

A Lost "Psyche": Kirk Munroe's Log of a 1,600 Mile Canoe Cruise in Florida Waters, 1881-1882

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INTRODUCTION

The popularity of the decked sailing canoe swept the United States in the 1870s, and wherever localities had access to suitable bodies of water, enthusiasts formed canoe clubs, held regattas, and organized cruises. One of the most ardent devotees of the new sport was an attractive young man, a journalist, editor, and later a celebrated writer of boys' stories, Kirk Munroe (1850-1930). In 1879, after three years as a reporter of the *New York Sun* and at that date the editor of the newly established magazine *Harper's Young People*, he joined the New York Canoe Club. With his accustomed zest he threw himself heartily into all its activities, serving as its Commodore for five years, founding the American Canoe Association, organizing and reporting its annual summer meets, and acting as editor of its official organ *The American Canoeist* from October, 1882 to August, 1883. A facile writer he penned numerous articles about his favorite pastime, not only for this periodical but for others, including *The Wheelman* which soon became *Outing Magazine* and devoted to all sports.

About this time in his life apparently began Kirk Munroe's interest in Florida, which resulted in nearly a half century residence in that state. He had already had an adventurous career in the American Southwest where, as a seventeen year old boy, he had traveled with a surveying party through Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and California to determine routes for the later Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroads. A year or two later his eagerness for experience had taken him through the Dakotas, Montana, and the State of Washington to explore and lay out a similar route for the Northern Pacific railroad. His love of the wilderness and his "inextinguishable wanderlust" inevitably turned his thoughts in time to the southern

peninsula of Florida which was experiencing a modest boom with the growing migration of tourists, invalids in quest of health, and settlers to its benign climate and alluring opportunities. Already Hamilton Disston was negotiating the great purchase of four million acres at twenty-five cents each in the Okeechobee region and was making contracts to drain its adjacent lands. But the southern extremity of the peninsula, however, still remained a largely untrammled frontier whose siren call Kirk Munroe's adventurous spirit could scarcely resist and whose innumerable waterways for cruises presented irresistible challenges to his enthusiasm as a canoeist.

Family circumstances opportunely crystalized a resolve that was already taking shape in his mind. His older sister, Susan, had recently married Charles Stowe, the youngest son of Harriet Beecher Stowe of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* fame, who had a winter home at Mandarin on the St. Johns River not far from Jacksonville. This alliance appears to have made Kirk Munroe's intimacy with the Beecher Stowes very close—he collaborated with his brother-in-law on a biography of Harriet Beecher Stowe—and, with an invitation to come to Mandarin in 1881, he left New York in early October of that year for what was very likely the occasion of his first visit to Florida. With characteristic zeal Kirk Munroe seized this opportunity to bring his sailing canoe *Psyche* with him to make a venturesome 1,600 mile cruise in Floridian waters.

After a brief stay at Mandarin he journeyed by railroad from Jacksonville to Ellaville where he launched his craft in the Suwanee river and cruised down to Cedar Key, on the Gulf of Mexico, then an important terminal. Continuing along the Gulf coast to Tampa, an invitation received there to go by steamer to Key West and the Dry Tortugas interrupted his cruise by canoe which he presently resumed at Punta Rassa at the mouth of the Caloosahatchee river. Working his way up its twisty course toward Lake Okeechobee, he was unable to enter this body of water directly and had to arrange to have his canoe portaged to Fish Eating Creek. Paddling down this stream he entered the broad expanse of the lake and, for a harrowing week, he vainly sought the mouth of the Kissimmee river amidst the dense sawgrass. In desperation he finally tied his canoe to a cypress tree and plunged through the razor-like vegetation to high ground and eventually reached Fort Bassinger on foot. After recovering his lost *Psyche* some five miles from the mouth of the river, he boarded a steamer to Kissimmee City whence his canoe was portaged by oxen team and railroad to Sanford.

There he resumed his cruise, paddling and sailing a leisurely course down the St. Johns river to his point of departure at Mandarin. From there he dispatched a summary account of his adventures to the Secretary of the New York Canoe Club which was published in the May, 1882 issue of *The American Canoeist* under the title "A Lost Psyche." As this printed report provides some additional details, pertinent parts are intercalated, between brackets, in appropriate places in Kirk Munroe's log of the cruise reproduced below.

Though he nearly lost his life on the watery wastes of Lake Okeechobee—the climactic event of this notable cruise—that misadventure in no way diminished his enthusiasm for Florida and for the exploration of its waterways. On the contrary, it seems to have decided him not only to undertake further expeditions of the same sort, but to make the Florida frontier his permanent home. Even before he embarked on this first long canoe trip in the fall of 1881 he had resigned the editorship of *Harper's Young People*, having determined to become a free lance writer and an author of books for boys. In an unpublished autobiographical sketch written in the third person when he was sixty years old, Kirk Munroe stated: "The following winter [1882-1883] he took another lonely canoe cruise through the little known center of Florida by way of its network of rivers, lakes, and swamps. But the third winter [1883-1884] saw him and his wife taking a three months wedding trip down the Indian river from St. Augustine to Lake Worth. The wife, who from that day to this has been his staunch cruising friend, was Mary Barr, a daughter of Amelia Barr, the novelist.

The Munroes bought a place on Lake Worth and expected to live there but when, during the following winter, 1885-1886, they cruised up the Great Florida Reef to Biscayne Bay, they knew that they had found the most beautiful and desirable place in the state for a home in Florida, and there they have dwelt ever since."*

Ralph Middleton Munroe (no relative) tells in his book *The Commodore's Story* (1930) of his meeting with Kirk Munroe and of the latter's settling at Coconut Grove in 1886 (page 151): "... while returning from a fishing trip I noticed two men on the beach at the Punch Bowl, apparently strangers, which was an event in those days... Mr. Ewan of Fort Dallas asked me to come ashore and meet another Munroe, and thus I became acquainted with Kirk Munroe... It seems that being in Key West with his

wife he heard of a Munroe in Biscayne Bay and came up to investigate. His first impressions of the country were evidently favorable, for he soon brought Mrs. Munroe from Key West, and they looked about for a piece of land to build on. Eventually they bought a tract south of my new purchase and built a home which they named "Scrububs" and occupied, with additions, until recent years."

While usually spending his summers in the north or on extensive travels about the world in search of material for his stories and journalistic writings, Kirk Munroe and his wife invariably returned for long seasons to Coconut Grove where he wrote most of his popular books for boys and many articles that appeared in *Harper's Weekly*, *Scribners*, *Outing*, and in other magazines.

DIARY OF KIRK MUNROE¹

(Monday, November 28, 1881 to Sunday, March 12, 1882)

Monday, November 28, 1881. Left Mandarin² at 10 o'clock this A.M. in canoe *Psyche*.³ Paddled to Jacksonville against tide and wind. Reached there at 1:30 P.M. Distance 12 miles. Bought Shotgun and a few stores. Spent night at St. Marks Hotel. Received final directions as to route from Dr. Kenworthy⁴ in evening. Day cold, rainy, and generally disagreeable. Received letter from home.

*Typescript in the possession of Rollins College Library, Winter Park, Florida.

