

South Florida's Prelude to War: Army Correspondence Concerning Miami, Fort Dallas, and the Everglades Prior to the Outbreak of the Third Seminole War, 1850-1855

Christopher R. Eck

Most readers know that the National Archives in Washington, D.C., contain a wealth of historical documents covering all aspects of the American Experience from the colonial era to the present. These documents have



Artwork commissioned by the U.S. Army Quartermaster General in 1885, depicting the official U.S. Army uniforms of the Third Seminole War period, 1855-1858. Courtesy of the Broward County Historical Commission.

been mined for decades by historians seeking to understand the history of the United States. Among the millions of preserved documents are thousands of collections created in the nineteenth century by the United States military during this nation's epochs of territorial expansion and the ensuing conflicts that arose with the numerous American Indian tribes that were confronted by settlers and the federal government.

Since few people, other than Seminoles and U.S. military personnel, lived in southern Florida for much of the period covering the Seminole Wars, the military correspondence produced by those

officers stationed in southern Florida with their military commanders and staff members at distant headquarters provides a unique record of a significant period of local and American history. The focus of this article is those letters produced between 1850-1855, extracted from a record group entitled *Letters Sent, Registers of Letters Received and Letters Received by Head Quarters, Department of Florida 1850-1858*. The letters



A portion of the U.S. Army map of southern Florida, entitled "Sketch of the Southern part of Florida," ca. 1842. This portion depicts the area from around Fort Dallas north to Fort Lauderdale. Courtesy of the Broward County Historical Commission.

detail military communications covering operations in South Florida prior to the outbreak of the Third Seminole War in December 1855, particularly at the military base first established in 1837 by the U.S. Army at the former Richard Fitzpatrick/William English plantation along the north bank of the Miami River and named Fort Dallas (after Navy Commodore Alexander J. Dallas), which, in no small measure, served as the catalyst for a permanent settlement that would eventually become the City of Miami.

The following letters, transcribed and edited from collections in the National Archives, have never before been published and they provide new insight into better understanding the lives of those individuals who blazed a trail in this tumultuous period of the area's past while laying a foundation for its present and future. The Seminole War era drew to the area many officers who had distinguished themselves in prior service, or who would serve with distinction in the coming Civil War for both Union and Confederate forces. The letters these officers produced have been transcribed as written, complete with original spelling and punctuation, and have been annotated to provide the reader with a better understanding of each document's author and its recipient, and of South Florida history generally.

These writings also demonstrate the relative isolation of the Fort Dallas command from others in central Florida and farther north along the Atlantic coast and Gulf of Mexico. Being stationed at Fort Dallas carried with it additional burdens from most other postings. It was a place apart. Because of its isolation, the military turned to letter writing as one way to counter this remoteness.¹

In July 1850, when these letters begin, fifty-one men were enumerated by County Marshall W.C. Maloney for the purpose of the federal decennial census as being stationed at the "Garrison at the Miami River." Brevet Major Francis Woodbridge² of Vermont commanded the fort with Lieutenant J.A. De Sagnol³ of New Jersey and Lieutenant James M. Robinson⁴ of New Hampshire as junior officers. The fort's surgeon was Isaac L. Adkins⁵ of Delaware. The average age of these officers was twenty-eight.

Among the 47 soldiers counted in the 1850 census, 33 of the men—70 percent—were foreign-born. Twenty-five were Irish (53 percent of the total), 5 were German (11 percent of the total), 2 were Scots, and 1 was English. Half of the 14 native-born soldiers were from New York and only two were from Southern states (one each from Georgia and North Carolina). The average age of the troops was twenty-seven. Not only were these men stationed in a forbidding and foreign environment during a time of military tension, but they were truly foreigners themselves—either to the region or to the nation as a whole. Fortunately for them, the first group of soldiers discussed below were only stationed at the fort from September 1849 until the end of 1850.

**Letter from Lieutenant Beekman DuBarry to Major Allen Lowd,
18 July 1850**

Lowd, Maj A⁶

Comm^{4#7} in Indian River

Ad: Gen⁸: of the Troops in Fla.

Tampa Bay July 18th 1850

Sir,

The Colonel Comm^{4#} in Fla. directs me to say that he wishes you to forward, via Savannah, a semi-monthly field return of your actions and (as far as heard from) (say for the 15th day) & directs that you send your monthly

returns by express party across the country, to leave your post about the 3^d day of each month, should you not have received the return from Fort Dallass,⁹ do not detain the express, but from that post, return via Savannah-

I have the honor to be &
B. DuBarry¹⁰
Lieut. & A. Asst. Adjt. Genl:

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Beekman DuBarry to Major Allen Lowd, 19 July 1850**

Lowd, Maj A

Comm^{dg} in Indian River

Sir,

The Colonel Comm^{dg} in Florida district directs me to say, that if the Depot Commissary at Indian River has not in hand supplies for the troops at Forts Capron and Dallas, to the 15th of November next, you will direct him to make, immediately, requisitions for what ever is ~~necessary~~ required to provision those forts to that date. As soon as a sufficient quantity is obtained, Fort Dallas will be supplied to the 15th of November next.

Yours sir & -
B. DuBarry
Lieut. & A. Asst. Adjt. Genl:

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thornley S. Everett to Major William W. Morris, 23 September 1850**

Morris, Maj. W.W.¹¹

Comm^{dg}: Key West

Hd. Qrs. Troops in Florida
Tampa, Sept. 23, 1850

Sir,

By direction of the Col. com^{dg}. I have the honor to enclose herewith a communication for the Com^{dg}. Officer at Fort Dallas,¹² which the Col. wishes you to forward by the earliest opportunity to which may chance to offer.

I am Sir Very respect'ly
Your Obt. Servt.¹³

T.S. Everett¹⁴

Lt. & A.A.A.G.

Between 1850 and 1854, the Army, acting on behalf of the federal government, attempted to encourage those Seminoles who had evaded capture to remove west to the Arkansas territory. In July 1848, tensions between white settlers and Indians had once again erupted in violence with attacks on white settlements along the New River near the old Fort Lauderdale and along Pease Creek northwest of Lake Okeechobee. The New River attack had sent the settlers fleeing south to Key Biscayne where a Coast Guard cutter found them. A subsequent patrol by Lieutenant Commander B.W. Couch of both the New and Miami Rivers found no signs of Seminoles in the area.¹⁵

Because the white settlers implored the government for additional military protection, forts that had been abandoned after the end of the Second Seminole War in 1842 began to be reactivated in late 1849—as Fort Dallas was—and 1850. Leading up to the outbreak of hostilities in December 1855, a gradual stepping up of military activity began to occur throughout the state. To the military, if the Seminoles could not be forcibly led out of the peninsula, then one tactic would be to harass them to such an extent that emigration would be preferable. Indians found outside of the territory assigned to them that covered the southwestern portion of the state—from the western boundary of Dade County, north from the Shark River at the southern end of the Everglades to the Kissimmee River above Lake Okeechobee, and west-southwest from the Kissimmee over to the Gulf of Mexico at Charlotte Harbor, and south-southeast back to the Shark River—were subject to seizure by the Army. Nevertheless, the military did require its officers and troops to avoid the occasion for conflict with the Seminoles; thus, an uneasy detente existed.

Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General Thomas J. Haines¹⁶ to Colonel Samuel Cooper, 10 October 1854

Cooper Col. S.¹⁷
Adjt. Gen. U.S.A
Washington
D.C.

Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Fort Brooke,¹⁸ 10th October 1854

Sir,

In compliance with your instructions of September 21st. I have the honor to submit for the consideration of the Secretary of War, the following reports, in relation to the future disposition of the Troops in South Florida, for the purpose of restraining the Indians, and of impressing them if possible, with the necessity of emigrating.

There are six companies on this side of the Peninsula, (3) three now at Fort Meade, 46 miles East of this Post on Pea River,¹⁹ and three at Fort Myers, 15 miles above the mouth of the Caloosa Hatchee at the highest point on that river, that can be occupied during the rainy season, with disregard to the health and comfort of the Troops.

Details from these companies furnish a Guard, mechanics, laborers and teamsters for this Depot.

I propose, in obedience to your instructions, to open a road from Fort Meade²⁰ to the Caloosa hatchee with a branch to Fish Eating Creek,²¹ or some other point on Lake Okee-cho-bee, and another from Fort Myers to the same point, this last road to pass up the south side of the Caloosa Hatchee as far as the ford at Fort Thompson.²²

I am at present of the opinion that it is impracticable to construct a road along the Southern Shore of Lake Okee-cho-bee as the waters of that Lake are continuous with those of the Everglades and that all transportation in the middle of the Peninsula and South of Okeechobee, must be by water and in boats or canoes.

The troops now at Fort Meade, can occupy the position on Okee-cho-bee during the winter and spring months, and with a few boats can command that Lake. The exploration of its outlets, more particularly those into the Everglades will be an important duty.

If time permits, during the ensuing season, I further propose to open roads South of the Caloosa hatchee to one or more of the principal Indian Landings on the west side of the Everglades, to Miami river, and other points on the Atlantic side.

All these avenues will be immediately required in the event of hostilities, and in the meantime will greatly annoy the Indians, and tend to confine them to the country South of the Caloosa Hatchee.

I am of the opinion that no location can be found on or near Okeechobee which will be healthy during the rainy season, the whole country being at that time under water. I would therefore suggest that during that portion of the year the Troops near Okeechobee should be withdrawn and either return to Fort Meade or be stationed at Fort Myers and Tampa Bay as many at that time be deemed expedient unless some unforeseen circumstances should dictate a different policy.

On the Atlantic side of the Peninsula, there is but one company, now at Fort Capron,²³ near Indian River Inlet. I do not think that the removal of that force to the vicinity of old Fort Jupiter would be of any advantage; while it would entail much additional trouble and expense in supplying it, as Jupiter Inlet is believed to be so obstructed as to render it nearly if not quite inaccessible even to the smallest coasting vessels.

If any force is considered necessary to give confidence to the frontier Settlers on Indian River, the present Post at Fort Capron is as good as any for that purpose—but I regard the occupation of Key Biscayne Bay as of vastly more importance.

