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## SEMINOLE INDIANS—PRISONERS OF WAR.

## LETTER

FROM

## THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

IN REPLY TO

*A resolution of the House of Representatives of the 21st ultimo, as to whether any Seminole Indians, coming in under a flag of truce, or brought in by Cherokee Indians, acting as mediators, have been made prisoners by General Jesup.*

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 APRIL 11, 1838.

 Read, and laid upon the table.
 

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DEPARTMENT OF WAR, *April 10, 1838.*

SIR: The enclosed report of the Commanding General of the army, and accompanying documents, together with those numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4, are respectfully submitted, as containing such of the information called for by the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 21st ultimo as to whether "any Seminole Indians, coming in under a flag of truce, or brought in by Cherokee Indians, acting as mediators, have been made prisoners by General Jesup," as is now in the possession of this Department.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

S. COOPER,

*Acting Secretary of War.*

HON. JAMES K. POLK,

*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*


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 HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
*Washington, March 29, 1838.*

SIR: I have the honor to lay before you, herewith, the report of the Adjutant General, furnishing so much of the information called for by the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 21st instant, as is in the possession of the headquarters of the army.

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

ALEX. MACOMB,

*Major General.*HON. JOEL R. POINSETT, *Secretary of War.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

*Washington, March 26, 1838.*

SIR: Agreeably to your instructions, I herewith respectfully submit for your information copies of all such communications and documents on file in this office as appear to have any relation to the subject of inquiry contained in the resolution of the House of Representatives dated 21st March.

These documents are lettered from A to I, inclusive, viz :

A. Letter from Major General Jesup, the commanding general in Florida, to the Adjutant General, dated October 21, 1837.

B. Letter from General Jesup to the Secretary of War, dated October 22, 1837.

C. Letter from General Jesup to the Adjutant General, dated November 17, transmitting copies of his instructions to General Hernandez, marked D; General Hernandez's report, marked E; a "talk" with the Indians, marked F; and a communication on the subject from Captain L. B. Webster, marked G.

H. Letter from General Jesup to the Secretary of War, dated December 6, 1837.

I. Letter from General Jesup to the Adjutant General, dated December 14, 1837.

Documents B and H will be found in the printed correspondence with Major General Jesup, document No. 78 of the present session of Congress, House of Representatives.

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

R. JONES,

*Adjutant General.*

Major General A. MACOMB,  
*Commanding, &c.*

A.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE SOUTH,

*St. Augustine, October 21, 1837.*

SIR: I have received your letter dated October, covering a copy of a statement submitted to the Secretary of War, dated the 29th of August, of the probable number of troops (regulars and marines) for service in Florida. That statement embraces the entire organization, as I understand it, of the companies in, and to be sent to, Florida; but you are aware that the establishment is never full, and that in this climate it is rare that two-thirds of the nominal force is ever effective. The commanding officer at Tampa reports that, of his command, the troops from the interior, who are reported for duty, are barely convalescent. Of the whole regular force which will be in Florida, I am sure not more than two thousand will be effective, and the discharges will probably equal the recruits who will join. If we can commence, early the next month, our operations in advance, the enemy may be found, and perhaps beaten before the close of the winter. I regret that a small body of recruits had not arrived early this month, to enable me to occupy Volusia and Fort Mellon.



I have caused Powell, Wild-Cat, Coe-Hajo, John Cawaya, the two Hickses, Tustenuck-kee, Chitto-Yahola, with upwards of seventy Micasukey and Seminole warriors to be seized, and I have them now confined in the fort at this place. Powell, Wild-Cat, and John Cawaya, were the cause of the Seminoles failing to fulfil their treaty. We have here about one hundred and thirteen Indian prisoners, and among them nearly all the war spirits of the nation.

I shall detach General Hernandez to-morrow, with three or four hundred mounted men, dragoons and volunteers, to Tomoka, and perhaps to Volusia, to attack or capture numerous small parties of Indians and negroes said to be east of the St. John's, preparing coontee, (a species of the arrowroot.) And I shall send, early the next morning, a steamboat with a detachment of the artillery and a company of the 2d infantry to Volusia, for a party of negroes, said to be there or at Spring Garden.

