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H.R. Doc. No. 200, 27th Cong., 2nd Sess. (1842)

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DEPREDACTIONS BY INDIANS AND UNITED STATES TROOPS
IN GEORGIA.

APRIL 22, 1842.

Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs, with instructions.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, April 22, 1842.

Ordered, That the communication from the War Department, and the letter of the Governor of Georgia, [herewith presented, dated on the 10th March, 1842,] asking the delegation from Georgia to have an appropriation made for the support of a militia force on the Florida frontier, in Georgia, be referred to the Committee on Military Affairs, with instruction to report upon the propriety of making the appropriation asked for by the Governor of Georgia, and that said papers be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT, April 20, 1842.

SIR: I have the honor to communicate, as directed by a resolution of the House of Representatives of the 6th instant, "all correspondence between the Governor of Georgia and this Department, since the 4th March, 1841, in relation to Indian depredations in Georgia; and the complaints made and evidence submitted of depredations on the citizens of Georgia and their property, by the United States troops;" and also to state "what course has been adopted to prevent in future the violation of the rights of the citizens by the United States troops."

The correspondence herewith submitted contains all the information, from whatever source, in the possession of the Department, relative to the subjects of inquiry by the resolution, details its action upon all the points presented, and in a great measure exhibits the grounds upon which that action proceeded. The letters are divided into two series: the first, embracing those which passed between the Governor of Georgia and this Department, with their enclosures; and the second, those between the Adjutant General and officers of the army stationed on the exposed portion of the Georgia frontier.

Up to the 2d of March of the present year, the letters of the Governor of Georgia relate exclusively to the exposed condition of the inhabitants residing near the Florida line and the Okefenokee swamp, and to the payment of the militia companies which he deemed it necessary to call into service for the protection of the country. The numerous documents accompanying these letters, and the correspondence during that period contained in the second series, give such full information on the subject as to render any further explanation unnecessary. The report of Lieut. Col. Riley, of the 28th of March, enclosed in No. 16 of the second series, is worthy of attention, as showing how little apprehension was then entertained, by the settlers on the Georgia frontier, of outrages from the Indians; and this

view of the subject is corroborated by the letter of Captain Screven, of April 3, No. 18 of the second series.

It is proper to state that, after the explicit declaration of the Governor of Georgia, in his letter of the 10th of March, that he had taken the defence of the State into his own hands, and wrote only to ask the removal of the regular troops from the limits of Georgia, it was impossible for this Department to offer him aid, if there had been any occasion for such offer. Apparently so well convinced of this were the delegation in Congress from that State, that, in an interview with the undersigned, they requested that an answer to the letter of the Governor might be delayed until they could communicate with him. They further expressed their wish that one or two companies of militia might be called out, and kept in the service of the United States, for the purpose of protecting the southern frontier of the State, and to tranquillize the minds of the inhabitants. They were answered, that the high consideration in which the opinions and wishes of such a body were held by the Department, would induce it in a doubtful case to yield its own opinion of the necessity of such a force to theirs; but that, in the present state of the correspondence with the Governor of Georgia, it was impossible to do any thing, as the application for authority to call out militia must necessarily come from the Executive authority of the State. They left the undersigned with an impression on his mind that some communication would be received from them, or from the Governor of Georgia, before there should be any action of the Department on the subject. No further correspondence or communication, either with the Governor of Georgia or with the delegation, has been had, prior to the receipt of the resolution of the House to which this communication is an answer.

The letter from the Governor of Georgia of the 2d of March contains "all the complaints made and evidence submitted of depredations on the citizens of Georgia and their property, by the United States troops," and was the first as well as the only information communicated to the Department on that subject, with the exception of a notice of the death of D. N. Cone, in a letter from Captain Day to the Adjutant General, of February 1, requesting the employment of counsel for the defence of a soldier and three of his comrades, who were imprisoned as principal and accessaries, on a charge of the murder of Cone. That officer was immediately called upon for a statement of the circumstances of this unfortunate affair; and his report will be found under date of February 24, numbered 12, of the second series. The letter of Governor McDonald, communicating the death of Cone, and stating that depredations had been committed by the soldiers on the property of citizens of Georgia, was immediately transmitted to Colonel Worth, for an investigation of the disorders therein alleged. His report, under date of March 29, numbered 15 of the second series, will be found to enter fully into these charges. From this report, and that of Captain Day above referred to, the death of Cone would appear to have been a case of excusable, if not justifiable homicide; and to these reports the attention of the House is respectfully invited.

It will be seen by the letter of Colonel Worth of March 30, numbered 16 of the second series, that the United States troops have been withdrawn from the limits of Georgia, for reasons entirely independent of the occurrences in question.

In answer to that part of the resolution which inquires "what course has been adopted (if any) to prevent in future the violation of the rights of

the citizens by the United States troops," the undersigned would remark that the terms of the inquiry seem to imply that there has been some violation of the rights of the citizens of Georgia by the United States troops, which called for some special and extraordinary interposition of this Department. Such an implication the undersigned thinks will appear, from the correspondence now submitted, to be unfounded. As to the charge of having killed a citizen, it is sufficient to say that the transaction, immediately on its occurrence, became the subject of investigation by the civil courts of the State; and if criminality attaches to the conduct of the soldiers, there can be but little doubt that the law will be amply vindicated.

The depredations charged against them in the petition of Isaac Jernigan and others, to the Governor of Georgia, and enclosed in his letter of 2d of March, are, if truly charged, of such a description as may well occur among an equal number of ordinary citizens, and were scarcely of a character to demand any special interposition from any quarter. The soldiers were liable to the jurisdiction of the ordinary civil courts for any trespasses committed by them. The laws extend their broad and ample protection over the citizen, whether he be in public employ or in a private station; and I am not aware of any rule or principle which excepts the soldier in the service of his country from the benefits of this protection. It is not perceived, then, in what manner or by what authority this Department could adopt any course to prevent a violation, in future, of the rights of the citizens of Georgia by the United States troops, other than that which has been adopted, viz: to direct inquiry into the truth of any charges, and the application of the usual legal remedies to redress the wrongs inflicted, and to punish the transgressors.

No other course, to prevent future violation of the rights of citizens of Georgia by United States troops, has been adopted.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. C. SPENCER.

HON. JOHN WHITE,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, March 10, 1842.

GENTLEMEN: I have frequently applied to the War Department for a military force that might be relied on to protect the inhabitants of that part of the State of Georgia exposed to the ravages of the Florida Indians. I have been answered by assurances that the regular force stationed for that purpose is sufficient; that the Indian war is near its close; and that no indication of Indians in or near Georgia can be discovered by officers of the United States sent to make the examination. I have informed the Department that, the moment the militia force is removed, the Indians, disregarding the regular troops, renew their work of death and plunder. This is verified in this instance. The forces under the command Captains Johnson and Morgan had been but a short time discharged, before the murders mentioned in General Knight's letter were committed. Tired of making fruitless appeals to the authorities at Washington for an effective force, I have determined to take the defence of the State into my own hands, and have accordingly requested the Secretary of War to remove the regular troops from the territory of Georgia. I must ask you to have an appro-

priation made by Congress for the payment of the companies lately commanded by Captains Johnson and Morgan, as well as for those now ordered out for the defence and protection of the State.

I send you the copy of a letter this day addressed to the Secretary of War.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

To the GEORGIA DELEGATION IN CONGRESS.

P. S. You will confer a favor by sending me some dozen or two of blank muster and pay rolls.

C. J. McDONALD.

FIRST SERIES.

From the Governor of Georgia to the Secretary of War.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, March 9, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to forward to you an extract of a letter from Captain North, of Ware county, in this State.

In addition to what he says, I can inform you that his neighborhood has been repeatedly attacked by straggling parties of Indians from Florida, and is greatly exposed.

I must ask you for a force for the protection of the people, to be stationed at Fort North. There can be no question that the Indians, when pressed in Florida, will retreat to the Okefenokee and adjacent swamps in Georgia, and, as has been their custom, destroy the lives and property of our citizens. This can be prevented by sending a force in time to the exposed points. Four companies are now in service, for the protection of this section of country, but they are so disposed as not to guard this neighborhood.

I have the honor to be, respectfully, your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Extract of a letter from Captain North, enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.

It may be described to you that Fort Gilmer is a guard for our frontier, but I wish to inform you that the fort was built there when the Indians were in the Okefenokee swamp; but the times have changed, for the Indians are on the other side of us, and we are some ten or fifteen miles from Fort Gilmer, behind it and the Indians, and an open scope of country between us and the Indians for seventy or eighty miles, the way they come from the nation. So, if you do not wish to give us any further protection, the request of the citizens is, that you would remove the station to where it will be of some benefit to those people that are actually in danger every day; for what few remain on the east side of Suwannee are at this time in small forts, but they are chiefly removed; and now it is coming crop

time, and it is yet dangerous times, and except we get some assistance from you, we cannot work and guard too through the winter. We guarded as well as we could, by scouting as often as we could. But now time is the scarcest thing with us, if we try to make crops; so we sincerely hope you will take us into consideration, as your suffering constituents.

N. B. There is something yet that you may not consider; that is, there are four companies around the Okefenokee swamp, and they are so far east of us, that they are no guard to this part; for they are on the east and southeast end of the swamp; so there are some few men at Fort Gilmer on the west, or else we are alone, in fact; so, with the exception of a few of Captain Jernigan's men, there is no company within sixty miles, so we consider that we are utterly in danger.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, (GA.)

Milledgeville, March 16, 1841.

SIR: Owing to the extraordinary freshets in our rivers, we had no account until yesterday of the organization of the new Cabinet under President Harrison. I avail myself of the earliest occasion to ask your attention to a communication made by me to the Secretary at War a few days since, transmitting an extract of a letter from Captain North, and requesting the Department to have a military force stationed at Fort North, for the protection of the people in that neighborhood, who are greatly exposed to depredations from the Indians. You will confer a favor by giving this subject your earliest consideration.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Hon. JOHN BELL, *Secretary of War.*

WAR DEPARTMENT, *March 25, 1841.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 9th and 16th instant, in relation to the exposed condition of the inhabitants of Ware county, and requesting that a further militia force may be called out and stationed at Fort North, for their protection.

The Department is without the means to authorize it to comply with this application, Congress having made no appropriation for the payment of militia. Nor would this measure be justified by the present state of affairs in Florida; intelligence just received from there authorizes the hope that the negotiations now going on with the Indians, for their emigration, will prove entirely successful. Instructions have, however, been given to the proper officers in Florida, to provide such additional protection as may be necessary for the section referred to, by means of the regular troops, or, if advisable, by putting the four companies of Georgia militia, or a portion of them, in better position for this purpose.

Should the negotiations with the Indians unfortunately fail, the most effectual measures in the power of the Department will be adopted for the protection and security of the country.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN BELL.

His Excellency C. J. McDONALD,

Governor of Georgia, Milledgeville, Georgia.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, March 29, 1841.

SIR: I have lately addressed two letters to the War Department, asking the protection of a part of Georgia exposed to the incursions of the Seminole Indians, which must have been received since you were placed at its head. I have received no reply to either. I see it announced, I suppose upon authority, and much to my surprise, in the National Intelligencer of the 24th instant, that you have despatched instructions to discharge the brigade of Florida militia under General Read, authorized to be called into the service of the United States during the past summer. Attached to this brigade are four companies of mounted men, from Georgia, intended to guard the spacious Georgia swamps, heretofore occupied by the Indians when pressed in Florida, and in the neighborhood of which they have destroyed many lives and much property. This service is of such a nature that it can be performed by mounted men alone. I must ask you if it is your intention to supply the place of these troops by others, or is this section of country to be left unprotected by the Government?

An immediate answer is requested.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

HON. JOHN BELL,

Secretary of War.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *April 5, 1841.*

SIR: I have just had the honor of receiving your communication of the 29th ultimo.

My letter of the 25th ultimo will have advised you that the Georgia militia were not included in the order for the discharge of General Read's command of Florida militia, and that instructions were given to the proper officer in Florida to provide any additional protection necessary for the section of Georgia exposed to the inroads of the Indians from below. Intelligence just received from Florida shows that the commanding general is discharging the militia under General Read only, as he is able to provide, by the regular troops, for the defence of the section occupied by them. Under these circumstances, and in view of the hoped for success of the negotiations with the Indians in Florida, there is, in the opinion of the Department, no just ground for apprehending that the citizens of Georgia will be again troubled by them.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN BELL.

His Excellency CHARLES J. McDONALD,

Governor of Georgia, Milledgeville, Ga.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, (GA.,)

Milledgeville, April 27, 1841.

SIR: In August last the Seminole Indians invaded the territory of this State, and destroyed many lives and much property in the counties of

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Ware and Camden. A military force was promptly assembled, to repel the invaders and protect the country. As soon as intelligence of these outrages reached this Department, General Nelson was despatched to the scene of their perpetration, with instructions to raise a sufficient force of mounted men for the effectual protection of the Georgia frontier. He performed this duty, and under these orders mustered into the service of the State, for thirty days, four companies. After the expiration of this service, they were mustered into the service of the United States, in which service they have ever since remained. Until recently, I had supposed that these men had been paid for their services, and also that the supplies furnished them had been paid for. I refer you to the letter of your predecessor of the 30th of October, of last year, on this subject, a copy of which is herewith forwarded, to show that this service has been recognised by the Government. These men have left their families, and many of them are dependent on their pay for their support. I enclose you extracts from letters of two of the captains in command, showing the pressing necessity for immediate payment. The service of a part of these companies, if not all, commenced in August last. I hope that you will adopt immediate measures for their payment. Those who serve their country so laboriously, and at the sacrifice of every comfort, should be promptly paid the very small amount allowed by the law.

I have received your letter in reply to mine of the 29th ultimo, and am gratified to find that you intend to keep these companies in service for the protection of this part of the country. I fear your anticipations of the speedy termination of the Florida war will be disappointed. These Indians are a faithless and treacherous people, and their professions need not be relied on. They speak of peace when their purpose is plunder and murder; and I must reiterate my apprehension that they are yet to make a hostile demonstration within the limits of this State.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

HON. JOHN BELL,
Secretary of War.

[Enclosed in Governor McDonald's foregoing letter of April 27.]

Extract of a letter from Captain Jernigan to Governor McDonald.

I will be glad if you can give me some information respecting the payment of my company while in the service of the State, as we have not been paid off yet, and we have been such a length of time in the service that we greatly stand in need of many necessaries. If you can expedite the payment, you will much oblige your obedient servant.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter from Captain Sweat to Governor McDonald.

I must respectfully ask your excellency to urge the immediate payment of the troops which have been in the State's service; also, those in

the United States service. All those who furnished supplies for the companies are anxiously waiting for the pay of the supplies furnished. All those men in the service are becoming much distressed, having left all other pursuits, for a term of six months, to raise money; and, by hardness of the times, have become much embarrassed, and their property must be sacrificed unless their pay can be had to relieve them.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

WAR DEPARTMENT, *October 30, 1840.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your excellency's letter of the 21st instant, apprising the Department that General Nelson had retained in the service of the State of Georgia four companies of mounted men, and asking that they should be mustered into that of the United States as such. Orders have been given to that effect, and likewise to pay for the supplies furnished those troops while employed by your excellency for the protection of the Georgia frontier. The four companies of mounted men will be placed under the command of Brigadier General Leigh Read, of Florida.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. R. POINSETT.

To the GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *May 7, 1841.*

SIR: I have had the honor to receive your excellency's letter of the 27th ultimo, asking that measures be taken to pay the militia called out last August for the protection of Ware and Camden counties, Georgia; and, in reply, I beg leave to refer to the accompanying report of the Paymaster General, stating the reasons that have prevented and still prevent the settlement of these claims, and the measures to be taken to place the Department in funds for the accomplishment of that object. I shall not fail to lay the subject before Congress at its next session.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN BELL.

To the GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA.

[Report referred to in the preceding letter of the Secretary of War to the Governor of Georgia, of May 7, 1841.]

PAYMASTER GENERAL'S OFFICE,

May 5, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor herewith to return the letter of his excellency the Governor of Georgia, dated 27th ultimo, on the subject of paying certain militia of that State, referred to me for a report.

An estimate was submitted to Congress at the commencement of the last session, in which the sum of \$29,416 08 was included, for the payment of

these troops for their service in 1840. They were also included in the militia estimate for 1841; but, no appropriation having been made, the Department has not had the means of paying them. An estimate will be submitted to you, to be laid before Congress at the approaching session, and if an appropriation is made, no time will be lost in settling their claims.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. TOWSON, P. M. G.

HON. JOHN BELL,
Secretary of War.

From the Governor of Georgia to the Secretary of War.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, May 7, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to enclose to you the copy of a letter received by me to-day, from Captain E. D. Tracy, in command of one of the companies of mounted volunteers from Georgia, in the service of the United States. You will see the just cause that these men, who have abandoned their usual occupation, by which their families were sustained, for the defence of their country, have to complain of the Government for the unreasonable delay of their payment.

If the Government cannot conveniently pay from existing appropriations for the entire service, it certainly can pay for such a portion of it as will enable the soldier to provide some comforts for his destitute family.

The expression in the letter of Captain Tracy, that the four companies of volunteers "are anxiously waiting the arrival of an officer to muster them out of the service," grew out of a communication made by myself to one of the captains in command, an extract from which I enclose. I have corrected the impression this letter was likely to make, and I have no doubt these companies are willing to continue in the service as long as the frontier shall require protection; and, as they are better acquainted with the country than new recruits can possibly be, I hope they will be retained.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

HON. JOHN BELL.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald, of May 7.]

Copy of a letter from Captain E. D. Tracy, of Georgia volunteers.

TRADER'S HILL, *April 26, 1841.*

SIR: Two companies U. S. dragoons arrived on the 21st, and have taken post, the one at Moniac, the other here. The four companies of volunteers are anxiously waiting the arrival of an officer to muster them out of service. It is currently reported and believed, that no paymaster will be here to pay off the troops, until a certain investigating committee shall have carried us through their ordeal—some three or six months hence. If

so, our section of the country must suffer severely from the delay. My company have been led to believe they would be continued in service during the war; they have forsaken their little plantations, and allowed the season for planting to pass, under that impression; all have expended the ready money they had, and many have contracted debts depending on their pay. They are now to be coolly turned off; the protection of their homes confided to strangers, with whom they do not hold one feeling in common, and their pay delayed till a bankrupt Treasury can be resuscitated, or the blunders of some unknown officers accounted for. Of all this we complain; after eight months' faithful service, we claim a better reward than to be turned over to hungry creditors, without a penny.

That your excellency may not be unapprized of our situation, the foregoing is respectfully submitted.

In conclusion, I have the honor to be, respectfully, your obedient servant,
E. D. TRACY,

Captain commanding company Georgia volunteers.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract from a letter addressed to Captain Aaron Jernigan.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, March 29, 1841.

SIR: Yours of the 27th ultimo, and postmarked the 9th instant, has been received. I thank you for the further tender of your service after the expiration of the present term. I fear, however, from a notice I see in the National Intelligencer of the 24th instant, that orders have already issued for the discharge of your company, as well as the other companies of Georgia militia under General Read's command.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *May 15, 1841.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant, and its enclosures, complaining of the delay of payment experienced by the volunteers from Georgia, in the service of the United States; and regret to inform you, in reply, that there is no appropriation, at the disposal of this Department, applicable to that object.