¹ A typescript copy in the possession of the Rollins College Library, at Winter Park, Florida, with the caption "Kirk Munroe's Okeechobee Diary—1881" is here used. It was made from a typescript loaned by Professor Lewis Leary of Columbia University who, apparently, contemplated writing a biography of this author at one time. The original is unavailable but in 1964 Mr. Eliot O'Hara, husband of Kirk Munroe's niece, deposited a collection of approximately 2,500 items pertaining to Kirk Munroe in the Library of Congress, among which are numerous diaries, and possibly the original of the one here reproduced with inserted quotations from the report of the cruise published in the May, 1882 number of *The American Canoeist*.

² Mandarin was the winter home of Harriet Beecher Stowe in the 1870s and 1880s. (See Mary B. Graff. *Mandarin on the St. Johns*. University of Florida Press, Gainesville, 1953, chaps. 5 to 10). ". . . on the east shore is Mandarin, a cozy, prosperous village of roomy, airy, neat homes; the orange-groves, gardens, lawns, roads, and fences and pier all giving unmistakable evidence of comfort and good taste. Here, showing prominently from the river, is the home of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe." (George M. Barbour. *Florida for Tourists, Invalids, and Settlers*, etc. New York, 1887, revised edition, p. 111).

Tuesday, November 29, 1881. Left Jacksonville at 7 A.M. on Florida Central Rail Road. Canoe in box car 476. At Lake City transferred to J. P. & M RR [Jacksonville, Pensacola and Mobile Railroad] and went to Ellaville on Suwanee river. Canoe was left at Lake City. Found conductor of J. P. & M train pleasant fellow, Hollinger by name. Returned with him to Lake City, got canoe, and reached Ellaville second time 4 o'clock A.M. Cold & rainy.

Wednesday, November 30, 1881. Slept two hours on floor of railroad station. At daylight took traps to river. Left Ellaville at 7 o'clock, rainy and thick fog. Canoe very deeply laden. A mile below town ran three rapids—foundered in second, had to jump overboard to save canoe from upset. Shipped considerable water and got blankets wet. Went into camp five miles down Suwanee river on left bank. Sun came out and I hung everything out

³ Regarding his fourteen foot canoe *Psyche* Kirk Munroe wrote in an article "Canoeing in the Adirondacks" in *Harper's Weekly*, Sept. 22, 1888 ". . . She is the oldest and one of the best known canoes registered in the American Canoe Association, and still is in active service. She was built in Ithaca, New York, in 1876, and has since cruised in an infinite variety of waters, from the swift rivers of Canada and the placid lakes of the Adirondacks to the dim lagoons and trackless swamps of the far South. She has traversed half the coast line of the Gulf of Mexico, and skimmed lightly over the glistening coral banks of the Dry Tortugas. She has penetrated the Everglades of Florida and the great Okefinokee Swamp of Georgia. But her most noteworthy claim is that she was the first sailing craft to proceed up the Caloonsahatchee River from the Gulf of Mexico, and force her way through the "big saw grass" into the great lake Okeechobee, then almost unknown to white men. Here she was abandoned while her captain, lost and bewildered, struggled for his life, swimming, clambering, and wading amid the slimy mazes of the dark swamps surrounding the great lake. After weeks of loneliness she was recovered, and her voyage resumed toward her native Northern waters. Now she is at home, and on almost any pleasant afternoon she may be seen dancing over the waters of New York Bay off Staten Island."

In a letter dated May 5, 1931 to the second Mrs. Munroe after Kirk Munroe's death, his former clubmate, W. P. Stephens, wrote: "His canoe *Psyche*, was built by Jarvis in Ithaca, N. Y., in 1876 for our fellow member, Dr. Henry G. Piffard, who sold her to Kirk in 1879. . ."

R. B. Burchard in an article "True Canoeing" published in the September, 1895, number of *Outing* magazine, refers to Kirk Munroe and his canoe. "The *Psyche* was no "duffer" of a boat, for all her hard cruising, I have not seen a prettier one among the later craft, nor have I witnessed more exciting races than the ones in which *Psyche* competed. . ." *Psyche* was the name of the one of the canoes in Kirk Munroe's story *Canoemates, A Story of the Florida Reef and Everglades* 1892).

⁴ Dr. Charles J. Kenworthy was President of the Florida Medical Association who, at various times since 1844, had "navigated the larger streams of the State, visited the Everglades and Lake Okeechobee and almost every bay, inlet, and river from Cape Sable to the Suwanee River, and for over two months at a time slept in an open boat, with nothing but a simple awning over the boat's boom . . ." quoted in Barbour, *op. cit.*, 203.

to dry. Stayed quietly in camp all day. Very wild country and have not seen a human being either on river or shore. Turned in at 8 o'clock.

Thursday, December 1, 1881. Made late start on account of trouble with mast. Got off at 10 o'clock. Warm, pleasant day. Noticed trees just beginning to turn. Passed Horton's Ferry at 1 o'clock, had talk with Horton, first man seen on river. Two miles below stopped at Tooles. He was boiling syrup. Tasted sugar beer for first time and liked it very much. Went into camp a mile below Tooles on left bank near Charles Irving's house at 3:30. Day's run 30 miles. Saw plenty of duck but did not try for any; they were very shy.

Friday, December 2, 1881. Irving and family saw me off, after having sold me a quart of milk for 15 cents. I carelessly grounded in a rapid about a mile after starting. In the afternoon passed Irving's Ferry and Morgan's Place. Found Morgan making sugar and got some sweet potatoes which I boiled for supper and ate with milk. Ran another easy rapid and at 4 o'clock went into camp on Peacock's place, left bank of river, house about half mile back. Got more milk from Peacock. Rainy, disagreeable night.

Saturday, December 3, 1881. Everything wet, did not start until 9:30 as was only 15 miles from New Troy. Got more milk. Peacock and wife saw me off. About 6 miles above Troy encountered a series of bad rapids extending two miles, but found good channels behind the Islands. Passed a boom at 1 o'clock and a few minutes later reached a mill and ferry which proved to belong to Troy. The village consisting of four stores and as many houses is $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile back from bank of river in Pine woods. Camped on bluff on left bank. Saw first alligator today, 12 ft. long.

Sunday, December 4, 1881. Have staid quietly in camp all day. Have written home and "Mala".⁵ Saw two men, Brayant [*sic*] and Bass, who committed a murder Saturday week, killing Robert Moore for \$11, carried off to Tallahassee in chains. Went to church about one and a half miles in the woods. No house nearer than mile to church. Log building with neither windows or doors. Most primitive building, congregation, preacher, and sermon I ever heard. Got milk at Lee's a mile away. Had visit in afternoon

⁵ "Mala" was, apparently, Kirk Munroe's pet name for his fiancee and later wife, the Scottish born Mary Barr (1852-1922), a daughter of Amelia Barr, the novelist. It is possibly a playful use of the Spanish word *mala*—bad, i.e., bad girl. Kirk Munroe had met her in 1880 when he was editor of *Harper's Young People* and she an occasional contributor.

from principal Barkeeper of the place who conversed fluently on adulterated liquors.

Monday, December 5, 1881. Rose early, but did not get early start because walked to Lee's for milk, two miles. Got off at 9:15. Passed Roland's Bluff, 2 houses and Gin, at 10:30. Passed mouth of Santa Fe creek, 10 o'clock. Used mainsail part of time in afternoon. Reached Fayetteville, a town containing three families when they are all at home, at 5 o'clock. Town on right bank contains two small stores. Plenty of cattle in the country, but no milk to be had. No fruit, no meat, no vegetables, excepting sweet potatoes.