My prisoners, since I commenced operations in December last, amount to about five hundred, black and red; and about thirty Indians and negroes have been killed, by which more than two hundred rifles have been silenced. And we have guides for every part of the country. I may be deceived, but I think the prospect of closing the war is now flattering.

I have the honor to be, sir, most respectfully, your obedient servant,  
**THOMAS S. JESUP,**  
*Major General commanding.*

Brigadier General R. JONES,  
*Adjutant General.*

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B.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE SOUTH,  
*St. Augustine, October 22, 1837.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your two letters of the 7th instant; and I have the satisfaction to inform you that Asseen Yoholo (Powell) is my prisoner, with nearly all the war spirits of the nation.

That chief came into the vicinity of Fort Peyton on the 20th, and sent a messenger to General Hernandez, desiring to see and converse with him. The sickly season being over, and there being no further necessity to temporize, I sent a party of mounted men, and seized the entire body, and now have them securely lodged in the fort.

I have Emathla, (Philip,) Coe-Hajo, Miccopotokee, and Euchee Billy, all principal chiefs; Coacochee, (Wild Cat,) Asseen Yoholo, (Powell,) Chitto Yoholo, Tustunnuggee, and several other important personages, sub-chiefs, with more than eighty first-rate warriors; and I have guides who can lead the army into every fastness in the country.

I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
**TH. S. JESUP,**  
*Major General commanding.*

Hon. J. R. POINSETT,  
*Secretary of War, Washington city.*

C.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE SOUTH,

*Picolata, November 17, 1837.*

GENERAL : I enclose a copy of a report of General Hernandez, detailing the operations of the force under his command, from the 17th to the 21st ultimo, inclusive. I would have sent this document sooner, but, occupied as all the gentlemen near me have been, I have not been able to have a copy made. In the copies of my official communications, already sent to your office, you will find my instructions to General Hernandez, as to the subjects to be discussed with the Indians, as well as my order to seize them.

I am, most respectfully, your obedient servant,

TH. S. JESUP,

*Major General commanding.*

Brig. Gen. R. JONES,

*Adjutant General, Washington city*

D.

*Memoranda for General Hernandez.*ST. AUGUSTINE, *October 21, 1837.*

Ascertain the objects of the Indians in coming in at this time ; also, their expectations. Are they prepared to deliver all the negroes taken from citizens, at once ? Why have they not surrendered them already, as promised by Coe-Hajo, at Fort King ? Have the chiefs of the nation held a council in relation to the subjects of the talk at Fort King ? What chiefs attended that council, and what was their determination ? Have the chiefs sent a messenger with the decision of the council ? Have the principal chiefs, Micanopy, Jumper, Cloud, and Alligator, sent a messenger, and, if so, what is their message ? Why have not the chiefs come in themselves ?

TH. S. JESUP.

FORT PEYTON, *October 21, 1837.*

GENERAL : Let the chiefs and warriors know that we have been deceived by them long enough, and that we do not intend to be deceived again. Order the whole party directly to town ; you have force sufficient to compel obedience, and they must move instantly. I have information of a recent murder by the Indians ; they must be disarmed ; they can talk in town, and send any messengers out they please.

TH. S. JESUP.

