

FLORIDA VOLUNTEERS.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

COMMUNICATING

All the papers in relation to the mode and manner in which the troops serving in Florida were called into service, &c.

JANUARY 11, 1859.—Referred to the Committee of Ways and Means and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *January 10, 1859.*

SIR: At the request of the Hon. George S. Hawkins, of Florida, I have the honor to transmit to the Committee of Ways and Means, herewith, all the papers in relation to the mode and manner of the troops serving in Florida having been called into service, and the regularity of their employment, for the payment of which an appropriation has been asked of Congress.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN B. FLOYD,
Secretary of War.

HON. JOHN S. PHELPS,
*Chairman of Committee of Ways and Means,
House of Representatives.*

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, January 8, 1856.

SIR: Official accounts received from Florida indicate the renewal of difficulties with the remnant of Indians residing in the southern portion of that peninsula.

To be prepared for such emergency—it being impracticable to send reinforcements of regular troops—Brevet Colonel John Munroe, of the United States army, who is charged with conducting the military operations in that quarter, has been authorized, should he deem their

services necessary, to call on your excellency for an auxiliary volunteer force of five companies. Should Colonel Munroe avail himself of the discretionary authority thus conferred, I am instructed by the President to request that his requisition may be complied with, and to express the hope that the State authorities will give to the measure their cordial co-operation.

The volunteers will be received for six months, unless sooner discharged. Colonel Munroe will designate an officer of his command to muster the several companies at such time and place as you may appoint, and he will furnish any information that may be desired in respect to organization, pay, &c., of the volunteers.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JEFFERSON DAVIS,
Secretary of War.

His Excellency JAMES E. BROOME,
Governor of Florida, Tallahassee, Florida.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, January 21, 1856.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your excellency's letter of the 31st ultimo in relation to the late outbreak of the Indians in Florida, and offering any militia force that the government may need to aid in quelling it.

In reply I have to inform you that previous to the receipt of your letter I addressed a communication to you requesting that five companies of volunteers might be called into the service of the United States. I have to refer you to that letter, dated the 8th instant, for the views of the department in the matter.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JEFFERSON DAVIS,
Secretary of War.

His Excellency J. E. BROOME,
Governor of Florida, Tallahassee, Fla.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, May 21, 1857.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant asking an approval of the service of certain volunteers called out by you, and in reply to inform you that the explanation as to the necessity of their services is satisfactory, and orders have been issued to the officer commanding in Florida to muster them in and out of the service of the United States.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN B. FLOYD,
Secretary of War.

His Excellency J. E. BROOME,
Governor of Florida, Washington.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, May 28, 1857.

SIR: The President of the United States requests that, to aid in suppressing Indian hostilities within Florida, you cause to be detached, without delay, from the militia thereof, in accordance with a late suggestion of your own, not exceeding ten companies of mounted volunteers, to be reported by companies to the commanding officer of the United States troops engaged in that service, as fast as they can be detached, in order that the same may be duly mustered into the service and pay of the United States.

With the ten companies, a colonel, lieutenant colonel, and major, may be mustered; with eight, a lieutenant colonel and major; and with six companies, only a lieutenant colonel. In either case, one adjutant, one quartermaster, each with the rank of first lieutenant, and not exceeding three medical officers, may also be mustered into service.

A copy of this requisition will be sent to the commanding officer of the United States troops in Florida, with instructions to detach proper mustering officers to meet the volunteers at convenient points, and to correspond with you on that point and all others connected with the vigorous prosecution, on the part of the United States, of the said hostilities.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN B. FLOYD,
Secretary of War.

His Excellency J. E. BROOME,
Governor of Florida, Tallahassee.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, June 4, 1857.

SIR: In the requisition for volunteers made upon you the 28th ultimo, by direction of the President, no mention was made of the time for which the companies would be accepted. I have now, therefore, the honor to inform you that they will be mustered into the service of the United States for the period of six months, unless sooner discharged.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN B. FLOYD,
Secretary of War.