The strip of land between the Everglades and that Bay, although outside the Indian limits, is frequently visited by them. There they procure their chief supply of Koontee,²⁴ besides it is a favorite hunting ground, and probably the only point where they may procure supplies by contraband trade.²⁵

I therefore recommend that two companies be stationed there and that they may be supplied with suitable Canoes for navigating the Everglades.

In case of hostilities a force can move by water from that position across the Everglades to the immediate vicinity of the Indian Settlements. The knowledge of the fact will not be without its influence upon the Indians and a military force at or near the Miami, will annoy them more than would the occupation of any other point.

I shall of course require some additional means of transportation, tools, &c. for the Quarter Masters Department and estimates will be forwarded to new Orleans as soon as practicable.

It is well known to the Department that the operations herein suggested, extend over a very large surface of country and as the force under my control is very limited, the heavy details required to meet the great demand for transportation and labor would reduce the present companies too much to allow of the necessary Guards and of a proper military display. I would urgently recommend that the Companies of

this Command be increased to 74 Privates, under the provision of the Act of June 17, 1850.²⁶

These views are submitted after free consultation with Capt. Casey.²⁷

I have to request that the Topographical Bureau may be directed to furnish me with all sketches of and information concerning the Southern part of Florida, which it may have in its possession.

As it is not proposed that the Garrison at Key West shall take any part in the operations and it is advisable that the officer second in rank and upon whom the command may devolve should be upon the ground and acquainted with the country and operations in progress, I would recommend that the Post be detached from this command.

I am Respectfully

Your Very Obedt. Servt.

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thomas J. Haines to Captain Bennett H. Hill,²⁸ 11 December 1854**

Comd'g Officer Battⁿ. 1st Arty.) Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Near Fort Dallas) Fort Brooke Dec^r. 11. 1854
Key Biscayne Bay)

Sir,

The Colonel Comd'g directs that you take post with your command at or near Fort Dallas. The material objects in establishing this Post, are to prevent the Indians from visiting the Koontee grounds to procure Koontee, to confine them within their limits, and to prevent all trade with them in violation of the laws of Florida.

All Indians found without their limits are liable to seizure and will be taken and sent to Fort Myers when practicable, but they will not be fired upon unless it becomes necessary for the safety of the Troops, or some act of hostility shall have been committed by them.

Ten canoes are now being constructed for the use of your command in exploring the Everglades and will be sent you as soon after being furnished as transportation can be procured. You will make requisitions direct upon the Quarter Master General for such other transportation /land and water/ as you may require.

You will cause New river to be examined with a view to the establishment of a small Post, at or near the site of old Fort Lauderdale.

I transmit herewith for your information & guidance copies of the law with reference to trade and of a letter from Capt. J.C. Casey, in charge of Indian Affairs. Also such other information with reference to the country in the vicinity of Key Biscayne bay, as I have been able to obtain.

You will transmit to these Head Quarters, such reports relative to the condition of your Post and vicinity as you may deem necessary for the information of the Colonel Commanding.

Very Respectfully,
 Your Obedt Servt.
 T.J. Haines
 1st Lieut. 2nd Arty.
 A.A.A. Genl.

Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe²⁹ to Major General Thomas S. Jesup,³⁰ 19 December 1854

Jesup. T.S.
 Mr. Genl.
 Washington
 D.C.

Head Quarters Troops in Florida
 Fort Brooke, Dec^r. 19, 1854

General,

I have the satisfaction to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th Inst.³¹

The Barges, Whale and Durham Boats which you have providently ordered for the service in Florida being excellently adapted to the uses designed, will with those constructing here pretty much supply our wants in that species of transportation.

In relation to your suggestion of a steamer to be placed on Lake Okeechobee, I am of opinion that rowboats will answer every end proposed as well as any other description of vessel. The Lake is not necessarily so much of a highway as to compel the Indians to make use of it should they desire to migrate, since safe avenues by the Everglades are open to them. A considerable portion of its Circuit has a wide margin of Swamp and the influence of malaria on health in Summer would cause its abandonment during that season.

The Canoes which are constructing for the Okeechobee and the Everglades do not progress so rapidly as we could desire, but the

labor of working them into shape exceeds our estimate of that species of work.

I regret that delay has occurred in sending the Steamer Fashion³² here. I am informed that she will not be despatched so as to arrive at Tampa until after the beginning of next month.

The companies destined for Key Biscayne I have directed to take post at Fort Dallas, or its vicinity—seven or eight feet of water can be carried within less than half a mile of that point, for this distance a lighter³³ will be required.

The means or wants of the company at Indian River, intended for Fort Jupiter, I am not acquainted with, a depot which I called for some time since not having been received here. It was intended to embrace a reconnaissance as far as Jupiter, and I directed that a duplicate of should be sent direct to the Adjutant General.

I am Respectfully
Your very obedt. Servt.

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thomas J. Haines to Captain Bennett H. Hill, 29 January 1855**

Hill Capt. B.H.
 Comd'g Fort Dallas Head Quarters Troops in Florida
 Fla. Fort Brooke, January 29, 1855

Sir,

I am directed by the Col. Comd'g to acknowledge the receipt of your communications of January 13th & 18th.³⁴ It is desired by the Col. Comd'g that the Troops be comfortably quartered, and such are the directions of the Quarter Master General. Such measures as you may think necessary to take for that purpose will be reported direct to the Quarter master General.

A Paymaster was ordered to this Post in August last but has not yet passed.

The Col. Comd'g proposes soon to visit your Post and will then confer with you further relative to the subjects mentioned in your letter.

Very Respectfully
Your obed. Servt.
T.J. Haines
1st Lieut. 2nd Arty.
A.A.A. Genl.

Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General Thomas J. Haines to Brevet Major Joseph A. Haskin,³⁵ 2 February 1855

Haskin Maj. J.A.	Head Quarters Troops in Florida
1 st Arty. Comd'g	Fort Brooke February 2, 1855
Fort Capron	

Sir,

In accordance with instructions from the War Dept: the Col. Comd'g directs that you move with your Command to Old Fort Jupiter, or such other point in its vicinity as you may deem advisable.

The object of establishing a Post at that point was stated in my letter of Nov: 26 '54. A Blockhouse will probably be erected upon the Eastern Side of Lake Okee-cho-bee, or its site selected before you arrive at Fort Jupiter, and in locating the Post you will keep in view facility of Communication with the block house & of procuring your supplies.

As it is probable that you will be obliged to draw your supplies from Fort Capron, you are authorized to leave at that Post a sufficient guard to protect the Stores and other public property there.

Your letter of Dec^r. 25 '54, and the accompanying report of land and water transportation were received; should you deem more necessary, the Col. Comd'g. Directs that you make Requisitions for it (as also for all other Quarter Master Supplies) direct upon the Quarter Master General, as with the present means of communication with your post much delay would be occasioned by sending them to these Head Quarters.

It is hoped that after your arrival at Fort Jupiter more frequent and expeditious communication may be established with you, via Fort Myers & Lake Okee-cho-bee.

As no report or acknowledgment of the receipt of the communication to you from these Head Quarters dated Nov. 26 '54 has been received, I transmit herewith a copy of that Communication.

Should the examination directed have been made, You will send a copy of the Report to these Head Quarters by the Express rider in his return. You will also send to Fort Dallas copies of all communications sent to this Post by the Express rider, as the Col. Comd'g. Proposed in a few days to visit that Post.

Very Respectfully
Your obedt. Servt.
T.J. Haines

1st Lieut. 2nd Arty.
A.A.A. Genl.

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thomas J. Haines to Captain Bennett H. Hill, 2 February 1855**

Hill. Capt. B.H.
1st. Arty. Comd'g
Fort Dallas

Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Fort Brooke February 2, 1855

Sir,

I am directed by the Col. Comd'g to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of Jany. 2^d and to inform you that no mules or horses can be sent you from this side of the Peninsula: you will therefore make requisitions for such as you may require direct upon the Quarter Master General (in accordance with instructions from these Head Quarters, Dated Dec'. 11, 1854.).

Very Respectfully
Your obed. Servt.

T.J. Haines
1st Lieut. 2nd Aty.
A.A.A. Genl.

**Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe to Colonel Samuel Cooper
and Major William W. Mackall,³⁶ 11 February 1855**

Cooper, Col. S.
Adj. Genl. U.S.A.

Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Fort Brooke Feb. 11, 1855

Mackall, Maj. W.
Asst. Adj. Genl.

Sir,

The Steamer Fashion leaves here to day for Key Biscayne Bay with canoes prepared here for the service of the Troops at Fort Dallas.

I avail myself of this opportunity to make an official visit to that Post. During my absence, Capt. Casey, Subsistence Department, will take charge of all public documents received at these Head Quarters, and distribute such orders as may require it.

I am Sir Very Respectfully

Your obdt. servt.

John Munroe

Major 2nd Regt. Arty. Bvt. Col.³⁷

Commanding

Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe to Brevet Major Joseph A. Haskin, 19 February 1855

Haskin, Bvt. Maj. J.A. 1st Art^y. Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Comd^g. Fort Jupiter, Fla. Fort Dallas, Feb^y. 19. 1855

Major,

The Colonel Comd^g. Directs that you open a practicable road for wagons from Fort Jupiter to the Blockhouse to be established upon the Eastern side of Lake Okeechobee. Cap^t. Harvey A. Allen, 2nd Art^y. Has been directed to blaze the above mentioned route.

As soon as the Blockhouse is constructed (which will be done by Capt. Allen,³⁸ or some other officer detached from the command upon the Caloosa Hatchee), you will send a Detachment consisting of one Comd. Officer (if practicable), one Sergeant, one corporal and twenty Privates to garrison it. They will draw their supplies from Fort Jupiter, and be relieved from time to time by other details as you may direct.

Should it become necessary to communicate with Capt. Hill without delay via Jupiter, you will be informed of the fact, and will forward to him, by Express such communications as may be sent you for that purpose from these Head Quarters or from Bvt. Colonel Harvey Brown,³⁹ 2nd Art^y.

Very Respectfully

Your obdt. servt.

Captain T.J. Haines

John Munroe

1st Lieut. 2nd Art^y.

Major 2nd Regt. Arty. Bvt. Col.

Actg. Asst. Adj. Genl.

Commanding

Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General Thomas J. Haines to Captain Bennett H. Hill, 19 February 1855

Hill, Cap^t. Bennett H.