## E.

## HEADQUARTERS FORCES EAST OF THE ST. JOHN'S,

*St. Augustine, October 22. 1837.*

GENERAL: The Indian chief Coacoochee having, conformably to his engagement, when he was permitted to depart from this, returned about 12 o'clock on Tuesday, the 17th instant, and having reported that about one hundred Indians would be at Pellicer's creek on the following day, among whom would be Oseola and Coa Hajo, I proceeded, on the 18th instant, with Captain Hanson's company of Florida volunteers, Captain Green's company of Georgia volunteers, and a part of a company of the 2d regiment of United States dragoons under Lieutenant Gilpin, to meet these Indians. On my arrival at Pellicer's creek, I found, on this side of the creek, about thirty or forty warriors, and learned from my officers that there appeared to be about as many on the south side of it; but that neither Oseola nor Coa Hajo had joined them. It was represented to me by the sub-chief, John Cavallo, who conducted the *talk* on the part of the Indians, that these chiefs were expected in the evening of that day or the subsequent morning. In this interview it was my purpose to hold out every proper encouragement to induce the Indians to rely on kind treatment from the whites in the event of their coming in, and bringing with them the negroes and other property captured during the war, expressing our desire to put an end to hostilities; and I procured a promise from them to move northwardly to the neighborhood of Fort Peyton.

On the morning of the 20th instant, John Cavallo, with another Indian, accompanied by Lieutenant Peyton, arrived in town, with information that Oseola and Coa Hajo, with the Indians, had encamped near Fort Peyton, and stating that they expected to see me there on the following morning.

Having directed to be assembled at Fort Peyton, under the command of Major J. A. Ashby, of the 2d regiment United States dragoons, parts of companies D, F, and I, of that regiment, under Captain Beall; company H, of the same regiment, under Lieutenant Gilpin; Captain Green's company of Georgia volunteers; and Captain Hanson's company of mounted East Florida volunteers; I proceeded to that post on the morning of the 21st instant, accompanied by my assistant adjutant general, Major Drysdale; my quartermaster, Major Robion; and my two aids-de-camp, Major Gibbs and Lieutenant Graham, of the 2d regiment United States dragoons; as also by your aid-de-camp and acting adjutant general, Lieutenant Chambers, and Colonel Warren. Leaving Fort Peyton, I found the Indians encamped about a mile south of that post, on the north of a pretty large cypress pond.

For the purpose of carrying into effect your instructions conveyed to me verbally by your aid-de-camp, Lieutenant Linnard, after having left Fort Peyton, that if the answers of the chiefs to my inquiries should not be satisfactory they were to be made prisoners, I had given the necessary instructions to Major Ashby to ensure their capture if it should become necessary. In conformity to these directions, believing from the dispositions of the Indians that they did not mean to surrender, they were completely surrounded in about ten minutes after I reached their encamp-

ment. I found there Oseola and Coa Hajo, with a force which I then estimated at about sixty warriors.

In the prosecution of my purposes in this interview, I learned that the Indians were perfectly disposed to bring in the negroes and property taken from the inhabitants during the war, but that they were by no means prepared to surrender themselves; and their answers to the questions put to them in regard to the breach of their stipulations made with you at Fort King, I conceive to be wholly evasive and unsatisfactory. Indeed, their answers were generally so. From these circumstances, and agreeably to your express order, conveyed to me during the *talk*, that they should be made prisoners, I gave a signal, previously agreed on, and the troops closed in on them. The arms and baggage of the Indians, with the ponies, amounting to twenty-four, were now ordered to be collected, and the line of march taken up for St. Augustine. Two of the party were absent from the camp when I arrived at it, and one of them, I regret to say, escaped; the other, in attempting to do so, was taken and secured by Colonel Sanchez, between Fort Peyton and their encampment.

I have every reason to be satisfied with the manner in which my orders on this occasion were executed by Major Ashby, and the officers and men under his command. I have little doubt that the purposes of the Indians were far from being such as might have been expected under the circumstances; and I am convinced, on our determination to capture them, that nothing but the promptitude and efficiency of the movements of the troops under my command prevented the effusion of blood; for the arms of the enemy, artfully covered by deer-skins, as if carelessly thrown on the ground occupied by them, were ready and evidently prepared for action, and to prevent surprise.

The accompanying report will show that there were captured on this occasion 71 warriors, 6 women, and 4 Indian negroes, with 47 rifles and their accoutrements of powder-horns and 43 pouches. The horns are generally about half-filled with good powder, and they had abundance of lead. Five additional rifles have since been brought in.

On my way to Pellicer's creek, I met 74 negroes, brought in by the Indians, and forwarded by Captain Hanson, who, with his company, preceded me with provisions for Indians, whom, from the information derived from Coacoochee, I expected to meet there.

