. Excoriated in the press, these officers could point out the small size of their commands, in comparison to the State forces available, and, also, that the question of the ownership of such property had never been resolved.

Brannan was of the same mind as Anderson and Slemmer. The entire career of the forty-one year old Captain had been one of preparation for command decision. Born on July 1, 1819, at Washington, D. C., he had received an appointment to the United States Military Academy in 1837. His graduation with the class of 1841, had not been spectacular, as he stood twenty-third out of a class of fifty-two. In the same class Braxton Bragg stood fifth, Jubal A. Early eighteenth and J. C. Pemberton twenty-seventh.¹² Commissioned a Brevet Second Lieutenant, Brannan was first stationed at Plattsburg, N. Y., where he acquired active field experience during the disturbances of 1841 and 1842. By the time of the outbreak of the Mexican War Brannan had become a regular First Lieutenant and was adjutant of the 1st Artillery. Other members of that regiment, destined for fame, were Joseph Hooker, Irvin McDowell, John B. Magruder, Ambrose P. Hill and Thomas Jonathan Jackson. With this regiment Brannan took part in Scott's campaign from Vera Cruz to Mexico City, earning a brevet to Captain and a severe wound in the doing. He remained with the occupation forces and was one of the founding members of the Aztec Society, together with U. S.

Grant and R. E. Lee. In view of the Seminole disturbances in Florida, Brannan, with one company of the 1st Artillery, was transferred to Key West in 1856.¹³

Even before the Key West secession meeting was held Brannan was considering his alternatives. On December 11th, he wrote the Adjutant General, Colonel Samuel Cooper, that he believed that secession in Florida was inevitable. He went on to say that he had "reliable information that as soon as that act is committed an attempt will be made to seize upon Fort Taylor."¹⁴ He then requested specific instructions. Should he "endeavor at all hazards to prevent Fort Taylor being taken or allow the State authorities to have possession without any resistance."¹⁵

Brannan was greatly hampered in his relationships with Washington by the lack of adequate communications. There was no telegraph service linking the island and the mainland, and the Captain had to rely on the Mordecai and Company steamer *Isabel*, or passing ships out of New Orleans or St. Marks. The *Isabel* made the round trip between Key West and Charleston, S. C. once every two weeks. Counting rail service between Charleston and Washington, Brannan could count himself lucky if his letters reached the War Department in a week and a half.¹⁶

Communication difficulties were not so great for State officials. On January 5, 1861, Florida Senator David Yulee, in Washington, telegraphed Joseph Finegan, in charge of the military affairs of the State of Florida, in Tallahassee, saying that "the immediately important thing to be done is the occupation of the forts and arsenals in Florida."¹⁷ Hampered by the Secession Convention Finegan made no move to secure the Key West posts.

Yulee was also calling upon the War Department for a list of officers in the Regular Army from his state and for a statement of "the numerical force of troops now in garrison at the various posts in the State . . . and the amount of arms, heavy and small, and ammunition, fixed and loose."¹⁸ The Department returned a polite answer that the "interests of the service forbid that the information which you ask should at this moment be made public."¹⁹

In view of his communications difficulty Brannan operated in a vacuum. He knew the date of the Secession Convention in Tallahassee, and could, with some degree of accuracy, determine the possible date of Florida's repudiation of the Union. The idea that the State might remain within the Union did not enter the Captain's considerations.

There was on the island at least one other man as determined as Brannan that Fort Taylor should remain in Union hands. This was Captain E. B. Hunt, United States Engineers, in charge of the construction of the Fort. Hunt had been the chief engineer on the works for the better part of three years. Fearful that the product of his skill would fall into the hands of the enemies of the Union, Hunt urged upon Brannan "to assume the military command of Fort Taylor."²⁰ The engineer added that "I shall heartily cooperate in my appropriate capacity . . . and shall in a few days complete all the defensive preparations now required."²¹

At least two other members of the Key West Community felt much the same way as did Captain Hunt. Maloney reports that Brannan's future action was taken "by the advice of Judge Marvin and Charles Howe, Collector of Customs."²² Marvin, who had counselled that Florida wait and note the actions of the border states in the Key West secession movement had apparently had a change of heart.