The regular troops in Florida are deemed sufficient for the protection of the frontiers, and, as the strictest economy is necessary, it is not deemed proper to retain any portion of the militia in pay, when their services can be dispensed with. Although every disposition is felt to oblige the people of Georgia, yet this Department would deem itself wanting in its duty to the public, were it to maintain an irregular force in the field, when not absolutely required.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN BELL.

To the GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, (GA.,)

Milledgeville, May 17, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant, enclosing one from the Paymaster General, stating the reasons why the militia called out for the protection of Ware and Camden counties have not been paid. I had hoped that these companies would have been paid from the appropriation of the last session, of more than one million of dollars, for preventing and suppressing Indian hostilities in Florida, especially for their services rendered in 1840, as arrearages for that year seem to be specified as one of the objects of the appropriation. I cannot permit myself to believe that Congress will not at an early day make a suitable appropriation for their payment. You will remember that there are *four* companies.

I will call your attention to the copy of a letter received yesterday from Captain Jernigan, an officer of great merit, commanding one of these companies. The difficulty of which he complains must have arisen from a misapprehension of your orders by the commanding general in Florida, and I have so stated to him. He is the commander of one of the four companies which were under the command of General Nelson, referred to in the letter of your predecessor to me of the 30th October, and attached to the command of General Read. It was not your intention, you stated in a former letter, to dispense with the services of these companies, and it was my expectation they would, as heretofore, draw their rations. If they are to be discharged, however, I must ask to have them mustered out in the usual manner, with instructions for their muster roll to be so made out as to include their entire service. I cannot comprehend the reason that the quartermaster should have withheld the rations, unless those under whose authority he acts have misconstrued your orders. Captain Jernigan, you will perceive from the accompanying extract of a letter from Captain Clark, has not been idle; he has been in the discharge of duty, and, when opportunity presented, he has acted with the energy and courage which became a soldier. I have understood from rumor that the quartermaster withheld the rations on the ground that he understood that there were but three companies of Georgia militia in the service, and that Captain Jernigan was acting without authority. If so, he has acted under an erroneous impression, and I hope you will correct him in this particular. I am informed by Colonel Hansell, of this place, a gentleman of unquestionable veracity, that in a conversation with Major Muhlenberg, a few days since, he understood him to say that he had estimated but for three companies of mounted men from this State. If so, one has been improperly omitted, and I now call your attention to this matter, in time for you to have it corrected in your estimates to be submitted to Congress.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

HON. JOHN BELL.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter from Captain Henry E. W. Clark to his Excellency Charles J. McDonald, Governor of Georgia, dated January 27, 1841.

I suppose ere this time your excellency has heard of the killing of two and wounding a third of the enemy by Captain Jernigan, when on a scout with five of his men, two weeks since, in the neighborhood of the "Okefenokee," and for which he deserves much credit. He pursued them six miles in a swamp called the "Impassable Bay," probably one of the most thick and boggy in any part of our country, with but six men, the other six remaining as a guard to his horses, being the whole number he had with him on the scout. As I have been informed, he obtained two very fine rifles, almost new; a very splendid silver mounted "Bowie knife," supposed to have belonged to some officer who was killed by them; several pounds of balls, and two horns of the finest rifle powder, containing two pounds each, and lastly, not least, their *scalps*, being by far the best prize, I think.

It is supposed that they were spies sent in from the nation, to make discoveries and find out what disposition had been made of the troops around the swamp, and then to sacrifice some helpless and innocent family previous to their return; but Captain J. fell in with them just in season to prevent them from rejoicing again over the bloody scalps of some slaughtered victim.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter from Captain Jernigan.

CENTRE VILLAGE, May 7, 1841.

DEAR SIR: I addressed a line to you a short time since, informing you of the arrival of two companies of United States dragoons in the neighborhood of Okefenokee. I regret that I am under the necessity of again troubling you so soon. My company is still in service under our original muster, no officer appearing to remuster or discharge us. Now, the matter to which I would specially call your attention is, that the quartermaster assigned us at Trader's Hill absolutely refuses to furnish us with either subsistence or forage rations. Thus we are thrown on our own resources in an uncertainty, not knowing when we are to be mustered out of the service, or what is intended to be done with us. We have remained at our post, and obeyed with alacrity every order that has been given us, and we are still willing and ready to do so, be the sacrifices what they may individually. But we complain, and we think justly too, not of the service, for I am proud to say that I am fully persuaded every individual composing my command is anxious for an opportunity to distinguish himself in his country's service; but we think, as soldiers, it is hard to be starved off the field in a land of plenty, as though we were unworthy of the common right of soldiers. If our services are unnecessary, let us be honorably discharged, and we will go to our homes without a murmur, although, as is apparent to every one, the season for planting has passed. We are told that the commanding officer has ordered all the volunteers in the Florida service

to be discharged, and this is the reason assigned for stopping our rations. Now, I would respectfully ask, is this right, is it just? I, together with the other captains near the Okefenokee, have General Read's order to remain in service and in the position we were then in, (at the end of the first three months,) and our requisitions for forage and rations, and our pay, would go on the same as if re-mustered, until a suitable officer could be sent to muster us. Now, in view of all this, I have concluded to keep my company in the field, and keep up my stations until I can hear from your excellency, or am mustered out by the proper officer."

To his Excellency CHARLES J. McDONALD.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, May 19, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to enclose to you the copy of a letter this day received by me, from Captain Sweat, in command of one of the companies of Georgia mounted militia lately under the command of General Read, of Florida. I shall order Captain Sweat, as I have Captain Jernigan, to remain in the service until I am assured by you that effectual protection for the citizens of Georgia has been provided by the General Government; and had not the other captains discharged their companies, I should have given similar orders to them.

In your letter of the 5th ultimo, you state that "my letter of the 25th ultimo will have advised you that the Georgia militia were not included in the order for the discharge of General Read's command of Florida militia, and that instructions were given to the proper officer in Florida to provide any additional protection necessary to the section of Georgia exposed to the Indians from below."

I must now demand of you that the officer who has violated your orders be arrested and punished. He has assumed a responsibility that cannot be tolerated. These men, after a faithful and honorable service, are entitled to be mustered, *not starved* out of the service, and that in defiance of your orders. I must ask your immediate attention to this matter.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

FORT FLOYD, (GEORGIA,) May 8, 1841.

DEAR SIR: Since my last note to you, I must inform you that our rations have been stopped by order of the Quartermaster General. The quartermaster at Trader's Hill rationed our companies to the end of last month. Captains Tracy and Clark marched their companies before the quartermaster at Trader's Hill, and discharged them. I still keep up my company, and shall do so, on my own responsibility, until the mustering officer shall arrive, or I hear from your excellency on the subject. I am left in such a situation I know not what to do. I wish to hear from your excellency as soon as possible, and by so doing you will much oblige,

Sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES A. SWEAT,

Captain commanding Georgia Volunteers.

To his EXCELLENCY.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *June 5, 1841.*

SIR: This Department has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your excellency's letters of the 17th and 19th ultimo, enclosing letters from Captains Jernigan, Clark, and Sweat.

In your letter of the 17th you call the attention of this Department to the copy of a letter from Captain Jernigan, commanding a company of Georgia volunteers, dated at Centre Village, May 7, 1841, in which he complains that the officer of the subsistence department on duty there had declined to furnish the usual rations to his command, and expresses the belief that there must be some mistake in the matter, as he, with other captains, was ordered by Brigadier General Read, at the end of their first tour of three months, to continue in service and position until a mustering officer should arrive. Upon this letter you remark, that I had stated, in a former letter, that it was not my intention to dispense with the services of these companies, and that you had expected them to draw their rations, as heretofore; and you seem, also, to be impressed with the belief that there must be some misunderstanding of my orders.

In communicating orders to officers in the field, where so many persons are concerned, and when the mails are so irregular as in Florida, it is not wonderful that misunderstandings should occur; and I have been at so much pains to ascertain all the facts in this case as to cause some delay in answering your two last letters. The facts, so far as this Department is informed, appear to be these:

Four companies of Georgia volunteers were mustered into service for three months, November 4, 1840;

Expiration of service, February 4, 1841.

Ordered to be re-mustered for six weeks by this Department;

Expiration of second term, March 18, 1841.

Ordered (it is supposed by Brigadier General Read) to continue in service until the completion of second tour of three months;

Expiration of second tour, May 4, 1841.

On the 11th of March last, orders were issued from this Department to the commanding general in Florida, to cause the militia serving "in Florida" to be mustered out of service, as soon as their places could be supplied by a different disposition of the regular forces; and he was also ordered to provide a sufficient force to relieve the four companies of Georgia militia, on the expiration of their term of service. This course appeared to be imperative on this Department, as alike respectful to Congress, (which body declined to provide any means of paying the militia,) and as due to the militia themselves, who should not be kept in service without pay, except in cases of emergency, which were fully provided for, as you were informed by my letter of the 25th March last.

Under these instructions, on the 10th of April, Brigadier General Armistead ordered the four companies of Georgia volunteers to be relieved by two companies of dragoons, one of which arrived at Trader's Hill on the 22d of April, and the other at Fort Moniac on the 25th April. Major Churchill, the mustering officer, reports, on the 26th April, that his assistant, Lieutenant Churchill, would proceed next day to discharge the Georgia militia on the Okefenokee. It is supposed here that it would require him about four days to make the journey, leaving him three days before the expiration of the term of service of the militia to prepare them to be mustered out. No further reports have been received from this of-

ficer, and it is to be presumed that some unavoidable accident has detained him from the theatre of his duty.

Captain Jernigan on the 7th, and Captain Sweat on the 8th of May, report to you that they have ceased to be furnished with rations, of which they complain; and the latter informs you that he will continue in service with his company until regularly mustered out, although two of the captains had "marched their companies before the quartermaster at Trader's Hill, and discharged them." You inform me, in your letter of the 19th May, that you have given orders to the two companies not discharged to remain in service until you are assured by me "that effectual protection for the citizens of Georgia has been provided by the General Government." You also demand that the officer who had declined to furnish rations and forage to these companies "be arrested and punished," as "he has assumed a responsibility that cannot be tolerated."

No orders have been given, by any competent authority, to continue these companies in service beyond the fourth of May last, when their terms of service expired; and it is to be regretted that no regular officer was then authorized to muster them out of service; but that fact neither authorized them to remain nor your excellency to continue them *in the service of the United States*, after the expiration of the term for which they had been mustered. It appears, therefore, that there has not been any assumption or responsibility in these proceedings on the part of the United States officer, who has only performed his imperative duty. Doubtless, (as soon as the arrival of the relieving force was known,) all the companies were informed of the necessity of their being discharged on the 4th of May; and it appears that two of the captains did discharge their companies accordingly whilst the other two, by your sanction, still continue in the field. It is due to your excellency that I should distinctly inform you that the authority cannot be recognised, either in the captains of volunteer companies or in the Governor of a State, to continue militia in the service of the United States for any longer period than the Government shall need them. These companies cannot, therefore, be recognised as any part of the military force of the United States since the fourth of May last.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

JOHN BELL.

To the GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, (GEORGIA,)

Milledgeville, June 10, 1841.

SIR: I wrote you on the 19th ultimo, transmitting a copy of a letter from Captain Sweat, of the 8th of May, informing me that the rations for his company had been stopped, by order of the Quartermaster General, and demanding of you the arrest and punishment of the officer who had violated your orders, as mentioned in your letter to me of the 5th of April. Although it has been twenty-two days since this letter was written, I have received no reply. I, however, acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 15th ultimo, in which you express the opinion that the regular troops in Florida are sufficient for the protection of the frontiers, and remark that, "as the strictest economy is necessary, it is not deemed proper to retain any portion of the militia in pay, when their services can be dispensed with.

Although every disposition is felt to oblige the people of Georgia, yet this Department would deem itself wanting in its duty to the public, were it to maintain an irregular force in the field, when not absolutely required."

I must respectfully ask you if you intend me to infer from this letter that orders to stop the rations of these four companies emanated from the War Department, forcing them unceremoniously from the service, without a muster and an honorable discharge, thus rendering it next to impossible, under the innumerable difficulties and embarrassments thrown around accounts for military service, for them to be paid? If so, I must ask you to review and countermand them, and order them to be regularly mustered out, and, for causes hereafter mentioned, mustered in again. That they are legally in service, I beg leave to refer you—

1st. To the letter of Mr. Poinsett of 30th of October last, in which he states that orders had been given to muster four companies of mounted men into the service of the United States, which had been retained by General Nelson, and informing me that these companies would be placed under the command of Brigadier General Leigh Read, of Florida.

2d. To the letter of Mr. Poinsett of the 18th February last, in which he states that orders had been given for the re-mustering of the troops in the Okefenokee district for the further term of six weeks.

3d. To the accompanying extract of a letter from Captain Jernigan, of the 7th ultimo, stating that the four Georgia companies were ordered by General Read to remain in service and position they were then in, (at the end of the first three months,) and their requisitions for forage, and rations, and pay, would go on the same as if re-mustered, &c.

4th. To your letter of the 26th March, in which you say: "Instructions have, however, been given to the proper officer in Florida to provide such additional protection as may be necessary for the section referred to, by means of the regular troops, or, if advisable, by putting the four companies of Georgia militia, or a portion of them, in better positions for this purpose."

5th. To your letter of the 5th April, in which you state that "my letter of the 25th ultimo (26th) will have advised you that the Georgia militia were not included in the order for the discharge of General Read's command of Florida militia," &c.

Up to the 5th April these companies were in the service of the United States, and were, by your order, continued in the service after that time. They were deemed by you, as well as myself, necessary to the protection of the people of Georgia, and I know of the occurrence of no circumstance which renders their service unnecessary. The Indians are still committing their outrages in the neighborhood of the Georgia line, destroying the lives of the people and plundering their plantations.

I refer you to the accompanying extract of a letter from Captain Jernigan, which will prove that, but for the necessity imposed upon him by recent regulations to provide forage and subsistence for his own company, this meritorious and energetic officer would, in all probability, have captured the gang of marauding Indians who lately committed murders almost under the eye of the regular troops. The people of Georgia do not ask to be "obliged" by the General Government for the protection of their lives and property. They are entitled to it, and they do not think that the Government should pause to estimate the cost, in dollars and cents, of effectual protection. The late development in the neighborhood of the Okefenokee

show the hostile purposes of the Indians; and unless a better fortune attends the efforts for their pacification that are now being made in Florida than I hope for, the inhabitants of the country in the neighborhood of that immense swamp will atone with their lives the credulity of the authorities of the General Government. I must therefore renew my request that these companies be mustered and retained in the service until every Indian shall be shipped to the West. The cost can be but little, the probable benefit immense.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Hon. JOHN BELL,
Secretary of War.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter from Captain Jernigan, of May 7, to Governor McDonald.

I, together with the other captains near the Okefenokee, have General Read's order to remain in service and position we were then in, (at the end of first three months,) and our requisitions for forage and rations, and our pay, would go on the same as if re-mustered, until a suitable officer could be sent to muster us.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter, dated May 21st, from Captain Jernigan to Governor McDonald.

I have just returned from a persevering but unsuccessful chase after a marauding party of Seminole Indians, who have again visited our frontier, and hasten to give you the particulars.

On Wednesday of last week they killed a young man by the name of Green, on the south prong of St. Mary's river. Early on the morning of Friday they attacked the dwelling of Mr. William Barber, and shot Mr. Barber down in his yard; Mrs. Barber and the balance of the family made their escape; after which, the Indians killed two fierce dogs, who disputed their taking possession of the house. They also killed a horse in the lot near the dwelling, and, robbing and taking off every thing of value, they began their retreat south. This place lies about 20 miles southeast of my residence, and 25 from Moniac, and about 7 miles from the Georgia line. A detachment from the United States dragoons at Moniac promptly repaired to the scene of their depredations, and took their trail early on the next morning, which they followed for about seven miles, and then retired, giving up the pursuit as hopeless.

A detachment of United States troops from Trader's Hill also were at the residence of Mr. Barber the next day, but not in time to join the other detachment, and went no further. The intelligence reached me on Friday;

but owing to my company being mostly at their homes on furlough, for want of provisions, it was Saturday afternoon before I could raise sufficient force to give pursuit. Sunday morning I took the trail where the dragoons left it, with fourteen men; we pursued the trail for about 70 miles down into the interior of Florida, when, from my small force and the want of necessary supplies, (having to supply ourselves,) and the want of a guide who knew the country further, I thought it prudent to abandon the chase. Had my force been sufficient to authorize further pursuit, I feel very certain that I could and would have overtaken them. If we had had a fair start after them, we should most assuredly have overtaken them.

WAR DEPARTMENT,

June 18, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of the 10th instant, enclosing extracts from two letters of Captain Jernigan.

My communication of the 5th instant will have explained the delay in answering your letter of the 19th ultimo, and will have placed you in possession of the views of the Department. It may be proper to add, that the Department is not aware of any authority for the *last* six weeks service of the four companies; but, as they appear to have been actually in service, an estimate for their pay has been presented to Congress.

The Department cannot sanction their continuance in service, after the expiration of their second term of three months.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN BELL.

To the GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA.

WAR DEPARTMENT,

June 21, 1841.

SIR: I hasten to inform you that the returns of the mustering officer have just been received at this Department, reporting that the four companies of Georgia militia were discharged from the service of the United States on the following dates, viz: One company on the 28th of May, one on the 29th of May, one on the 31st of May, and one on the 1st June, 1841; up to which periods, respectively, they will be paid.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN BELL.

To the GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, (GA.,)

Milledgeville, June 11, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to enclose you the copy of a letter from Captain E. D. Tracy, commanding one of the companies of Georgia volunteers, from which you will perceive there is foundation for believing that the In-

dians intend to make another hostile demonstration within the limits of Georgia.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

HON. JOHN BELL,

Secretary of War.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

TRADER'S HILL, *May 18, 1841.*

SIR : Yours of the 7th instant was received to-day, with the correspondence between your excellency and the Secretary of War. It is highly satisfactory, and for your exertions in our behalf, I, for myself and company, tender you our hearty thanks.

I hasten to explain a paragraph in my last letter, to which you have alluded. I did not mean that the companies wished to leave the service. Their anxiety proceeded from the very reverse. They are anxious to remain so long as the war may last. As for the investigating committee of whom I spoke, I can only say, as before, that it is generally believed, because the reports are concurrent and uncontradicted, although unofficial. It is said to consist of Colonel Hunt, Major Mapes, and Captain Crosman, United States army, and to have convened at Tallahassee, for the purpose of investigating the claims of General Read's command before payment; and it is assigned as the reason why the Florida militia recently mustered out were not paid off. Since the arrival of the United States troops, the quartermaster has refused to make any further issues to us of forage or subsistence. Not liking to leave the service by starvation, I have dispersed my company in such a manner as to allow them to furnish themselves, and at the same time keep out my scouts. On Wednesday last, the Indians killed two men within 8 or 10 miles of Fort Moniac. Their names are Wm. Barber and David Green. The depredation was in Florida, on the south prong of the St. Mary's.

I have just returned from a tedious scout on the great bend of the St. Mary's, where I anticipate more mischief soon. I do not believe the Indians have crossed the river yet, but they have long been skulking about the Ocean pond and swamps on the opposite side, and whenever the volunteers are withdrawn we shall hear of trouble. I shall return to the upper part of the country to-morrow, if I can raise any provisions to march with; men furnishing themselves from their homes is a slow business.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

E. D. TRACY,

Captain Georgia Volunteers.