Head Quarters Troops in Florida

1st. Reg^t. Artillery
Comd^g. Fort Dallas, Fla.

Fort Dallas, Feb^y. 19, 1855

Captain,

I am directed by the Colonel Comd^g. To inform you that (to carry into effect the instructions of the Sect^y. of War)⁴⁰ he desires that the different routes (water trails) from Miami & New rivers to Shark River, Prophets Landing⁴¹ & other points on the Western side of the Everglades & routes between these latter points and also the chief inhabited Islands in the Everglades, be carefully explored.

He directs that you will with as little delay as practicable organize a command of about 75 men, to cross the Everglades from Miami to Prophets landing or some other point in the Everglades in its vicinity.

A Command from the Caloosa Hatchee is now engaged in opening a road to, and along the Everglades and a Blockhouse will be established at some point between Prophets & Waxy Hadjo's Landings,⁴² probably near the latter.

By skirting along the Everglades between these two landings, the site for the Blockhouse may be found. Your command will communicate with that at the Block House, and after recruiting, return to your Post, by such route as you may direct.

After the return of the command, you will make such of the other examinations desired, as you may deem advisable with as little delay as practicable. The organization of the parties required, and the roster to be examined are left to your discretion, but it is desirable that parties be in motion through the Everglades as much as practicable. Reports of the Explorations will be forwarded to these headquarters.

Should your command meet with Indians without their limits, they will be governed by the Instructions previously given you. Should any be met within their limits, they will not be molested, unless forcible opposition be made by them which must be repelled and the explorations continued.

The parties will not seek communication with the Indians, but should it be sought by them (within their limits) they will be informed that you are carrying out the orders of the President, that you have none but friendly intentions, but that if opposition be made, you are prepared to repel it, and the consequences must rest on their own heads.

Very Respectfully

Your obdt. serv^t.

T.J. Haines

1st Lieut. 2nd Atty.
A.A.A. Genl.

**Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe to Colonel Samuel Cooper,
25 February 1855**

Cooper, Colonel S. Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Adj'. Genl. U.S.A. Fort Brooke Feb^{ry}. 25th 1855

Sir,

I reported in my letter to you dated Fort Brooke Feb^{ry}. 11th that I would avail myself of the opportunity presented by the Government transport steamer Fashion carrying canoes from here to Fort Dallas, to visit that Post.

I left here on the 12th and returned on the 24th and visiting Punta Rassa, Fort Myers, and Key West on my outward trip, and Key West and Punta Rassa on my return.

Copies of my Instructions to Cap^t. Hill, 1st Artillery commanding at Fort Dallas, and also those for Captain & Bvt. Major Haskins, 1st Artillery, Commanding at Fort Jupiter, are herewith enclosed.

Lieut. Haines, 2nd Art^{ry}. Actg. A.A. Genl., who accompanied me, I left at Fort Dallas, to execute Special Orders N^o. 14, which orders are also remitted you herewith.

I am, Very Respectfully

Your obdt. servt.

John Munroe

Major 2nd Regt. Arty. Bvt. Col.

Commanding

**Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe to Major General Thomas
S. Jesup, 25 February 1855**

Jesup, Maj. Genl. T.S. Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Q^r. M^r. Genl. U.S.A. Fort Brooke, Tampa Feb^{ry}. 25 1855

General,

I have received your letter of the 14th inst., time is not left me to reply to it in a satisfactory manner. Having returned but yesterday from a visit I

made in the Steamer Fashion to Fort Dallas, Key Biscayne, where she delivered the ten canoes built in this vicinity for the Everglades.

I regret that I have not at present an available officer to detach on an examination of the Kissimmee river.

Lieut. James Totten of the 2nd Artillery now on the Coast Survey,⁴³ and engaged on the survey of the Florida reef, but whose four year tour has expired, would be a most competent person to perform the duty, and I have a reason to believe that it would not be in opposition to his wishes.

I presume that on your application no difficulty would be presented to his being relieved, when I could place, at once, at his disposal the men and boats necessary for the service.

I am Respectfully
 Your very obdt. serv^t.
 John Munroe
 Major 2nd Regt. Arty. Bt. Col.
 Commanding

Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe to Major William W. Mackall, 28 February 1855

Mackall, Maj. W.W.		Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Asst. Adj. Gen ^l .	}	Fort Brook. Feb ^{ry} . 28 1855
H ^d Q ^{rs} . Dep ^t of the East }		

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose you for the information of the Commander of the Department, and transmitted to General Head Quarters, Copies of the following enumerated papers, which I have transmitted to the Adj^t. Gen^l. Of the Army viz.

1. Letter to the Adjutant General
2. Instructions to Capt. Hill, 1st Art^y. Com^d. at Ft. Dallas
3. d^o. Capt & B^t. Maj. Haskins, 1st Art^y. Com^d. at Ft. Jupiter
4. Special Orders N^o. 14.

I am Very Respectfully
 Your obdt. serv^t.
 John Munroe
 Major 2nd Regt. Arty. Bt. Col.
 Commanding

**Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe to Colonel Harvey Brown,
7 March 1855**

Brown, Col. H. Maj. 2 nd Art ^y.	)	Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Com ^d . Troops on the Caloosahatchee	)	Fort Brooke March 7. 1855
Fort Myers)	

Sir,

I send by the “Texas Ranger”⁴⁴ which leaves tomorrow, A.W. Thompson, a deserter from Bvt. Major Haskins Comp^y. D 1st Art^y. who surrendered himself at this Post on the 23^d. ultima; be pleased to forward him by the first conveyance that presents itself. Enclosed is a letter to Major Haskins which I request may be transmitted at the same time.

Capt. Montgomery⁴⁵ takes with him to Fort Myers a quantity of Carpenter’s tools, should this supply be insufficient, you will have an estimate made out for such articles as may be required. This estimate to be substituted for the last forwarded here by Major Anderson,⁴⁶ which in some of its particulars appears to me to be unreasonably large.

The Steamer “Fashion” which left here on the 2^d inst: will be detained at New Orleans about a fortnight for repairs, and is expected to return with lumber &c. Any subsistence or other supplies you may need, I desire may be required for at once, so as to avail ourselves of the conveyance she presents.

20.000 blank Cartridges with percussion Caps are sent you for the service of both posts. As none are retained here you will judge of the economy to be used in their expenditure.

Enclosed I forward for your information copies of my instructions to Cap^t. Hill, 1st Art^y Comd^e. At Fort Dallas and to Bvt. Maj. Haskins 1st Art^y Comd^e. At Fort Jupiter. The latter has, you will perceive been directed to furnish a garrison for the Blockhouse on the East side of Lake Okeechobee and supply it with provisions. If he is deficient in transportation it may be necessary for him to draw his supplies of subsistence from the West side, of this Lieut. Haines can inform you, in which case the present instructions will have to be modified.

After the “Texas Ranger” has fully supplied the posts on the Caloosa hatchee, Cap^t. Montgomery is authorized to bring her up here, to return with such Barracks furniture, Medical Stores &c as still remains at this Post. He need not relieve Maj. Anderson until after he has performed this duty.

I would have broken up the Hospital Department but for a Surgical case, which will not bear removal, and have to wait until the individual recovers sufficiently for transportation.

I am Very Respectfully

Your obdt. serv^t.

John Munroe

Major 2nd Regt. Arty. Bt. Col.

Commanding

Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe to Major William W. Mackall, 14 April 1855

Mackall, Maj. W.W.

Asst. Adj^t. Gen^l.

H^d Q^s. Dep^t of East.

Sir,

Head Quarters Troops in Florida

Fort Myers. April 14. 1855

I have the honor to transmit Charges against Private Patrick Donoghue,⁴⁷ C^o. "M" 1st Art^y. and to request that a General Court Martial may be convened at Fort Dallas for his trial.

I am Sir, Very Respectfully

Your obdt. serv^t.

John Munroe

Major 2nd Regt. Arty. Bt. Col.

Commanding

Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General Thomas J. Haines to Captain Bennett H. Hill, 20 April 1855

Hill, Cap^t. B.H. 1st Art^y.

Comd^g. Fort Dallas

Sir,

Head Quarters Troops in Florida

Fort Brooke April 20. 1855

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of March 10th and the accompanying report & instructions.

The Colonel Comd^g. is desirous that the Everglades shall be explored as far as practicable, as soon as the state of the water will permit, and it can be done with a due regard to the health of your command, but the

time of making the examination as well as the portions to be examined is left to your discretion.

As the Detachment now at the Block House near Waxy hadjo's landing will soon be withdrawn, it is advisable that any command which you may send across to that point or vicinity, should take with it sufficient provisions to enable it to return to Fort Dallas.

Very Respectfully

Your obdt. servt.

T.J. Haines

1st Lieut. 2nd Atty.

A.A.A. Genl.

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thomas J. Haines to Captain Bennett H. Hill, 16 May 1855**

Hill, Cap^t. B.H. 1st Art^y.

Comd^{ng}. Fort Dallas

Captain,

Head Quarters Troops in Florida

Fort Brooke May 16. 1855

I am directed by the Colonel Comd^g. to inform you that he deems it advisable that the Troops at your Post be supplied with fresh beef by contract. The Steamer Fashion cannot be spared at present for transporting the cattle from Tampa, and no suitable vessel can be obtained for the purpose. It is understood that the Contractor for supplying Fort Jupiter would be willing to take the Contract for your Post.

Very Respectfully

Your obdt. servt.

T.J. Haines

1st Lieut. 2nd Atty.

A.A.A. Genl.

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thomas J. Haines to Captain Samuel K. Dawson, 22 June 1855**

Dawson, Capt. S. K. 1st Art^y.

Fort Dallas

Head Quarters Troops in Florida

Fort Brooke June 22, 1855

Sir,

I am directed by the Colonel Comd^e. to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of May 28, 1855, and to inform you that he does not deem it necessary to take any action in the case.⁴⁸

Very Respectfully

Your obdt. servt.

T.J. Haines

1st Lieut. 2nd Aty.

A.A.A. Genl.

Letter from Lieutenant Lewis Morris⁴⁹ to Major General Thomas S. Jesup, 1 July 1855⁵⁰

Major Genl. T.S. Jesup

Quartermaster Genl. U.S.A.

Washington

D.C.