Accompanying this, I beg to transmit to you a minute of the *talk* held with these Indians, which will show the answers given to the questions you desired me to put to them; from all which, it is manifest that they had not come here with an intention of remaining.

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

JOSEPH M. HERNANDEZ,  
*Brig Gen'l com'g.*

To Major General TH. S. JESUP,  
*Commanding army of the South.*

P. S. I find I have omitted to state that before the line of march was taken up for St. Augustine, Captain Drane joined me with his company of foot.

## F.

*Notes of a talk between Brigadier General Hernandez and the Indian chiefs Osinyohola (or Powell) and Coahajo, on the 21st October, 1837, taken by Major K. B. Gibbs, aid-de-camp.*

*General.* What people have come with you ?

*Chiefs.* All that are well, and they could gather.

*General.* I speak to you as a friend : what induced you to come ?

*Chiefs.* We come for good.

*General.* At whose request did you come ?

*Chiefs.* Philip sent us a message by Coacoochee.

*General.* What message did Philip send ?

*Chiefs.* Philip sent word to us that there would be a great [not legible] to each other ; he sent his son to let them know to come in, and they did so.

*General.* What do you expect from me ?

*Chiefs.* We don't know.

*General.* Have you come to give up to me as your friend ?

*Chiefs.* No, we did not understand so ; word went from here, and we have come ; we have done nothing all summer, and want to make peace.

*General.* In what way to make peace ?

*Chiefs.* They thought they would come in and make peace, with liberty to walk about.

*General.* Are you ready to give up all the property you have captured ?

*Chiefs.* We intend to do so, to bring in what is due to the white people ; we have brought a good many negroes in now.

*General.* Why have you not given up the negroes before, as Coahajo promised at Camp King ?

*Chiefs.* The negroes were scattered, but they intended to do so.

*General.* Did the chiefs assemble after the talk at Camp King ?

*Chiefs.* They were gathered, but had not time to talk.

*General.* What chiefs gathered at that time ?

*Chiefs.* Three or four.

*General.* Have you any message for me ? and the names of the chiefs who send the message ?

*Chiefs.* We have some talk from the chiefs ; two more chiefs were to have come with us, but they got sick and went back—John Cavallo bring their talk. [They bring talk from Pon Governor, Jumper, and Holatoochee, who are the heads of the nation.] Amico and Hospitala are the two chiefs that got sick and turned back.

*General.* Why did not Micanopy, Jumper, and Cloud, come instead of sending a message ?

*Chiefs.* They all got the measles, and could not come.

*General.* What word did they send by you ?

*Chiefs.* When they got stronger, they would come and see you.

*General.* I am an old friend of Philip's, and wish you all well ; but we have been deceived so often, that it is necessary for you to come with me ; you can send out a messenger ; you shall stay with me, and none of you shall be hurt ; you will all see the good treatment that you will experience ; you will be glad that you fell into my hands.

*Chiefs.* We will see about it.

*General.* You know that, until now, the white people have let you do

as you pleased ; they did not wish to hurt you ; they beat drums and fired the big guns to induce you to come in.

*Chiefs.* That is true.

*General.* The white people were in great bodies to induce you to come in, and to show you their power. You are clear of the war, and are going with me to St. Augustine.

*Chiefs.* Yes.

*General.* The troops are going into the field, but without drums or big guns ; they will come upon them, and be seen as birds in the air, without expecting them.

*Chiefs.* Yes—it is all straight.

*General.* We know the country, and, if we do not, we have good guides ; the force will be spread over the whole country.

*Chiefs.* Yes—you are right.

*General.* You are now speaking to one who is your sincere friend ; you are going to St. Augustine, and none will hurt you.

*Chiefs.* Yes.

*General.* I have brought Blue Snake to prove what I say is true. *Blue Snake* said that all the general says is true. But he understood the Indians were to be allowed to return.