His Excellency CHARLES J. McDONALD,

Governor of Georgia, Milledgeville.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, June 14, 1841.

SIR : I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, exculpatory of the War Department, and the officers subject to

its control, for the errors committed in relation to the Georgia militia in the service of the United States, and regret that the explanation given is very far from being satisfactory.

As a reason wherefore subsistence was arbitrarily and abruptly withheld from these troops, you *now* refer me to the orders of the 11th March last, which you say "were issued to the commanding general in Florida, to cause the militia serving in Florida to be mustered out of service as soon as their places could be supplied by a different disposition of the regular forces; and he was also ordered to provide a sufficient force to relieve the four companies of Georgia militia on the expiration of their term of service." You will remember, that under the orders of General Read, communicated in the letter of Captain Jernigan, and to which you allude, these four companies were ordered to remain in the service, not for a further term of three months, as you intimate, but for an indefinite period, and that they had no notice emanating from your Department, nor other competent authority, that they were to be discharged. The first intimation I had, that orders had been issued on this subject, was a notice in the National Intelligencer, which I supposed to be by authority, that the militia under General Read were to be discharged. I immediately addressed you a note, asking if the exposed part of Georgia was to be left unprotected by the General Government; in reply to which, you informed me that *the Georgia militia were not included in the order for the discharge of General Read's command of Florida militia*. By your letter of the 26th March, I was informed that the regular troops to be stationed in the neighborhood of the Georgia companies were not to relieve them on the expiration of their term of service, but intended as an *additional protection* to the country. It was not extraordinary, therefore, that, relying on the correctness of your communications to me, I should have supposed that some officer in Florida had violated your orders, and assumed a responsibility, in withholding [rations] from troops which you had declared were to be retained in service, that would neither be sanctioned nor tolerated by you. Nor is it wonderful that, acting under these impressions, I should have ordered the volunteer companies not yet discharged to remain in the service, confiding in the War Department, as soon as intelligence should reach it, to reprove its officers, and order subsistence for them. You may then imagine my surprise when I found that the proceedings of the quartermaster general in Florida not only meets your *approbation*, but is *justified* by you. To withhold from them, without notice, the necessaries of life, is a new mode of discharging troops from the public service, unknown heretofore in military usage, and not warranted by any existing regulation. I am confident you could not have taken the view of the case presented by you, had you been aware that militia employed in the service of the United States are subject to the same rules and articles of war as the troops of the United States; and that by these articles soldiers shall not be dismissed the service without a discharge in writing; and that by universal usage, if not by positive regulation, when the term expires for which militia are called into the service of the United States, unless otherwise ordered, they must await the arrival of the mustering officer to discharge them.

I forward to you the copy of a letter received from Brigadier General Hilliard, in which the condition of the country and the imminent peril to which the citizens of that section of the State are exposed are truly portrayed. To pretend to guard, with two companies of dragoons, as great an

extent of territory as that opened to the incursions of the Indians, and that, too, by *stationing* them at military posts, is little better than turning the people over to the tender mercies of the savage. The military force intended to guard this country, and the passes to the immense swamps which furnish effectual hiding places to the Indians, should be kept constantly on the alert, and be required to scour the whole exposed line every few days. The Indians will, otherwise, pass within very few miles of the military stations, do their work of plunder and death, and retreat with impunity, as former experience has proven that pursuit in such cases is wholly unavailing.

You will perceive from General Hilliard's letter that trails have been discovered leading to the Okefenokee swamp, and he truly remarks "that this is the season of the year that the enemy make their attacks upon our people."

I suppose ere this time the four Georgia companies have been discharged by a regular muster. I must, therefore, renew my request that they be called again immediately into the service; the safety of the people of Georgia requires it. These companies have the experience which fits them for duty; they are acquainted with the country and the hiding places of the Indians; their families and friends are exposed, in whose protection they have a deep and abiding interest; and they have a pride to serve their country. You will oblige me by informing me, on the receipt of this, if the request will be complied with, and effectual protection given to a people hourly exposed to rapine and death.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

HON. JOHN BELL.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

WARESBOROUGH, June 5, 1841.

DEAR SIR: The four companies of Georgia volunteers left in the service, for our protection, have been discharged at the time when their services are most needed. These companies should have been left in the service, as they were expected by the citizens. We did have every hope that we should have every necessary protection from the Government, that our lives and property might be secured; but we are again left to our unfortunate condition. We have suffered these outrages on our families and property long enough. How much longer have we to live in this condition, or must we finally abandon the country? This is the season of the year when the enemy make their attacks on our people, and at the time when we are unprepared to receive them. I have no doubt, from the last information, this will again be the case. They are well acquainted with the condition of this country, and of the troops being discharged, and of the posts being abandoned. They have lately murdered two men near the Georgia line; and trails of them have been seen leading for the Okefenokee swamp.

Will your excellency please inform me if there is any expectation of these companies being again re-mustered, or what is the prospect for our protection.

Captain Sweat will hold himself and company in readiness, as I presume

the other companies will, to be ready for any action that may be required of them. Should a sudden invasion take place, I shall be compelled to order out a sufficient force to repel it, until such time as the United States send a sufficient force to relieve us.

I have the honor to be your excellency's obedient servant,
 THOMAS HILLIARD.

His Excellency CHARLES J. McDONALD.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *June 24, 1841.*

SIR: Your excellency's two letters of the 11th and 14th instant have been received. My letter to you of the 21st instant will have informed you of the dates to which the four companies of Georgia volunteers, lately in service, will be paid. It appears that one of these companies terminated its second tour of three months on the 4th May; and in a report from the Adjutant General's office it was stated that the time of all the companies then expired; but it now appears that they were mustered into service at different dates; and, as the mustering officer failed to reach the ground in due time, and has thought proper to muster them as if continued in the service up to the time of his arrival, to avoid difficulty on that point, the Department has sanctioned his proceedings, and directed the payments to be made accordingly.

The information forwarded through you, of the probable return of hostile Indians to the Okefenokee swamp, has caused both surprise and regret; nevertheless, as it cannot be expected that the Government can intercept every skulking Indian, or defend every inhabitant of the frontier from predatory attacks, there does not appear in the facts stated by General Hilliard and Captain Tracy sufficient ground for calling out an additional force at present; and this view of the case is much strengthened by the fact of the renewal of hostilities on our part along the northern portion of Florida, thus fully engaging the marauding parties at home.

At this distance, however, from the scene of action, it is not competent to the Department to determine exactly what amount of force is necessary, or how it should be disposed; and therefore the officer commanding the army of Florida has been fully instructed to afford ample protection to the exposed inhabitants. He is directed, if in his opinion it be necessary, to call to his aid an additional regiment of the neighboring militia. Having thus made this officer responsible for the protection of the frontiers, and given him a sufficient force to accomplish it, the Department is unable to perceive any necessity for a direct call, on its part, for the services of the Georgia companies.

The conduct of the commissary charged with provisioning the Georgia volunteers will be further inquired into, and, if it be found that he has failed in the discharge of his duties, such proceedings will be instituted as the good of the service may require.

Respectfully, &c.

JOHN BELL.

To the GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, (GEORGIA,)

Milledgeville, July 1, 1841.

SIR: I had the honor yesterday to receive your letter of the 24th ultimo, in reply to mine of the 11th and 14th, by which I am pleased to learn that the four companies of Georgia militia have been so mustered as to prevent further difficulty in regard to their payment.

I regret, however, that you are not yet satisfied of the necessity of adopting immediate measures for the protection of the entire district of country within the limits of Georgia subject to Indian depredations. Camden and Ware counties have been invaded in the months of July or August for the last four years; and the very cause which seems to allay your apprehensions of danger to the people of Georgia increases my fears for their safety. The renewal of hostilities by the United States' forces in Florida is one ground upon which I base the opinion that the Indians will make their appearance in Georgia. They have no "local habitation." If they should be attacked in their camp, they do not stop to defend it. They disperse, and in small parties go in different directions, and do all the mischief they can in unprotected settlements. It is understood that their ammunition is becoming scarce, and they will no doubt attack the settlements in Georgia, with the hope of obtaining a supply. This has been their uniform course heretofore, and I think it due to the citizens of the State, when we have the infallible experience of the past to act upon, not to wait until the work of death is done, before an adequate force is called to the field. I send you extracts of letters written in former years, to show to you that my complaints are not capricious. I will here remark, that the correspondence of this Department proves how difficult it has been to impress officers in command of the United States forces with the sense of the danger to which the Georgians were exposed, until the massacre and plunder of the people afforded testimony that could not be doubted. I know the impossibility of defending every inhabitant of the frontier from the predatory attacks of the Indians; but when a particular section of country has been the uniform theatre of their depredations for four successive years, it seems to be due to those that inhabit it that all reasonable efforts should be made for their protection. The preservation of the life of a solitary human being will be ample compensation for all the cost of guarding the exposed frontier.

The authority given by you to the officer commanding the army in Florida to call to his aid such force as he may deem necessary for the protection of the exposed inhabitants will, I hope, inspire the people with confidence that they will be protected, and induce that officer to so dispose his forces as to justify it; but I should have greatly preferred that positive orders had been issued for the purpose, as the hostile operations of the Indians in former years leave no doubt that they will visit this part of the country within a very few weeks. I shall issue a provisional order to Captains Jernigan and Sweat to meet and repel any threatened invasion, should the United States troops or militia called out by the Government not be at hand to accomplish it.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
CHARLES J. McDONALD.

HON. JOHN BELL, *Secretary of War.*

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter dated July 25, 1838, from Colonel Thomas Hilliard to Governor Gilmer.

SIR: Last Sunday morning, 22d instant, between daybreak and sunrise, the house of Maxey M. Miles, resident about seven miles from this place, was attacked by a party of Indians, supposed to be about fifty in number, and barbarously murdered Miles, his wife, and six children, together with one of his neighbor's children, who happened to be there at the time. Four only, out of thirteen, made their escape, to tell the sad news. They plundered and burned the house to the ground.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter from Captain Richard T. Floyd, commanding chasseurs of horse, dated August 19, 1838.

Upon my return in camp on the night of the 16th, I received an express from Major Dearborn, U. S. A. The Indians had killed one and wounded two United States dragoons in Ware county, near the Camden line, and thirteen miles from Centreville. These dragoons formed part of an escort to a wagon train returning empty to Trader's Hill. Nearly all the mules attached to the wagons were killed in the harness.

I questioned the wounded men, and they informed me that the number of Indians was fifty or sixty. There are no United States troops stationed in Camden, and but one company of dragoons in Ware.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

ST. MARY'S, August 22, 1838.

SIR: By this mail your excellency will receive a letter from Major Dearborn. I am happy to inform you the major, since the attack and capture of the baggage wagons by the Indians, has received into service the battalion under my command, of mounted men.

Your excellency will perceive, from his letter, those companies were absolutely necessary.

Gen. Taylor has never been in our country, nor does he know any thing about our affairs; his opinion, like that of General Clinch, was founded upon idle report, and not from any knowledge of the ground I had to act on. The major, however, wishes the militia called for.

I am, sir, in great haste, yours, very respectfully,

E. HOPKINS,

Maj. com'g Volunteers in the U. S. service.

To his Excellency the GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA.

P. S. The wagons were taken by the Indians; one man killed and two wounded.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter from Major Bowen to Governor McDonald, dated November 8, 1839.

I have just returned from a scout on the frontier part of this county. I found two Indian encampments in the Suwanoochee swamp. From the signs, their number must have been forty, or the rise, that occupied the camps. The whole number of Indians in this county, according to the best information, must at least be sixty or seventy.

DEPARTMENT OF WAR,

Washington, July 10, 1841.

SIR: Your letter of the 1st, acknowledging recent communications from this Department, and suggesting the propriety of immediate measures for the protection of Camden and Ware counties, has, with its enclosed papers, been received.

It is gratifying to find that the militia of your frontier are so ready and able to protect the settlements in case of actual danger; but the Department indulges the hope that it will not be necessary to make any requisition upon their gallantry and zeal during the present year. To avoid all apprehension on the subject, Colonel Worth will be instructed to direct his particular attention to the Okefenokee swamp, and to place ample protection in that quarter.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN BELL.

To the GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, July 14, 1841.

SIR: In the latter part of the month of August last the Indians invaded the territory of Georgia, and Generals Hilliard and Floyd promptly called out a military force for their expulsion and the protection of the country. Their conduct was approved by me. As soon as intelligence of the incursion of the Indians reached this Department, I despatched orders to General Hilliard to protect the country, a copy of which I enclose. The men originally called out, as well as those retained in the service under this order, are yet unpaid, as I am informed by a letter of the 3d instant, from General Hilliard, an extract from which also accompanies this. On the 29th August I despatched General Nelson to the scene of these depredations, with orders to raise a sufficient number of men to afford ample protection to the country, and drive out the enemy. He was delayed several days on the road by sickness, and until his arrival the forces ordered out by Generals Hilliard and Floyd were kept in the field. That these measures were approved by the War Department, I refer you to the letters of Mr. Poinsett, of the 8th of September last, of which you doubtless have a copy in your Department. I send an extract. I was informed by the Secretary

of War, in his letter of the 30th October, that orders were given to muster into the service of the United States the four companies retained by General Nelson. I transmit a copy of this letter. The companies ordered out by Generals Floyd and Hilliard were not so mustered as to cover this service. I must therefore ask you that provision may be made as speedily as possible for their payment, as well as for the payment of the accounts for forage and subsistence. As they were never mustered, there may be some difficulty in making out their pay roll; but this could soon be accomplished, under an officer of the United States army. It appears that companies under the command of Captains Jones and Knight served a short time. Captains Henderson and North's companies were retained by General Nelson as long as he remained in command, and Captain Sweat's company was subsequently mustered into the service, and was one of the four companies recently discharged, but has never been paid for his service from August to November. Captain Tracy was ordered into the service by General Floyd on the 20th of August last, who served until recently discharged, but, like Captain Sweat, has never been paid. The two companies of Captains Clark and Jernigan were also called into service by General Nelson, and have never been paid. I must ask you, therefore, to cause arrangements to be made for their payment as early as practicable.

I have the honor to be, respectfully, your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Hon. JOHN BELL.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter from General Thomas Hilliard to Governor McDonald, dated 3d July, 1841.

On receiving information that a considerable body of Indians, in the month of August last, had invaded the State of Georgia, and had made three attacks on the inhabitants of this county, I called to the field five companies. Only three of these companies were retained in the service for any length of time. Captains Jones and Knight's companies were, so soon as it was found a less number would be sufficient, discharged. Captains Sweat, Henderson, and North's companies were retained in the field until discharged by General Nelson. Captain Sweat's company was not discharged until it was discharged by the United States. The accounts for forage and subsistence of Captains Sweat and Henderson's companies are, I suppose, undergoing examination for payment, and perhaps Captain North's.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

HEADQUARTERS, *Macon, August 26, 1840.*

ORDERS.]

Having received information that the Seminole Indians have lately committed numerous and atrocious murders, and destroyed a large amount of property within the limits of Florida, immediately on the borders of Georgia, and the territories of Georgia being in imminent danger of invasion, it

is ordered that Brigadier General Hilliard forthwith detach from his brigade two companies, under the command of efficient officers, for thirty days' service, to protect the frontiers of Georgia, and pursue with energy the Indians, if their trails are discovered.

The companies will be ordered to drive the Indians from any swamp in which they may have taken refuge, and effectually relieve the inhabitants of that section of country from all causes of alarm. If the general should be satisfied, from well-ascertained facts, that a stronger force is necessary, he will order it out, but not retain it in service longer than the necessity exists. The brigadier general will order the commanding officers of said companies to ascertain promptly the extent of the Indian depredations, and have the same reported to the commander-in-chief forthwith.

If there should be no necessity for continuing the said two companies in service for thirty days, the general will disband them. If the safety of the country should require it, they will be kept in service for a longer time. Brigadier General Hilliard will take the necessary measures for supplying the companies with forage and subsistence, for which the allowance made by the laws of the United States will be paid.

By order of the commander-in-chief :

A. P. POWERS,
Aid-de-camp to the Commander-in-chief.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter from the Honorable Joel R. Poinsett to Governor McDonald, dated 8th September, 1840.

Congress at its last session made no new provision for suppressing Indian hostilities, and the militia called out on this occasion by your excellency cannot therefore be paid until Congress reassembles. No serious inconvenience, however, is apprehended from this omission, as an appropriation for that purpose may be obtained at the commencement of the next session. Orders will immediately be given to muster into the service the force which you have authorized General Nelson to raise, in order that, when an appropriation shall be obtained from Congress, they may be paid by the United States.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

WAR DEPARTMENT, *October 30, 1840.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your excellency's letter of the 21st instant, apprising the Department that General Nelson had retained in the service of the State of Georgia, four companies of mounted men, and asking that they should be mustered into that of the United States as such. Orders have been given to that effect, and likewise to pay for the supplies furnished those troops while employed by your excellency for the protection of the Georgia frontier. The four companies of mounted

men will be placed under the command of Brigadier General Leigh Read, of Florida.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. R. POINSETT.

To his Excellency CHARLES J. McDONALD,
Governor of Georgia, Milledgville, Georgia.

DEPARTMENT OF WAR,

Washington, August 30, 1841.

SIR: I regret that some unavoidable delay has taken place in replying to your excellency's communication of the 14th ultimo, calling the attention of this Department to the claims for pay of certain companies of Georgia militia, called out under authority from you last summer and autumn, and also for the supplies with which they were furnished. It appears that on the 29th of August last you informed this Department that you had authorized General Hilliard to call out two companies of militia for the defence of the section of country then invaded by a party of Indians from Florida; and on the next day you wrote that, in consequence of the receipt of further intelligence of the danger to which the inhabitants were exposed, you had ordered General Nelson there to take the command, and had invested him with authority to embody a force of five hundred men.

In answer to your first communication, under date of September 5th, the Secretary of War sanctioned the raising of the two companies, and informed you that they should be mustered into the service of the United States; and an order to this effect was given to Colonel Twiggs on the same day. And in answer to your second letter, under date of September 8th, the Secretary decided that you were justified in authorizing an increased force, and said that it also should be mustered into service. But in the order to Colonel Twiggs, of the same date, he was directed to muster in but five companies, in addition to the two previously authorized, making seven companies in all.

