

me
For your information

March 27th, 1916.

Hon. Ion. L. Parris,
Jacksonville, Fla.

My dear Mr. Parris:-

I assume you have noted the resolution of the legislature of Florida (1843) for acquiring and draining the Everglades, as reproduced on Page 39 of Senate Document 39.

Even at that early date the State Legislature requested that all of the swamp and overflowed lands of which the Everglades are a part, be granted to the State "on condition that the State will drain them and apply the proceeds of the sale thereof, after defraying the expense of draining, to purposes of education".

It was in answer to this petition that the Congress of the United States (Sept. 28th, 1850) granted the swamp and overflowed lands to the State of Florida under the specific condition

"That the proceeds of said lands, whether from sale or by direct appropriation in kind, shall be applied, exclusively, as far as necessary, to the purpose of reclaiming said lands by means of the levees and drains aforesaid"

Nothing, it seems to me, could be more plain than that the State is bound in perpetuity by its own proposition, followed by the grant, on conditions, and the acceptance thereof, by the State.

It is also perfectly plain that no diversion of swamp and overflowed lands shall be made to the school fund until after the expense of drainage is defrayed by the proceeds of the sale of said swamp and over lowed lands.

As stated in another letter, the drainage trust fund is just as sacred as the school trust fund - if the latter has suffered by virtue of diversions to railroad companies, there is no justification for holding out the remaining swamp and overflowed lands from drainage purposes merely to try and satisfy the residuary interests of the school

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fund. If any recovery is to be made for the benefit of the school fund, let it be at the expense of the Railroads and not of the drainage trust.

Yours very truly,

VWH/E

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "W. S. Farris", written in a cursive style. The signature is located on the right side of the page, below the closing "Yours very truly,".