Office of A. Assist. Quartermaster

Fort Dallas Fla.

July 1. 1855

Genl.,

Agreeable to Par 2 of General Orders N^o. 11, dated War Dep^t. A.G.O. Washington May 23, 1853 I have the honor to report that the following barracks, quarters, hospital and other public buildings occupied by Troops have been built since the establishment of this Post on the third day of the present year.

On our arrival here, we found the walls of a two Story Stone building 42 by 20 feet. This building has been roofed, both stories floored, and a piazza ten feet wide added to the front, and is now occupied as quarters by C^o "P" 1st Art^y.

There was also the first story walls of a stone building 95 by 17 feet. To this has been added a 2nd Story of boards with piazza (eight feet wide) in front. The first story is now used as a Quartermaster & Commissary Store house; And the Second Story is Occupied as quarters by C^o "M" 1st Artillery.

One frame building 30 by 19 feet with piazza (eight feet wide) in front now occupied as Hospital.

One small frame building twelve feet square for Hospital Kitchen.

One frame building 15 by 20 feet for Post Bake House.

Four frame buildings for officers quarters with piazzas (eight feet wide) in front & rear each building Contains two rooms fifteen feet square with a hall between.

Also the following buildings the sides and roofs of which are thatched with palmetto.

One Stable to accommodate Seven Mules.

One Forage House 15 by 20 feet.

One Blacksmith Shop 15 by 20 feet.

One Carpenters Shop 15 by 20 feet.

Two Kitchens for Co^s "L" and "M" 1st Art^y.

These buildings have been built entirely by the Troops. All the timber for the frames was hewn out here and hauled in by the men at a distance varying from a Mile to a Mile and a half. The boards, shingles &c. were purchased in New York, Savannah and Key West.

I am, Sir, respectfully

Your Obt. Serv^t.

Lewis Morris

1st Lieut. 1st Art.

A. A. Qmr.51

Approved

B.H. Hill

Capt. [illegible]

Cmmd'g Post

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thomas J. Haines to Captain Bennett H. Hill, 7 July 1855**

Hill, Cap^t. B.H. 1st Art^y.

Fort Dallas

Head Quarters Troops in Florida

Fort Brooke July 7. 1855

Sir,

The Colonel Comd^g. directs me to inform you that as the order directing Bvt. L^{ieut}. Col Taylor, Major 1st Art^y. to forward to Fort Dallas, has been countermanded, he does not feel at liberty to grant your application for a leave of absence, unless the "private business" referred to be of great importance.⁵²

Very Respectfully

Your obdt. servt.

T.J. Haines

1st Lieut. 2nd Aty.

A.A.A. Genl.

Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe to Colonel Samuel Cooper and Colonel Lorenzo Thomas,⁵³ 15 July 1855

Cooper Col. S.	}	Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Adj. Genl. U.S.A.	}	Fort Brooke July 15, 1855.
Thomas Col. L.	}	
(A.A. Genl.) H ^d . Qrs. Army}		

Sir,

As the season for active operations in this Peninsula has closed, and the troops have been withdrawn from the field, I deem it proper to report for the information of the Secretary of War, the duties performed during the Season.

In compliance with your instructions of Sept. 21, 1854, I transmitted to you on the 10th of October, my report and view relative to the proposed operations.

On the 13th of October I directed that Lieut. Benson,⁵⁴ 2nd Art^y. should be sent to examine the country from Fort Myers (via Fort Thompson) to Fort Meade, with a view to the construction of a road between the two posts. I also directed Major Arnold,⁵⁵ Comd'g Fort Meade, to cause the country in the vicinity of the Post to be examined with the same view.

The examinations required having been made, Major Arnold was instructed to open a road from Fort Meade to Fort Thompson, and Capt. Pratt⁵⁶ to open one from Fort Myers to the same point. Your instructions of Octb. 27th having been received, orders were issued on the 12th of November for the permanent abandonment of Fort Meade.

As I was unable to determine what point in the vicinity of Lake Okee-cho-bee would be the best for a Post (as contemplated in your instructions) I directed Maj. Arnold to take post with his command (temporarily) at or near Fort Thompson, at which point he arrived on the 23^d of November.

Temporary Store-houses were constructed there and examinations of the country between Fish Eating Creek and the Caloosa-Hatchee and along the Southern Shore of Lake Okee-cho-bee made (by Lieut. Hartsuff⁵⁷) with a view to ascertain if a suitable point for a Post could be found near to lake Okee-cho-bee than that already occupied: an examination of Fish Eating Creek to its entrance into Lake Okee-cho-bee was also made by Lieut. Vincent.⁵⁸

It was found that the whole country examined was subject to overflow and that neither Fort Thompson nor any other point nearer the Lake would be tenable during the rainy season. I therefore deferred establishing the command permanently until I could make a personal examination of the country along the Caloosa-Hatchee below Fort Thompson.

On the 26th of November instructions were issued to Bvt. Major Haskins, 1st Arty. Comd'g Fort Capron to cause the inland water route between Fort Capron & Jupiter and the country in the vicinity of the latter part to be examined with a view to the transfer of his company to that point. The examination was made by Lieut. Hill 1st Arty. who found this route practicable for boats drawing not more than 3 feet. The bar at Jupiter⁵⁹ was entirely closed.

On the 11th of December instructions were transmitted to Key Biscayne Bay for the guidance of the officer in command of a Detachment of the 1st Arty. under orders for that point. The principal objects of establishing a post there were to prevent contraband trade with the Indians, to confine them within their limits, and to exclude them from the Koontee grounds.

On the 6th of January, I left this Post for Fort Myers. Bt. Col. Harvey Brown 2nd Arty. arrived there on the 10th and the Recruits for the companies of the 2nd Arty. on the 12th.

On the 13th, Col. Brown was placed in command of the Troops serving upon the Caloosa-Hatchee.

On the 16th, I left Fort Myers in company with Col. Brown for Fort Thompson. It being evident from the water marks upon the trees that the country in the vicinity of the Post is covered with water during the rainy season. I deemed it advisable at once to withdraw the command from that position. As the site of of⁶⁰ old Fort Deynaud⁶¹ appeared to be the most eligible and least liable to overflow. I selected that point for the Post.

On the 20th of January the following instructions were issued for the guidance of Col. Brown.

“You will direct Major Hays⁶² to move to Fort Deynaud with the Command, leaving at Fort Thompson a non-Com^d. officer & ten men to guard the stores and provisions which may be left there.

At Fort Deynaud will be the Depot for the supply of the Troops on Lake Okee-cho-bee and a position of those in the vicinity of the Everglades. You will cause such stores and blockhouses to be constructed as you may deem necessary for the safety of the public property.

It will be necessary to build a blockhouse opposite to Fort Deynaud and you will cause a bridge to be built across the river or a float to be constructed as you may deem advisable.

After having established his command at Fort Deynaud, Major Hays will detach an officer with a party of men to construct a blockhouse upon Fish Eating Creek near the site of old Fort Centre⁶³—another blockhouse will also be constructed upon the East Side of Lake Okee-cho-bee and as far South as practicable.

You will without delay organize a command of about 150 men for the purpose of opening roads in the direction of of⁶⁴ the Everglades & Indian towns.

A road will first be opened to Depot N^o. 1 or some point in that vicinity where you will establish a Depot & construct a Block-house and such other defenses as you may deem necessary.

You will cause the country between the Depot & Fort Deynaud to be examined and if necessary open a road between the two points.

From the Depot you will cut a road to such a point upon the Everglades as may be deemed the most practicable then along the Everglades as far as you may deem practicable.

The organization of the different Commands necessary to carry on the above operations is left to your discretion, but it is advisable that the labor should be equalized throughout your command (officers and men) as much as possible.

You will cause a block-house to be erected at Punta Rassa to protect the store house and a guard will [be] kept at that post after the store house is erected.

Two additional Store houses will be erected at this Post, also a new Hospital or the old one enlarged, additional cantonments will also be constructed for the accommodations of the Troops which it may become necessary to withdraw from Fort Deynaud and vicinity during the Summer months.”

In accordance with these instructions Lieut. Robertson 2nd Arty. was directed to examine the trails leading from Fort Myers to Cholalapulko,⁶⁵ which having been done, Capt. Pratt 2nd Arty. left Fort Myers on the 25th with companies “G” and “I” 2nd Arty. and accompanied by Lt. Hartsuff as Acting Topgl. Engineer⁶⁶ with detailed instructions from Col. Brown based upon the above cited.

He opened a road to Depot N^o. 1 and after examining the country in the vicinity with Lieut. Hartsuff, selected as a Site for a Block-house a

pine island about one fourth of a mile from the big Cypress⁶⁷ and a mile south from the head. A block-house and picketting were erected at that point and called Fort "Simon Drum". —⁶⁸

On the 17th of February Capt. Pratt's command was relieved by Co.s "E" & "C" under command of Capt. Elzey⁶⁹ 2nd Arty. A road was opened from Fort Simon Drum to Fort Deynaud by the companies, while en-route between the two places—Capt. Elzey after building a causeway across the Okholoacoochee⁷⁰ about 2 miles North of Fort Simon Drum, marched with his command on the 23rd of February for Waxy Hadjo's landing—having selected the most eligible position for a blockhouse in that vicinity he commenced its erection on the 27th. The point selected is the most Southern (near the Everglades) that it is practicable for wagons to reach. A Blockhouse and picketting were erected here and called Fort Shackelford⁷¹—This work having been completed Capt. Elzey marched on the 13th for Fort Simon Drum at which point he was relieved by Co.s. "L" & "K" under command of Bvt. Major Hays 2nd Artillery who proceeded with his command to the Eastward of the Okholoacoochee and established a temporary Depot. After examining the country between the Okholoacoochee and the Everglades he proceeded to the westward of the Okholoacoochee established another temporary depôt, and examined the country to the South & West and in the direction Maleo river.⁷² Lieut. Platt⁷³ 2nd Arty. with Co. "K" reached a river supposed at the time to be Maleo, but afterwards ascertained by him to be about 8 miles North of it.⁷⁴

Major Hays and Lieut. Hartsuff, Actg. Topgl. Engineer, having reported that the exploration had been extended as far as practicable, Major Hays was directed on the 18th of April to return with his company to Fort Deynaud via Fort Thompson and Co. "K" to proceed direct to Fort Myers.

