

1-30-1839

Documents relating to the bill (S. 160) "to provide for the armed occupation and settlement of that part of Florida which is now overrun and infested by marauding bands of hostile Indians

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.law.ou.edu/indianserialset>



Part of the [Indian and Aboriginal Law Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

S. Doc. No. 163, 25th Cong., 3rd Sess. (1839)

This Senate Document is brought to you for free and open access by University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in American Indian and Alaskan Native Documents in the Congressional Serial Set: 1817-1899 by an authorized administrator of University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [darinfox@ou.edu](mailto:darinfox@ou.edu).

DOCUMENTS

RELATING

To the bill (S. 160) "to provide for the armed occupation and settlement of that part of Florida which is now overrun and infested by marauding bands of hostile Indians."

JANUARY 30, 1839.

Submitted by Mr. BENTON, and ordered to be printed.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
Washington, January 28, 1839.

SIR: In answer to your note received this morning, requesting "the names of the officers who have been killed or who have died in Florida," since the commencement of hostilities, I herewith respectfully send you two lists, A and B, which furnish the desired information. It will appear by these statements, that eighteen officers of the *regular* army, and one volunteer, have been killed; and sixteen officers of the army have died in Florida, and of disease contracted while on service there. The names of two officers who committed suicide while serving in Florida, are omitted in the list. I may here add, that fifteen officers have been *wounded* during the same period.

Being pertinent to the subject of your inquiry, I take the liberty respectfully to refer you to document No. 305, p. 6, H. R. of the last session, where you will find a printed statement, accompanying my letter to the chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, dated March 29, 1838. In this statement I included the rank and file, of which there are—

Killed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	132
Wounded	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	235
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<u>367</u>

The number of men who have died of disease in Florida, is supposed to be great; but I have not yet been able to compute it.

I am, sir, with great respect, your obedient servant,

R. JONES,  
Adjutant General.

The Hon. Colonel BENTON,  
Chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs.

## A.

List of officers of the army killed in the Florida service, inclusive of December, 1838.

No.	Rank and names.	Regiment, &c.	Place and date.
1	Lieut. Col. Alex. Brooks	- 4th artillery	St. Johns bay, December 17, 1836*
2	Lieut. Col. Alex. Thompson	- 6th infantry	Battle of Okechobee, Dec. 25, 1837
3	Brevet Major F. L. Dade	- 4th infantry	December 28, 1835†
4	Captain Upton S. Fraser	- 3d artillery	December 28, 1835†
5	Captain George W. Gardiner	- 2d artillery	December 28, 1835†
6	Captain Charles Mellon	- 2d artillery	Fort Mellon, February 8, 1837
7	Captain Jos. Van Swearingen	- 6th infantry	Battle of Okechobee, Dec. 25, 1837
8	First Lieut. James F. Izard	- 1st dragoons	Wipplacocosse, March 5, 1836
9	First Lieut. Alex. Mackay	- 1st artillery	St. Johns bay, December 17, 1836*
10	First Lieut. Fras. T. Brooke	- 6th infantry	Battle of Okechobee, Dec. 25, 1837
11	First Lieut. C. Smith	- 2d artillery	Fort King, December 28, 1835†
12	First Lieut. J. P. Center	- 6th infantry	Battle of Okechobee, Dec. 25, 1837
13	Second Lieut. W. E. Basinger	- 2d artillery	
14	Second Lieut. J. W. S. McNeill	- 2d dragoons	Near Fort Peyton, Sept. 11, 1837
15	Second Lieut. R. Henderson	- 2d artillery	December 28, 1835†
16	Second Lieut. R. R. Mudge	- 3d artillery	December 28, 1835†
17	Second Lieut. J. L. Kedis	- 3d artillery	December 28, 1835†
18	Assistant Surgeon John S. Galloway	- Medical staff	December 28, 1835†

\* Killed by the explosion of a steam-boiler off Florida coast.

† Dade's battle.

‡ Surprised by the Indians.

R. JONES, Adjutant General

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, January 28, 1839.

List of volunteer officers reported to have been killed.

No.	Rank and name.	Regiment, &c.	Place and date.
1	Colonel Gentry	- Missouri volunteers.	Battle of Okechobee, Dec. 25, 1837

## B.

List of officers of the army who have died of disease incident to the climate, and from exposure in the Florida service, inclusive of December, 1838.