His Excellency J. E. BROOME,
Governor of Florida.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, July 23, 1857.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant, wherein you propose to this department that the

mustering in and out of the service of those volunteers in Florida, whose enrollment had been approved and adopted by it, should be predicated upon the State's muster rolls furnished to the officer of the United States appointed for that purpose.

In answer I have to inform you that no officer of the army could make a mere constructive muster such as that you suggest. To certify to the rolls, he must have mustered the troops, nor could he have mustered them unless present. Under the circumstances, the only course left for the department is to receive as official the State rolls, duly certified by the State authorities, and to base upon these a recommendation to Congress for the appropriations necessary to pay off the troops. This course will obviate the difficulties mentioned by you on account of the disbandment of the volunteers in question.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN B. FLOYD.

Secretary of War.

His Excellency JAMES E. BROOME,
Governor of Florida, Tallahassee, Florida.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, December 23, 1857.

SIR: The term of the engagement of the companies of Florida volunteers at present in the service of the United States being about to expire, the President requests that, upon the requisition of the commander of the department of Florida, you cause to be detached from the militia of the State such number of volunteers as may be asked for by that officer, under the instructions communicated to him yesterday, of which a copy is herewith enclosed. The volunteers to be mustered into the service of the United States for the *period of six months, unless sooner discharged.*

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

JOHN B. FLOYD,

Secretary of War.

His Excellency M. S. PERRY,
Governor of Florida, Micanopy, Florida.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, January 7, 1856.

SIR: I have received and laid before the Secretary of War your communications of the 23d and 26th ultimo, on the subject of the recent attack on Lieutenant Hartsuff's exploring party, and the probable renewal of hostilities by the several Indian bands remaining in Florida.

To meet this contingency, it being impracticable to send reinforcements of regular troops, the department has authorized the calling out of three independent companies, to be disposed of in the manner

gested in your letter, or in any other way that, in your judgment, may best insure the objects contemplated, and two other companies to serve as hunters and trailers, and to be associated with the regular troops in their operations. In respect to the composition of these two last companies it is enjoined on you not to allow any man to be received who is not a good woodsman and familiar with the habits of Indians, and who could be thus usefully employed in discovering and following their trails. The several companies will have the same organization as regular troops, and will be mustered for the period of six months, unless sooner discharged. As each company will act separately, no field or staff officers will be received with them.

The great difference of expense between maintaining horse and foot troops renders it desirable to restrict the number of the former to the lowest limit. The department is not, indeed, aware of any special necessity for employing mounted volunteers at all; nevertheless, should you be of opinion that their services are essential to the success of your operations, it is left to your discretion to decide what portion of the three independent companies for which you are authorized to call shall be mounted.

Blank rolls for mustering these volunteers will be forwarded by to-day's mail. You will confer with the governor, who has been apprised of the authority given you, on the subject of receiving them, and send an officer of the army to muster them at such points as may be indicated. Instruct this officer to be very careful to embrace on the rolls all the information that may be necessary to secure, at the same time, the rights of the volunteer, and to protect the interests of the government.

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

S. COOPER,
Adjutant General.

Brevet Colonel J. MUNROE, U. S. A.,
Commanding in Florida, Tampa, Florida.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, March 13, 1856.

SIR: Your communication of the 13th ultimo, enclosing copies of a letter addressed to you by the governor of Florida, under date of January 19, tendering a volunteer force in advance of your requisition for the same, and your reply thereto, have been submitted to the Secretary of War, and your request to receive Captain *Richard Turner's* company of woodmen and boatmen is approved, the company to have the same organization as regular troops, and to be mustered into service for the period of six months, unless sooner discharged.

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

S. COOPER, *Adjutant General.*

Brevet Colonel J. MUNROE, U. S. A.
Commanding Troops in Florida, Tampa, Florida.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, March 21, 1856.

SIR: I transmit herewith a copy of a letter addressed to the War Department by Senator Mallory, of Florida, covering a communication from several citizens of that State, in relation to the defence of the Manatee settlements from Indian hostilities.