Tuesday, December 6, 1881. Left Fayetteville at 9:15 o'clock. Reached Oldtown on edge of Oldtown Hammock, right bank of river, at noon. Here saw Miss McQueen, first pretty girl in Florida since Jacksonville, but she chews gum. Passed Ft. Fanning on left bank at 1 o'clock. Met steamer *D. L. Yulee*, Capt. Reddick of Cedar Key at 3 o'clock. Went out after squirrels with captain in afternoon, got six. Am spending night on *Yulee*. Very warm day, but very cold nights.

Wednesday, December 7, 1881. Two months since leaving New York. Left *Yulee* at 9 o'clock, went lazily down river to Chair's timber camp, 10 miles on right bank. He is cutting cedar timber for Faber's pencil factory.⁶ Spent two hours there, then came on 10 miles farther to Boom. Am spending night in shanty of Dorsett, boom tender, on edge of great cypress swamp. Steamer *Erie* went up this evening. Feel very happy at idea of leaving river tomorrow.

Thursday, December 8, 1881. Left Boom 9 o'clock, went down two miles into East Pass at 10 o'clock, turning sharp bend came in sight of open waters of Gulf of Mexico. Went out of river at 11 o'clock, reached Cedar Key⁷ at 4 o'clock. Found friend J. Y. Jennes keeping Suwannee House. Am stop-

⁶ Located near Cedar Key on "... Atsenna Otie Island, where there is a large saw-mill and machine-shop owned by Faber Brothers, of New York, giving employment to a colony of thirty families, mostly Germans, engaged in cutting and preparing the cedar-wood for the famous lead-pencils. . . (Barbour, *op. cit.*, p. 64).

⁷ Then a terminus of the Atlantic, Gulf, and West India Transit Company Railroad from Fernandina, 154 miles away, and port of entry for steamship lines, particularly Henderson Gulf Line plying between New Orleans, Pensacola, St. Marks, Key West and Havana. Barbour, *op. cit.*, describes Cedar Keys about the time of Kirk Munroe's visit on pages 65 and 146.

ping with him. Got letters from home and New York. Distance travelled from Ellaville 225 miles.

Friday, December 9, 1881. Am spending day quietly in Cedar Key. Brought *Psyche* up to the hotel this morning and placed her in reading room where she is an object of curiosity and admiration to natives. Rainy, unpleasant day. Met Major Parsons (John), wealthiest man here and owner of Bayfront settlement 60 miles down the coast.

Saturday, December 10, 1881. Met Rev. Mr. Meeny, clergyman of this place and Gainesville, Oxford graduate. Also met party of excursionists from Illinois who go to Tampa and Manatee for winter.

Sunday, December 11, 1881. Went to church this A.M. to hear Mr. Meeny. Walked with Major Parsons this P.M. and visited old Indian mounds of which 12 to 15 are to be found on this island. Picked up arrow heads, stone cut pottery and bones.

Monday, December 12, 1881. Intended to leave today, but was prevented by strong head wind. Met young Italian Comte de Calry who is looking for land in this state upon which to plant an Italian colony.

Tuesday, December 13, 1881. Got off this morning though in teeth of strong East wind against which I have paddled all day making 20 miles. Am spending night on Hickory Island in storehouse owned by Dr. Hodges. House nearby is deserted and there is not a soul on island. Found graveyard in midst of grove of bitter oranges. Navigation today has been very difficult on account of numberless small Keys and reefs of oyster rock. Crossed Waccassa Bay and am within four miles of mouth of Withlacoochie river.

Wednesday, December 14, 1881. Shortly after daylight saw Dr. Hodges' sloop with him on board standing in towards island. Cooked breakfast and had coffee ready for Dr. when he landed. Then took *Psyche* a mile up creek where Dr. has landing. Team met us there and we drove 5 miles to Dr's place on Withlacoochie, stopping at Bonita, another of his places, on way. Went hunting with negro boys in Gulf Hammock in afternoon. Saw one deer but got nothing. Similar success on Fire Hunt in evening. Got very wet on latter during hard rain which lasted nearly all night. Cold norther is setting in.

Thursday, December 15, 1881. Cold day with strong "Norther" blowing. Left Hickory island at noon and made Crystal River, which is marked by shell island on south side of mouth at 3:30 o'clock. Made Willis Island 4 miles up the river shortly before 5 o'clock and am stopping with Willis—regular Cracker family, windows with shutters instead of glass. Navigation today horrible on account of reefs, and dangerous on account of fall. Several seas washed completely over me. Used sail but little on account of ignorance of channel and reefs. Most unpleasant day of trip so far.

Friday, December 16, 1881. Intended to run through Salt River to Homosassa today but wind—the Norther which still continues—has blown all water out of the river so that navigation is impossible. Ran up to Head of Crystal river 4 miles. Small settlement at Head. Have been loafing here all day. Visited Hunter's Spring but found it uninteresting on account of lowness of water. Oldest inhabitant cannot remember such low water. Am stopping with James Milles, principal trader who has very comfortable place a mile from the settlement. Very cold night and fears of frost if wind lulls.

Saturday, December 17, 1881. Wind has moderated and weather is warm again. Found water rising slightly, so left Crystal River (The Head) at 1 o'clock and ran down and into Salt River, got 3 miles and was there. Stopped by bare mud flat extending across river. Am camped near house of man named Foster. Water has run out of well on account of low tide. Child was buried at Crystal River today in home-made coffin covered with white muslin trimmed with black lace and rosettes. Am eating oranges tonight to satisfy thirst, there being no water.

Sunday, December 18, 1881. Wind still further abating. Decided to start when tide began to rise and got off at 3 o'clock with Foster as guide. Worst river I ever saw. Had to haul over two oyster banks and mud flat on which there was no water. Foster left me three miles from Homosassa, assuring me that way was plain. It was then dark and I soon got lost. Found myself in Little Homosassa and luckily found man and woman in boat. For \$1 they consented to act as guides over mile yet to be run, so finally reached Jones' about 7 o'clock and received most hospital welcome. Crossed Bear Ford, Bare, Bear, *Bar*.

Monday, December 19, 1881. Decided to spend day on Homosassa. Have had most delightful time, perfect weather and pleasant companions.

Went up to head of river this morning in canoe with Mr. Curtis and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Howland of Fishkill on Hudson. River rises five miles above house in large spring 100 ft. in diameter and 50 or 60 in depth, clear as crystal. Near spring was scene of massacre of Swedish colony of Seminoles. On return found Capt. A. P. Jones had arrived with sloop yacht *Ella Little*. The Jones house is surrounded by roses and orange grove. Mrs. J. sets best table in Florida.

Tuesday, December 20, 1881. Got away at 10 o'clock this A.M. on sloop yacht *Vanessa*, owned by Mr. Louis Giles, who kindly offered me a tow to Bayfort. His cousin, Mr. G. W. Curtis, accompanies us. Had light winds and only made Bayport, 25 miles, by sundown. Found letters and papers here. Bayport is beastly, dull, uninteresting place, one store and four or five houses all owned by Maj. John Parsons. Water is so shoal that all vessels have to run out five miles to make offing. Dr. Bruner (Bumer?) is head man of place in Parson's absence. Sent letters from here to Mom, M[ala], and Mrs. J. B. Brown.