No.	Rank and names.	Regiment, &c.	Place and date.
1	Lieut. Col. J. F. Heileman	- 2d artillery	Fort Drane, Florida, June 27, 1836
2	Major George Birch	- 4th infantry	Fort Brooke, Florida, Sept. 26, 1837
3	Brevet Major R. M. Sands	- 4th infantry	Fort Call, Florida, Sept. 10, 1836
4	Captain S. Shannon	- 1st infantry	Tallahassee, September 4, 1836
5	Captain A. W. Thornton	- 4th infantry	Pensacola, November 2, 1836
6	Captain L. Gates	- 1st artillery	Fort Drane, Florida, August 6, 1836
7	First Lieut. D. S. Herring	- 3d artillery	St. Augustine, June 22, 1836
8	First Lieut. T. B. Adams	- 2d artillery	Fort Dade, Florida, Dec. 14, 1837
9	First Lieut. J. W. Hamilton	- 2d dragoons	Fort Marion, Florida, Nov. 26, 1837
10	First Lieut. J. Conrad	- 6th infantry	James Island, Florida, Aug. 10, 1836
11	Second Lieut. J. McClure	- 1st infantry	Fort Brooke, Florida, April 15, 1837
12	Second Lieut. C. C. Kingsbury	- 2d dragoons	Fort Mellon, Florida, June 9, 1837
13	Assistant Surgeon B. F. Nourse	- Medical staff	Key West, Florida, May 10, 1836
14	Assistant Surgeon T. R. Johnson	- Medical staff	Baltimore, Maryland, July 11, 1837
15	Assistant Surgeon A. C. Turletot	- Medical staff	Washington, D. C., Dec. 8, 1837
16	Assistant Surgeon W. Sullivan	- Medical staff	Camp Walker, Florida, May 15, 1836

R. JONES, Adjutant General

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, January 28, 1839.

LOCUST GROVE, NEAR LOUISVILLE, KY.,  
January 19, 1839.

DEAR SIR: I have received your letter of the 5th instant, with a copy of the bill to provide for the armed occupation and settlement of Florida. If the plan which you propose can be carried out, the Indians may be gradually destroyed, or forced to submit; and I know of no other measure likely to rid the country of them, unless, by following the example of the British Government in their war with the Maroons in Jamaica, we employ the blood hound. The only doubt I entertain as to the complete success of the plan, arises from the apprehension that the quantity of good land south of the 28° of north latitude, is not sufficient to induce settlers to occupy it; north of that degree, the country is generally equal to the southern counties of Georgia and Alabama; but south of it the good land is confined to a few detached spots along the coast on both sides of the peninsula; and fresh water can rarely be obtained on the Gulf coast south of Charlottes harbor, even where the land is fit for cultivation. Between the mouth of the Withlacoochee and Tampa bay, there is a considerable body of excellent land; there is also good land near Tohopeulaga; and between the Ocklawaha and St. Johns rivers, I have no doubt healthy situations for stations or residences might be found; and as to the country north of the Withlacoochee, it is quite as healthy as the greater portion of the western and southwestern States; and the whole seaboard is as healthy as any part of our Atlantic seaboard south of the Delaware. I would advise that the planters and farmers be urged to return to the plantations and farms which they have abandoned, and that the whole country north of Tampa bay be settled as soon as possible. The coasts of Florida afford as valuable fisheries, in proportion to their extent, as the banks of Newfoundland; and though the country south of Tampa bay affords but little inducement to the cultivator, a population sufficient to confine the Indians to the interior might find near the coast abundant support by combining fishing with cultivation. A supply of fresh water could be obtained from the adjacent islands.

The posts to be occupied by the troops must depend, necessarily, upon the number and position of the settlements. There should always be a sufficient force in the neighborhood of each settlement to serve as a rallying point to the settlers, and to unite with them either for purposes of protection or pursuit. There is a small body of good land on New river, also on the Miami river near Cape Florida, which was occupied previous to the war. Two or three hundred inhabitants might support themselves comfortably on that portion of the Territory. No part of the United States is more healthy. A light-house is necessary in that neighborhood; and so valuable is the commerce that passes that part of the coast, and so numerous the wrecks in consequence of the difficulty of the navigation, that, to protect the crews and property cast on shore, the country should be settled, and military posts be established on New river, and near Cape Florida.

There is a body of excellent land near Cape Sable, the most southerly point of the peninsula, which would support several hundred inhabitants. This it would be highly advantageous to occupy as soon as possible. A military post should be established and maintained at the cape. Posts will be necessary at Indian River inlet, at the head of Indian river, at New Smyrna, and at one or two other points between the latter post and St. Augustine. A post should be established at Punta Rasa, south of Tampa;

and at one or two points between Tampa and the mouth of the Suwannee those points of course to be determined by the settlements that may be made on or near the coast. The posts across the country from the gulf to the Atlantic should not be considered permanent, but be changed as the settlements in the interior be advanced to the south. I have read the letter of Surgeon General Lawson, and agree with him generally in his views. As to the war which we have carried on in Florida, it differs not only from any ever before waged by this country, but from any other of which we have an account in history, unless the Maroon war in Jamaica be an exception. The object has been, and is now, not to beat and compel the enemy to make peace, but to catch them. No force employed against them either in the former or present Seminole war, no matter by whom commanded, has ever been able to catch them, and my decided opinion is, if they ever be caught, it must be with their own consent, and that consent will hardly be given until they find the white man in their way. Let them be crowded by settlers, and that which has invariably occurred throughout the whole history of our settlements will occur again, they will not only consent to remove, but will desire it as the greatest benefit the nation can confer upon them.

With high consideration and respect, your obedient servant,

TH. S. JESUP.

The Hon. THO. H. BENTON,

*Chairman of the Military Committee of the Senate.*