On the 2nd of April I left this Post for Fort Myers. On the 13th instructions were given to Col. Brown to send out another Detachment to visit Fort Drum & Shackelford, make such further examinations as might be deemed necessary and relieve the garrisons at the Blockhouses. In accordance with these instructions Co.s. "E" & "C" under command of Capt. Elzey marched on the 2nd of May and reached Fort Simon Drum on the 5th, having performed the duties required, on the 10th the Companies left Fort Simon Drum for their respective Posts.

While these operations were being carried on South of the Caloosa-Hatchee, blockhouses had been constructed near the sites of old Forts

M^cRae⁷⁵ and Centre by Detachments under command of Capt. Allen & Lieut. Vincent 2nd Arty., the former was completed early in April, and the latter late in February, and both were garrisoned until the season was so far advanced as to render their temporary abandonment advisable.

A Store-house and blockhouse were also erected at Punta Rassa.⁷⁶

On the 2nd of February Major Haskins 1st Artillery was directed to move with his command to Fort Jupiter, to open a road to the Blockhouse on the East side of Okee-cho-bee and to garrison that blockhouse but subsequent examinations by Capt. Allen & Lt. Haines showing that it was impracticable to open the road without greater labor than the advantages to be gained would warrant, the latter portion of the instructions were countermanded.

On the 12th of February I left this Post on the Steamer "Fashion" for Fort Dallas with canoes and the Indian guide Chai⁷⁷ for the use of the command at that Post in exploring the Everglades. In accordance with instructions which I had given Capt. Hill 1st Arty. Comd'g the Post, Capt. Dawson 1st Arty. left Fort Dallas on the 1st of March with a Detachment consisting of 75 officers, Non-Comd. Officers⁷⁸ and Privates for the purpose of exploring the water trails from the Miami to Prophets Landing, after proceeding to a point some 23 miles South and 20 West from the Miami he was obliged on the 4th to turn back, there not being sufficient water to allow of further progress.

Instructions have been given to Capt. Hill to attempt the explorations again as soon as the water has risen sufficiently.

On the 18th of April Lieut. Benson left Fort Centre with a Detachment of men to examine the Kissimmee river from its outlet to Lake Kissimmee, and from that Lake to Lake Tohopkeliga⁷⁹ with a view of ascertaining if the Kissimmee river and the Lakes North of it were navigable by a light draft Steamer. He examined the Kissimmee, Lakes Kissimmee and Cypress, and the outlet of Lake Gentry⁸⁰ but was unable to enter lake Tohopkeliga on account of obstructions caused by water lettuce, willows, grass and briers. On his return he coasted along the shore of Lake Okee-cho-bee and relieved the garrison at Fort M^cRae.

From the report of Lieut. Benson it appears that the Kissimmee is impracticable for boats of greater length than 60 or 70 feet or of greater draft than 3 or 4 feet, on account of the short bends, strong currents, narrow channels and shallowness of the water, it being at some points not

more than 4 feet in depth. Pine wood can be obtained only at one point, and that 29 miles above the mouth of the river. On the 18th of April, Capt. Pratt 2nd Arty. left Fort Myers with his company to examine the rivers and keys South of Maleo River as far as practicable. He extended his examination as far as Pavillion Key⁸¹ and returned to Fort Myers on the 3^d of May.

Lt. Platt subsequently examined the shore and rivers from Punta Rassa to Maleo.

Between Fish-Eating Creek and the Caloosa-Hatchee, and South of that river, many Indian huts and Small fields were found, but few Indians however were seen. They had generally abandoned their homes and sought to avoid the Troops.

The Country examined South of the Caloosa-Hatchee so reported as entirely worthless for agricultural purposes with the exception of a few small scattered Hammocks, and in the summer season, nearly the whole of it is under water.

Soon after the withdrawal of the Troops from the field, the command at Fort Deynaud was attacked with the Scurvey and dysentery, and upon the recommendation of the Medical Officer, I directed the command (with the exception of a guard of Officers & 40 men) to encamp near Fort Myers, where it is proposed to retain it during the Sickly Season.

I transmit herewith an extract from the report of Col. H. Brown, Major 2nd Arty. of the operations of the troops under his immediate command, also an outline sketch of a portion of the big Cypress Swamp. A Map of the whole country in which the Troops have been operating during the winter will be forwarded as soon as it can be prepared.

I am Sir, Very Respectfully

Your Obedt. Servt.

John Munroe

Major 2nd Regt. Arty. Bt. Col.

Commanding

**Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe to Colonel Samuel Cooper,
15 August 1855**

Cooper Col. S.
Adjt. Genl.

Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Fort Brooke, August 15. 1855

Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Secretary of War that Capt. Dawson, 1st Arty. left Fort Dallas on the 19th of June with a Detachment comprised of two commissioned officers and 63 Non-Comd. Officers and Privates for the purpose of coasting the Everglades and reaching Waxy Hadjo's Landing if practicable.

With great difficulty he succeeded (on the 25th of June) in reaching a point "North of Prophets Landing and Six miles East of it" but was unable to proceed farther North, for want of water. The men being unable to drag the canoes through the mud, the nearest approach that could be made to the Big Cypress was at a point some few miles South of Prophets landing and here they were unable to approach nearer than three miles.

The men having been "entirely worn out" they were allowed to remain in Camp on the 26th commenced their action on the 27th and arrived at Fort Dallas on the 30th.

Capt. Dawson estimates the distance passed over to be "something like two hundred and forty miles" and that the canoes were dragged something like thirty-six miles, at times the utmost exertion being required with the crews doubled to force them through the saw grass.

No Signs of Indians were seen.

The Indian guide (Chai) who accompanied Capt. Dawson represents that the country is greatly changed since he crossed it Sixteen Years ago. The Keys having become larger and more numerous.

Capt. Hill Comd'g Fort Dallas reports that Citizens who have resided from 10 to 12 years on the Miami inform him that there has been a very perceptible filling up of the Everglades and that at no time is there much water there as formerly.

The two attempts made to cross them tend to show the Truth of these Statements and they are also confirmed by the Indian Guide, who formerly lived on one of the Keys passed by Capt. Dawson.

I transmit herewith a tracing from Lieut. Langdon's sketch of the route pursued.⁸²

I am Sir, Very respectfully
Your Obedt. Servt.
John Munroe
Major 2nd Regt. Arty. Bt. Col.
Commanding

Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe to Major William W. Mackall, 15 August 1855

Mackall Maj. W.W.	Head Quarters Troops in Florida
A.A. Genl.	Fort Brooke August 15. 1855.
H ^d . Qrs. Dept. East	
Sir,	

I have the honor to forward herewith for transmittal to the Head Quarters of the Army, an extract from my report to the Adjutant General relative to an explanation of the Everglades made by Capt. S.K. Dawson, 1st Arty.

I am Sir, Very respectfully
 Your Obedt. Servt.
 John Munroe
 Major 2nd Regt. Arty. Bt. Col.
 Commanding

Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General Thomas M. Vincent to Commanding Officers at Fort Myers, Camp Daniels,⁸³ and Fort Dallas, 30 October 1855

Commanding Officer	)	Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Fort Myers	)	Fort Brooke, October 30. 1855.
Fla.	)	Sir,
Commanding Officer	)	By direction of the Colonel Commanding
Camp Daniels	)	I have the honor to forward you a
Fla.	)	Skeleton Sketch of a portion of South
Commanding Officer	)	Florida, for the use of the Post, and for
Fort Dallas	)	which the commanding officer will
Fla.	)	please hold himself responsible.

I am Very Respectfully
 Your obdt. Servt.
 T.M. Vincent
 2^d. Lieut. 2^d. Artillery
 A.A.Adjt. Genl.

**Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe to Colonel Samuel Cooper,
8 December 1855**

Cooper Col. S.		Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Comd'g Troops on C.H. ⁸⁴	}	Fort Brooke. Dec ^r . 8, 1855.
Fort Myers.	}	

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo,⁸⁵ directing that the Post of Fort Jupiter be abandoned and suggesting that I cause the garrison (Company "D" 1st Arty.) to move to Fort Dallas or the Caloosa-hatchee, "with a View to ulterior operations in the Indian Country."

In exercising the discretion confided to me, I have —thinking it the most expedient— ordered that Company to the Caloosa-hatchee.

I am, Very respectfully

Your Obedt. Servt.

John Munroe

Major 2nd Regt. Arty. Bt. Col.

Com'g

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thomas M. Vincent to Captain Bennet H. Hill, 15 December 1855**

Hill Capt. B.H.		Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Comd'g Ft. Dallas		Fort Brooke Dec ^r . 15, 1855
Fla.		

Captain,

I am directed by the Colonel Commanding to inform you that with the ultimate view of having a connected route between the Miami and Kissimmee Rivers, he wishes you to detail an exploring party consisting of a Commissioned officer and a detachment adequate to the duties of the exploration —to examine a route for a wagon road from the bluff on the Ratones to Fort Jupiter— so as to connect with the road leading from there to Fort Basinger.

It is believed that the bluff about three miles from the mouth of the Ratones will be the best point of departure for the road, so from that point to Fort Dallas water communication could be effected. It would be desirable

that the road might lead from a point nearer Fort Dallas, or direct from Fort D. if practicable. The selection, however, of the point of departure is discretionary with yourself.

The officer in charge of the exploration will make a detailed report to you to be forwarded to these Hd: Qrs: concerning the character of the Country embracing the nature of the soil, that of the water courses, kind of timber met with &c &c. He will accompany his report by a sketch, exhibiting the topographical features of the Country examined.

I am Very Respectfully

Your obdt: Servt.

T.M. Vincent

1st. Lieut. 2^d. Artillery

A.A.Adjt. Genl.

**Second Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thomas M. Vincent to Captain Bennet H. Hill, 15 December 1855**

Hill Capt. B.H.
 Comd'g Fort Dallas.
 Fla.

Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Fort Brooke. Dec^r. 15. 1855

Captain,

I am directed by the Colonel Commanding to inform you that in relation to Indian Affairs, he deems his instructions to you of Dec^r. 11. 1854 and Feb'y 19th 1855, as embracing all that is essential to the Subject.