Wednesday, December 21, 1881. The *Vanessa* left for home as soon as tide served this morning, leaving me to wait the pleasure of Capt. Bob Johnson, who offered me a tow behind his trading schooner *Maggie* to Clearwater Harbor. Did not get off until noon, and with winds light and baffling sunset found us only just off Cootee River in sight of Anclote Keys. Crackers talk of Caloo town and Clearwater.

Thursday, December 22, 1881. Ran all night and made Yellow Bluff at north end of Clearwater harbor, just inside Hog Island^s at 3 o'clock A.M. This is much better looking country than that about Bayport. I slept on deck last night. Day broke lowering, with Rainbow in West. Walked four miles in pouring rain to get team to carry me six miles across country. Finally got one of Walton Whitehurst for \$3. Got over and launched on head of Old Tampa Bay at 3:30 P.M. Ran about 3 miles and made lonely camp in Hammock on point lower side of small bay opposite Booth's Point. Many porpoises running close inshore.

Friday, December 23, 1881. Tampa at last. Broke camp at 8 A.M. and started out into Old Tampa Bay in which sea was running very high before gale from N.W. Gale increased in fury as I got out under lee of land and

^s Now more euphoniously called "Honeymoon Isle."

several heavy seas swept completely over *Psyche*, filling her half full of water. At 12 o'clock had run 18 miles and reached Capt. Oliver's place on east side of bay. Got carried across Gadsden's Point 4 miles to Tampa in mill cart, thereby saving 30 mile sail. Launched in Hillsborough river and paddled across to Tampa where came to anchor in stream off the Steamboat Wharf. Found 21 letters and many papers in Post Office. Am lodged at Mrs. Handfords. Run thus far 350 miles.

Saturday, December 24, 1881. Wrote six letters this A.M. Army officers, Maj. Barston, Capt. Adams, Lieuts. Califf and Humphreys, of 3rd, are stationed here at Ft. Brooke and get meals at Mrs. H's. Have been invited by Califf and Adams to go with them to Key West on Government Schooner *Matchless* some time next week. Gathered cedar, Holly, Palmettos, and Moss this P.M. with which to decorate Lieut. Humphrey's quarters. Played croquet with Mrs. Davis, wife of Lieut. Davis of 3rd Artillery. Spent evening with Califf and Humphreys in latter's quarters, where we opened bottle of Italian wine which I have carried on whole cruise and drank to absent dear ones. Day is warm as June and air is full of noise of crackers, guns, and glare of rockets.

Sunday, December 25, 1881. Went to church this A.M. and found building decorated with roses, lillies, and other flowers instead of evergreens. Warm, beautiful day, like June day in north. Went to African church this evening, where upon conclusion of service congregation joined in a dance resembling that of Nautch girls. Had turkey and plus pudding for dinner, but with that exception and the exchange at the breakfast table of the compliments of the season, there has been nothing to remind one of Christmas.

Monday, December 26, 1881. Pouring rain during morning, but bright and clear afternoon. Christmas was celebrated here in Tampa by a Tournament of the Knights of Hillsborough held in the afternoon on Parade Ground of Ft. Brooke. The Knights were those of Florida West Tampa South Florida Girls Seven Stars Calisthenics Blue Mull, Balast Point, Six Mile Creek, Gadsden's Point, Navarre of the Ball, etc. Each rode three tilts for 3 rings

each at a distance of 90 yards.⁹ Crowned queen and two maids of Honor. Ball at Orange Grove Hotel in evening.

Tuesday, December 27, 1881. Sent letters to Charles Scribner, Starey, and C[hristian] Union this A.M. Hauled boat out of water for varnishing. Most perfect day of winter. Unclouded sky. Temperature 80 degrees, etc. Went to ride to Sulphur Spring 5 miles north of town with Dr. Wall. Rode through Florida and Nebraska Avenues, lined with young orange groves. Moonlight on fort was too beautiful for description.

Wednesday, December 28, 1881. Still in Tampa. Nothing seen yet of *Matchless*. Sent letters to Scribner, Christian Union and H. Harper today.¹⁰ Gave *Psyche* a coat of varnish. Received several letters by day's mail and beautiful Xmas card from Grace Furniss. Also got Xmas box from Mala.

Thursday, December 29, 1881. No news from *Matchless*. Received letter from home and Xmas cards from Swee and Yet (both?). One of the most perfect days of season.

Friday, December 30, 1881. Court martial at Garrison this morning. Played croquet all the afternoon with Mrs. Davis against Lieuts. Humphreys and Davis.

Saturday, December 31, 1881. Wrote letter on Tampa (A Gulf Coast City) this morning for C[hristian] Union.¹¹ Went hunting this afternoon with Lieuts. Humphreys and Califf, but got nothing. Received letter from home today saying house had been entered by thieves and \$200 of jewelry stolen. Wrote New Year's Eve letter to Julia, Ida, and Gen this evening. Day has been bright and clear, but cold. Played croquet after coming in from hunting. No signs of the *Matchless* yet.

⁹ A curious survival of the chivalric "Joust of the Ring" dating from the Middle Ages. It was basically a contest of skill in running a lance or spear through a small metal ring while riding a horse at full speed. Starting from an agreed line the mounted contestants, with lance couched, charged at full tilt, each in turn, at a suspended circlet, seeking to penetrate deftly this small opening with the knightly weapon. For a detailed description of a "Joust of the Ring" held in the high Andes in 1607 with one of the "knights" dressed as Don Quixote, see Irving A. Leonard. *Books of the Brave*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1949; New York, Gordian Press, 1964, pages 302-306.

¹⁰ Kirk Munroe was doing journalistic work for the New York publishers, Charles Scribner, and Harper Brothers at this time.

¹¹ This letter "A Gulf Coast City" was published in the January 19, 1882 issue of the *Christian Union*.

Sunday, January 1, 1882. As yet no signs of *Matchless*. Put canoe in water and went over to see fine house of artificial stone made from sand, owned by Mr. Morrison. Called in evening on Chief Engineer Carter of Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West Railroad at Orange Grove Hotel. Day has been uncomfortably cold, with heavy rain in morning, but bright and pleasant in afternoon.

Monday, January 2, 1882. Still in Tampa.

Tuesday, January 3, 1882. No *Matchless* yet.

Wednesday, January 4, 1882. *Matchless* came in this evening and we shall get off tomorrow. Glorious day, like Indian summer at North. Had children's party this evening at Mrs. Hanford's. Sailed down bay to anchorage, 4 miles, this morning.

Thursday, January 5, 1882. Left Tampa in U.S. Schooner *Matchless*, Captain Russell, with Lieut. Califf, 3rd Art., Lieut. Adams, 5th Art., and Willie Hanford for Key West this afternoon. Got under way at 4 P.M. Light breeze from E.N.N. Passed Egmont Light 35 miles at midnight. Steamer *Ellie Knight* passed us shortly before. Noticed Gulls stealing fish from pelicans.

Friday, January 6, 1882. Fine day with good breeze from N.E. in morning, but died out by noon and left us becalmed off Cinnabel [Sanibel] island until Sunset. Just before sunset an immense school of sharks surrounded the schooner. Fine effect of breeze coming over water. Moonlight is wonderfully beautiful, moon being full.