The decision once made that Fort Taylor must be garrisoned, Brannan moved with celerity. To confuse any persons who might desire to forestall his movement "Captain Brannan . . . attended the religious services on Sunday as usual."²³ This was a simple blind, for at midnight the Captain assembled his troops and all equipment in the barracks area. Dividing his men into small groups, the Captain quietly marched each squad through the peacefully sleeping city. The movement, begun at twelve o'clock, was completed before sunrise.²⁴

Key West awoke to a *fait accompli*. There was some grumbling among the citizens, but no concerted action was taken against the Army command. Routine business between the citizens and the troops was carried on as if there had been no change of position.²⁵

The indomitable Captain had no sooner occupied his new quarters than he fired off a message to the Adjutant General, announcing his unauthorized move:

I have the honor to report that in consequence of the recent seizure by unauthorized persons of several forts and arsenals in the Southern States, I have placed my entire command in Fort Taylor for the purpose of protecting it. I shall, until orders from the General Government to the contrary, defend it . . .²⁶

Brannan's position was still not an enviable one. Fort Taylor was one of the most modern in the United States, but it was still incomplete. Construction on the Fort had begun in 1845, but most of the works had been

swept away by the vicious hurricane of the following year. After some little delay construction had been resumed, with a projected completion date of 1861. Together with another unfinished work, Fort Jefferson, in the Dry Tortugas, Fort Taylor was designed to deny an enemy entrance to the Gulf of Mexico through the Florida Straits.

The work was a "double casemented brick fort of the Bauban [sic] plan."²⁷ It mounted extremely heavy coastal defense armament, consisting of

Forty 10-inch Rodmans, and ten 24-pounder howitzers on the first tier; thirty 8-inch Columbiads, six 30-pounder Parrott rifles; two 10-inch Rodmans, eighteen 24-pounder howitzers on the second tier, and twenty 10-inch Rodmans, two 15-inch Rodmans, three 300-pounder Parrott rifles, three 100-pounder Parrott rifles, three 30-pounder Parrott rifles, one 10-inch siege mortar, and four 8-inch siege mortars on the parapet.²⁸

The fort had been constructed on a wide sand spit projecting out about a quarter mile from the western shore of Key West. Built with four bastions and four curtains, it adequately covered the harbor against possible naval attack. Unfortunately the designers had not foreseen the possibility of civil war and had neglected the fortification of the land approach from the city.

If this did not constitute enough of a problem, Brannan was plagued with the smallness of his command. The fort had been designed for a minimum garrison of one thousand men.²⁹ The Captain had forty-four. His artillery company combined with the mechanics and laborers under the direction of Captain Hunt, gave the fort a garrison of about a hundred men.³⁰ In the early days of 1861 a determined assault, properly carried out across the spit might have sustained heavy casualties, but probably would have carried the fort.

Brannan immediately set about placing his command on a war footing. Rations and water were collected, and he was able to announce to the War Department on January 15th, that he had four months provisions and seventy thousand gallons of water on hand. But, he added, "we cannot stand a siege against any organized army." Reinforcements were imperative and two heavily armed naval vessels should be dispatched to Key West immediately to prevent the landing of any military forces beyond the range of the fort's guns.³¹

Captain Hunt was ordered to throw up two sand revetments covering the sand spit approach. The engineer and his laborers threw themselves furiously

into the work and the embankments were completed in record time. Ten 8-inch guns were mounted so as to enfilade any attacking force.

Although Brannan had given up the barracks he had no intention of abandoning them. Once the emergency measures necessary for the protection of the fort had been completed, he put the entire command at work, building a road between Taylor and the barracks. This road traveled in a straight line between the two points, thereby bypassing Key West to the North, giving the Captain freedom of movement. A few of the troops and four guns were stationed in the encampment area.³²

Meanwhile, Florida had plunged headlong into secession. The Tallahassee convention had assembled, amid great State and National excitement, on January 3, 1861. On January 10th, the major business of the Convention, the Ordinance of Secession, was brought to the floor and there passed by the overwhelming majority of sixty-two to seven. Governor Perry signed the act into law on the same day.³³

Some of Brannan's anxiety over his position would have been eased had he received news of the convention's action on the day following the passage of the secession ordinance. The convention instructed Governor Perry that

It is the sense of this convention that the governor should not direct any assault to be made on any fort or military post now occupied by Federal troops, unless the persons in occupation of such forts and posts shall commit overt acts of hostility against this state . . . unless directed by a vote of this convention.³⁴

But neither Brannan or the people of the North knew about the intentions of the State officials. Even before Florida had passed its Ordinance of Secession the *New York Times* reported that "the forts and other Federal property have been taken possession of by the governor."³⁵ Communications remained open between the North and Fort Pickens, at Pensacola, but no immediate news came from Key West, due, in most part, to its geographic isolation. Public fears that Forts Taylor and Jefferson had fallen into State hands was alleviated on January 28th, with the publication, in the *New York Times*, of a letter from Key West. The author, who signed himself "Engineer", stated:

I write a line to say that we are now quiet and at peace, *because we have put ourself on a war footing*. . . . There are now an artillery company of 44 men, and an enrolled force of mechanics and laborers who are ready to defend their workmanship. A total of over a hundred can probably be relied on, and the work itself is very strong against assault.³⁶

The letter ended with a fervent plea for naval assistance and adequate water communications. Two days later the *Times* confidently announced that "the government property at Tortugas and Key West is . . . perfectly secure."³⁷

The War Department was not as confident. Brannan's original letter of December 11, 1860, had not reached Washington until January 3rd. In the absence of Samuel Cooper, who was considering the possibility of handing in his resignation, Brannan's orders came through Lieutenant Colonel G. W. Law, Aide-de-Camp on the staff of General Scott. On January 4th, Law directed Brannan to move his entire command into the confines of Fort Taylor, and there to do everything in his "power to prevent the seizure of your fort."³⁸ The aide went on to state, that while Fort Jefferson was to be garrisoned, Brannan was to look for help only from cruising naval vessels and the mechanics and laborers of Captain Hunt's construction force. He then closed with the ominous warning that "there is some apprehension that an expedition is fitting out in Charleston to take one or both of the forts, Taylor or Jefferson."³⁹

On January 26th, Brannan, who had received no communication from the Department for a month and a half, wrote Washington to announce that there had been no demonstration against the fort. The work was growing stronger with the passage of every day, and the doughty Captain had no doubt that while "a force will soon appear . . . from the main land," he could beat it off.⁴⁰ He urged that his company be raised to a hundred men and that he be supported on the flank by a naval sloop-of-war.⁴¹

Brannan's contact with the outside world, but not with the Department, came with the arrival in Key West of Captain M. C. Meigs, on January 22nd. Meigs was an Engineer of the command of Major L. G. Arnold, who had been dispatched to relieve Fort Jefferson. His visit could not have been a happy one for he had been ordered to ask for guns and ammunition from the small supplies available at Fort Taylor. In compliance with the command, Brannan reluctantly gave up six 8-inch columbiads, four field pieces, and an ample supply of ammunition.⁴²

Late in January, or early in February, contact between Key West and the War Department was restored, thanks to the Navy. By the end of the first week of February, Brannan could report that he believed that there would be no attempt on the part of the newly formed Confederate forces to take Fort Taylor. So secure did he feel that he transferred seven more of his 8-inch columbiads to Major Arnold. One danger remained, however, his

powder was going bad, as were his friction tubes, used to fire his long range rifles.⁴³ He was later to report that the flag of the Confederacy was being flown over many homes and stores, but that he did not "apprehend any attack on this fort."⁴⁴

The optimism of Captain Brannan had a heartening effect in Washington. If, by a display of soldierly valor, Fort Taylor could be held securely, why not the great bastions at Charleston and Pensacola? The newly inaugurated President was reluctant to take action for the relief of Fort Sumter, situated in the birthing place of the secession movement, however, he had no such qualms about Pensacola. On April 1st, he ordered Colonel Harvey Brown, U.S.A., to take command of an expedition to reinforce and hold Fort Pickens. Brown was authorized to defend himself if attacked, and "if needful for such defense, inflict upon the assailants all the damage in your power"⁴⁵ General Scott, aged, but still the most able American military commander, warned Brown that he was not to "reduce too much the means of the fortresses in the Florida Reef, as they are deemed of greater importance than even Fort Pickens."⁴⁶

The last hopes of the Southern sympathizers in Key West that Fort Taylor could be seized and the island turned over to the Confederacy were dashed in late March and early April. The expedition of Colonel Brown, although using Fort Jefferson as its base of supply, was strong enough to reinforce Brannan in the face of any threat. Reorganized naval forces began to use the island harbor for coaling. Troops, too, began to arrive in strength from Texas.

On February 18, 1861, soon after the passage of an ordinance of secession by the State of Texas, General David E. Twiggs, U.S.A., commanding the Department of Texas, had issued a General Order. The Army was to deliver up all military posts and supplies to the State immediately. Loyal troops were then to evacuate the State by marching to the coast, where transportation would be provided.⁴⁷

Five companies of the 1st Artillery were among those effected by Twigg's order. Three of these were stationed at Fort Duncan, under the command of Brevet Major William B. French, while two more were garrisoned at Fort Brown, under the leadership of Captain Henry J. Hunt. War Department orders had been dispatched to French, as senior officer, on February 7th, anticipating the surrender of the Southern partisan, Twiggs.