The Secretary of War authorizes you to cause the force alluded to to be mustered into any of the companies you are already empowered to receive into the service of the United States, or you will take such other measures with the troops now at your disposal as, in your judgment, will best secure the safety of the settlements in question.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
 S. COOPER, *Adjutant General.*

Brevet Colonel J. MUNROE, *U. S. A.,*
Commanding Troops in Florida, Tampa, Florida.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, May 1, 1856.

SIR: Your letters, with enclosures of April 16 and two of April 20, have been submitted to the Secretary of War, who directs me to say, in reply, that to effect a speedy termination of hostilities in Florida he is anxious operations should be chiefly directed against the strongholds of the Indians in the Big Cypress, where, it is understood, their families are concentrated. A departure from this course would only tend to give confidence to the hostiles, and encourage them to scatter and make forays with small parties upon the settlements.

Should this plan of operations be adopted and prosecuted with energy and determination, the Secretary does not doubt that the most favorable results will follow. To this end it is presumed most of the volunteer force, now posted for the ostensible purpose of giving confidence and protection to interior settlements, might be more advantageously employed in operating with the troops south of the Carlosahatchee.

In carrying out these suggestions should you, in disposing of the present volunteer force in the way here proposed, consider that additional force of that description is necessary to a vigorous prosecution of the campaign, you are authorized to take into service from the to five more companies of foot volunteers.

With regard to such cases as Captain Jernigan's company, the Secretary desires you not to hesitate in taking prompt steps to rid the service of such men, who certainly cannot be relied upon for efficiency in time of need. It is left to your discretion either to dis-

charge individuals or, if circumstances demand, to cause companies to be mustered promptly out of service.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
S. COOPER,
Adjutant General.

Brevet Colonel JOHN MUNROE,
*Commanding Department of Florida,
Fort Brooke, Tampa, Florida.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, July 21, 1856.

SIR: Your letter of the 6th instant, reporting the dates at which the terms of service of the volunteer companies called out in Florida will expire, and presenting certain suggestions in relation to the organization of a new volunteer force, has been received and laid before the Secretary of War, by whom it has been returned to this office, with the following endorsement:

"The views of the colonel commanding the department of Florida, as to the propriety of drawing volunteers from points at a distance from the exposed frontier, are approved, and will be communicated to the governor of the State. He is authorized to make a requisition for such number of mounted companies as in his judgment will suffice to replace those about to be discharged, not exceeding the number now in service.

"JEFFERSON DAVIS.
Secretary of War.

"WAR DEPARTMENT, *July 18, 1856.*"

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
S. COOPER,
Adjutant General.

Brevet Colonel J. MUNROE, *U. S. A.,
Commanding the Department of Florida, Tampa, Florida.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, June 3, 1857.

SIR: By direction of the Secretary of War, I have the honor herewith to transmit, for your information and government, a copy of a requisition made the 28th instant, upon the governor of Florida, for ten companies of mounted volunteers, to serve under your orders, in the prosecution of hostilities against the Seminoles.

These volunteers will be mustered into the service of the United States *for the period of six months, unless sooner discharged.*

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

S. COOPER,
Adjutant General.

Colonel G. LOOMIS,
*5th Infantry, Commanding Department of Florida,
Tampa, Florida.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, December 22, 1857.

SIR: Your letter of the 2d instant to the assistant adjutant general at the headquarters of the army, relative to the volunteer companies in the service of the United States, at the present time, in Florida, and the manner in which they are to be replaced, has been forwarded to this office, and laid before the Secretary of War.

The Secretary is favorably impressed with the views suggested by you in respect to the employment of organized companies of guides, trailers, boatmen, &c., believing that they would render the most efficient service, considering the nature of the country in which they would have to operate, and the character of the foe; but as this particular description of force can only be obtained by an allowance of compensation greatly beyond that which existing laws provide, he is reluctantly compelled to withhold his assent to the measure proposed.

You are, however, authorized to make requisition upon the governor of Florida for volunteers to replace those now in service whose engagements are about to expire; and for such number as, in your judgment, the objects to be accomplished may require, provided the limit at present allowed is not exceeded.

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

S. COOPER, *Adjutant General.*

Colonel GUSTAVUS LOOMIS,
5th Infantry, Com'g Dep't of Florida, Tampa, Fla.