Saturday, January 7, 1882. Key West in sight at 8 o'clock. Ship surrounded by fleet of Nautilus (portuguese men-of-war), beautiful colors, pink, blue, purple, iridescent. Reached Key West, Cayo Hueso (Bone Key) at 12 M. Drove out to Ft. Taylor in afternoon, went to skating rink in evening. No letters.

Sunday, January 8, 1882. Key West at last. Went out to garrison this A.M. Saw superb Banyan tree in front of officers' quarters, believed to be only one in America. Took long walk P.M. Town contains 12,000 people,

mostly Conchs from Bahamas, Minorcas from St. Augustine, Negroes, Cubans, not more than 100 Americans in place. Highest point of island is 16 ft. above mean tide. Sent off letters on Mallory Steamship *Colorada* from Galveston for New York. Found man named Henry Curry with wooden bicycle.¹²

Monday, January 9, 1882. Put *Psyche* in water and visited sponging fleet this A.M. Saw little nigs diving in crowds. \$17,000 worth of sponges sold at auction on wharf today. Sponges come from Rock Island, Anclotes, St. Marks, and Bay Biscayne. Saw fruit sold at Auction¹³—Cocoanuts, Sapodillas, Mannel (?), Sapota, Mangoes, Pawpaws, Plantains, Bananas, Sugar-cane, Oranges, Lemons, Limes, Sugar Apples, Alligator Pears, Jamaica Apples, etc. Trees in Key West—Date and Cocoa Palm, Australian Fir, Royal Poinciana, Geiger, Sapodilla, Gooseberry, Cedar, Spanish Laurel, Cactus Giganticus, Almond, Sea Grape, Gumalama or Gumalimbo, Banana and dozen more.

Tuesday, January 10, 1882. Went to barracks and visited cemetery, all overgrown with rank chaparal, many graves marked "unknown." Very warm day, like midsummer at north, with scent of Oleander, Jasmine, Oppaponac and roses which grow in greatest luxuriance. Bought sixteen cocoanuts for 50 cents. Called on officers of Rev. Cutter, *John A. Dix* this evening.¹⁴

Wednesday, January 11, 1882. Took long drive with Califf over island this P.M., visited Salt works, abandoned, and Martello tower, unfinished. Glorious day, cool sea breeze. Left at midnight for Dry Tortugas, taking as passengers Chief Calvin Edson, last of the Pequots, and Robert Thompson, Loggerhead Light Keeper.

Thursday, January 12, 1882. Reached Tortugas and Fort Jefferson at 8 A.M. Tortugas consists of Garden Key, Sand Key, Bird Key, East Key,

¹² This curious observation was probably prompted by Kirk Munroe's active interest in the new sport of bicycling. He had organized the New York Bicycle Club of which he was still the Captain, and on May 31, 1880 he had founded the League of American Wheelmen at Newport, Rhode Island. See Irving A. Leonard, "The Founder of the First League of American Wheelmen," *American Cycling*, August, 1967, p. 12-13.

¹³ Kirk Munroe utilized this experience in his first book-length story *Wakulla, A Story of Adventure in Florida*, written in the following year (1883), in Chapter V entitled "Mark and Ruth Attend An Auction."

¹⁴ A letter written about this date was published as "Cayo Hueso (Key West)" in the February 16, 1882 issue of the *Christian Union*.

and Loggerhead Key. Ft. Jefferson stands on Garden Key and encloses 9 acres. It is a brick work on which over \$30,000,000 is said to have been spent, was begun in 1846, abandoned in '78, and it is not finished—is second largest in country and best quarters in any fort. Went fishing over at Loggerhead in catboat *Ella* with Robert Thompson and Frank Knight. Loggerhead, 152 ft. height, last point on Florida. Reef lights on reef are Cape Florida, Fowey's Rocks, Cary's Fort, Sombrero Am. shoals, Alligator Sand Key (Rebecca shoal) and Loggerhead.¹⁵

Friday, January 13, 1882. Had fine sport yesterday and caught Snapper, Grouper, Yellow Tail, Mutton Fish, and Grunt. From Loggerhead turned back and began to retrace my steps on my homeward journey. Left Tortugas at 4 P.M. with wind dead ahead blowing strong from N.E., beat all night and in morning only just sighted Marquesas. Made Key West by noon and left there bound north at 5 o'clock P.M. Got picture of chief.

Sunday, January 15, 1882. Calm continues. Have not made more than 50 miles from Key West.

Monday, January 16, 1882. Good breeze sprang up at daylight from N.E. Anchored two miles off Sanibel at noon and I was set ashore there. Felt very lonesome on bidding farewell to *Matchless* and Mr. Califf. Most beautiful shells on Sanibel I ever saw. Sailed over to Punta Rassa, where found some mail. Am spending night in house of Mr. Shultz, the operator.¹⁶ Heard queer story this evening of Harry Rice, hermit of Mound Key, whose sister-in-law married Gov. Rice and who was draughtsman in Selfridge's party on Panama survey. Mosquitoes are thicker here than any place on coast.

Thursday, January 17, 1882. Left Punta Rassa with fair wind and tide and ran 18 miles up river to Ft. Myers in four and one half hours. River about two miles wide and very beautiful. Am camped on Major Evans' place on edge of orange grove, and between two cocoa palms. Ft. Meyers has about 50 houses and 3 or 4 hundred people. Found mail from home and Ridgewood.

¹⁵ An article "The Dry Tortugas and the Last of the Pequots" by Kirk Munroe appeared in the June 8, 1882 number of *The Independent*.

¹⁶ A telegraph and international cable station was located at the time on Punta Rassa, then an important place of shipment of cattle to Key West and Cuba.

Wednesday, January 18, 1882. Still in Ft. Meyers. Met Capt. Hendry today. Shot duck and got fish for dinner.

Thursday, January 19, 1882. Still in Ft. Meyers. Have been out sailing. Also visited *South Florida College*, small frame building.

Friday, January 20, 1882. Left Ft. Meyers at 8 o'clock and ran under paddle against wind and tide 25 miles to McKinley's place. Am camped with man named Waldron, two women and boy who are bound to Ft. Thompson. Met woman who was hunting for a doctor to have teeth *amputated*. Heard alligator story of man named Gibson who was killed year ago last June near People's bridge on Suwanee river. Our camp is very bad and uncomfortable, hog wallows and fleas. Went over to McKinley's to sugar boiling this evening.

Saturday, January 21, 1882. Ran 20 miles in company with Waldron and am camped at Ft. Deynaud.

Sunday, January 22, 1882. Ran 25 miles today and am spending night on dredge boat *Sam'l Grey* at Head of Lake Flirt where she began work yesterday.¹⁷ Cold norther set in this P.M. with rain. Shot six alligators today. River has been very crooked and full of snags. Struck one and sprung a leak. Lake Flirt is filled with bonnets, river letuce, and grass, so that navigation is extremely difficult. Found camp of cattlemen at Ft. Thompson and dined with them.

Monday, January 23, 1882. Norther and rain still continue. Shot alligator 9 ft. long. Man could not remember name on account of numbers he saw.

Tuesday, January 24, 1882. Norther still blowing with occasional spurts of rain. Very cold and uncomfortable. Ran down lake to Waldron's house this A.M., but returned to dredge for night. Crossed end of Big Prairie which looks like Kansas.¹⁸

Wednesday, January 25, 1882. Norther broke today and day came out clear and bright by noon. Went in canoe three miles up to Coffee Mill

¹⁷ Evidently on the three mile canal No. 1. Lake Flirt is described as "really a shallow mudhole" in Alfred Jackson Hanna and Kathryn Abbey Hanna. *Lake Okeechobee, Wellspring of the Everglades*. Indianapolis and New York, 1948, p. 174.