From your letter of the 14th ultimo it appears that, under the authority thus given by you to Generals Hilliard and Nelson, eight companies were called out, which were commanded respectively by Captains Jones, Knight, Henderson, North, Sweat, Tracy, Clark, and Jernigan. Neither your letters to the Secretary of War, nor his orders to Colonel Twiggs, indicated the kind of force to be raised and mustered; and, as the Indians had returned south when these orders reached that officer, he considered so large a mounted force entirely unnecessary, and did not, therefore, feel justified in ordering more than two companies of that description to be received. This determination on his part met the approbation of the Department, as appears by a letter to him from the Secretary of War of the 5th of October last; Colonel Twiggs was ordered to have the force mustered in the usual way for the legal term of three months, unless sooner discharged. But General Nelson, it appears from the copy of his report enclosed in your letter to the Secretary of War of the 22d of October last, declined having any part of the force mustered as foot, or for a longer period than thirty days, the time for which you had authorized it to be called out. The companies of Captains Jones, Knight, Henderson, and North, were con-

sequently discharged, as I learn from your letter of the 14th ultimo, without having been mustered into the service at all. Of this fact, and of the existence of the claims growing out of the service of these companies, I was not aware till the receipt of your letter, and no estimate was therefore presented to Congress for an appropriation for their payment, nor will it be in the power of the Department to present such an estimate until the time that those companies served shall have been ascertained, and their muster rolls verified. An officer of the army will immediately be directed to perform this duty; and it is stated by the Quartermaster General that Captain Babbitt has already been ordered to ascertain all the claims for supplies furnished them whilst actually in service. The companies of Captains Sweat, Tracy, Clark, and Jernigan, were not discharged with the others by General Nelson, when he relinquished the command. And on the receipt of your letter of the 22d of October, informing the Department that they had not been mustered into service, orders were given, as requested by you, that they should be mustered into service as mounted men from the time they were raised. But it would seem, from your letter of the 14th ultimo, that these orders were not strictly carried out; that these companies served for a period prior to, and not embraced in, the term for which they were mustered; and you request that they be now mustered for the period thus omitted, and that arrangements be made, as promptly as possible, for paying them therefor, as well as the claims for supplies furnished them during the same time, and after Captain Babbitt, shortly before their discharge, ceased to supply them. The same officers will be instructed also to ascertain how long these companies served prior to the time for which they were mustered, and to verify their muster rolls accordingly. The appropriation which has been asked for their payment will be sufficient for the whole term of their service; and if it be made, they will be paid accordingly, as soon as the muster rolls shall have been verified. The claims for supplies furnished these four companies will be paid with as little delay as possible.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN BELL.

His Excellency CHARLES J. McDONALD,
Governor of Georgia, Milledgeville, Georgia.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of the Secretary of War.]

PAYMASTER GENERAL'S OFFICE,

July 23, 1841.

SIR: Mr. Lea informs me that you wish to know whether the claims of the Georgia militia, mentioned in Governor McDonald's letter to you of the 14th instant, herewith returned, are entitled to pay; and if so, the amount required to pay them, and why they were not provided for at the last session of Congress?

In reply, I have the honor to state that four of the companies mentioned in the Governor's letter have been recognised as entitled to pay by being mustered into the service of the United States, and have been estimated for from the time they first took the field under the Governor's order, in August, 1840. The service of the other companies has never been recognised,

nor has any data been furnished to show their organization, nor how long they were in service, nor has the Pay department ever been instructed that they were to be paid. Perhaps the files of the War Department, the office of the Commander-in-chief, or the Adjutant General, can furnish information on the subject. If any has been communicated, it should be found in one of these offices.

The estimate for the four companies whose service has been sanctioned was submitted to the last Congress; why it was not appropriated I am unable to say. It is now before Congress, and as soon as an appropriation is made it will be applied to their payment.

As it is impossible, from the information that has been furnished, at least so far as it is known to me, to determine whether any other than the four companies of Georgia militia that have been estimated for are entitled to be paid for services stated to have been rendered in 1840, I would respectfully recommend that a suitable officer be ordered to call on Governor McDonald, and ascertain from him why the four additional companies (to wit: Capt. Jones's, Capt. Knight's, Capt. Henderson's, and Capt. North's, mentioned in his letter of the 14th inst.) have never before been specifically presented to the War Department as being entitled to pay from the United States; that he be furnished with copies of the correspondence between the War Department and the Governor of Georgia, to enable him to judge whether the service of these companies has in any way been sanctioned by the Secretary of War; and if it has, to muster them for payment; or, if their service has not been sanctioned, to report all the facts relating to it, and whether, in his opinion, it should now be recognised by the United States; and that he be also instructed to muster the four companies, whose services have been sanctioned, for the time they served under the order of the Governor of Georgia, before they were mustered into the service of the United States; and, as the company officers are not now in service, that he require their affidavits, instead of their certificates, as to the correctness of the muster rolls.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. TOWSON, P. M. G.

HON. JOHN BELL,
Secretary of War.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, October 13, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to enclose to you copies of letters from Captain Jernigan to me, in relation to the exposed situation of the Georgia frontier; the copy of a letter from Col. Worth, promising that a sufficient force should be provided for its protection; also, copies of letters to Capt. Jernigan, calling him into the service, with two companies of mounted men, and the copy of a letter addressed to Col. Worth, apprizing him of the fact.

It seems to be impossible to convince the authorities of the General Government of the necessity of keeping up a constant efficient force on this frontier, for the protection of the people. For four successive years have the Indians made the section of Georgia on the border of the Okefenokee swamp the theatre of their outrages; and, in the face of this fatal experience, the officers of Government seem incredulous of the representations of

the danger to which the people there are exposed. From the last letter of Capt. Jernigan, you will perceive that the Indians approached very lately within a short distance of the Georgia line, committed their depredations, and returned with impunity, unobserved by the United States forces. There should be a sufficient force kept constantly on the scout, or these marauding parties of Indians will never be vanquished, the whole frontier kept in a constant state of alarm, or the inhabitants be compelled to abandon their homes. It is idle to dream of a close of the Florida war within any short time. As long as there are ten warriors left, they may annoy the whole Florida and Georgia frontier.

I must ask you to have these companies mustered into the service of the United States. The safety of the people of Georgia requires it, and the insignificant cost of maintaining this small force should not be weighed, when the lives of our citizens are exposed to savage revenge.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

The Hon. SECRETARY OF WAR.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF FLORIDA,

Cedar Keys, July 24, 1841.

SIR: Being accidentally at this post, on my way to the Suwannee, I had the honor to receive your excellency's communication of the 15th instant; that of the 2d instant, referred to, has not reached me. Although measures taken in the last twenty days to throw forces in the direction to which you call attention are believed to meet every emergency which may arise, and give quiet and security to the Georgia frontier settler, I shall, nevertheless, forthwith give such instructions to the United States officer commanding in that quarter as shall make assurance doubly sure.

With thanks to your excellency in bringing this subject to my notice, I have the honor to be your very obedient servant,

W. J. WORTH,

Colonel commanding.

His Excellency Gov. McDONALD.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, September 14, 1841.

SIR: Yours of the 31st August has this moment been received, from which I am surprised to hear that the Georgia frontier is still in an unprotected condition, the forces stationed there by the commanding officer in Florida being inadequate to the purpose. From the strongest assurance of Colonel Worth, that ample protection should be given to this section of Georgia; I had hoped that before this a sufficient military force had been provided, to inspire the people with confidence, that they might remain at their homes without the slightest apprehension of danger.

You will, without delay, organize your company, and call on Captain Sweat to join you with his company, and adopt such immediate measures to prevent the depredation you apprehend from an incursion of the Indians. You will scour the whole exposed district; and I must confide in your judgment in regard to the necessity for the continuance of the force. You will have supplies furnished at the lowest possible cost.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Captain A. JERNIGAN.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, September 15, 1841.

SIR: I enclose you a communication addressed to Colonel Worth, which you will send to him by express. I am not able to say where he may be found. On the 3d of last month he was at Fort Brooke. The packet contains a request to furnish the two companies called into the service with forage and subsistence, with which, if he complies, you will be relieved from much trouble. It seems to be difficult to convince the officers of the army of the United States of the necessity of keeping up a strong force on the Georgia frontier. I must suppose, from the strong assurance of Colonel Worth to me, in his letter of the 24th of July, that this district should be amply protected, that he has been prevented by the sickness of his command, or some other cause, from carrying his intention into effect.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Captain AARON JERNIGAN.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, September 15, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to enclose to you the copy of a letter received yesterday from Captain Jernigan, by which I am informed of the state of alarm existing among the inhabitants of the section of Georgia which has been so long subject to the hostile incursions of Indians from Florida. A sense of insecurity on the part of the people, together with the late hostile demonstrations of the Indians in Florida, on their usual route to Georgia, is well calculated to give rise to the state of things described in Captain Jernigan's letter. I presume that the unprecedented sickness that has been prevailing in Florida has prevented you from sending as great a force for the protection of this district of country as you intended when you addressed me your letter of the 24th of July. But, be the cause what it may, I cannot consent to permit the people of this State to be exposed to the depredations of the Indians, and have ordered out two companies of mounted men for their protection. I must ask you to supply them with the neces-

sary forage and subsistence as long as it is necessary to retain them in the service.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Colonel W. J. WORTH,

Commanding Army of Florida.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

*Extract of a letter from Captain Jernigan to Governor McDonald,
dated 1st October, 1841.*

CAMDEN COUNTY, October 1, 1841.

SIR: Your letter of the 27th August has been received, with the amount enclosed. You informed me that you had received a letter from Colonel Worth, assuring you of the effectual protection of the whole Georgia frontier. You suppose my surprise when I saw from your letter that Colonel Worth had assured you that effectual protection was afforded to the whole exposed part of the Georgia frontier, knowing that there was no protection given to the Georgia frontier only by the two companies which I informed you of in my other letter. I have made some delay in answering your last letter, to see if this protection would be supplied, and it is not yet afforded us. It was on the 26th September last Moses Barber, of Florida, was attacked near his dwelling by a party of eleven Indians, was fired on by them, and badly wounded, though he made his escape into his dwelling, defending himself against their firing. They burnt his out-houses during the night, as the attack was made about the going down of the sun. On the next day there was a party of four men assembled themselves for the purpose of going to the relief of Mr. Barber; not knowing the number of Indians, they proceeded on within a mile of Mr. Barber's house; the Indians arose from each side of the road, and fired upon them, killing two and wounding the third, and killing his horse from under him. The fourth made his escape without any injury, and assisted the wounded one by taking him on his horse. These depredations were committed about three miles from the Georgia line. As soon as the news reached me, I immediately mounted my horse and proceeded to Fort Moniac, to procure a force to pursue them, which was despatched with as little delay as possible. I volunteered my services to go with them as a guide, and to trail off the Indians. There were four other men in my neighborhood who volunteered their services also, to proceed to the place where they had done their work of havoc, and took their trail, and followed it for two days; but, they having one day the start of us, we could not overtake them. Their course was for the nation, and on their way back they fell in with three other men, killing one and wounding another, who made his escape; the third escaped unhurt.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, October 19, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to enclose copies of letters from General Hilliard and Captain Sweat, on the subject of the entry of Seminole Indians upon

the territory of Georgia, which furnish additional reasons why the two companies commanded by Captains Jernigan and Sweat should be mustered for the protection of this section of country.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

HON. JOHN C. SPENCER,
Secretary of War.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

WARESBOROUGH, *October 7, 1841.*

SIR: Indian signs have been discovered in several places around the Okefenokee swamp, in this county, causing considerable alarm among the inhabitants. Several have left their homes, through fear of an attack by the enemy. From the last information I have received, I have no doubt of the fact that Indians are now in our country.

Through instructions of your letter of the 14th September, and the request of General Hilliard, I called out my company on the 6th instant, for the protection of the exposed country.

Will your excellency please write me on the subject, with such instructions as you may see proper to give.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES A. SWEAT, *Captain.*

His Excellency CHARLES J. McDONALD.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

WARESBOROUGH, *October 9, 1841.*

DEAR SIR: The people of this county have again become alarmed at the appearance of Indian signs on the Okefenokee swamp. Some of the inhabitants have left their homes, for fear of being attacked by them, whose forces are daily increasing.

The last intelligence received from the inhabitants adjacent to the Okefenokee swamp leads me to believe that the Indians have again returned to that swamp. Under this impression, I have requested Captain Sweat to call out his company, for the purpose of giving relief to the exposed inhabitants, and to scour the country effectually. He is now upon that duty. Should it become necessary, I will call out another company. I am apprehensive that Captain Sweat's company will not be sufficient to protect the exposed country.

Please write me on the subject at as early time as may suit your convenience.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

THOMAS HILLIARD.

Governor McDONALD.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

HEADQUARTERS, FORT FLOYD,

October 11, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to inform your excellency that on Saturday last, while on a scout near the Okefenokee swamp, at a place called the Cow-house, I discovered considerable Indian signs, most of which were quite new. The trails were mostly leading into the Okefenokee swamp. Having at the same time sent a detachment from my company, I was not able to pursue them to any advantage; but, as soon as I can procure suitable rations for that purpose, I intend to give them a chase.

In relation to our supplies, we get corn, beef, &c., from the inhabitants, on the credit of the State, on which we find some difficulty to obtain it. Your excellency will please advise the most suitable mode to procure supplies. Many of the inhabitants part from their corn, &c., with much reluctance, in consequence of the delay which attended the collection of former claims upon Government.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

JAMES A. SWEAT, *Captain.*

His Excellency C. J. McDONALD.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, (GA.)

Milledgeville, October 21, 1841.

SIR: I am directed by his excellency Governor McDonald to enclose you a copy of Captain Jernigan's letter of the 31st August, which was omitted to be forwarded with his communication to you of the 19th instant.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

THOMAS D. HARRIS,

S. E. Dept.

HON. SECRETARY OF WAR.

[Enclosed in the foregoing.]

CAMDEN COUNTY, (GA.)

August 31, 1841.

SIR: I wish to call the attention of your excellency to the last order that General Nelson gave to the troops retained in the service of the State last fall, a copy of which I enclose, (four companies of volunteers.) In his order, he informed the troops, and the inhabitants generally, that they should never be left during the war without that protection afforded them by one Government or the other, which gave the citizens of the exposed part of the State the assurance that they could return to their homes, and there remain in safety, as four companies were considered sufficient to keep the Indians out of the country, and save the citizens from their midnight attacks.

This section of the State has been left without that protection since the

31st May last, when the volunteers were discharged from the service. It appears that the Executive department has been assured by the General Government that this protection would be supplied by a different disposition of the regular forces. In your letter of the 14th July, you enclosed to me a copy of a letter from the Secretary of War, showing that Colonel Worth would be instructed to direct his particular attention to the Okefenokee swamp, and to place ample protection in that quarter. This protection has not yet been afforded, nor do I think it will be afforded by the General Government. Only two companies of dragoons have arrived, one of which at Trader's Hill, the other at Fort Moniac, before the volunteers were discharged, and the one at Trader's Hill. I do not think it any protection to the exposed part of the State. The one at Fort Moniac is a very important place. The officers and men being unacquainted with the country, and having no guide, it causes them to render but little service to the country. The officers at Fort Moniac expressed to me their belief that they would leave there in a few days, but not under positive orders. Fear of the Indians, and their attacks down in Florida, have driven the more exposed families from their homes, while others offer their farms at reduced prices, with a view of leaving.

I must therefore request your excellency to call into the service of the State at least two companies of volunteers. The safety of the exposed citizens of Georgia requires it. The citizens here have little disposition to turn out for a second term of service, and seldom move but in defence of their own families, owing to the failure to receive pay for their services of last fall.

You will oblige me by giving an early answer to this.

I have the honor to be, respectfully, your obedient servant,

AARON JERNIGAN.

To his Excellency C. J. McDONALD,
Milledgeville, Georgia.

WAR DEPARTMENT,

Washington, October 26, 1841.

SIR: Your excellency's letters of the 13th, 19th, and 21st instant, with their enclosures, have been received. Upon the receipt of your first letter, orders were promptly given, through the Major General commanding the army, to have the two companies of volunteers, recently called out by your authority, mustered into the service of the United States.

The Department is much pained to hear of the threatened depredations upon the frontiers of Georgia, and will use all proper means at its disposal to afford protection to the exposed inhabitants.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. C. SPENCER.

To the GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, (GA.)

Milledgeville, November 25, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to enclose to you copies of several communications, informing me that a small band of Seminole Indians have entered this State; and also copies of letters addressed by me to Colonel Worth and General Knight, in relation to this matter. If Colonel Worth is not vested with discretionary power to afford protection to the people of this State, as supposed by me, may I ask your attention to the subject. It would perhaps expedite his arrangements to be ordered by you. As I stated to Col. Worth, the entrance of this company of Indians into Georgia confirms the opinion I have invariably expressed to the War Department, that, as they are pressed in Florida, they will take refuge in the swamps of this State, and be a source of constant annoyance to our citizens.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Hon. J. C. SPENCER,
Secretary of War.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

LOWNDES COUNTY, October 23, 1841.

SIR: I this day received information, through Captain John J. Johnson, an experienced officer who served under General Nelson, and Captain Morgan, who has a volunteer company organized for the purpose of entering the Florida service, that several of George Overstreet's family had been murdered by the Indians on the Alappaha river, on the 17th instant, ten miles below the Georgia line, and, from their trail, proceeded up the river, supposed to be about fifteen or twenty in number. Signs of them were found by Captain Morgan and others, above Micco, five miles below the line in the Alappaha swamp, yesterday. Believing they have continued up into the State in this county, I issued orders to Captains Johnson and Morgan to take a detachment of twenty-five men each, and proceed immediately in search of them, and report to me immediately if any signs are to be found in this State between the Suwannee and Alappaha. As there are no forces in the field in that section, I have thought proper to order these companies to protect that section until your excellency shall have an opportunity to cause forces to be sent, or orders for these companies, or one of them to remain and defend it.

Very respectfully, your excellency's obedient and very humble servant,
LEVI J. KNIGHT, *Maj. Gen.*

His Excellency CHARLES J. McDONALD.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

LOWNDES COUNTY, October 31, 1841.

SIR: Enclosed I send you the copy of a letter from Captain Morgan, stating the Indians are in this State, between Alappaha and Suwannee, together with the copy of an order issued to Captains Morgan and John-

son, from me. I hope your excellency will order forces to protect that section, or cause one of these captains at least to be stationed between Alappaha and Suwannee. Either of them would no doubt readily place a full company anywhere that you might designate. I am not advised of what forces there are in the field for the protection of the Georgia frontier, consequently I have only ordered these captains to protect that section until I may hear from you or some forces are sent. I hope your excellency will attend to this matter speedily, as much alarm prevails in that neighborhood.

Very respectfully, your excellency's most obedient and very humble servant,

LEVI J. KNIGHT, *Major General.*

Governor McDONALD.

N. B. Before the arrival of the Western mail, which leaves this place once a week, I kept this letter open, that I might communicate any further intelligence I might receive. I have just received the enclosed; it is a copy of a letter from Captain Johnson. As the mail has arrived, I send the original. The last orders had not reached until after Captain Johnson wrote; the bearer of his letter informed me he met the orders.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of General Knight to Governor McDonald.]

Copy of a letter from Captain S. W. Morgan.

LOWNDES COUNTY, October 28, 1841.

SIR: In obedience to your order, I collected a part of my company, and proceeded down the river in search of the Indians. In the river swamp, immediately at the Georgia line, I found considerable signs about two or three days old. On Monday last, several Indians were seen at Mr. Duncan's, about eight miles below this line; and on Tuesday last, Mr. Lee's son saw several at or near his father's house. Mr. Lee lives immediately on the line, and on the Alappaha swamp. I believe there is a good number of Indians in this neighborhood; a trail of some ten or fifteen Indians we found bearing towards Suwanoochee creek, in a northeast direction from the Alappaha river, three miles below the line. All the families in this section are assembled together for protection. I will start to-morrow with a full company in search of them. Captain Johnson is gone to Centreville to meet the United States paymaster, and will not go himself. I expect some of his men will go under his lieutenant. I would be glad you would issue orders where to station, and what we must do for provisions.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

SOLOMON W. MORGAN, *Captain.*

General KNIGHT.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of General Knight to Governor McDonald.]