*General.* I have just heard of one white man killed on the other side of the St. John's. You are prisoners, and prisoners never suffer with us. Tell the young men not to be afraid, we do not mean to hurt them ; but it is necessary that they be secured till they get in town. Nothing will happen to them.

The arms and baggage of the Indians were now ordered to be collected, and the line of march taken up for St. Augustine.

K. B. GIBBS, *A. D. C.*

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G.

FORT MARION, *October 22, 1837.*

GENERAL : In obedience to your orders, I have the honor of reporting that, of the Indian prisoners captured yesterday, and came over to me last evening, there are seventy-one Indian warriors, four negro men, and six Indian women. The arms are forty-seven rifles, old and much worn ; forty-three rifle pouches and horns ; a good supply of lead, but a small quantity of excellent powder, (the horns generally not more than a fourth full ; ) six hatchets, two axes, eighty knives, nineteen pack-saddles.

I am, general, respectfully, your obedient servant,

L. B. WEBSTER,  
*Captain 1st Artillery.*

Brigadier General HERNANDEZ,  
*Commanding east of the St. John's.*

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H.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE SOUTH,

*Steamboat on Lake George, December 6, 1837.*

SIR : On the evening of the 3d instant, Micanopy, Cloud, Toskegee, and Nocese-Yoholo came into camp and surrendered themselves. They were accompanied by the Cherokee delegation, and by the chief Coe-hajo,

whom I had sent out to assure the Seminole Indians that all who would surrender should receive kind treatment. The Cherokee delegation have acted in accordance with the views of the Government. On explaining to the Seminole chiefs the talk of Mr. Ross, they have urged the importance and necessity of fulfilling all their treaty stipulations. They manifest every disposition to co-operate with me, and, thus far, I approve entirely of their course. On the 5th instant I met the Seminole chiefs in council : the principal officers of the army and the Cherokee delegation attended.

I opened the council by remarking on the bad faith with which the Seminoles had acted, and desired to know from them what were their views and expectations in coming to camp. Micanopy replied that he desired peace, and would fulfil the treaty which he had made with us ; but that his people were dispersed, and that several of the principal chiefs were absent, and could not join him for many days ; but he and the other chiefs observed, that give them time, and all would "go right."

I replied, that our object was to save, not to destroy them ; that it was the desire of the Government and people of the United States to treat them with the utmost liberality ; but we had been so often deceived by their promises, that I hardly knew how to rely on their professions ; that it was my intention not to be deceived by them again ; and I required the immediate surrender of the families of the chiefs and warriors confined at St. Augustine. Micanopy promised to surrender them. I then required that Sam Jones should surrender, with his people, and that all the Seminoles and Mickasukies within four days' march of us should come in immediately, and surrender their arms. This was assented to. Seven days were allowed for the families at St. Augustine and for Jones's people to surrender, and ten for those of Micanopy and Cloud. Messengers were immediately despatched to carry the orders of the chiefs into effect. Though I believe the chiefs to be sincere, I have but little reliance on their promises. I doubt their influence over their people. I shall, however, hold them as hostages, and compel them to act as guides if their people should not come in. Ten days will settle the matter.

Having a few days disposable, I determined to go to Garey's ferry, and make arrangements in relation to the volunteer force lately arrived ; and I am now on my way down for that purpose.

I have the honor to be, most respectfully, your obedient servant,  
T. S. JESUP,  
*Major General commanding.*

The Hon. J. R. POINSETT,  
*Secretary of War, Washington city.*

P. S. I propose to discharge the Florida volunteers immediately.

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I.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE SOUTH,  
*Fort Mellon, December 14, 1837.*

SIR : Since the return of the Cherokee delegation this morning, I have caused all the Indians in camp, and in this vicinity, to be seized and placed on board of a steamboat destined for Fort Heileman, whence they will be sent to St. Augustine. There are seventy-two Indians : among

them are Micanopy, Cloud, and Nocose Yoholo, principal chiefs. There is, in addition, one Indian negro.

I am, general, most respectfully, your obedient servant,

TH. S. JESUP,

*Major General commanding.*

Brig. Gen. R. JONES, *Adj. General, Washington City.*

The foregoing letters and documents, marked A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, and I, are true copies.