¹⁸ As a seventeen year old boy Kirk Munroe had been with a surveying party in Kansas.

Hammock. Shot two large alligators. Mosquitoes nearly ate us up tonight. Met Lone (Tom?) Tiger, Billy Fuel, Charlie Osceola, and two other Seminoles this P.M. Dress buckskin moccasins and leggins, bright calico shirts and bright shawls and handkerchiefs about heads. Armed with rifles.

Thursday, January 26, 1882. Moved down to Dave Waldron's house on Fork Branch and on edge of Big Prairie today. Met Seminole and daughters, Mrs. McGee, Miss Mizell, and others.

Friday, January 27, 1882. Very warm and beautiful day. Went out turkey hunting, got two and 8 ducks, blue wings. Mosquitoes powerful bad. Got washing done.

Saturday, January 28, 1882. Made arrangements with Jenkins to carry me over to Fish Eating Creek, 18 miles, tomorrow. Got fine mess of squirrels today. Very hot. Mosquitoes in swarms. Shot five wood Ibis.

Sunday, January 29, 1882. Started with Dempsey Jenkins and his ox team overland for Old Ft. Centre. Whole route, 18 miles, lay across Big Prairie. Expected to find Tom Tiger encamped at New Ft. Centre. Found camp deserted. Camped in hammock beside slough midway between New and Old Ft. Centre. Were joined by party of Indians, six young braves, who spent the night with us.

Monday, January 30, 1882. Moved at daybreak to Old Ft. Centre on Fish Eating Creek. Shall start alone for Kissimmee at daybreak tomorrow. Frank Lefils name on Cabbage tree.

[Kirk Munroe's report to the Secretary of the New York Canoe Club deals with the events from January 16 to this date as follows: "Ascended Caloosahatchee river 75 miles, touching at Punta Rassa, Fort Meyers and Fort Thompson, to Lake Flirt where found dredge of Okeechobee Drainage Company at work 28 miles from Lake. Spent four days on board dredge, then followed up stream 15 miles to Lake Hickpochee and found entrance to Okeechobee impassable on account of saw-grass. Returned to Fort Thompson and took ship railway, viz: ox cart across prairie 18 miles to Fish Eating Creek. Found Seminole Indian village—Tom Tiger, chief of ten lodges. Camped with Indians one week trying in vain to hire one of their number to act as Okeechobee pilot.]

Tuesday, January 31, 1882. Started alone an hour before day, 5:30. Made Okeechobee at 6:30. Gale blowing from South. Shipped many seas and everything wet. Have run within sight of eastern shore of lake but have not found Kissimmee. Am spending night in boat, tied to cypress tree in Eagle Bay.¹⁹

[Report to Secretary of New York Canoe Club reads: "Finally, last day of January started alone, descending Fish Eating Creek to Okeechobee. Found tremendous sea running, effect of gale from south. Put in two reefs, battened hatches, and laid course by compass northeast by east—which I had been told would bring me to mouth of Kissimmee river. Made the distance, 30 miles, by noon but failed to discover river, nor could I discover any land, the lake being surrounded by cypress swamps and big saw-grass from one to 12 miles wide. Anchored and spent night in canoe, provisions and clothing water-soaked in spite of battened hatches."]

Wednesday, February 1, 1882. Have failed to find Kissimmee and have run back to try and regain Fish Eating Creek. Another night in boat. Looks as though I were lost.

[Report: "Next day decided to return to Fish Eating Creek; did so, but failed to discover mouth of creek on account of saw-grass, which hid it. Spent another night in boat. Provisions getting mouldy."]

Thursday, February 2, 1882. Spent six hours trying in vain to find Fish Eating Creek. Have determined to run back and look for Kissimmee. Landed for the first time on Sandbar at 10 o'clock and spent two hours, cooking hominy and coffee and in drying cargo. Then started to search coast to N.E. carefully. Made 12 miles but found no opening. Thunderstorm came up just at dark and I got pretty wet, but got drink of rainwater. Lack water fit to drink. Am tied to old log on edge of saw grass. Mosquitoes are terrible. Lost anchor and sheath knife in storm, two serious losses.

[Report: "Next day started in calm to make further search for mouth of Kissimmee. Had made only half distance when night overtook me and I was forced to spend third night in boat."]

¹⁹ If at Eagle Bay he had passed mouth of the Kissimmee river.

Friday, February 3, 1882. Started at daylight after most wretched night. Boat was surrounded by alligators all night. Ran back to what I have called Eagle Bay but what I am satisfied is mouth of Kissimmee river. Ran for third time up a wide clear stream of good water with current which seems as though it must be Kissimmee, but after two miles it breaks into several small streams which vanish in sawgrass 7 or 8 feet high and keen as razor. Filled keg and ran to where *coast* bears S.E. Here found wide straight Estuary $\frac{3}{4}$ mile long from which several streams lead into gloomy cypress swamp full of gators. Ran out at dark and am camped on narrow sand beach. Southerly gale is blowing and sea threatens to inundate my camp. Am in despair.

[Report: "On fourth day cruised to eastern shore of lake and became involved in the mazes of a dark cypress swamp, so horrible in all its features that, as a model for an "inferno" it would be a success; was still lost in its mazes when darkness overtook me and was forced to spend a night of horror within noisome recesses—was greatly alarmed during this night by the aggressive presence of innumerable alligators and venomous water moccasins.

Succeeded by sunrise in escaping swamp and regaining open lake. By this time was becoming very weak from inability to eat my provisions, all of which were rapidly spoiling and nauseated me. That morning had the rare good fortune to discover a narrow strip of sand beach on which I landed, stepping from my canoe for the first time in four days.

After making coffee, cooking a hearty meal, and drying my clothes by a fire of drift wood, I lay down to sleep. When I awoke it was dark, and water was dashing over me. A gale had sprung up from southward, while I slept, and the sea, so quickly raised in that shallow lake, was already breaking over my sand bar."]

Saturday, February 4, 1882. Gale was heavy all night and all day until sunset, when it broke. Sea rose higher and higher until it seemed as though I must be washed away, but was mercifully preserved. Could not launch canoe through breakers and have spent day here. Climbed tall cypress but could see nothing. I have but little appetite, which is fortunate as my food is rapidly spoiling with continued wet. My bread is already covered with

green mould. Day has been bright and clear with exception of one shower during which I caught some rainwater which refreshed me greatly. Spark from my fire burned Mosquito bar badly and I have just finished mending it with a piece of my bread bag. Shall I ever see home again?

[Report to Secretary: "The gale continued all that night and, as I could not launch my canoe in face of it, I was in great fear lest she should be torn from me and dashed in pieces among the trees of the cypress swamp behind me. By sunrise the gale subsided and the waters receding left me once more on dry land with my boat still uninjured; but with much of her cargo swept away."]

Sunday, February 5, 1882. Broke camp soon after day break and went back 3 miles to what I am quite certain must be the mouth of the Kissimmee. It is a large bay with 20 or more sloughs emptying into it. I explored them all. Some were a mile or more in length but all ended in the horrible saw-grass with which I cut my hands quite badly. It seems as though I should never escape. I wonder how long it will be before my friends send in search of me and whether I shall be found alive. I have come back to my old camp on the sand bar thoroughly disheartened. In it mosquitoes and lizards abound in numbers I have never seen equaled.