The Colonel's anxiety to have the Indians kept within their boundaries—and more particularly to exclude them from the Koontee Grounds—induces him to desire that you will keep parties in constant motion.

The Colonel has been informed that the line of Coast extending North and South from Fort Lauderdale furnished Koontee as abundantly as that South of the Miami.⁸⁶

I am Very Respectfully

Your obdt: Servt.

T.M. Vincent

1st. Lieut. 2^d. Artillery

A.A.Adjt. Genl.

On December 7, 1855, an exploring party under the command of Lieutenant George L. Hartsuff left Fort Myers with two non-commissioned officers, and eight privates and headed southeast into the Big Cypress towards the settlement of Seminole leader Holata Micco, or Billy Bowlegs. On several occasions over the next several days, the soldiers caught fleeting glimpses of Seminoles, who avoided contact with them.

On December 18, the party came across the settlement's deserted fields and houses. Though there is disagreement over the significance of the arrival of Hartsuff's troops into Bowlegs's settlement and whether it was the actual cause of the Third Seminole War, the presence of the soldiers—who apparently trampled some of the crops and took some of Chief Bowlegs' bananas from his gardens—may well have incensed the Seminole leader for its disrespectful quality. As the soldiers pressed on the following day they found several other Seminole encampments and villages and learned that both Fort Simon Drum and Fort Shackelford had been burned.⁸⁷

Then, on the morning of December 20, set to return to Fort Myers, Hartsuff's soldiers were attacked. Four men of the detachment were killed, several were injured, and Hartsuff himself—seriously wounded by three shots—was separated from his men and hid from his attackers until he made it to safety on December 23. The correspondence below reflects the initial information received after several privates from the detachment reached Fort Myers late on December 21 to alert the command of the attack. War had once again begun.

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thomas M. Vincent to Captain Bennet H. Hill, 22 December 1855**

Hill Capt. B.H.
Comd'g Ft. Dallas

Head Quarters Troops in Florida
Fort Brooke. Dec. 22^d 1855

Captain,

I am directed by the Colonel Commanding to enclose you herewith, some communications for Major Haskin Commanding at Fort Capron, and request you to forward them to Major H. with all possible dispatch. The communications refer to the late outbreak by the Indians (the particulars of which I herewith transmit) and the movement of Major H's command to

Fort Myers. It is necessary that Major H. should receive the communications without delay.

I am Very Respectfully

Your obdt: Servt.

T.M. Vincent

1st. Lieut. 2^d. Artillery

A.A.Adjt. Genl.

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thomas M. Vincent to Captain Bennet H. Hill, 23 December 1855**

Hill, Capt. B.H.

Head Quarters Troops in Florida

Comd'g Fort Dallas.

Fort Brooke.

Decr. 23^d. 1855.

Sir,

I am directed by the Colonel Commanding to inform you of the attack of an exploring party under command of 1st Lieut. G.L Hartsuff 2nd Arty. by the Indians. In consequence of this outbreak the instructions contained in my communication of the 15th inst: Concerning the survey of a road to Fort Jupiter—are suspended.

I send you a copy of the Peninsular Extra which will serve to inform you of the particulars of the attack so far as ascertained. All Indians met with will be considered as hostile. It is important that parties sent out for explorations &c. Shall be sufficiently strong for their own protection.

I am very respectfully

Your obedt: Servt.

T.M. Vincent

1st. Lieut. 2^d. Artillery

A.A.Adjt. Genl.

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thomas M. Vincent to Captain Israel Vogdes,⁸⁸ 23 December 1855**

Vogdes, Capt. I.

Head Quarters Troops in Florida

Comd'g Key West Bks.⁸⁹

Fort Brooke. Decr. 23^d. 1855.

Captain,

I am directed by the Colonel Commanding to inform you that

Captain J.M. de'Oca of the Schooner "Experiment,"⁹⁰ and bearer of this to you, has in charge some very important communications concerning the late Indian Outbreak, which it is necessary for the commanding officer at Fort Dallas to receive as soon as possible. The Colonel therefore requests that you will see the communications referred to forwarded without delay. Capt. Casey has written Mr. Baldwin requesting him to forward communications by the Revenue Cutter —Lieut. Randolph Commander— if she should be in port, if the Cutter cannot take them to Fort Dallas and the regular mailboat is not about to leave immediately, then Captain De Oca is to take the communications to Fort Dallas with his own vessel.

The enclosed Copy of the "Peninsular Extra" will serve to inform you of the particulars of the outbreak so far as ascertained. Several communications were sent to Commanding Officer at Fort Dallas via Key West in the last steamer, if they have not yet left Key W. will you please see them forwarded also.

I am very respectfully

Your obedt: Servt.

T.M. Vincent

1st. Lieut. 2^d. Artillery

A.A.Adjt. Genl.

**Letter from Lieutenant and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General
Thomas M. Vincent to Captain Bennet H. Hill, 24 December 1855**

Hill. Capt. B.H.

Comd'g Fort Dallas.

Head Quarters Troops in Florida

Fort Brooke, Dec. 24. 1855.

Captain,

Since writing my communication of the 22^d. The Colonel Commanding has directed me to call your particular attention to his previous instructions to you concerning explorations of the Koontee Grounds and Everglades. It is the Colonel's desire that you keep parties of sufficient Strength constantly moving through the Koontee region, and if the Stage of water permits —through the Everglades taking advantage of every opportunity presented to act offensively with the Indians.

I am very respectfully

Your obedt: Servt:

A supply of ammunition goes down in the Ranger.

I am very respectfully

Your obedt: Servt:

T.M. Vincent

1st. Lieut. 2^d. Artillery

A.A.Adjt. Genl.

**Letter from Brevet Colonel John Munroe to Colonel Samuel Cooper,
26 December 1855**

Cooper, Col. S.

Adjt. Genl.

Head Quarters Troops in Florida

Fort Brooke. Dec^r. 26. 1855.

Colonel,

I have the honor to report, that in consequence of the recent Indian outbreak, requisitions have been made on the Qr: Master's Dept. at New Orleans for additional means of transportation for the Troops serving on the Caloosahatchee. I have made a requisition of a similar character but limited in amount for this post —draft mules, wagons, horses, and forage, &c.

I made a requisition on the Commissary of Subsistence at New Orleans for Fifty Thousand rations of subsistence in addition to the ordinary estimates —one-half to be delivered at Fort Myers, and the other moiety⁹³ at this post.

I sent by way of Key West (the vessel sailing on the 24th.) instructions to the Officer Commanding at Fort Dallas, informing him of the changed condition of our affairs with the Seminoles —that they were to be treated as enemies— and that his command was to be kept in constant activity.

An Express left this post by land yesterday morning with instructions to Major Haskin, Commanding at Fort Capron who had received previous instructions to transport his company to the Caloosahatchee by water, and his teams⁹⁴ to Fort Myers by land via: Fort Deynaud, that they were so far modified, as that the teams would be protected by a suitable guard, and to proceed to Fort Meade.

Immediately after receiving the news of the outbreak I extensively informed the Citizens on the frontier of the occurrence, and had it urged upon them to Fort themselves for mutual protection and not to think of falling back on the interior settlements. I hope and believe that the most of them will act on that view.

It might be expedient temporarily and until other arrangements can be perfected—to call out a limited number of Volunteer Companies— say three.

One Company to defend the line of Pea Creek, thence toward the Kissimmee, and serve as escorts for the Beef Contractors Cattle to Fort Deynaud—to be supplied at Fort Meade from Tampa.

One Company about Fort Gatlin⁹⁵ and that section to be supplied via the St. Johns.⁹⁶

One Company to protect the intermediate settlements and connecting with the other two—supplies drawn from Tampa.

I wrote to Department Head Quarters on the 1st inst. stating that the officers serving with the troops were too few, and that the service must suffer if the number was not materially increased, desiring that the Communication might receive such direction and consideration as its importance merited. That was before the outbreak, and the reasons assigned will apply now with redoubled force. I have therefore to regard that the subject may receive your earliest attention.

I am very respectfully

Your obedt: Servt:

John Munroe

Major 2nd Regt. Arty. Bt. Col.

Comm'g

These letters serve to illuminate the details of the circumstances that led to the outbreak of the Third Seminole War in late December 1855. They show both the isolation and the interconnectedness of Fort Dallas to the other Army command centers throughout South Florida and its importance to American military strategy by serving as an outpost in patrolling the Everglades, in preventing contraband trade with the Seminoles, and prohibiting their use of the coontie harvesting areas in the extensive pine forests east of the Everglades.

In retrospect, it was perhaps inevitable that the tactics used by the Army in restricting the Seminole people would lead to conflict. Unfortunately, the contents of these documents do not provide any evidence of the perspective of the Indians regarding the conflict that engulfed the parties, but they do show how the events leading up to December 20, 1855, became the prelude to the last war between the U.S. military and the Seminole people.

Notes

¹ For example, one letter sent by Brevet Major Woodbridge, the commander of Fort Dallas on May 25, 1850, requesting leaves of absences for men in Company "F" of the Second Artillery stationed at Miami, did not arrive at Fort Brooke until June 14, 1850, and a second letter sent on July 1, 1850, was received on July 17, 1850. See National Archives, *Letters Sent*, Roll 1, Target 9, *Registers of Letters Received by Head Quarters Troops in Florida*, Vol. 1, June 1850-December 1854, pp. 123 "W" and Letter 7.

² Woodbridge was a 1837 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, who was elevated to Brevet Captain and, later, Brevet Major for gallantry and meritorious conduct after several battles during the War with Mexico in 1847. He was formally raised to the rank of Captain in December 1847. The distinction of Brevet allows an officer to use the brevetted rank as a title while getting paid at the highest formal rank, in this case as Captain.

³ Nothing has been found concerning the background of De Sagnol. His place of birth is given as New Jersey in the U.S. Census of 1850, however, the official *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*, as well as several other sources contain no information about him. De Sagnol is a fairly uncommon French name and the Jersey City, New Jersey, city directories from 1889-1893 do list the family of a French coppersmith, Etienne Sagnol, as residents, but it is not known whether they were related or not.