ORDERS.] LOWNDES COUNTY, November 1, 1841.

As the Indians are in your neighborhood, you will proceed with your company to search with energy the swamps between Alappaha and Oke-

fenokee swamp until further orders; the men will furnish their own provisions, forage, &c. I have written to his excellency, enclosing copies of your letters. As I am not advised what forces are in the field for the protection of the Georgia frontier, I do not know whether or not your company will be wanted longer than till other forces can be sent.

Respectfully yours,

LEVI J. KNIGHT, *Major General.*

Captain J. J. JOHNSON.

N. B. The same was sent to Captain Morgan.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of General Knight to Governor McDonald.]

ALAPPAHA, *November 1, 1841.*

SIR: I have the honor of reporting to you, that, on receiving your order, I sent out a detachment, on Sunday last, to scour the Suwanoochee; and they have returned, and report that they discovered recent traces of Indian signs in the dense swamps of the Suwanoochee; and with the signs appeared to be one or two ponies. They think the signs to be five or six days previous to their being there. Sir, I shall go out on Monday next with my command, and scour the Suwanoochee. I will be glad, sir, if you will come as soon as convenient, and muster my company into the service. Sir, I would thank you to give me instructions about the purchase of provisions for the troops. I submit further, sir, to your consideration, that I think the most requisite places for stationing those troops would be, part at Jackford, on the Suwanoochee, and the other part to be stationed lower down.

I remain your most obedient servant,

JOHN J. JOHNSON.

To General LEVI J. KNIGHT.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter from Captain Swilley, to his Excellency Charles J. McDonald.

LOWNDES COUNTY, (GEORGIA,) *November 15, 1841.*

DEAR SIR: I take my pen in hand to inform you respecting the situation of our adjoining neighborhood. The Indians are on our borders; we have a company operating, and find signs every week. The captain has orders from General L. J. Knight to operate every week; this company operates in the neighborhood, and adjoining neighborhood, where the depredations were committed on the family of George Overstreet; and I think, if said company do not keep in active operation, the first thing we shall know will be another family destroyed.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Milledgeville, November 23, 1841.

SIR: Your communication, informing me of the indications that have been discovered of the incursions of several Indians into Georgia, has been received. The prompt measures you have adopted for the protection of the people meet my approbation. I enclose you a packet, which you will forward by express to Colonel Worth, in command of the army of Florida; he will furnish a force for the protection of the invaded territory. In the mean time, you will cause the forces in the field to scour the Alappaha and Suwannee swamps, and drive the Indians out. The only way to protect the country effectually is to let the savages know that they are not to find a resting place in our borders. As soon as you are either assured that the Indians have left the swamps or a force is sent by the officers of the Federal army to guard the country, you will disband the detachment ordered out.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Gen. LEVI J. KNIGHT.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Milledgeville, November 24, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to enclose to you communications made to me by General Levi J. Knight, informing me that a body of Indians have taken refuge in the Alappaha swamp. I also forward extracts of letters from Mr. Swilley and Captain Morgan. Great alarm exists among the people in that neighborhood. The operations of this little band confirm the opinion I have uniformly expressed to the Federal authorities, that the Indians, as they are pressed in Florida, will look to the Georgia swamps for places of safety.

I have directed General Knight to keep the detachments ordered out by him in the field until protection is afforded the inhabitants of the exposed districts by a regular force.

The conducting of the army operations and the protection of the Georgia frontier have been confided, I believe, to your discretion by the War Department; I must therefore ask you to adopt speedy measures for the protection of this district of country, and that the companies or detachments ordered out by General Knight may be mustered, and arrangements made for their payment.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Col. WILLIAM J. WORTH.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald to Colonel Worth.]

An extract from a letter written by S. B. Morgan to his Excellency Charles J. McDonald, dated November 12, 1841.

SIR: I write to you to inform you that I have received orders from General Knight to raise a company for the protection of the frontier, as I live near the Florida line, between the Atappaha river and the Okefenokee swamp. There are no settlers between where I live and the Okefenokee swamp. It is about ten miles above where George Overstreet's family were murdered. We discovered, on last Sunday morning and Monday, some fresh signs of Indians.

DEPARTMENT OF WAR,
Washington, December 3, 1841.

SIR: Your letter of the 25th ultimo is received, and I hasten to reply that Colonel Worth, commanding in Florida, is vested with the most ample discretionary power to afford protection to the people of Georgia, as well as the inhabitants of Florida; and on the receipt of your excellency's communication to him, dated the 24th ultimo, a copy of which you have transmitted to this Department, he will unquestionably take all such measures as his great ability and peculiar information shall dictate to be necessary or expedient. His attention will be called to the companies or detachments ordered out by General Knight, and he will make such disposition of them as the exigency of the case may require.

For your information respecting the movements of the Indians, I transmit, herewith, copies of letters recently received from Captain Bliss;

And am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. C. SPENCER.

To the GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of the Secretary of War.]

TRADER'S HILL, (GA.,) November 9, 1841.

SIR: I respectfully report that, agreeably to instructions of the 28th ult., from your office, I left Washington on that day, and reached this place on the 8th inst., having been unexpectedly detained several days in Charleston and Savannah.

From Savannah I reported to Colonel Worth, soliciting his instructions relative to the discharge of the two companies I am ordered to muster. I hope to receive his reply by the 16th instant.

Captain Brown, 6th infantry, who is now here, will proceed on the 11th to North's station, via Fort Moniac. I shall accompany him, for the double purpose of getting accurate information on the state of the frontier, and making arrangements for the muster of the two companies—*Jernigan* being at or near Fort Moniac, and *Sweat* being on an excursion around the swamp, which will probably bring him to North's station on the 13th.

Sweat's company certainly, and probably *Jernigan's*, will not be im-

bodied for muster before I receive instructions from Colonel Worth. Should those instructions direct the discharge of the companies, but one muster will be necessary in that case.

Taking into consideration the tranquil state of this frontier, and the probability that Colonel Worth will order the immediate discharge of these companies, I hope I shall not be considered to transcend my instructions, should I delay the muster of one or both the companies for two or three days, if necessary, until Colonel Worth can be heard from. I have reason, however, to expect his instructions quite as soon as Sweat's company can be mustered.

From the best information I can obtain, there has not existed the slightest necessity for calling these militia companies into service. Intelligent officers assure me that there has not been an Indian in the swamp this summer. Persons are not wanting to report "signs," from time to time, and parties of regular troops have repeatedly been called out on the most frivolous alarms. The *real* state of feeling among the frontier inhabitants, and the kind of service these volunteer companies expect to render, are well illustrated by the fact that, while the road from this point to Waresborough is travelled in security by small parties, and even single individuals, though skirting the swamp, Captain Sweat's company has been for two or three weeks imbodyed on Kettle creek, near Waresborough, five miles from the court-house, for what public or patriotic purpose it is difficult to imagine.

I hope to report more fully on my return from North's station, about the 15th instant. Agreeably to the verbal direction of Major General Scott, I shall communicate to Colonel Worth every thing of interest relative to affairs in this quarter.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. W. S. BLISS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL OF THE ARMY,
Washington, D. C.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of the Secretary of War.]

TRADER'S HILL, (GA.), November 20, 1841.

SIR: Herewith I respectfully enclose the muster roll of Captain J. A. Sweat's company of mounted militia, mustered by me at this place on the 18th instant.

I saw Captain Sweat just before leaving for North's station; and ordered his company to this point for muster, fully expecting to receive the instructions of Colonel Worth by the day appointed, which was the earliest day that the company could be assembled here. In this I was disappointed, and the company has accordingly been mustered for service, and placed, agreeably to my instructions, under the orders of Captain H. Day, 2d infantry, commanding this post.

Jernigan's company was imbodyed on the 15th instant; but the difficulty at this moment of supplying it at its rendezvous, near Fort Moniac, has induced me to defer its muster until I receive Colonel Worth's instructions, which can hardly fail to reach me by the 22d instant. I hope this short delay will meet the approbation of the Major General commanding.

On my route hence to Fort Rosa, (five miles east of North's station,) I traversed nearly sixty miles of the Okefenokee frontier, and found the country in a perfectly tranquil condition, no alarm seeming to exist among the settlers, and the road being constantly travelled by small parties and individuals unarmed. I could hear of no Indian depredations for many months within the limits of Georgia, and the "signs" occasionally reported are too equivocal to deserve attention. While Fort Rosa, Fort Moniac, and the post near Thigpens, are occupied, I should deem this frontier abundantly secured from Indian inroads, particularly in the present state of affairs in Florida.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant;

W. W. S. BLISS;

Assistant Adjutant General.

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL OF THE ARMY,

Washington, D. C.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, December 15, 1841.

SIR: The copies of letters from officers of the army now in Florida, forwarded under your frank, I have had the honor to receive. I feel assured of your disposition to afford the inhabitants of the district of Georgia exposed to Indian depredations protection against their outrages, but regret that you are likely to be misled by this information. It has been difficult for me to impress the War Department with the danger to which these people are exposed; and it seems that, even with all the experience of the past, nothing but actual murder can break the delusion which a few weeks or months of repose occasions. The Indians are aware of all the movements of the army, and no post is abandoned ten days, that it is not known to them. It is not extraordinary that people in this part of the country pursue their usual business with no manifest apprehension of harm. One day's immunity from trouble begets the greater confidence of security for the next; and the people finally pass about, attending to their ordinary engagements, seemingly fearless of danger. This is no evidence, however, of their safety. This thing has happened for years past, and yet annually has this part of the country been visited by the savages, and the people murdered, and their property destroyed. The officers of the army, deceived by the apparent unconcern with which the people traverse the country, misjudge the necessity of maintaining a force for their protection, and the officers and men connected with the army and stationed at the military posts established through this district, acting under convictions expressed in the letters communicated, actually omit to keep out scouts for the constant and thorough examination of the country. As evidence of this, I was informed that on one of the last incursions of the Indians into the territories of Georgia, they passed within a few miles of one of the garrisoned military posts of the United States, committed their outrages, and retreated, not only unharmed but unobserved.

I have incessantly labored, since I have been intrusted with the duty of protecting the people of the State, to prove to the Federal authorities the necessity of keeping up an active military force in this section of the State, adequate to inspire the people with a sense of security. I have always

had to combat the opposing opinions of the army. As an evidence, I have the honor to enclose the copy of a letter from one of your predecessors, together with the testimony of the officers of Florida, furnished me by him. I also transmit copies of communications from General Floyd and other gentlemen, proving how fatally unwise it was to rely on these opinions.

No man acquainted with the country can doubt that, as the Indians are pursued in Florida, they will expect to find places of safety in the immense and almost impenetrable swamps of Georgia. We know that they have invariably done it heretofore; and even if no indication of the presence of Indians is now to be seen, it is no evidence that the people are secure from their ravages. I regret extremely that the commanding officer in Florida has deemed it to be his duty to discharge this force. The men who were employed are interested in keeping a good watch. Their families are in the exposed district, and they are sensibly alive to the danger of trusting them to the mercies of an enemy that are constantly on the lookout for unprotected victims. I entertain no doubt that the Indians will renew their massacre the moment they find that all the forces capable of making pursuit are out of the field. They do not regard infantry confined to military posts. They will pass within a mile of them, murder the inhabitants, and defy their efforts to overtake them. I must ask you to have these companies retained. I am convinced that it is necessary to the security of the people.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Hon. J. C. SPENCER,
Secretary of War.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract from a report of Brevet Brig. Gen. Z. Taylor, dated Headquarters, Army of the South, Fort Fanning, April 14, 1840.

SIR: As I informed you on the 7th of March would be the case, Captain Barnum, commanding the troops around the Okefenokee swamp, was instructed to make inquiry as to the presence of Indians in the Okefenokee swamp, as reported to you by the Governor of Georgia, on the representation of Captain Knight; and I now enclose a copy of Captain Barnum's report to Colonel Twiggs, dated the 23d of March, with copies of reports made to him, enclosed therein, which came yesterday to hand. By these communications it will be seen that the report, as made by Captain Knight, was entirely without foundation.

Hon. J. R. POINSETT,
Secretary of War.

[Enclosed in General Taylor's letter to the Secretary of War.]

Extract from a report of Captain E. K. Barnum, 2d infantry, to Col. D. E. Twiggs, 2d dragoons, dated Headquarters, Okefenokee District, Fort Moniac, (E. F.,) March 22, 1840.

Since my communication to you of the 14th instant, I ordered the commanding officers of the posts of Fort Gilmer and Fort Taylor to make a strict and critical examination of the country around their several posts, particularly in the vicinity of Surveyor's creek and Okefenokee swamp, in that quarter. I have this day received their reports; Captain Bird's is herewith enclosed, marked No. 1. Lieutenant Norton, commanding Fort Taylor, under this date says: "I have scouted south and west of this post, through the islands of Breakfast branch, and on the west side of the Double run, and then on the south side of the Okefenokee swamp, and have to report no signs of Indians whatever.

I also enclose a certificate of Lieutenant Norton, marked No. 2, on the subject of Levi J. Knight's letter to Governor McDonald.

[No. 1.—Enclosed in Captain Barnum's letter to Colonel Twiggs.]

Extract from a report of J. Bird, captain, &c., to Captain E. K. Barnum, dated Fort Gilmer, (Ga.,) March 22, 1840.

In obedience to instructions received from you, I have examined the country in the vicinity of Surveyor's creek, as also a considerable distance in the Okefenokee swamp, where the creek makes in. I could make no discoveries of Indian signs. I proceeded on as far as Cox's hammock, where I saw a man by the name of Carter, who carries on a farm in that place. He states that he is constantly through the country, hunting his stock; that he has never made any discoveries of Indian signs, and believes that there are no Indians in that portion of the country, or so few that their signs cannot be discovered. I have out daily scouts, and should any signs be seen, I will immediately inform you of it.

[No. 2.—Enclosed in Captain Barnum's letter to Colonel Twiggs.]

I, Nathan Norton, first lieutenant of Captain Bird's company, Florida mounted volunteers, do hereby certify, that I was in command of the post of Fort Gilmer, Georgia, from the 2d day of December, 1839, to the 31st day of January, 1840; that I made scouts from said post frequently during that period, up the Suwanoochee creek, and in the direction of Cox's hammock, on the west side of the Okefenokee; that I never made a discovery of any fresh signs of Indians, or saw any thing to induce the belief that Indians had visited that part of the country for some months previous. I have this day heard a letter read to me by Captain E. K. Barnum, United States army, said to be a copy of one from Levi J. Knight, of Lowndes county, to the Governor of Georgia. I have never heard of any cattle or

hogs being missed by any of the inhabitants on the Suwanoochee or Jones's creek, and I believe the statement made by Levi J. Knight to Governor McDonald to be greatly exaggerated, if not entirely destitute of truth.

Given at Fort Moniac, this 15th day of March, 1840.

NATHAN NORTON, *First Lieut. F. M. V*

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter from E. K. Barnum, dated Headquarters, Okefenokee District, Fort Moniac, (E. F.) April 3, 1840.

I have the honor to transmit, herewith, a field return of troops in the Okefenokee district, for the month of March, 1840.

No signs of Indians have been discovered within the district since my last report.

Captain Bird reports from Fort Gilmer, dated yesterday, that Lieutenant Rain returned a few days since from a scout on the Suwanoochee; he states that he requested the inhabitants of that place to show the signs of Indians, as likewise the stock which they reported had been killed; he says that they failed completely to show any signs.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

WARESBOROUGH, August 18, 1840.

SIR: The murders* and the destruction of property committed by the hostile Indians on our borders (on the 14th and 15th instant) are horrible to relate. Nearly all the plantations on the Suwannee river, in Georgia, are in ashes, and several of the citizens murdered (mostly women and children) and squandered; and it is not known in this vicinity how many murders have been committed by them in Florida, near the line. It appears, from good authority, that the devils are now more bent than ever on slaughter and destruction; and, if relief be not speedily afforded to our citizens, they must either fall a prey to their relentless ravages, or quit their homes, and become dependent on the charity of their fellow-beings.

I hope, therefore, that your excellency will render us the necessary help, that we may repel the savages, and save our people and property. Various opinions are afloat relative to the number of Indians engaged in this horrid affair: their number is estimated at from one to two hundred.

Your most obedient servant,

ELIJAH MATTOX.

To his Excellency CHARLES J. McDONALD.

* The murders are in Florida.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

AUGUST 18, 1840.

SIR: I received a communication from Col. Joseph Watts, stating to me that the hostile Seminole Indians had, on the 14th instant, commenced offensive depredations on the frontier of Suwannee, by an indiscriminate massacre of the white inhabitants, and did on that day lay fourteen plantations in ashes, and murder four of the inhabitants and wound another, all women and children, and are still continuing their course for Okefenokee; and there are no troops on this frontier for our protection; and we pray your honor would take the desperate case into deep consideration, and grant such relief as your honor may think best for the immediate relief of the frontier. I am now, sir, marching forthwith, with all the forces I can raise, to Okefenokee.

I remain, with respect, your most obedient servant,

JOHN J. JOHNSON, *Captain.*

TO CHARLES J. McDONALD, *Governor.*

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract of a letter from Brigadier General Charles Floyd, dated Jeffersonton, August 21, 1840.

SIR: I received information yesterday from Centre village, by express, that about one hundred Indians from Florida had killed ten persons and burnt eleven houses on the Suwannee and St. Mary's, and entered the Okefenokee swamp. I received also, at the same time, an application from the citizens on the frontier of this county for protection; and, for their defence, I have ordered Captain Tracy, of the Centre-village riflemen, into the field with fifty men.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

WARESBOROUGH, (GEORGIA,) August 22, 1840.

SIR: It becomes my duty to inform, by express, of the ravages committed by the Indians on this frontier on the 14th and 15th instant. Nearly all the plantations on the Suwannee river in this county are burnt up and destroyed. The inhabitants have fled in consternation, leaving their all behind them. Their situation is wretched in the extreme, and calls loudly for help. I have, in the exigency of the moment, ordered out several companies to give protection to our distracted frontier, and shall pursue the most energetic measures to repel and subdue this savage foe. The number of Indians engaged in their ravages is variously estimated—say from one to two hundred. The fact of these depredations having been committed in open day, contrary to their usual custom, proves conclusively that they are in large force. It may be proper to inform your excellency that, on the morning of the first-mentioned day, (the 14th,) several families were murdered and plantations destroyed by the same band of Indians in Florida, within a few miles of the line of this county. I sin-

cerely hope your excellency will take such measures as may in your wisdom give the most efficient protection to our distressed country.

I would respectfully suggest to your excellency the propriety of appointing a quartermaster for the troops which may be engaged in this service.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,
 THOMAS HILLIARD, *Brig. Gen.*

His Excellency CHARLES J. McDONALD.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, December 16, 1841.

SIR: Since writing you yesterday, I have received by express two letters, copies of which I have the honor to forward. You will perceive the difference of opinion existing between the officers of the army and the people in the exposed district. You will discover that a part of the inhabitants have despaired of the protection of their Government, and are moving from their homes.