[Report to Secretary: "That day I continued my search for an outlet to the lake, returning at night to the sand bar to sleep. This I did for three days, until having nearly circumnavigated the lake and finding no chance of escape, my provisions spoiled as they were, being nearly exhausted, I decided to abandon Psyche and attempt to force my way through the saw grass to the mainland."]

Monday, February 6, 1882. This night completes a week of my captivity in this terrible place. Though hope has almost left me, still I have much to be thankful for. I have thus far been preserved amid manifold dangers and have not been called to endure any great *physical* suffering. I have made up my mind to penetrate the saw grass as far as possible in my boat and there abandon her, attempt to force my way through it to solid ground. I do not think the water is more than waist deep. Have cooked the last of my provisions and made mittens and mask for my face in preparation for the undertaking. Shall start at daybreak. God help me!

Tuesday, February 7, 1882. Thank God I have escaped from that horrible lake and am once more in human company. I broke camp at daylight and ran up to "Canoe" bay and as far as I could force my boat into the grass of a small creek emptying into the bay. There, after spreading a rubber blanket over the boat, I left her tied to a small cypress on which I hoisted the American flag union down. Then I struck into the terrible sawgrass heading N.W. by pocket compass. After 3 hours of the most exhausting labor of my life, I reached a belt of timber on mainland, bloody, cut, wet, and muddy. Walked 15 miles across prairie and struck trail running east and west. Turned East and on edge of fine Island found Edward Whitten's House where I received warm welcome.

[Report to Secretary: "This, after a desperate effort, I finally succeeded in doing and reached the mainland where I lay some time in a state of unconsciousness from weakness and exhaustion. The big "saw-grass" is twelve feet high, closely matted, and its edges cut like those of razors. In it the water stands from two to four feet deep, and the bottom is soft mud.

Upon regaining consciousness and refreshing myself with a cup of brandy and water, and two of my mouldy biscuits, I started across the prairie in search of settlements. From the effects of my struggle with the saw grass, my clothing hung in rags and I was covered with blood from cuts on every portion of my body.

Knowing that there was, on the Kissimmee river, a settlement called Fort Bassinger, and that a trail must lead eastward from it to the settlements on the Indian river, and being fully convinced also that I was east of the Kissimmee, I laid a course by compass north-west which I knew must lead me to the trail or the river.

After walking 15 miles I struck the east and west trail just at sunset, and shortly after found a log cabin, in which lived a cow-hunter by the name of Edward Whitten. Here I was treated with the greatest kindness . . ."]

Wednesday, February 8, 1882. Walked west across prairie 15 miles to Ft. Bassinger on west bank of Kissimmee river. Prairie full of deep sloughs,

very wet and hard walking. Started up 20 or more head of deer but gun was left in boat so could not harm them.

[Report to Secretary: "... and next day I followed the trail west for 17 miles through an uninhabited country to Shake Rag, a settlement on the Kissimmee, opposite Fort Bassinger."]

Thursday, February 9, 1882. Am going to stay at Ft. Bassinger and work on Pierce's place for my board until John Pierce comes home from Indian river. Am at work helping make plow stocks.

Friday, February 10, 1882. Still at work on plow stocks.

Saturday, February 11, 1882. Plow stocks finished. Have been running ferry. Pierce returned this afternoon.

Sunday, February 12, 1882. Ran ferry this A.M. Pierce thinks he will go with me to Okeechobee after boat. Billy Smith, Indian, passed East this A.M. Said that in five days the entire Fish Eating Creek band would cross on their way to Cow Creek. Frank and Will Lefils came in this evening from [Lake] Istokpoga bringing some of the fattest turkeys I ever saw. Shall try to get one of them to go to Okeechobee with me.

Monday, February 13, 1882. Started in skiff with Will Lefils, boy 19 years old, at 11 o'clock this A.M. for Okeechobee. Stopped for dinner at Pierce's lower hammock and for an hour at Tom Daughtry's last place on river 10 miles from Bassinger. Are camped in a Buzzard's Roost 20 miles down. Fine weather.

Tuesday, February 14, 1882. Started at daylight and made the lake at 2 P.M. Found Kissimmee empties into bay west of one I had been searching and which I have named "Canoe Bay." The stream of clear water running into Canoe Bay seems to have been heretofore unknown and has been named "Munroe's Creek." Found *Psyche* safe in the saw grass where I left her about 5 miles east of Kissimmee. Ran back to sand bar near mouth of river where we are camped. Mosquito swarm in clouds.

[Report to Secretary: "At Bassinger, I found an alligator hunter, and engaged him to go with me in his skiff down the Kissimmee to Okee-

chobee and recover my canoe. We went and, in three days, returned with the *Psyche*, having found her uninjured where I left her.”]

Wednesday, February 15, 1882. Made splendid run up river and reached Prairie camp 25 miles. Very warm day, 110 degrees in sun. Shot number of gators and caught a young one alive.

Thursday, February 16, 1882. Made late start on account of having to stop and make bread. Reached Daughtry's in time for the late dinner and then set out for Bassinger. Last bend before reaching Bassinger is worst on river, where one has to pull 2 miles against a powerful current to make straight distance of 100 yards. Reached Bassinger about 5 P.M. Very tired but happy at having made the quickest trip ever made between Bassinger and the lake—whole distance travelled in three and a half days, 120 miles.

Friday, February 17, 1882.²¹ Have been resting quietly in Bassinger today. Overhauled, oiled her, etc. Gave Will Lefils double Mackinaw blanket worth \$10 and \$5 in money for his trip. Very hot day. Pierce and his boys gone deer hunting.

Saturday, February 18, 1882. Pierce came in today with fine buck. My ankles are very lame in consequence of red bugs and poison of lake water.

Sunday, February 19, 1882. There was preaching across the river at Shake Rag today, but my lameness prevented me from going. Old man Colyer with 3 wives and 14 children came over river with teams, moving to Charley Apopka creek. They are camped near the house.

Monday, February 20, 1882. Pierce and Mann went with Colyer to Istokpoga creek today and on return reported steamer in sight of Micko's Bluff.

Tuesday, February 21, 1882. Steamer *Gertrude* arrived at 10 this A.M. and I have made arrangements to go up river on her. All hands are drunk tonight. *Gertrude* brought three passengers, Northern men, who wanted to see country and are disgusted with it.

²⁰ Possibly Taylor's Creek, near present site of Okeechobee City.

²¹ Kirk Munroe's article in *Harper's Weekly*, January 6, 1883, entitled "Adventures with Alligators" was based on his stay at Fort Bassinger.

[Report to Secretary: "By this time my wounds from the saw grass had become "water poisoned," and I was so unfit for work that I took passage for myself and canoe on a small trading steamer that makes a semi-monthly trip down the Kissimmee as far as Fort Bassinger."]

Wednesday, February 22, 1882. Left Bassinger on *Gertrude*²² at 8 A.M.

Machinery in such bad order that we have made only 35 miles and are tied up at Micko's Bluff cleaning out flues tonight. I am acting alternately as cook and Pilot. Have made two batches of bread since coming aboard.