If Twiggs gave up, French was to march both his and Hunt's commands to Brazos Santiago, where he would find a steamer in readiness to embark his men. So important did the Department consider this transfer that it sent an assistant adjutant-general with the ship, to expedite the movement. The Major was further commanded to leave two companies at Fort Jefferson, two more at Key West, and send the remaining one to Fort Hamilton, N. Y.⁴⁸

In compliance with his orders, French moved out upon receipt of Twiggs' General Order. Although deprived of most of his artillery horses, the Major's command managed to drag their 12-pounder *canons-obusier* down the valley of the Rio Grande to Point Isabel. Finding it impossible to reach Brazos Santiago, French contacted the awaiting steamer and the complement was laded at the more southerly harbor.⁴⁹

Late in March, Captain Hunt, with two companies were disembarked at Fort Jefferson. Major French, with Companies F and K, 1st Artillery landed soon after at Key West.⁵⁰ As senior ranking officer, French immediately assumed command from Captain Brannan. The period of the Captain's dilemma was at an end.

But there was no abatement in the alarums and excursions. The shocking news of Anderson's fight and surrender at Fort Sumter was received soon after April 13th. Confederate flags continued to fly over many of the homes and business houses of the city. Captain E. B. Hunt, the engineer, plaintively wrote the Chief Engineer, in Washington, that he still feared that a determined assault would result in the loss of his handiwork. He reported that he had information of a letter from Sephen Mallory, Confederate Secretary of the Navy and one time inhabitant of the island city, to a prominent citizen "that when the C. S. Army were ready, an attempt to take these works would be made."⁵¹

Captain Meigs was also complaining to Washington. To his mind, Fort Taylor could not resist a landing on Key West, nor was it "better fitted to withstand bombardment than Fort Sumter. The burning woodwork of its barracks would soon drive out its garrison."⁵² In the face of a possible landing, a volunteer company of a hundred and nine men was raised among the loyal Union men of the island.⁵³

Despite all of this pessimism, any threat to Key West was long since past. The Confederate government was never able to mount any kind of attack against Fort Taylor, indeed, it never seems to have even contemplated

such an action. At first glance, and in view of Mallory's first hand knowledge of the value the position, this Confederate neglect seems inexcusable, but the answer was to be found in the lack of a Southern navy. The key, with its important harbor and defensive work, was to remain in Union hands throughout the war.

Because of the island's peripheral geographic location the importance of Brannan's action in Key West had been overlooked. Standard histories play up the actions of Anderson and Slemmer, but ignore completely those of Brannan. If they mention Key West at all, it is merely to say that it was the only naval base in the South which was never held or attacked by Confederate of State forces.

The strategic value of Key West to the Union in the war is inestimable. Had it fallen into Confederate hands, it would, without doubt have been recaptured by the North, due to Federal naval superiority, but the reconquest would have involved the expenditure of many lives. More important, such a recapture would have taken time, a commodity which the Union could ill afford to give up, in view of the European diplomatic reaction to the war.

Without secure control of the island, Lincoln's declaration of an effective blockade of the Southern coast would have been a farce, for the Navy had no other Southern coaling station so necessary for its short cruising range blockading fleets. Early in the War, Southern blockade runners operated quite successfully from Havana and the British controlled Bahamas, however, fast Federal cruisers operating from Key West were to wreak havoc among these vessels during the last three years of the conflict.

Key West was the key to the Gulf of Mexico. Slemmer's little force at Pensacola would have been overwhelmed had not reinforcements continued to flow to him around the Southern tip of Florida. Union captures of Ship Island, New Orleans, Galveston and Mobile would have been all but impossible with the island in Confederate control.

In-so-far as historic immortality is concerned, Captain Brannan was unfortunate. In carrying out what he conceived to be his duty no bullets sung past his ears, no bombs burst over his head, the reputation-making press was missing, and the Captain had little ability for self aggrandizement. Nevertheless, the resolution of Captain Brannan's dilemma remains one of the most important command decisions of the Civil War.⁵⁴