They do not believe that the officers and men of the Federal army, acting under the conviction that there is no danger, can be relied on to search for the trail of an enemy that they profess to believe does not exist, and cannot therefore be found. They know that Indians have passed with impunity in the neighborhood of their posts, murdered and destroyed, and retreated unmolested. They know that when they attempted to commit outrages while Captain Jernigan was in the field, he pursued them, killed two of the marauding party, and so intimidated the rest that they made no further hostile effort in that quarter until his company was disbanded, and that they then renewed hostilities. With these facts before them, and knowing that the Indians are in their neighborhood, the people may well be alarmed, and attempt to place themselves beyond the reach of danger, against which they believe they are not to be defended.

Notwithstanding the opinion entertained by Colonel Worth on this subject, I deem it due to the people of Georgia that they be made secure against an enemy that never attacks openly, and whose hostile purposes cannot be thwarted but by the most unceasing vigilance. They come in small parties covertly and secretly; are watchful themselves, and know when they may attack with impunity, and retreat without the danger of pursuit.

If a single life is saved, it is worth the small expense of two companies. If it be even necessary to inspire the people with a sense of security, it ought to be encountered without hesitancy. I hope, therefore, that you will order these companies to be re-mustered and retained as long as a party of Indians is left to annoy the inhabitants. If I believed that the intimation contained in one of the letters communicated was true, that the danger is exaggerated merely to obtain employment, I would lend no countenance to the application. I have invariably refused to recommend to the Government to employ a force where I believed there was no ground to apprehend danger. But when I know that for four or five years past the country in which these troops are employed has been ravaged by the Indians, and that, too, while it was constantly insisted by the officers of the regular army that there was no cause of alarm, and the posts were occupied, I

cannot disbelieve the representations made to me by the inhabitants, that they labor under the constant apprehension of murder; nor can I be insensible to the justness of their complaints, when the force that has shielded them has been disbanded.

I have the honor to remain your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Hon. J. C. SPENCER, *Secretary of War.*

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

WARESBOROUGH, WARE CO., *December 8, 1841.*

SIR: On the 22d of November last I had the honor to write to your excellency from Trader's Hill, then informing you of my company having been mustered into the United States service from the 6th day of October last for three months, unless sooner discharged. It again becomes my duty to inform your excellency that my company has been mustered out of service on the 3d instant, and, it is said, by an order from Colonel Worth. I cannot account for the cause of this mustering us out, as it is certain that Indians are yet remaining in our swamps; but, be the cause what it may, it has certainly created much dissatisfaction among the people or exposed inhabitants, as they consider themselves yet in imminent danger, from their exposed situation, to the marauding Indians yet in the swamps. Many of the inhabitants are actually moving from their homes from fear; and it appears their fears have been increased from the fact that Captain Griffis and his company found fresh Indian signs in Suwanoochee swamp last week. I am therefore instructed to inform your excellency of the above facts, that you may act as in your wisdom and opinion shall seem just. In all your former instructions to me (so far as was practicable or possible to do) they were strictly and promptly obeyed. Scouts were constantly kept out around the most dangerous or suspicious parts of the swamps, which appeared to give general satisfaction to the inhabitants most interested.

All of which is respectfully submitted by your most obedient servant,

JAMES A. SWEAT,

Captain Georgia Militia.

His Excellency CHARLES J. McDONALD,
Governor of Georgia.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

WARESBOROUGH, WARE CO., *December 10, 1841.*

SIR: I have the honor to inform your excellency that the companies under Captains Sweat and Jernigan, taken into the service of the United States, were discharged on the 3d instant, which, indeed, leaves the citizens of this county in an unprotected situation; more particularly so, as there appears to be no doubt of there being Indians in the Okefenokee or its tributaries. The cause of this sudden change of opinion in the officers of the Government is indeed strange to us. Captain Griffis, with a detachment of his company, some time last week saw Indian signs in the

Suwanoochee swamp; which circumstance, together with the fact that the country is unprotected at the present time, has caused considerable fears among the inhabitants of this country. In fact, many are now moving from their places (those on the frontier part) from actual fear of the incursions of the supposed marauding Indians now in and about the swamp. I have thought proper to direct two companies to stand in readiness to take the field, should any attack be made upon the lives or property of the inhabitants, but which will not be ordered into service, unless some attack is actually made, until I shall hear from your excellency on the subject.

I have the honor to be, with much respect, your most obedient servant,

RICHARD BOWEN,

Maj. Com. Batt. Ware County.

His Excellency CHARLES J. McDONALD,

Governor of Georgia.

WAR DEPARTMENT,

Washington, December 27, 1841.

SIR: Your excellency's letters of the 15th and 16th instant, with enclosures, have been received. You but do me justice in supposing that I am anxious to afford all the protection within the power of the Department to the inhabitants of Georgia, exposed to Indian outrages. You will, I am sure, also recollect how limited are the means at the disposal of the Department. Our small army is now principally engaged in striking at the root of the difficulty; and but a few days, it is believed, will elapse, before the only leader of the Indians now in arms against us in Florida, with his band, will be captured. If the depredations and alarms of which you speak do not then cease, we shall have the means of more effectually guarding the southern frontier of Georgia.

An Indian frontier, in time of war, cannot expect absolute immunity from the depredations of small parties. No amount of force, regular or militia, can prevent the occasional inroads of a daring enemy, accustomed to move with secrecy and despatch. This is eminently true in Florida and the southern portion of Georgia, where extensive hammocks and swamps favor the advance and obstruct the observation and pursuit of marauding parties. The enclosed report of the officer charged with the duty of mustering and discharging the militia companies recently in service on the southern frontier of Georgia will show the arrangements for its defence, the bearing of the points now occupied by regular troops upon the usual routes of parties from the south, and their efficacy in holding such parties in check. It is believed that even were a mounted militia force kept continually in service, it would contribute but little additional protection to the frontier, beyond that which the inhabitants can afford themselves. Accustomed to the use of arms, and provided as they are with them, the border settlers must necessarily rely upon their mutual aid for the surest and best protection. This remark is corroborated by the tendency which is known to exist among imbodyed militia to disperse to their homes, when serving near them. They are aware that when a large portion of a sparse population is collected at a few points, all others are left exposed, and they feel that their families and firesides cannot be free from alarm or danger in their absence.

In reference to your remarks respecting the hazard of relying upon the opinions of the officers of the regular army, as to the nature and extent of the danger, and the means of guarding against it, it is proper to remark, that those who have served on the frontier have, at least, as good means of information as the militia officers or inhabitants, and are at least disinterested in the recommendations they make.

The officer commanding the army in Florida is responsible for the suitable application of the force under his orders, not only to the purposes of offensive operations, but also the defence of the settlements of Florida and Georgia. Acting under this high responsibility, and with much better means of information than any possessed by this Department, he has deemed the existing dispositions for the protection of the Okefenokee frontier adequate for that purpose, and has therefore declined the services of a militia force. Confirmed as the correctness of his decision has been by the most recent intelligence received here, I cannot undertake to countermand his orders for the discharge of the militia force.

I trust there will be no more occasion for calling militia into service, as all our accounts from Florida concur in representing the great probability of a speedy termination of the conflict. Small bands are continually coming in, and the northern part of the peninsula is now almost entirely free of hostile parties. Copies of your communications will, however, be sent to Colonel Worth; but I am bound to advise you that the service of the troops discharged subsequent to that event, and prior to any order from Colonel Worth to retain them, cannot be recognised.

Very respectfully your obedient servant,

J. C. SPENCER.

To the GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of the Secretary of War.]

WASHINGTON, (D. C.), December 22, 1841.

SIR: Agreeably to your directions, I have the honor to submit a report showing the recent state of things on the southern border of Georgia, as connected with real or apprehended danger from incursions of Indians from Florida. To make my report more intelligible, I beg leave to preface it with some remarks on the nature of the military occupation of that frontier.

When made at all, such incursions have been confined to that part of the frontier which includes the Okefenokee swamp, and the district watered by the head branches of the Suwannee river; the residue being an open country, and never, it is believed, infested or traversed by Indians since 1836, when a remnant of the Creeks escaped to Florida.

The Okefenokee swamp, from its impracticable character and scarcity of arable islands, presents no permanent abode for Indians, and has been only occasionally employed by them as a secure cover from our pursuit—the last time it was so employed, at least by a party of any strength, having been in the winter of 1838-'39, when the operations of the regular troops and militia force under General Floyd were successful in driving the enemy from the swamp. There are *two* routes by which marauding parties of Indians from Florida approach the swamp: the *eastern* route, by Kingsley's pond and New river, passes near Fort Moniac; the *western*, by the

natural bridge of the Santa Fe and upper Suwannee, passes near Fort Gilmer. These routes are dictated by the nature of the country, and have, almost without exception, been followed by Indian parties from the south; which fact has furnished the basis of all arrangements for the defence of that frontier.

While Forts Moniac and Gilmer have been occupied, the Indians have generally desisted from depredations in the vicinity of the swamp, fearing to be cut off by the garrisons of those posts, after passing them to the northward. On the other hand, a temporary evacuation of Fort Moniac, in the summer of 1840, was almost immediately followed by ravages in neighboring settlements. These facts show the great importance of the two positions, which may be regarded as the keys of the swamp, and their adequacy, with active garrisons, to afford competent protection to the Okefenokee frontier.

A company of dragoons is stationed at Fort Gilmer; and a company of infantry, liberally supplied with horses, for the purposes of prompt pursuit, at Fort Moniac. An infantry company is also stationed at Trader's Hill, and one of dragoons near Thigpens, on the route indicated above as the *eastern* route. Renewed activity has lately been given to these four companies; and, if past experience be of any value, the existing arrangements for the defence of that frontier may be regarded as adequate to their object.

While recently on a tour of duty in that quarter, I had a good opportunity of judging of the state of feeling among the inhabitants, in reference to Indian alarms. Independently of the sense of security with which the roads adjacent to the swamp are daily travelled, for purposes of business or pleasure, I could discover, by questioning individuals, little or no cause of alarm. The "signs" reported, such as the cutting of bee-trees and killing of cattle, were quite too vague and equivocal to justify any apprehensions; and the captain of one of the militia companies mustered by me himself expressed great doubts whether any Indians were or had recently been in the swamp. With respect to the northern border of the swamp, from which Captain Sweat's company was drawn, and for the defence of which it was called out, I am convinced that no necessity whatever existed for calling that company into service. Captain Jernigan's company was raised in a district near Fort Moniac, more exposed, it is true, to inroads from the south, but yet sufficiently guarded by regular troops, as above shown.

It may not be inappropriate to remark that, within the last few months, the danger of Indian incursions from Florida, across the Georgia line, has greatly diminished. Several bands that roved among the adjacent settlements of Florida have surrendered, and others have been driven further south. Excepting a small party of fugitive Creeks, with whom negotiations had been opened at the last advices, there are no hostiles at this time within striking distance of the Okefenokee swamp.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, your obedient servant,

W. W. S. BLISS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

Hon. J. C. SPENCER,
Secretary of War.

WASHINGTON, (D. C.,) *December 24, 1841.*

SIR: Having attentively perused the communication from Governor McDonald to the War Department, dated December 16th, with enclosures, I beg leave to submit the following remarks in relation to the matters embraced in these papers.

Since the occupation of Fort Moniac and Trader's Hill, in the spring of 1841, no party of Indians has passed those posts to infest the settlements around the swamp. In September, two or three men were killed by Indians between Thigpens and Garey's Ferry, 20 or 30 miles south of the Georgia line. This outrage was promptly followed by an order from Col. Worth, detaching two additional dragoon companies to the exposed frontier—one taking post near the spot of attack, the other near Fort Gilmer. These companies now occupy those positions, and I have no hesitation in asserting (my impressions being derived in great part from the inhabitants themselves) that since that movement no Indians have shown themselves within the border settlements of Georgia.

The letters of Major Bowen and Captain Sweat, copies of which are enclosed by the Governor, were written within a week after my departure from Trader's Hill. I heard nothing of the great alarm referred to in those letters, and am confident that no such alarm existed two or three weeks before, when I saw, near North's station, many persons from the district reputed in the above letters as particularly exposed. In asking the commanding officer at Trader's Hill to give some of his men permission to go home, Captain Sweat, in my presence, stated that many families were somewhat alarmed, as the male population had been drawn away from their homes for service in his company, at the same time acknowledging that he doubted if there were sufficient ground for apprehension.

Whatever alarm may have existed in the district referred to, I am certain that the settlers near Fort Moniac, though more exposed than any others around the swamp, entertained but small apprehensions of Indian incursions; indeed none at all, if any reliance can be placed upon an observation of their daily habits.

In repeating the intimation that a desire to be in the pay of Government may have caused an exaggeration of the state of alarm among the inhabitants, which I do with great deference to the opinion of his excellency the Governor of Georgia, I rely not so much upon my own limited observation and experience, as upon the convictions of officers who unite to rank and length of service high intelligence and moral worth, and whose experience among the militia in Florida and Georgia entitles their opinions to great weight.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, your obedient servant,

W. W. S. BLISS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

Hon. J. C. SPENCER,

Secretary of War.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, March 2, 1842.

SIR: I have the honor to forward to you, for your information, several documents in relation to the conduct of the military force of the United States

stationed in and near the territory of the State of Georgia; and also an extract from a communication from Captain Jernigan, in regard to the discovery of Indians near the Okefenokee swamp.

The officers permitting the outrages complained of should be brought to condign punishment.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Hon. J. C. SPENCER,
Secretary of War.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

Extract from a letter of Captain Aaron Jernigan, dated Camden County, (Georgia,) February 10, 1842.

SIR: I have the honor to inform your excellency that recently the wagon master reported to Captain Casey, the commanding officer at Fort Moniac, that he had just seen fresh Indian signs within about six or seven miles of his post; the signs were leading into the Okefenokee swamp; and in the dusk of the evening, he saw some person going into a part of the swamp which made up near the road; he was moving very briskly, and appeared to have a gun on his shoulder, and was in a dark dress, and he supposed it to be an Indian; but, the light of the day being so far past, he was unable to ascertain positively whether it was an Indian or not; as he encamped near that place, some time after night he saw the light of fire some distance in the swamp. As there was but a small force with the train, there was no pursuance in either case. The officer commanding, after receiving this report, despatched a lieutenant and a party of men, who proceeded on the road to where the signs were seen, and they made no discovery of the Indians on the road; so they returned to their post, without making any further examination, (so says the wagon master.) I hear that there have been trails of Indians seen recently, leading into the swamp on the west border.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

To his Excellency Charles J. McDonald, Governor of Georgia:

We, the citizens of Camden county, and we in the Okefenokee district generally, feel it our duty to lay before your excellency this our humble petition.

There is no doubt but your excellency is aware of the present position of some of the regular forces in this section of country, which were ordered here for the protection of the citizens and their property, on the frontier of Georgia. They have been stationed as follows: company F, 2d regiment of infantry, at Fort Henderson, near Trader's Hill; company C, of the same regiment, at Fort Moniac, on the road that leads to the Suwannee, about 30 miles from Trader's Hill; company H, of the 2d regiment of dragoons, at Fort Gilmer, 30 miles from Moniac, which makes 60 miles

from Trader's Hill depot to Fort Gilmer. The train of wagons is constantly on the road that leads from Trader's Hill to Fort Moniac, and from thence to Fort Gilmer. The train is mostly escorted by detachments from companies C and F. This escort, together with the wagons, is constantly killing our hogs and cattle, and spreading ruin and devastation wherever they go; and, not satisfied with destroying our property in this manner, they occasionally threaten our citizens in the most outrageous manner. Not long since, a party of the dragoons stopped one of our citizens on the road, and took a barrel of liquor out of his cart, and carried it into their camp, and did beat and abuse the owner most unmercifully. It was on the evening of the 6th ultimo, the son of our worthy citizen and statesman who has formerly represented Camden county, D. N. Cone, the son of Captain William Cone, was shot through the heart by one of the company F, who was with the train, merely because the young man asked for the mark and brand of a beef which they had just killed, which information he considered it was his duty to endeavor to ascertain, as it was in the range of a part of his father's cattle, and his neighbors; and after all this, they continue to threaten the lives of our people. We, your humble petitioners, wish to prove to your excellency, that such is the conduct of the men who have been ordered here for the purpose of protecting the citizens and their property, and such is the indulgence of the officers towards the men under their command, and having to live under such gross assaults from the troops towards our fellow-citizens, besides divers similar crimes committed on our property by these troops, who we had expected to protect us and our property; and under such considerations we, your humble petitioners, do beseech and appeal to your excellency, and request you to use your influence in having these troops removed from this our country, for we would prefer the tender mercies of the savage to the oft-repeated attacks of undisputed villany imposed on us by these troops, who were sent here for our protection.

We are, sir, with the highest consideration, your excellency's obedient servants,

*James Jelvington
 *Gideon Jelvington
 *Wm. Sparkman
 *Wm. Williams
 *Wm. A. Williams
 *Isaiah Dobson
 Ichabod Fouracres
 J. T. Williams
 *Isaac Harvey
 *Samuel Davis
 *Richard Harvey
 *Peter Gwinn
 *Aaron Jernigan
 Isaiah Williams
 John Vellanger
 Joseph Louthier
 James Wainwright
 James Mizzell
 A. E. King
 *Isaac Jernigan

James N. Brewer
 Henry Hines
 *John Harvey
 *Martin Butler
 Daniel O'Brien
 *John D. Williams
 *William H. Williams
 C. C. Loyd
 Jackson C. Loyd
 *Richard N. Green
 Thomas French
 John Tanner
 W. Minchen
 *James W. Burnsed
 *Wm. Motes
 *Geo. Motes
 *Asa Wilkinson
 Elisha Wilkinson
 Allen Dickson
 Isaac Hines

Wm. R. Thompson	*Wm. Rawlison
John Harvey, jr.	*West Rawlison
*Barien Butler	James Austine
*Nathan Fouracres	*John Patrick
*James Hogans	Wm. Malfreys
W. Patrick	Edward Mobly
E. G. Stokes	Wm. Gates
*A. Hogans	*Lewis Daniel
N. M. Pease	*James Harvey
Domingo C. Acosta	*L. Austine.
S. McAle	

I believe that the regular troops specified by this instrument of writing do no good whatever, and the common soldiers I know do many outrageous acts.

Claiborn Bevill	Lafayette L. Loyd
H. E. Colson	James B. Colding
John L. Courson	James Burritt
Wm. Hodges	Burrel Yates
Henry Hines	D. M. Stewart
James Carter	G. W. Wells
A. J. Hunter	Wm. Johns
John Courson	John Peoples
W. W. Allman	*Wm. Brown
Jesse Carter	B. Brewer
Nedham Rolland	Wm. Colson
Isaac Tucker	H. H. Colson
Willis R. Dangerfield	James D. Colson.
Richard Murray	

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

GEORGIA, Camden County :

Before me, William Coalsen, a justice of the peace in and for said county, personally came Captain Aaron Jernigan, William Rawlison, Stephen Hull, West Rawlison, Williby Minshen, and James Albretton; and they, being duly sworn, depose and say: That they believe there are as many as three companies of regular troops in the interior of Georgia—two companies of infantry and one company of dragoons. The deponents state that their protection to the citizens is of no value; they do not consider them vigilant in their scouts, nor beneficial in any shape. The deponents further state, that they do not know whether or not there are Indians within the limits of Georgia; that there have been no late discoveries. And the deponents further state, that they apprehend the same fear of the savages as they have heretofore, as they have the same scope of country to

It appears that thirty-one of the above names (with this mark [] prefixed) are found on the muster rolls of Captain Jernigan's company of Georgia militia, dated November 23d, 1841, now on file in the Adjutant General's office.