R. JONES, *Adjutant General.*

March 26, 1838.

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No. 1.

DEPARTMENT OF WAR, *October 31, 1837.*

SIR: It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22d instant, containing the gratifying intelligence of the capture of Powell and other important personages of the Seminoles; and I trust that a sufficient number of troops have by this time reached Florida, to enable you to act with energy, and to compel the rest of the nation to sue for peace.

I have to request that you will write weekly at least to the Department, by the opportunity now offered by the steamer Poinsett.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

J. R. POINSETT.

Major General THOMAS S. JESUP,  
*Garey's Ferry, Florida.*

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No. 2.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

*Washington, November 3, 1837.*

SIR: I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your several letters, respectively dated the 19th, 21st, and 23d of October, communicating the highly satisfactory intelligence of the seizure of Powell, Wild Cat, and other influential chiefs, with many Indian warriors of the hostiles; all of which have been laid before the Major General.

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

R. JONES.

Major General THOMAS S. JESUP,  
*Commanding, &c., Florida.*

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No. 3.

PICOLATA, *November 17, 1837.*

DEAR SIR: As I shall depart to-day for the interior, and, in the casualties of an active campaign, it is possible I may not return, I desire that the seizure of Powell and other chiefs and warriors may be understood by my friends.

Powell, Coacoochee, the two Hickses, and several other sub-chiefs, organized the abduction of Micanopy and other hostages in June last. Coacoochee, John Cavallo, (the latter one of the hostages,) with several



others, carried the hostages off, and with them their people. I then resolved to take all who were concerned in the measure, whenever the opportunity might present. The capture of Philip, by General Hernandez, opened the way to effect my object sooner than I had hoped. Coacoochee carried off Micanopy by force, and, if he had been a white man, I would have executed him the moment he came into my hands. His father, (Philip,) however, asked permission to send him out with messages to the chiefs and warriors. He returned with one of my hostages, John Cavallo, and with most of the sub-chiefs and warriors who were concerned in the abduction. I determined, at once, that they should be seized, and held as hostages for the conduct of the chiefs and warriors out.

I gave Lieutenant Peyton, commanding at Fort Peyton, a confidential order (A) to seize them, if they should come into the fort. Late at night, however, I learned from General Hernandez that they could not be induced to come into the fort; and the messenger whom they sent in, (John Cavallo, my hostage,) desired the general to meet them at their camp, without an escort; saying he would be perfectly safe among them without troops. I observed to the general, that wherever John Cavallo was, foul play might be expected; and I had no doubt the intention of the Indians was to seize a sufficient number of officers to exchange for Philip and the Euchee chiefs; and I directed that he should increase his escort. I requested him to call in the morning for final instructions, and I sent an express to Lieutenant Peyton, with a note, informing him that he would have no opportunity to execute my confidential order, and he must not attempt it, unless the whole force should place themselves within his power; but that we must trust to events.

On the morning of the 21st, General Hernandez called for final instructions. I then informed him that I was inclined not to permit the Indians to escape, and I gave him a memorandum of the heads of the conversation I desired him to hold with them, (of which paper B is a copy.) The general departed to Fort Peyton accompanied by a number of officers and citizens; among the former, were the gentlemen of my staff. Without communicating my intention to any one, I followed to the neighborhood of Fort Peyton, sent in for Lieutenant Peyton, and ascertained from him the number and position of the Indians. I directed him to go forward and ascertain whether the answers of the Indians to the inquiries made by General Hernandez seemed satisfactory. In the mean time, I detached an aid, who had joined me, with orders to General Hernandez to seize all the party if the talk was not satisfactory.

Lieutenant Peyton returned to Fort Peyton, whither I had gone, and related to me the substance of the answers given by the Indians. Their answers were evasive and unsatisfactory, and I sent by Doctor Finlay an order (of which C is a copy) to seize them. The measure was so promptly and judiciously executed by Major Ashby, of the 2d dragoons, that the Indians, though their rifles were loaded and primed, ready for action, had not an opportunity to fire a single gun.