⁴ Robinson, who would later change his name to "Robertson", rose from the rank of private upon joining the army in December, 1838 to that of Second Lieutenant in the Second Regiment of Artillery by June, 1848. He was later elevated to the rank of First Lieutenant in September, 1852 and, by the outbreak of the Civil War, was Captain in May, 1861. As a Union officer, he was brevetted for conduct in battle to Major in June, 1862 (following the Battle of Gaines Mill, Virginia), to Lieutenant Colonel in July, 1863 (after the campaign at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania), Colonel in May, 1864 (after the Battle of Cold Harbor, Virginia), and Brigadier General in March, 1865 for service while attached to the Army of the Potomac.

⁵ Adkins served only briefly as a military surgeon, his service running from his enlistment on November 23, 1849 to his resignation on October 9, 1852.

⁶ Lowd, a Massachusetts-born officer who entered army service in 1814 as Second Lieutenant, was raised to the rank of Major for gallantry in the defense of Fort Brown (Brownsville), Texas, during the War with Mexico, May 9, 1846.

⁷ “Commdg.” or “comd’g.” are all variants of the abbreviation for “commanding” and are often paired with “Col.”, as in the “Colonel commanding” the post that is being referred.

⁸ Abbreviation for “Adjutant General.”

⁹ [*Sic*].

¹⁰ DuBarry was a New Jersey-born graduate of the United States Military Academy (1849) at West Point who achieved the rank of Second Lieutenant of the Third Artillery, February 13, 1850. He would achieve the rank of Colonel as a Union officer during the Civil War and rise to the rank of Brigadier General by the time of his retirement from the army in 1892.

¹¹ Morris was an 1820 West Point graduate who was brevetted to Major during the Second Seminole War on January 27, 1837 for gallantry and effectiveness in his command within Florida. He achieved the rank of Brigadier General for the Union in 1862 during the Civil War and was elevated for service during that war to the rank of Major General on December 10, 1865. He died the next day.

¹² A copy of the communication being referred to was not found.

¹³ Abbreviation for “Obedient Servant,” a traditional form of polite closing, which also acknowledges the military hierarchy, though the form was not confined to the military.

¹⁴ Everett was a Virginian who entered the Army as a private in October, 1841 and who rose to the rank of Second Lieutenant by September, 1848. He resigned his commission in 1852, but, though a Southerner, entered service as a U.S. Army Captain in August 1861. He again resigned active military service in April, 1862, but remained as a civilian employee for the Union Quarter Master’s Department. Captured in April, 1864 by Confederate forces, he died four months later at Andersonville Prison, Georgia.

¹⁵ Virginia Bergman Peters, *The Florida Wars* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1979), pp. 268-9.

¹⁶ Haines was a New Hampshire-born West Point graduate (1849) and a classmate of Beekman DuBarry. Rose to the rank of Colonel and Assistant Aide-

de-Camp during the Civil War in 1862 and Brevet Brigadier General in 1865.

¹⁷ Cooper, a New York native and Military Academy graduate, entered the service as a Brevet Second Lieutenant of light artillery in December, 1815. Elevated to the colonelcy in May 1848 for service during the War with Mexico, he resigned his commission as a Federal officer in March, 1861 and entered the service of the Confederacy as a General of the Adjutant-General and with the Inspector-General from 1861 through 1865.

¹⁸ Fort Brooke was located in present-day Tampa.

¹⁹ Also known as Pease Creek that enters into Charlotte Harbor on the Gulf of Mexico. Today this is known as the Peace River.

²⁰ Fort Meade was on the upper reaches of Pease Creek and almost sixty miles north of the Caloosahatchee.

²¹ Fish-eating Creek enters Lake Okeechobee on its western shore above Fort Center.

²² Fort Thompson is about three-quarters the distance upstream on the Caloosahatchee between the Gulf of Mexico and Lake Okeechobee.

²³ Fort Capron was located just a little north of Fort Pierce along the western shore of the Indian River lagoon.

²⁴ Coontie (*Zamia pumila*) is a native plant in the cycad family, similar to the exotic ornamental sago palm commonly planted today, that has a large root that produces an edible starch that was an important dietary staple and cash crop for both the Seminole and early white pioneer populations.

²⁵ Contraband trade had long been carried out with the Indians of Florida, with the Seminoles at this time and even earlier with the Tequesta and Calusa, by fishermen and other mariners coming over to Florida from the Bahamas and Cuba since at least the early eighteenth century.

²⁶ "An Act to Increase the Rank and File of the Army, and to Encourage Enlistments" was passed by the 31st Congress and signed by President Zachary Taylor, himself a veteran of the Florida Wars, and it allowed the President, if he believed necessary, to increase the number of privates in a light artillery company that is stationed on the frontier to 74, as a deviation from the standard number of 64.

²⁷ Captain John Charles Casey was an Englishman by birth and a graduate of the U.S. Military academy in 1829. He participated in the Battle of Okeechobee—the largest land battle between American troops and Seminole warriors fought during the Florida Wars—on Christmas, 1837. In 1848, he was appointed as an agent for Indian Affairs and sought to rebuild trusting relationships between the Indians and the government.

It was Casey who was also authorized to serve as an intermediary with the Indians following the attacks of 1848 and, later that same year, given the authority to provide a bounty of one hundred dollars to be paid to any Seminole (man, woman, or child) who would agree to move west. Casey had believed that if the Indians could be assured that they would be left alone by white settlers, hostilities would end. See Peters, *The Florida Wars*, pp. 267-279. Casey died Christmas, 1856.

²⁸ Hill was a native of Washington, D.C., and had entered the Army directly from West Point (1837) as a Second Lieutenant of the First Battalion of Artillery. He rose to the rank of Captain on January 12, 1848. In 1849, he has established Fort Steilacom at Puget Sound, Washington, to protect American fur trading interests there. Hill would later be brevetted Colonel and Brigadier General during the Civil War in January, 1865.

²⁹ Munroe, a native of Scotland, graduated from West Point in 1814 and served with great distinction in the War with Mexico. He is credited with gallantry and for helping to turn the tide of potential defeat at the Battle of Buena Vista, February 23, 1847, during the War with Mexico. He was elevated to the rank of Major over the Second Regiment of Artillery in August 1846.

³⁰ Jesup is one of the seminal figures of the Seminole Wars. Born in Virginia and raised in Ohio, he entered the military as a Second Lieutenant of the Seventh Regiment of Infantry in May, 1808 and quickly rose through the ranks. He was brevetted Lieutenant Colonel for his service at the battle of Chippewa, Canada on July 5, 1814 and elevated to Colonel following the Battle of Niagara on July 25, 1814, during the War of 1812.

By May, 1818, he was a Brigadier General for the Quarter Master General. In May, 1828 he was made a Major General. In the spring of 1836, Jesup was made Commander of the Florida campaign under Territorial Governor Richard Keith Call, who was appointed by President Andrew Jackson, but he did not arrive to take actual control of the troops until December, 1836. From that point forward, Jesup's career was inextricably intertwined with the Florida Wars.

³¹ "Instant," meaning of the present month, in this case December 7, 1854.

³² General William T. Sherman makes mention of traveling on the government transport steamship *Fashion*, in 1843, in his *Memoirs*. She is also listed in the newspaper *New Orleans Picayune* on December 23, 1847, as carrying officers from Vera Cruz, Mexico during the War with Mexico. See transcription at the internet web site, *TheShipsList*

(<http://www.theshipslist.com/1847/decno1847.htm>).

³³ A lighter is a type of shallow draft barge that would be used to ferry supplies from a larger ship when circumstances prevent the larger vessel from docking directly at the unloading point.

³⁴ Copies of these letters were not found.

³⁵ Haskin was born in New York and graduated from the Military Academy in 1839. He was brevetted Major on September 13, 1847 for gallantry and meritorious conduct at the Battle of Chapultepec in the War with Mexico. He would achieve the rank of Brigadier General by the end of the Civil War.

³⁶ Mackall was born in the District of Columbia and graduated from the Military Academy in 1837. He served with distinction in the War with Mexico and was brevetted the rank of Captain in fighting at Monterey in September, 1846 and Major in August, 1847 after battles of Contreras and Churubusco. He was made Brevet Major and Assistant Adjutant General in August, 1853, and would resign his Army commission in July, 1861 to join the Confederate forces. He served for the Confederacy as a Brigadier General through the end of the Civil War.

³⁷ "Bvt. Col." is the abbreviation for Brevet Colonel, a rank Munroe was provided for meritorious conduct in the War with Mexico in 1847.

³⁸ Allen was a North Carolinian who graduated from West Point in 1841. He is noted as serving with distinction in the War with Mexico in 1847. He would later be promoted to Captain in November, 1854 and, during the Civil War, was elevated to the rank of Major in the Union forces in August, 1863. From 1866-1868, Allen was stationed near the Canadian border in Washington and later, during Reconstruction, he was posted in Raleigh—in his old home state—as part of the military occupation. He retired from service in 1879 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

³⁹ A New Jersey native, Brown graduated West Point in 1818 and had achieved the rank of Major by January 1851. He had already distinguished himself in service during both the Second Seminole War in 1836 (and was brevetted major) and during the War with Mexico in 1847 (brevetted Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel). In November 1861, he was again brevetted to the rank of Brigadier General for his conduct during the engagement between Union and Confederate forces at Fort Pickens, Pensacola Harbor.

⁴⁰ The Secretary of War throughout the period covered by these letters

was Jefferson C. Davis. Davis was himself a Military Academy graduate (1828), served as Secretary of War from March, 1853 to March, 1857 (during the presidency of Franklin Pierce), and later became the only President of the Confederate States of America from 1861-1865.

⁴¹ Prophet's Landing is located on the boundary between the Big Cypress Swamp and the Everglades, about 50 miles due west of Fort Lauderdale.

⁴² Waxy Hadjo's Landing was about halfway between Prophet's Landing and Lake Okeechobee, near Fort Shackelford, or a little more than 20 miles due south of that lake.