R. JONES, *Adjutant General.*

WASHINGTON, April 18, 1842.

roam, and nothing to hinder them from this swamp to the nation. The deponents further state, that the regular troops are destructive to stock of all kinds, killing and stealing occasionally, and are very abusive to the citizens.

AARON JERNIGAN.
WILLIAM RAWLISON.
STEPHEN HULL.
WEST RAWLISON.
WILLIBY MINSHEN.
JAMES ALBRETTON.

Sworn to and acknowledged before me, this 22d day of January, 1842.
WILLIAM COALSON, J. P.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Governor McDonald.]

GEORGIA, *Camden County* :

Before me, William Coalson, a justice of the peace in and for said county, personally appeared Burris Brewer, James Thomson, Thomas Waters, Henry Hines, G. W. Wells, Allen Discon; and, being duly sworn, depose, on oath, that the three companies retained here on the line of Georgia, for the protection of the inhabitants—viz: two companies of infantry and one company of dragoons—are by no means protective, as they are not vigilant in their scouts, but, on the contrary, destructive to stock of all kinds, killing and stealing, and very abusive to the citizens, especially if interrogated on the subject of stealing.

Sworn to before me, this 24th day of January, 1842.

WILLIAM COALSON, J. P.

I do hereby certify, that the regular troops are destructive to our hogs and cattle, slaying and eating, and abusive to citizens occasionally; and I further state, that D. N. Cone was murdered by the escort, for interrogating them on the subject the day and date above written.

I subscribe my name.

WILLIAM COALSON, J. P.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

Milledgeville, March 10, 1842.

SIR: I have the honor to forward to you a communication from General Knight, which furnishes evidence of Indian signs that cannot be controverted, and proof of the indisposition of the regular forces to pursue the Indians into their hiding places. It is useless for me to apply to the Government for an effective force. Those stationed for the protection of the country, instead of discharging their duty, are almost as troublesome as the savages in the work of murder and destruction of property. Of this I have sent you the testimony. I have taken the defence of the State into my own hands, and only write to ask you to remove the regular troops from the limits of Georgia, that I may have the posts occupied by a military force that may be relied on for the protection of the people. I will ask the

delegation of Georgia in Congress to have appropriations made to pay the militia.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

CHARLES J. McDONALD.

Hon. J. C. SPENCER, *Secretary of War.*

[Copy of the letter of General Knight referred to in the foregoing.]

LOWNDES COUNTY, *March 6, 1842.*

SIR: On the night of the 28th ultimo Mrs. Oglesby was murdered by the Indians, and burnt in her house, about 15 miles from Fort Gilmer, in Ware county, on Tom's Creek. This is in confirmation of my report to you, that the Indians have not left the country, but are prowling about in small parties on the borders of the Okenfenokee swamp, and so soon as the companies under Captains Johnson and Morgan were discharged, are again committing depredations. The citizens in the neighborhood of Mrs. Oglesby assembled on the 2d day of this instant, and appointed Wm. Paggett captain, and pursued the Indians two days, when Mr. Paggett left his men still hunting them, and came to see me. I gave him an order to continue searching for them until I could hear from you, or the enemy should leave the country. Mr. Paggett informs me the regular officer in command at Fort Gilmer was also at Mrs. Oglesby's place with him, and followed the trail of the Indians to the swamp, but would not go into the swamp. I am informed by him, and a number of the citizens, that this company affords the country no protection whatever, as they only ride about in the open country, never search a swamp or hammock, where the Indians invariably take shelter; and if some other and better protection is not afforded, the country must suffer greatly. I learn from Mr. Paggett that it was a small party of Indians, not more than five or six, that murdered Mrs. Oglesby; while hunting for them, he found the sign of a much larger party in Suwanoochee Creek swamp, within three miles of Fort Gilmer. I hope your excellency will order one company, of about sixty men at least, to be stationed on Suwanoochee creek under the command of some energetic officer. I know that such a force is absolutely necessary to protect the country, and keep the swamp free from the savages. In my former report, I begged you would call the attention of the Secretary of War to this subject, and cause a better regular force to be sent here; I am certain, from experience, that a company of militia would be preferable. I sent an order to Captain Johnson yesterday, to take his company and search for eight days. I dislike to give such orders immediately after I am ordered by your excellency to discharge; but, as it is impossible you could contemplate such a result, I think the circumstances justify the course at this crisis. I send you this by express, as our mail does not come to this office.

I have the honor to be your excellency's obedient and humble servant,

LEVI J. KNIGHT,

Major General.

His Excellency C. J. McDONALD.

N. B. I am informed that Mrs. Tillis and three children were murdered on the 22d ultimo, 8 miles from Mineral Springs, Florida, supposed by the Indians whose signs Mr. Paggett found near Fort Gilmer.

L. J. K.

SECOND SERIES.

No. 1.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, April 3, 1841.

SIR: Enclosed herewith you will receive a copy of a communication of March 25th, addressed to the Governor of Georgia by the Secretary of War, on the subject of protecting the inhabitants of Ware county, Georgia;

The General-in-chief directs me to say, that if the four companies of Georgia militia now in the service, and which it is intended shall remain in the service until the expiration of the term for which authority was recently given for their re-muster, (six weeks,) be not sufficient for the purpose, you will adopt such measures in the case as you may deem necessary.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. JONES,

Adjutant General.

Brig. Gen. W. K. ARMISTEAD,

Commanding, &c., Tampa, E. F.

No. 2.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, July 19, 1841.

SIR: Enclosed herewith you will receive a copy of a communication of the 10th instant, addressed to the Governor of Georgia by the Secretary of War, and I am instructed by the Major General to say, that you will please carry out the views of the Department, as communicated to the Governor of Georgia, respecting the protection of the country around the Okefenokee swamp.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

L. THOMAS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

Col. W. J. WORTH,

Commanding the army in Florida, Tampa.

No. 3.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, October 28, 1841.

SIR: Captain Bliss, assistant adjutant general, has this day been instructed to muster into service for three months, unless sooner discharged, the two

companies of militia recently ordered by you to the vicinity of the Okefenokee swamp. A copy of the instruction* is, for your information, herewith respectfully enclosed also, a copy of instructions of the same date to Col. Worth,† respecting these companies.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

L. THOMAS,
Assistant Adjutant General.

His Excellency C. J. McDONALD,
Governor of Georgia, Milledgeville, Georgia.

No. 4.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, October 28, 1841.

SIR: Enclosed herewith you will receive a copy of instructions of this date to Captain Bliss, assistant adjutant general,‡ directing the muster into service for three months, unless sooner discharged, of the two companies of Georgia militia recently ordered to the Okefenokee swamp by Governor McDonald. Should you determine to at once discharge these companies, Captain Bliss will muster them out of service. If otherwise, he is to return to his duties in this office, such being the instructions of the Major General commanding.

During the time these companies remain in service under your orders, the General desires that they may be constantly and actively engaged in their proper duties, so as to render efficient service.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

L. THOMAS,
Assistant Adjutant General.

Col. W. J. WORTH, *8th Infantry,*
Commanding the Army in Florida, Tampa Bay.

No. 5.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, October 28, 1841.

SIR: The Major General commanding the army directs that you proceed, with as little delay as practicable, to Trader's Hill, Georgia, and thence to such other points as you may find necessary, and muster into the service of the United States for three months, unless sooner discharged, the two companies of mounted militia (*Jernigan's* and *Sweet's*) lately called out by the Governor of Georgia, for the defence of the settlements in that quarter.

When mustered, these companies will be placed under the orders of the nearest commander or commanders of sufficient rank belonging to the Florida army. The Major General directs that those commanders be

* No. 5. of this series.

† No. 4 of this series.

‡ No. 5 of this series.

instructed to cause the militia companies under their orders to render efficient service, and to be kept in constant activity.

You will report your arrival at Trader's Hill and the execution of your duties to Colonel Worth, whose orders, relative to mustering the companies out of service, should he order their discharge immediately, you will await at Trader's Hill or other convenient point.

After executing the duties assigned you, you will return to Washington, and report at this office.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

L. THOMAS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

Captain W. W. S. BLISS,

Assistant Adjutant General, Washington, D. C.

[Nos. 6 and 7 are the reports of Captain Bliss, of November 9 and 20, under the foregoing instructions, and follow the letter from the Secretary of War to the Governor of Georgia of December 3d, 1841.]

No. 8.

TRADER'S HILL, (GA.), *November 25, 1841.*

SIR: I respectfully enclose the muster roll of Captain Jernigan's company of Georgia militia, mustered by me at Fort Moniac on the 23d instant. Two men were accidentally absent on the day of muster; one in obedience to a summons from the county court, the other on a short leave granted by the captain. As Captain Jernigan represents them as good men, I have mustered them in the company, taking measures to assure myself of their immediate return to it. When mustered, Captain Jernigan's company was placed under the orders of Lieutenant Colonel Gates, 3d artillery, to whose command the posts on this frontier have been recently attached, and who was at Fort Moniac, on a tour of inspection, the day of muster.

I have received no communication from Colonel Worth's headquarters. Lieutenant Colonel Gates is now inspecting the frontier, with a special view to determine the necessity of a militia force; a final decision in relation to which, by Colonel Worth, is suspended until his report shall be received.

Having mustered these companies into service, and Colonel Worth *not* ordering their discharge *immediately*, I conceived my duties closed; but Lieutenant Colonel Gates has directed me to remain until Colonel Worth's final instructions may be received, involving my detention here, certainly *two*, probably *three* weeks longer.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. W. S. BLISS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

The ADJUTANT GENERAL OF THE ARMY,

Washington, D. C.

No. 9.

TRADER'S HILL, (GA.,) December 3, 1841.

SIR: I respectfully report, that in obedience to instructions from Colonel Worth, dated November 20, 1841, and herewith enclosed, I have mustered out of service the two companies of Georgia militia lately called out by the Governor for the defence of this frontier, viz: Jernigan's company on the 30th ultimo, and Sweat's on the 3d instant, the earliest days on which they could be properly assembled for this purpose.

I enclose, herewith, the muster rolls of the companies, copies of which, agreeably to the request of Major Cooper, have been forwarded to Colonel Worth's headquarters. The proper rolls have also been furnished to the Paymaster General of the army.

I shall leave this place to-morrow, on my return to Washington city.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. W. S. BLISS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL OF THE ARMY,
Washington, D. C.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Captain Bliss.]

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF FLORIDA,

Tampa, November 20, 1841.

SIR: Your report of the 15th instant has been received, and submitted to the Colonel commanding, who directs that, on the receipt hereof, you will be pleased to discharge, executing the necessary papers as to pay and allowances, such companies or detachments of Georgia militia, called out by the Governor of that State, as you may have mustered into the service under the special instructions from the Adjutant General's office, dated the 28th ultimo, advising the proper staff departments when issues of provisions and forage shall cease.

You are requested to transmit to these headquarters copies of the muster rolls, and such other papers as may be necessary to a correct understanding of the case.

After fulfilling these instructions, you will, in obedience to the orders you have received, return to general headquarters.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

S. COOPER,

Assistant Adjutant General.

Captain W. W. S. BLISS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

No. 10.

FORT HENDERSON, GEORGIA,

Trader's Hill, February 1, 1842.

SIR: I have the honor herewith to enclose a return of the troops at this post for the month of January just past. I would respectfully solicit, if

there be any precedent for such a course, that the Government would so far intercede for the men of my company who are held in custody by the authorities of Georgia, on a charge of murder, as to secure proper counsel for them at their trial, which is to come on in April next. I had supposed that the district attorney would find it within the sphere of his duty, but he writes me that his duties are confined entirely to causes before the United States courts, and then only as prosecutor on the part of the United States.

The transaction leading to their commitment and incarceration in the county jail having occurred while the party were in the performance of escort or guard duty to a wagon train, it is desired that their trial should at least be a fair one.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. DAY,

Captain 2d Infantry, commanding.

Brigadier General R. JONES,

Adjutant General U. S. A., Washington, D. C.

No. 11.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, February 15, 1842.

SIR: Your letter of the 1st instant, on the subject of counsel to defend those soldiers of your company charged with murder, has been laid before the Major General commanding, who instructs me to require from you a report of the circumstances in relation to the alleged murder. When the trial comes on, the court will, if necessary, no doubt appoint counsel to defend them.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

L. THOMAS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

Captain H. DAY, *2d Infantry,*

Fort Henderson, Trader's Hill, Ga.

No. 12.

FORT HENDERSON, (GA.) *February 24, 1842.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant; and, in answer thereto, to make the following report of the circumstances leading to the arrest of certain soldiers of the 2d infantry by the authorities of Georgia, viz:

On the 6th December last I detached a small party from my command, as guard or escort to a wagon train destined with supplies for Fort Gilmer. On that night the train halted about twelve miles from this post, and it seems that during the evening the guard was much annoyed by a drunken vagabond, who, coming from the Suwannee country, happened at the same point on the road for stopping during the night. This man (D. N. Cone)

persisted in hanging around the bivouac fire of the escort, and by his abusive language and other means sought to effect a quarrel with them. Every effort appears to have been made by the corporal in command of the party to persuade the fellow to desist, and to keep away, but without effect, for, on being sent off once or twice, he finally succeeded in procuring a rifle from some travelling companion of his, and was seen to approach one of the camp fires and renew the priming of his piece, and then again approached the guard in a threatening manner, but more particularly directing his threats towards private Oakley, one of the guard. When very near the party, the corporal (being still on the alert to prevent, if possible, any disturbance) had seized the man, with a view to reason with him, or, that failing, probably to disarm him, if necessary; and while thus situated (the man having his rifle nearly in the position of "charge bayonet") the corporal heard him cock his rifle, at which he very naturally called out, as a caution to Oakley, "Take care, Bob," on to that effect; on which, Oakley (seeing his own life thus in jeopardy) at the instant fired, and the shot proved fatal to the said Cone. An investigation was had in the case by one or more magistrates, and resulted in committing Oakley for murder, and the corporal and two privates as accessaries to the same, including one private of company C, 2d infantry, who, *en route* to join his company at Fort Moniac, also formed one of the escort.

These are the facts, as far as I have been able to collect them from witnesses, (the teamsters of the train and a sutler,) who, under the protection of the said guard and train, were going to Fort Gilmer, for I was not favored with any report of the case, or their action thereon, by the authorities. Indeed, such was the haste in which they were despatched to the county jail at Jefferson, under the charge of a posse, that it was with some difficulty I succeeded some days subsequently in finding their arms and accoutrements, of which they had been deprived on the spot, and irons of a different description substituted for them.

I am induced to believe that the excitement was very great in this neighborhood, from the numerous friends and great popularity of the father of the deceased Cone; but all who know the son concur in the opinion of his quarrelsome disposition, and, from intemperate habits, of his utter worthlessness, although he had, since the opening of the Florida war, been in the United States service as a captain of volunteers.

My letter upon the subject of counsel for the prisoners, on their trial, was induced by the assurance, from the clerk of the court, that the matter of assigning counsel for prisoners by the court itself was more matter of form, and to meet the requirements of the law, than with any view of affording them sufficient aid, or even an impartial hearing. I had previously addressed the district attorney at Savannah, but learned from him that his duties were limited to cases before the United States courts, and then only in prosecuting on the part of the United States.

As a report of similar import has been rendered to the commanding officer of the district in which this post is embraced, and this subject not so entirely of a military character, I presume I shall be justified in thus forwarding this communication *direct*, without passing it through the prescribed channel of military correspondence in ordinary cases.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. DAY,

Captain 2d Infantry, commanding post.

ADJUTANT GENERAL U. S. ARMY, Washington.

No. 13.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF FLORIDA,
Fort Mellon, March 13, 1842.

SIR: It is only within a few days that the case of four soldiers, (2d infantry,) charged as principals and accessaries in a case of murder within the limits of Georgia, has been brought to my notice, although Captain Day states that he promptly reported the circumstances to the district commander, Lieutenant Colonel Gates, who is now without the limits of my command. I forward herewith a copy of instructions to Lieutenant Colonel Riley, in respect to their defence.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. J. WORTH; *Colonel commanding.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL U. S. ARMY,

Washington City, D. C.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Colonel Worth.]

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF FLORIDA,
Fort Mellon, March 13, 1842.

SIR: The Colonel commanding directs that you instruct Captain Day, of your regiment, at the proper time, to proceed to the seat of justice in Georgia, to attend the trial of four soldiers of the 2d infantry, charged as principals and accessaries in a case of murder: also, that you cause all witnesses (soldiers) essential to their defence to be made to attend. These men will doubtless stand in need of efficient counsel. It is doubtful whether the Government will sanction any expenditure for this purpose. It is therefore suggested whether this is not a case appealing strongly for aid to your regimental fund. Should you have no funds, or the council deem it inexpedient thus to apply them in that case, you will instruct Captain Day to engage suitable counsel to look to their defence.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. T. SPRAGUE,

Lt. and A. D. C. and A. A. A. Gen.

Lieutenant Colonel B. RILEY,

2d Infantry, com'g, &c., Pilatka.

No. 14.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, March 10, 1842.

SIR: I herewith enclose a copy of a communication of the Governor of Georgia, dated the 2d instant, to the Secretary of War, complaining of certain alleged outrages committed by the United States troops on the citizens of that State, which the Major General desires to be investigated in such manner as you may judge to be necessary. I also enclose the accompanying documents, numbered from 1 to 4, inclusive.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. JONES, *Adjutant General.*

Colonel W. J. WORTH,

Com'g, &c., Pilatka, E. Florida.

No. 15.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF FLORIDA,

Fort King, March 29, 1842.

SIR: I have the honor to submit, and to invite especial attention to, the reports of Captains Day and Casey, and Lieutenants Long and Wentworth, touching the reports and petition of certain citizens of the Georgia border, to his excellency the Governor of that State, and his communication to the Secretary of War, calling for the condign punishment of the officers in the *premises*. The statements of these gentlemen challenge all the confidence that can, in any sense, attach to truth, honor, strict sense of justice, and correct appreciation of the relation which soldiers of a republic bear to their fellow-citizens. The soldiers referred to in the affair of Cone, who perished by the hand of one of them, are in the hands of the civil authority, to be tried for their lives; in respect to whom, and humanity, it is most deeply regretted that the law does not admit of change of *venue*.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. J WORTH, *Col. Com'g.*

The ADJUTANT GENERAL OF THE ARMY,
Headquarters, Washington City, D. C.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Colonel Worth.]