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ There is no muster roll available for Brannan's company. In a letter to the War Department, on January 14, 1861, he speaks of forty-four men: *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902), Series I, Vol. I, p. 342. All future notes are from Series I, and the title will hereinafter be cited as *O.R.* A letter to the *New York Times*, signed Engineer, also gives Brannan's strength as forty-four men: *New York Times*, January 28, 1861, 1. If this figure is correct Brannan's company was far below strength, for the Army Table of Organization called for artillery company strength to range between sixty-four to a hundred men and officers: William Addleman Ganoe, *The History of the United States Army*, (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1943), 116.
- ² See map: Writer's Program, Works Progress Administration, *A Guide to Key West*, (American Guide Series, New York: Hastings House, 1941), inside cover. Also see map. Walter C. Maloney, *A Sketch of the History of Key West, Florida*, (Newark, N. J.: Advertiser Printing House, 1876), insert. Hereinafter cited as Maloney.
- ³ United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States*, (Washington; Government Printing Office, 1931), 196. Jefferson Beale Browne, *Key West: The Old and the New*, (St. Augustine, Fla.: The Record Company, 1912), 171. Hereinafter cited as Browne.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, 90. Browne gives no source for this quote.
- ⁵ *Key of the Gulf*, (Key West), January 7, 1860, 1.
- ⁶ Donald Gordan Lester, *Key West During the Civil War*, (Master's Thesis, University of Miami, 1949), *passim*.
- ⁷ Browne, *op. cit.*, 90.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 91. Maloney, *op. cit.*, 63.
- ⁹ Browne, *op. cit.*, 91.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 91.
- ¹¹ Maloney, *op. cit.*, *passim*.
- ¹² Ellsworth Eliot, Jr., *West Point in the Confederacy*, (New York: G. A. Baker and Co., Inc., 1941), xxi.
- ¹³ *Dictionary of American Biography*, (New York. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), II, 600-601. Hereinafter cited as *D.A.B.*
- ¹⁴ *O.R.*, I, 342.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 343.
- ¹⁶ Browne, *op. cit.*, 80-81.
- ¹⁷ *Confederate Military History*, (Atlanta, Ga.: Confederate Publishing Company, 1899), XI, 21. Hereinafter cited as *C.M.H.*
- ¹⁸ *O.R.*, I, 348-349.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 351.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 343.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, I, 343.
- ²² Maloney, *op. cit.*, 64.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 64.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 64-65. *O.R.*, I, 343.
- ²⁵ Maloney, *op. cit.*, 65.
- ²⁶ *O.R.*, I, 343.
- ²⁷ Browne, *op. cit.*, 78.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 78. The best description of Fort Taylor is to be found in Ames W. Williams, "Stronghold of the Straits: Fort Zachary Taylor," *Tequesta*, XIV, 1954, 3-24.
- ²⁹ *New York Times*, January 12, 1861, 1.

- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, January 28, 1861, 1.
- ³¹ *O.R.*, I, 343.
- ³² Browne, *op. cit.*, 78. For a few years, during the war, this road was known as Brannan's Road, but the name gradually dropped out of use to be replaced by "Rocky Road". The street was later officially designated Division Street. The name has since been changed to Truman Avenue.
- ³³ *C.M.H.*, XI, 10-12.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, XI, 13.
- ³⁵ *New York Times*, January 9, 1861, 1.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, January 28, 1861, 1. It is probable that "Engineer" was Captain E. B. Hunt, as he was the only engineering officer present, on that date, at Fort Taylor.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, January 30, 1861, 1.
- ³⁸ *O.R.*, I, 345.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 345.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 344.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, I, 344.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, I, 344-347.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, I, 345.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 360.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 366.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 366.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 515-516.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 587-588.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 369-371.
- ⁵⁰ The date of Major French's arrival is not clear. Browne states that he took command at Key West on April 6, 1861: Browne, *op. cit.*, 92. This is obviously in error, for on March 27, 1861, Major French was signing letters as Commanding, Fort Taylor: *O.R.*, I, 364.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, I, 383-384.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, I, 398.
- ⁵³ Maloney, *op. cit.*, 66-67.
- ⁵⁴ After being relieved of his command at Key West, Brannan took part in Union operations around Jacksonville, Florida. His rise in the Army was rapid, and after being attached to the Army of the Cumberland he commanded a Division of that Army at the battles of Hoover's Gap, Elks River, and Chickamagua. Brannan, now a Brevet Brigadier General, accompanied Sherman on his Georgia campaign and directed the artillery in the siege of Atlanta. Early in 1865 he was breveted Major General. With the close of the war he remained in the regular Army at his permanent rank. He commanded the Federal troops used to break the Philadelphia railroad strike in 1871. Brannan retired from the service, as a full Colonel, in 1882, and died ten years later. *D.A.B.*, II, 600-601.

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