⁴³ Totten was an 1841 graduate of West Point from Pennsylvania who went to work for the U.S. Coast Survey under Superintendent of the Survey Alexander Dallas Bache. Bache, today recognized as one of the preeminent scientists of the 19th century, was the great-grandson of Benjamin Franklin and an 1825 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy. Bache was appointed in December, 1843 by President John Tyler as Superintendent and is the person most instrumental in preparing an exacting and invaluable survey of the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts of the United States over the next two decades. Because the Coast Survey used Navy and Army officers to supplement its civilian staff, Totten served under Bache in Florida surveying the Keys, the area of Key Biscayne, and the Florida Reef; accurate maps of this area were of tremendous value in saving millions of dollars in shipping from wrecking. He would later gain note in February, 1861 by successfully negotiating the peaceful relinquishment of his command and the safe passage of his men from the federal arsenal in Little Rock, Arkansas upon its siege by state militia on the eve of secession.

⁴⁴ This is a reference to the steamship *Texas Ranger* that was operating at this time.

⁴⁵ Probably Alexander Montgomery, a Pennsylvanian who graduated West Point in 1834. He became a Captain and Assistant Quartermaster in May 1846.

⁴⁶ Either Brevet Major Robert Anderson of Kentucky (West Point 1825) or Brevet Major Samuel S. Anderson of Virginia (West Point 1841).

⁴⁷ Donoghue was not among the soldiers listed as being stationed at Fort Dallas in 1850, but was, like many of them, probably a recent Irish immigrant and recruit.

⁴⁸ The content of Captain Dawson's letter which prompted this reply is unknown but may have dealt with a disciplinary action of a soldier, perhaps the Donoghue case noted earlier.

⁴⁹ Morris, a New Yorker, entered the Army in March, 1847 as a Second Lieutenant. He was then promoted to First Lieutenant in December, 1847. He would later enter the Civil War with the rank of Captain in 1861 and lead a New York regiment in service as a Colonel in 1862. He was killed at the Battle of Cold Harbor, Virginia, on June 4, 1864.

⁵⁰ This letter does not come from the collection that every other letter contained herein was found. It is from a photocopy of an original letter contained in the "Cooper Kirk Collection" (Broward County Historical Commission, Fort Lauderdale, Florida), Folder 67, but whose original source is likely the National Archives.

⁵¹ "A. A. Qmr." is the abbreviation for Acting Assistant Quartermaster.

⁵² Due to the isolation of and the length of time being stationed at Fort Dallas, Hill likely had requested a leave of absence to take care of a private family matter—difficult to accomplish from his Post—or to simply visit with his family. However, in the mind of his superior officer, Brevet Colonel John Munroe, his importance as commander of Fort Dallas prevented him from being granted permission to do this.

⁵³ Thomas was an 1823 graduate of West Point from Delaware. He had been brevetted the rank of Lieutenant Colonel during the War with Mexico after battles in Monterey, Mexico, in September, 1846. He was elevated to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and Assistant Adjutant General in July, 1852 and would later be promoted to Brigadier General with the Adjutant General in August, 1861.

⁵⁴ Henry Benson, a New Jersey native, rose through the ranks from his enlistment as a Private in June, 1845 to the rank of First Lieutenant by March, 1853. He was again promoted to Captain in the Union Army in May, 1861, and he would later be killed in action at Malvern Hill, Virginia in August, 1862.

⁵⁵ Lewis G. Arnold was a New Jersey native who graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1837. He was brevetted to the rank of Captain and then Major following engagements in the War with Mexico in 1847. At the outbreak of the Civil War he was promoted to the rank of Major in the Union Army, but was brevetted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel for his service during the Confederate bombardment of Fort Pickens, Florida, in November, 1861, where he

served with Brevet Colonel Harvey Brown, mentioned above, in the same engagement.

⁵⁶ Henry Clay Pratt was a Massachusetts native who graduated from West Point in 1837. He was brevetted Captain during the War with Mexico in 1847 and promoted to Captain in 1848.

⁵⁷ George Lucas Hartsuff, a New Yorker, graduated West Point in 1852. He was promoted to First Lieutenant on the March 8, 1855. He would later serve with distinction in the Civil War as a Union officer, being brevetted Colonel following the Battle of Antietam, Maryland, in September, 1862 and later Brigadier General in March, 1865 for his efforts against the command of Confederate General Robert E. Lee.

⁵⁸ Thomas McCurdy Vincent was an 1853 West Point graduate from Ohio and was serving as a Second Lieutenant at the time of this letter.

⁵⁹ A sand bar had formed at the mouth of Jupiter Inlet and closed it to navigation.

⁶⁰ [*Sic*].

⁶¹ Fort Deynaud, or sometimes “Denaud”, was located about twenty miles up the Caloosahatchee from Fort Myers and roughly twenty miles west of Lake Okeechobee. It was about four miles downstream from Fort Thompson.

⁶² Hays was a Virginian by birth, a Tennessean by residency, and an 1840 graduate of West Point. He was brevetted first to Captain and then to Major in 1847 for his service during engagements during the War with Mexico. He was promoted to Captain in October 1853. During the Civil War he became a Brigadier General in the volunteer service for the Union in November, 1862.

⁶³ Fort Center was located about eighteen miles northeast of Fort Deynaud and was located several miles west of the northwest shore of Lake Okeechobee along Fish-eating Creek.

⁶⁴ [*Sic*].

⁶⁵ Cho-la-la-pul-ko is an area about twenty-two miles south of Fort Deynaud, near the Seminole settlement of Billy’s Town.

⁶⁶ “Acting Topographical Engineer,” to be in charge of mapping the countryside for the benefit of military planning in the area.

Information from the military exploratory parties described in these letters was compiled by the Army and printed as the “Military Map of the Peninsula of Florida South of Tampa Bay” prepared by Lieutenant Joseph C. Ives of the Topographical Engineers and printed by the War Department in April, 1856. It is commonly known as the “Ives Map.”

⁶⁷ The writer is describing a location near the northern reaches of the Big Cypress Swamp.

⁶⁸ Fort Simon Drum was about twenty miles south of Fort Deynaud and about six miles east of Cho-la-la-pulko. Captain Simon Drum (West Point 1848) was an army officer killed on September 13, 1847 during the American assault on Mexico City during the War with Mexico.

⁶⁹ Elzey was born Arnold Elzey Jones in Maryland in 1816. Following his graduation from the Military Academy in 1837, he changed his name to Arnold Elzey, both to honor his maternal grandfather of the same name who was an army surgeon from 1814 until his death in 1818 and to distinguish himself from numerous other Joneses then in military service. He served with distinction in battle during the War with Mexico and was made a Major General of the Confederate Army from 1861-1865.

⁷⁰ The Okaloacoochee is a large slough that runs south from Fort Simon Drum through the Big Cypress Swamp to the Fakahatchee, a slough that runs southwesterly into the Gulf of Mexico.

⁷¹ Fort Shackelford was located near Waxy Hadjo's Landing.

⁷² "Maleo" is a misspelling of the "Mateo" River, a small stream that leads out to the Malco Inlet on the Southwest Gulf Coast above Cape Romano and Gallivans Bay.

⁷³ Edward R. Platt was a New York native and a West Point graduate (1849) who had been promoted to First Lieutenant in October, 1853. He would later enter the Civil War as a Captain in the Union Army and was brevetted for service during the Battle of Fredericksburg to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in December, 1862.

⁷⁴ Probably Caxambas Pass.

⁷⁵ Fort McRae was located about forty miles directly east of Fort Center across Lake Okeechobee upon its central eastern shore.

⁷⁶ Punta Rassa is located on the south bank of the mouth of the Caloosahatchee across the inlet from Sanibel Island. Fort Dulaney was established here by the Army.

⁷⁷ Chai was a Creek Indian who had first served as a U.S. Army guide during the Second Seminole War from 1835-1842. Chai had a Seminole wife, Polly, who had also served as a guide during the prior war. Soon after the war broke out in December, 1855, Chai committed suicide rather than serve again as a guide against his fellow Indians during another war. His wife Polly survived him and later married a Cuban fisherman that lived in Charlotte Harbor. See James W. Covington, *The*

Seminoles of Florida (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993), pp. 111 and 139.

⁷⁸ “Non-commissioned officers” above the rank of private, such as Corporal and Sergeant.

⁷⁹ Lake Kissimmee is located fifty miles north of Lake Okeechobee and Lake Tohopekaliga above that in the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes.

⁸⁰ Lake Gentry is located in Osceola County.

⁸¹ Pavilion Key is located at the southern end of Gallivans Bay about fifty miles due south of Fort Simon Drum.

⁸² Loomis Lyman Langdon was a New York native who graduated from West Point in 1854 and was serving as a Second Lieutenant at the time of the letter. At the outbreak of the Civil War he was elevated to the rank of Captain in the Union Army and was brevetted a Major after the Battle of Olustee, Florida, in February, 1864.

⁸³ Camp Daniels was located near Fort Myers.

⁸⁴ “C.H.” is the Caloosahatchee.

⁸⁵ “Ultimo” is a Latin word standing for the phrase “ultimo mense” or, in English, “in the last month”; in this instance meaning November, 1855.

⁸⁶ Coontie once grew abundantly in the extensive pinelands that covered much of what is now modern Broward County, as well as extending south into Miami-Dade County, as well as north into Palm Beach County.

⁸⁷ Ray B. Seley, “Lieutenant Hartsuff and the Banana Plants,” *Tequesta* (1963) XXIII: 3-14, Covington, *The Seminoles of Florida*, pp. 128-9, and Peters, *The Florida Wars*, pp. 279-80.

⁸⁸ Vogdes was a Pennsylvanian who had graduated the Military Academy in 1837 and been promoted to Captain in August, 1847. He would later enter the Civil War as a Union Major in 1861, become a Brigadier General over volunteer troops in November, 1862, and would be brevetted a Brigadier General in the regular Army in April, 1865.

⁸⁹ “Bks” is the abbreviation for the barracks at Key West.

⁹⁰ There was U.S. Navy Schooner *Experiment* employed for the Coast Survey from 1835-1839. This may be the same vessel.

⁹¹ This means the convening of the regular board on January 7, 1856 (the “7th proximate”) will not be held, if the situation so requires.

⁹² Sampson was an African-American man employed by the Army to serve as an interpreter with the Seminoles. See Covington, *The Seminoples of Florida*, p. 116, and Peters, *The Florida Wars*, p. 269.

⁹³ “Moiety” is the other half.

⁹⁴ "Teams" meaning those wagons that would need to be sent.

⁹⁵ Fort Gatlin was where Orlando was later established.

⁹⁶ The St. Johns River.