FORT SHANNON, PILATKA, (E. F.) *March 27, 1842.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of various documents, as endorsed by you for explanation on the 23d instant, and, in reply thereto, have to report, that, during the location of my company at Trader's Hill, (viz: from the 26th October, 1841, to the 26th February, 1842,) not an instance of any such depredation as complained of, either of destroying hogs or cattle, came to my knowledge, or formed the cause of complaint to me, on the part of any citizen, against soldiers either of my command or of that of Fort M^oniac, with the following exception: After the death of D. N. Cone, as heretofore reported in detail, I heard, casually, as being one item or perhaps the chief cause of his collision with the military guard to the wagon train, that a calf had been killed on the road that same day, and that this guard or the teamsters were accused of the depredation; and as each and every member of the guard was arrested and taken off, without my knowledge, to the county jail, no opportunity was afforded me of ascertaining the facts, and of punishing the guilty party, if found to be among those of my command. Indeed, from the sweeping made by the authorities of every soldier on the spot who was under arms, I had supposed that but one individual had been arrested on the charge of murder, and that the others were undoubtedly taken in order to secure them as witnesses, or that they were implicated in the calf-killing. I only learned some weeks after the transaction, from a blacksmith employed by the assistant quartermaster at the depot, and who proved to have been one of the examining magistrates in the first instance, that the four soldiers had been committed on one and the same charge of murder, principal and accessories; and some days afterwards, on the return of the train, it was determined also to arrest the

wagon master—probably to prevent his evidence being given in favor of the soldiers on their trial. However, with only a rumor of this act of depredation, and as yet no complaint to me by any person, and with a view to be secure from any just charge of neglect or indifference on the subject, I adopted the plan of giving the most positive orders, personally, to each and every non-commissioned officer going out in command of an escort or on other duty, to prevent any the slightest depredation upon the property or persons of citizens, and to hold no communication with them, nor to permit any soldier of their party to enter, under any pretence whatever, a house on the road; and, as a further precaution, to prevent another collision with the inhabitants or authorities, (at least to any fatal result,) I exceeded the bounds of military rule and principle in an enemy's country, (or at least on an enemy's frontier,) by depriving my company of their musket cartridges, and only to each party or escort, going out on duty, allowed five or six rounds of ammunition to be issued, requiring these to be promptly turned in again, on their return to the post—thus having a check upon the misapplication, in any way, of a single cartridge, in the destruction of cattle, hogs, &c.

Although I considered at the time that this step was justifiable, so far as the apprehension of Indians was involved, yet, in this confession of a breach of all military rule and propriety, let my apology be found in an anxiety to save the soldier from any just cause of censure, and from any indiscretion which he might fall into, in a state of partial intoxication, which was almost daily occurring, from the facilities afforded him by almost every inhabitant of the neighborhood. A further inducement to this precautionary step was found in a report, which came to me, that justice (or vengeance) had been so poorly satisfied by the arrest and incarceration of the whole guard, in the case before reported, that a combination was forming, and even had the solemnity of a written pledge, to the number of some two hundred persons, to be avenged on the soldiery for the murder of Captain Cone; but to this I gave no heed or credence, other than to forbid my men the use of cartridges, and to prohibit individuals or small parties from strolling out of garrison, either for the purpose of hunting or fishing, when, by possibility, some collision might occur. This peace-establishment of the cartridge-boxes was continued until the removal of my company from the Georgia frontier.

In the alleged case of the killing the calf, I had, in my own mind, the charity to attribute it, not so much to a wanton or thieving disposition, as to a custom which had prevailed, and, I think, with some sanction, in the Territory of Florida, and with which I know my company had been familiar, of shooting cattle when found running at large, either on the ground of their being Indian property, or, if not, considering them as lost to their proper owners, and to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy, as subsistence to them; and in our then recent change of location from Florida to within the limits of Georgia, the soldier was not aware of any difference, even if aware of the *fact*, as nothing but an inconsiderable stream at this place formed the boundary, the crossing of which, on the road to Moniac, placed him again in Florida.

Of this memorial to the Executive of Georgia I had heard much before leaving the State; and in connexion therewith was a rumor, that, in the event of its object failing, an attack would be made some day on the wagon train, while passing from the depot to one of the dependencies; and not

feeling the slightest apprehension on the subject, yet, on being relieved by Captain Screven, I thought it proper to mention the rumored threat to him, and to suggest that thereafter I should have considered a guard of four or five men as too small to ensure the intimidation of the vagabonds from such an attempt.

Finally, touching the whole subject of grievances, as represented by the petitioners, and the object which, in my mind at least, they seem to have had in view, as I learn within a day or two that, either by executive or legislative authority, there are now three companies imbodyed on that frontier as volunteers, and in the State service, I doubt not the whole secret of the movement is exemplified, and might be still more clearly seen by a comparison of one of the company muster rolls (that of Captain Aaron Jernigan) with the list of names appended to the said memorial.

The papers are herewith respectfully returned, and this report respectfully submitted, by, sir, your obedient servant,

H. DAY, *Captain 2d Infantry.*

Major S. COOPER,
A. A. General, &c.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Colonel Worth.]

FORT KING, EAST FLORIDA,

March 22, 1842.

SIR: There has just been handed to me some affidavits and other documents, purporting to have been addressed by a number of the citizens of Camden county, Georgia, to the Governor of that State, reporting the conduct of the troops upon the Okefenokee frontier, upon which I have the honor to report as follows:

I can only speak as it regards "C" company, 2d infantry, stationed at Fort Moniac, East Florida, and from the 28th of December, 1841, (the day on which I joined,) to the 28th of February, 1842, (the day on which the company was relieved.)

The only affidavit which appears to touch my company is that marked "No. 2."

As far as regards my vigilance in scouting, and my success in affording protection, I shall briefly say, that I kept a part of my command constantly out; and that, while stationed at Moniac, not a person suffered from the enemy, either in property or life.

Sir, I performed my duty conscientiously. As regards the latter part of the affidavit, in which the troops were said to be in the habit of "killing stock and of abusing citizens," I pronounce it untrue.

Some of the men who have signed the affidavit expressed to me their great regret that my company had to leave; that they were the most civil men they had ever seen in a company, and that they never killed their stock.

The statements of Lieutenants Long and Westcott, respecting the affair, are enclosed.

I have also enclosed Lieutenant Westcott's report of a scout alluded to by Aaron Jernigan.

Any one unacquainted with the character of many of the people of tha

frontier would be at a loss to imagine what could induce them to have made such uncalled-for and deliberately false statements.

When I joined company "C" I found a grog shop within 200 yards of my post; and, in fact, almost every inhabitant in my neighborhood had liquor to sell. The facility with which the men procured liquor caused me much trouble.

I established a total abstinence society in my company, which had the happy effect of breaking up the grog shop in my vicinity, and stopped the sale of liquor at the other places.

I believe that this action of mine, above mentioned, was one cause of the secret opposition of the people—"secret," I say, for to my face they were all kinduess. Another great reason I believe to be, the desire of the people to be mustered into service. They have once been so mustered, and they will never be satisfied until they are again in pay.

Sir, I solemnly declare that I believe the above to be the true reason for the vile slander and deliberate falsehood which they have uttered against the company which I have the honor to command. I do not fear the minutest investigation.

As regards Captain Cone, Captain Day, who commanded at Trader's Hill, will be able to give the required information.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
S. CASEY, *Capt. 2d Infantry.*

Major S. COOPER,
A. A. General, &c.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Captain Casey.]

FORT KING, *March 22, 1842.*

SIR: Having just read a petition of sundry citizens of the Okefenokee district, to the Governor of Georgia, setting forth various charges against the regular troops recently stationed in their vicinity, (*viz*: "C" and "F" companies, 2d infantry, and "H" company, 2d dragoons,) such as destroying their property, killing their stock, insulting and murdering their citizens, I have the honor, in compliance with your instructions, to submit the following statements of facts relative to the matters contained in said petition:

I shall, as I am an officer of "C" company, confine my remarks to it, as I had no opportunity of judging of the conduct of the men of the other companies, and presuming that the officers of the same can speak for themselves.

"C" company went from Fort Russell to Fort Moniac (on the Okefenokee) about the 1st of November, 1841, and left there about the 1st of March, 1842. I was in command of it until the 1st of January, when I was relieved by Captain Casey. I continued with it while it remained at that post. During the whole of this time, there were but two complaints made against the men of the company, and they so trivial as to be scarcely worthy of notice. The first was, that of a soldier, who, in passing a field of sugar cane, cut down one stalk. On his return, he was taken to task by the owner, and consented to remunerate him; whether he did or not, I cannot say; at all events, this very citizen, upon our leaving the post, said to me (several members of his family said the same) that our company

was the best behaved of any that had ever been stationed there, and that he was sorry that it was ordered away. His name is Rawlison, one of the signers of the petition. The other case was that of a Mr. Mincy, who found one of his hogs dead near the post, and accused the company of killing it. I asked him if he could produce any evidence of the fact. He replied, he could not. I then asked him how he knew whether the hog was killed by the soldiers or by Mr. Hogan, near whose field he found it. He could make no reply. I then told him, that I did not believe that the soldiers had killed it; that "C" company had been previously stationed in the vicinity of the settlements, and no charge of the kind had ever before been alleged against them; and gave him to understand, that if any depredations were committed by the soldiers under my command, if they could be identified, they should make good the damage. And, so far from being accused heretofore of such offences, the citizens had frequently asserted that "C" was the best company, in this respect, they had ever seen in service.

I will further add, that several citizens whose names are appended to this petition, residing near the post, have frequently and voluntarily testified, in my presence, to the orderly and exemplary conduct of the enlisted men of "C" company, and expressed much regret on their removal.

It will perhaps throw some light on this subject, to refer to the fact, that the first signer of this petition, and the most influential of their number, has recently been in the service of the United States, and is known to be very anxious to re-enter it. Most of the other signers are similarly interested. The regular troops are in their way; the object can only be effected by their removal. To gain their point, truth and justice are sacrificed.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

EDW. R. LONG,
2d Lieutenant 2d Infantry.

I concur in the foregoing statement of Lieutenant Long, and know the facts therein contained, to be correct.

GEO. C. WESTCOTT,
2d Lieutenant 2d Infantry.

Captain S. CASEY,
Commanding "C" Company, 2d Infantry, Fort King, E. F.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Captain Casey.]

FORT KING, (EAST FLORIDA,) *March 22, 1842.*

SIR: In compliance with your request, I beg leave to submit the following report of a scout under my command, sent out by you from Fort Moniac, East Florida, during the latter part of January or 1st of February last, and which scout is referred to in a communication from Captain A. Jernigan to the Governor of Georgia, dated "Camden county, Georgia, February 10, 1842."

The facts of the case, as near as I can recollect, are as follows:

About the time above referred to, Mr. Wrey, the wagon master in charge of the train from the depot at Trader's Hill, arrived about 10 o'clock in the morning, with supplies for the command at Fort Moniac; he having reported to you, that he saw that day in the road, about five or six miles from Moniac, what he supposed to be the track of an Indian crossing the road;

and that he had seen, two or three days previous, a track on the south side of the road, near the same spot. As you directed, I immediately started out with six mounted men, to examine the ground and to ascertain the correctness of the report. Mr. Wrey accompanied me to the point where he stated he had discovered the sign. On our arrival there, he showed me the *place* where he saw the track, but there was so much water in the road that I could see nothing which bore any resemblance whatever to either a moccasin or barefoot track. I examined the road closely, and, after searching here some time without making any discovery of Indian signs, I left the road, took a northerly course towards the swamp, skirting along the edge of it, and examining the bogs near it for two miles north of the road, not being able to discover a single track; and returned and recrossed the road, taking a southerly direction, and examined in the same manner the country for about four miles south of the road. Here I was also unsuccessful in finding any evidence of the presence of the Indians; and satisfied, after a careful examination, that there were none in the neighborhood, I returned to the post, coming up the north prong of the St. Mary's, and arriving at Moniac a short time after retreat.

It may be proper here to add, that it was ascertained on the following day, after the sign was seen by the wagon master, that a citizen passed over the road barefooted, and that it was probably his track which caused the alarm.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. C. WESTCOTT,
2d Lieutenant 2d Infantry.

Captain S. CASEY,
2d Infantry, Fort King.

No. 16.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF FLORIDA,
Fort King, Murch 30, 1842.

SIR: On the 23th instant, I directed the withdrawal of the depot and garrison at Trader's Hill, in order to adopt a shorter and more economical route of supply, and to give such positions to the companies and their detached camps as would better cover the country, especially any approach to the Georgia border. This arrangement was in no degree influenced by the petition of the citizens of that border to the Governor, much less by his excellency's letter to the Secretary of War of the 10th instant, of which I had no knowledge until yesterday through the public prints. Advised of this correspondence, I should have regarded any withdrawal of the detachments until instructed by the superior authority as premature, and calculated to embarrass the Department on a question of much interest and delicacy. I forward herewith a map, on which is indicated generally the position of the troops, showing (thus A) detached camps.

Several official reports are herewith forwarded, of little interest other than as exhibiting the systematic efforts to get up alarms, for very obvious purposes. The recent discharge of a large number of hired persons has, as was anticipated, greatly increased this disposition.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. J. WORTH, *Colonel commanding.*

The ADJUTANT GENERAL OF THE ARMY,
Headquarters, Washington City.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Colonel Worth.]

HEADQUARTERS, OCK. AND ST JOHN'S DISTRICTS,

Fort Shannon, (East Florida,) March 28, 1842.

SIR: I have the honor to report that I arrived here on the night of the 25th instant, from a tour of inspection of the posts on the Georgia frontier. I also extended my ride to North's station, which is 12 miles by land below Fort Gilmer, at what is called Blunt's ferry, in the vicinity of which there are many settlements, and in the midst of them, near the ferry, I have directed Captain McKavett to establish his principal camp. Enclosed you will find a copy of my letter of instructions to him upon the subject. As to Trader's Hill, I would respectfully represent that, beyond the preservation of the depot, there is but little use for troops at that place; and, as matters exist there at present, it may be doubted whether the troops afford that service, inasmuch as the depot is three-quarters of a mile or a mile from the garrison. I would recommend the breaking up of that post, and the removal of the company to Fort Moniac. In the mean time, by establishing a small depot at Black creek, in charge of a subaltern, with a small guard, the troops at Barber's, Fort Moniac, and North's station, might be supplied with much more economy. In my route, I hastened the changes directed by your order, and by this time they have, no doubt, taken place. On my arrival at Fort Gilmer, I found a letter of instructions in the hands of Captain Hunter, conflicting with a portion of the orders, &c., which I had previously seen; and I directed Captain Hunter so to modify as to embrace those instructions, they appearing more recent than any others.

Every thing appears to be perfectly quiet on the frontier; and from the number of persons I found travelling through the woods, without any kind of arms whatever, I should not judge there was much fear among the settlers, although, on their representations of the murder on Tom's creek, and their exposed situation, the Governor of Georgia has authorized the mustering of three companies of volunteers into the State service, under Captains Jernigan, Johnson, and North. They were mustered in while I was on the frontier, and are, no doubt, anxious to have the protection of the frontier in their own hands, in order to ensure their pay. I instructed the different officers of the army in their vicinity to be particularly careful not to recognise them by any act whatever. Company D, 8th infantry, at Trader's Hill, is much cut up by details of the assistant quartermaster; it numbered only 19, total, present on the 20th instant, a portion of the company being absent on a scout. Company E, 8th infantry, at Fort Moniac, mustered 70, total, present on the 21st. Company C, 8th infantry, at Camp Brown, mustered 54, total, present on the 24th; and Captain Hunter's company 2d dragoons mustered 50, total, present, and 43 effective horses, on the 22d.

I do not consider any accession of troops on the Georgia line necessary. With what there are, kept detached in small parties and in constant activity, as much may be achieved as could be done by a much larger force. Besides, no number of troops that could be stationed there would cause the clamor of the citizens to cease. Many of them are too indolent to work, and are in the habit of raising a clamor in order to be mustered into ser-

vice, and at the same time petition to have the regular troops removed, the better to ensure the same object.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

B. RILEY,

Lt. Col. com. the Ocklawaha and St. John's districts.

Maj. S. COOPER,

A. A. General, &c.

No. 17.

[Transmitted by Colonel Worth to the Adjutant General.]

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF FLORIDA,

Tampa, April 10, 1842.

SIR: On the 28th of March I issued instructions to abandon the position of Trader's Hill (within the limits of Georgia) as a depot, and for withdrawing the garrison to a point within the limits of Florida. It was not until the 31st of that month that I was apprized, through the public prints, of your excellency's correspondence with the honorable Secretary of War, which is presumed to be authentic, intimating wishes and demands with which my action would seem to be a compliance, of course, under instructions from the Government.* My sole object in the new disposition simply was to establish a better and more economical covering line, especially in reference to the Georgia border and Florida settlements in that quarter. To guard against any public misapprehension on this subject, I beg to be permitted to assure your excellency that, had I been aware of the published correspondence referred to, no consideration of convenience or expediency could have induced me to adopt a measure seemingly touching an issue which your excellency has been pleased to make with the Federal Government, much less do I presume to discuss that question; and quite as foreign was it from my design thereby to admit the justice or truth of the imputations which your petitioners have attempted to fix upon the soldiery and discipline of the troops and the honor of the officers of this army. My purpose, however, mainly is, in all respect and sincerity, to assure your excellency that, up to this moment, I have not had the honor to receive any instructions touching your demand for a withdrawal of the troops from the *State of Georgia*.

I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

W. J. WORTH,

Colonel commanding.

His Excellency Governor C. J. McDONALD,

Milledgeville, Georgia.

No. 18.

[Enclosed in the foregoing letter of Colonel Worth.]

FORT HENDERSON, TRADER'S HILL, GEORGIA,

April 3, 1842.

SIR: I have caused to be copied from the Federal Union of the 22d ultimo, published at Milledgeville, Georgia, and now, herewith, have the

* See letter of the Governor of Georgia of March 10, 1842, in the 1st series.

honor to transmit, for the inspection of the colonel commanding the army of Florida, a very nervous and denunciatory despatch from the Executive of Georgia to the Secretary of War, requesting the withdrawal of the regular troops from the territory of Georgia, charging upon them misconduct and supineness.

Upon this I have to remark, that if it be his excellency's purpose to scandalize, generally, the forces of the United States, I am not unwilling (in such good company) to sink as low as it may be in his power to plunge us; if he refer only to the troops which have heretofore, and until the 26th of February, 1842, garrisoned this post, it is neither my business nor my purpose, by this communication, to herald myself forth as their champion; but if he refer to the troops which I now have the honor to command, and which have been in position here since the above date, then I declare, most positively, that his accusations are wholly destitute of true and sufficient data.

It is not, generally, an honorable defence to resort to recrimination; but I have to assure you that the very few and trifling cases of misconduct which have occurred in this command have been promptly and properly noticed, and have arisen, chiefly, from an illicit traffic by the settlers in this vicinity in soldier's clothing and whiskey, which I promise you to suppress, if there is law in the land to do it.

I have, in conclusion, briefly to state that, in so far as I am informed, there is no cause whatever for alarm (nor can I learn that there does exist any alarm) from hostile Indians in this neighborhood; and, in order to corroborate this assertion, it is my intention, in the course of the next week, to penetrate and examine the Okefenokee swamp, in two small detachments from Forts Floyd and Norton—the first composed of one sergeant and eight privates, commanded by Second Lieutenant T. S. Johnson, 5th infantry; and the second, of one sergeant, one corporal, and eight privates, commanded by myself, leaving only one sergeant and seven privates for the protection of this post and depot.

The two detachments will rendezvous on Floyd's island, and, united, emerge from the swamp via Forts Tatnall and Gilmer, (see map,) and so return to this post via Fort Moniac. Of the result of this operation I shall give you timely advice.

I have the honor to be your most obedient servant,

R. B. SCREVEN,

Captain 8th Infantry, commanding.

Major S. COOPER,

Assistant Adjutant General, &c.