Thursday, February 23, 1882. Left Micko's Bluff at 5 this A.M. with me as pilot. Made Guy's (Kissimmee Ferry) at 4 P.M., where got wood and yams. Captain is very sick with measles and needs all bedding, which is pretty rough on the rest of us as a Norther has set in and the night is very cold. I acted as pilot from 6 P.M. until midnight and then tied boat up as I was nearly perished. Are lying in the cut-off. Flues again clogged. Met J. W. Duggs at Orange Hammock.

Friday, February 24, 1882. Still very cold and strong head wind. Ran out of the river into Kissimmee Lake at sunset and ran till midnight. Are anchored off Camp Hammock.²³

Saturday, February 25, 1882. Took wood and new deck hand at Camp Hammock (Quinn Bass) and left at 9 A.M. Kissimmee Lake 15 miles long, then river for 3 miles, then Lake Hatchenaka 4 miles, then four miles river, then Lake Cypress four miles long, the 8 miles of the most crooked and narrowest river on whole route, called Gum Swamp. Just before making Lake Cypress stopped at McQuaig Hammock near old Fort Gardiner to trade with

²² A little over a year later President Chester A. Arthur got as far as 60 miles above Lake Okeechobee and returned to Kissimmee City on the *Gertrude* in April, 1883. Cf. Joe M. Richardson. "The Florida Excursion of President Chester A. Arthur," *Tequesta*, No. 24 (1964), p. 41-48.

²³ In his log Kirk Munroe included a notation "List of Birds on Kissimmee river.

Water Turkey	Coromorants (<i>sic</i>)
Turkeys & Buzzards	Great Snowy Heron
Mexican Buzzards	Great Blue Heron
Crows	Whooping or Sand Hill Crane
Hawks	Green Heron
Stake Drivers	Two Kinds Egret
Coots	Ibis & Wood Ibis
Ducks	Scroggins, Blue, White & Green
Blackbirds	"Paroquetts"
Limpkins	

Tom Tiger and half a dozen Indians, one of them Milly Buster. Are tied up in Gum Swamp.

Sunday, February 26, 1882. Got into Tohopkelaga 18 miles long at 10 A.M. Made Kissimmee city at 2 P.M. I been cook for two days.

Monday, February 27, 1882. Spent the morning in Kissimmee city. Place started since Xmas. Very like western town. 20 houses, 2 saw mills running night and day. Left at 2 o'clock with mule team for Orlando. Reached Orlando at 8 P.M., 18 miles. Are camped in vacant lot in middle of town.²⁴

Tuesday, February 28, 1882. Saw George Newell this A.M. Dined at White's. Left on train of South Florida Railroad at 3 P.M. for Sanford and reached it at 5 o'clock. Found big mail and Post Office order for \$25. Sent telegram home. Am camped on bank of Lake Munroe, near hotel in company with four men who have just come up Indian river.

Wednesday, March 1, 1882. Have stayed in Sanford today. Ran across Lake to Enterprise this P.M. Beautiful day. It is very pleasant to be within limits of civilization once more. Sent letters home and to New York today.

[Report to Secretary: "... On this steamer, the *Gertrude*, I reached Lake Tahopkeligatt, [*sic*] the head of the Kissimmee, and from Kissimmee City, a frontier settlement founded since Christmas, I was carried via ox-cart and rail to Sanford, 40 miles across country, and there launched my canoe on the waters of the St. Johns."]

Thursday, March 2, 1882. Left Sanford at 10:30 this A.M., ran 5 miles to foot of Lake Munroe and entered St. Johns and ran to Blue Springs, where am camped on beautiful point. Moonlight evening and air is heavy with scent of orange blossoms. Spring is strong with sulphur. Have made 25 miles. Am running slowly for sake of company. St. Johns here runs through cypress swamps and is very interesting.

Friday, March 3, 1882. Took bath in sulphur spring this A.M. Made late start and have only run 18 miles. Am camped on bluff at St. Francis. Passed Hawkinsville and Crow's Bluff. Stopped steamer *Plant* this evening and sent sick man to Jacksonville. Old man Driggers killed two fat turkeys on bank of river this evening.

²⁴ Kirk Munroe's death occurred in Orlando, June 16, 1930.

Saturday, March 4, 1882. Have made 30 miles today and at last left cypress swamp and are camped on head of Lake George. Passed Bluffton at noon, 4,000 orange trees there. Passed Volusia, very stupid place. Steam yacht *Chime* from Bay Ridge, Capt. Johnson, is anchored off camp.

Sunday, March 5, 1882. Have spent the day quietly at head of Lake George. Went up Orange Grove this A.M. and got a load of lemons. Had callers from steam yacht *Chime*.

Monday, March 6, 1882. Ran across Lake George this A.M. and down river 25 miles past Welaka and Mouth of Oklawaha to Rogers one mile above Nashau. Am camped on beautiful Oak Bluff.

Tuesday, March 7, 1882. Ran down river 23 miles to Palatka, reaching it at 2 P.M. River has been very wide and beautiful today. Thermometer 110 degrees in sun. Palatka pretty place.

Wednesday, March 8, 1882. Have spent the day in Palatka camped just on edge of town in Oak Grove on bank of river. Palatka is lively place and is full of northern visitors.

Thursday, March 9, 1882. Left Palatka at 9:30 this A.M. and ran down river to Magnolia, 47 miles, before stiff S.W. breeze in 6 hours. Beat sloop with the Indian river party more than an hour. Passed Tocoï and Picolata but did not stop. Stopped at Green Cove Springs a few minutes. Have beautiful camp on high Oak Bluff near hotel and cottages.

Friday, March 10, 1882. Have spent day quietly at Magnolia.²⁵ Went over hotel with Seavey, manager, also of Maplewood at Bethlehem.

Saturday, March 11, 1882. Expected to run to Jacksonville and finish cruise but a stiff norther compels us to remain in camp at Magnolia. Our camp attracts attention from visitors, many of whom come to see us under the impression that we are Indians.

Sunday, March 12, 1882. Day broke clear and warm with light breeze down river and, as stores were getting low, we decided to go on. Ran down

²⁵ Just north of present day Green Cove Springs.

river past Mandarin to Jacksonville 28 miles and are camped on opposite side of river and two miles below city at St. Nicholas.

Monday, March 13, 1882. Went into city this A.M. and received most hearty welcome from friends there among whom I found several Tampa acquaintances. Got shaved for first time in four months and got hair cut. Bought two pairs of shoes and started for Mandarin at 3:30 P.M. Wind half a gale and very squally from west. When half way through under two reefs had to lower sail and scud. Shipped several heavy seas, but finally reached Mandarin at 6 o'clock, two and one half hours from Jacksonville, 15 miles. Received hearty welcome from crowd of people who turned out to meet me. Am at Mrs. Stowe's once more dressed as a gentleman. Whole length of cruise 1,600 miles.

[Report to Secretary: "A leisurely trip of two weeks duration brought me to this place where the *Psyche* is now on the ways for general repairs and overhauling.

All of which I have the honor to submit, and am, Mr. Secretary,

Most respectfully yours.

C. K. MUNROE.²⁶

Capt. Canoe *Psyche*, New York Canoe Club."]

²⁶ Munroe's full name was Charles Kirk Munroe. His first public dropping the name "Charles" appears to have been in the August, 1883 number of *The American Canoeist*, of which he was then editor.

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