I consider the force of the nation broken by this capture; and though we may have a month or two of hard service, I think the war must terminate early this winter.

Most respectfully and truly yours,

THOMAS S. JESUP.

Major T. Cross,

*Acting Quartermaster General, Washington city.*

A.

[Confidential.]

ST. AUGUSTINE, *October 20, 1837.*

Should Powell and his warriors come within the fort, seize him and his whole party. It is important that he, Wild Cat, John Cowagee, and Tustenugge, be secured. Hold them until you have my orders in relation to them.

THOMAS S. JESUP,  
*Maj. Gen. commanding.*

Lieut. R. H. PEYTON, *Fort Peyton.*

B.

*Memorandum for Gen. Hernandez.*

ST. AUGUSTINE, *October 21, 1837.*

Ascertain the object of the Indians in coming in at this time; also their expectations. Are they prepared to deliver all the negroes taken from the citizens at once? Why have they not surrendered them already, as promised by Coa-Hajo, at Fort King? Have the chiefs of the nation held a council in relation to the subjects of the talk at Fort King? What chiefs attended that council, and what was their determination? Have the chiefs sent a messenger with the decision of the council? Have the principal chiefs, Micanopy, Jumper, Cloud, and Alligator, sent a messenger; and, if so, what is their message? Why have not these chiefs come in themselves?

TH. S. JESUP.

C.

FORT PEYTON, *October 21, 1837.*

GENERAL: Let the chiefs and warriors know that we have been deceived by them long enough, and that we do not intend to be deceived again. Order the whole party directly to town; you have force sufficient to compel obedience, and they must move instantly. I have information of a recent murder by the Indians; they must be disarmed; they can talk in town, and send any messages out they please.

TH. S. JESUP.

Gen. J. M. HERNANDEZ.

RD 1 2.8 No. 4. MB

WASHINGTON CITY, *January 2, 1838.*

SIR: You have doubtless been informed, through Colonel John H. Sherburne, of the arrival in this city, on the evening of the 30th ultimo,

of the Cherokee deputation who were charged with the duty of endeavoring to restore peace between the Seminole Indians and the United States, in the character of mediators. This deputation penetrated the deep swamps and hammocks of Florida, under the escort of Coahachee, one of the captive chiefs; and at Chickasawhatchie, (Chickasaw creek,) a distance of sixty miles from Fort Mellon, they met the Seminole and Mickasuky chiefs and warriors in council, and there delivered to them the talk which I, with your approbation, had sent them. After reading and fully explaining its import through the interpreter, the assembled chiefs and warriors at once agreed to receive it in friendship, as coming through their red brethren the Cherokees, with the utmost sincerity and good feelings, from their elder brother the Secretary of War, who represents their father, the President of the United States. When the usual Indian ceremonies on this occasion, in smoking the pipe of peace, &c., were concluded, Micanopy, the principal chief, with twelve others of his chieftains, and a number of their warriors, agreed to accompany the Cherokee deputation, and accordingly went with them, under a flag of truce, into the headquarters of the United States army, at Fort Mellon. After this successful meeting, further steps were taken for inviting all the people to go in; and whilst some were coming in, the escape of Wild-cat from the fort at St. Augustine, and other events altogether beyond the control of the Cherokee deputation, produced a sudden and unexpected distrust and change of determination in the minds of the chiefs and warriors of the nation who were still out in their fastnesses. Upon being informed of this fact, it is reported that General Jesup immediately ordered his troops to be put in motion for hostile operations, and also caused all the chiefs and warriors who had come in under the Cherokee flag to be forthwith made prisoners of war; they were then placed in the hold of a steamboat, and shipped to the fort at St. Augustine, and there imprisoned. It is further reported that General Jesup told some of these chiefs that, for the first drop of blood which might be spilt by the warriors against whom he had marched his troops in battle array, they (the captive chiefs) shall be hanged. Under this extraordinary state of the affair, it has become my imperious though painful duty, for the defence of my own reputation, as well as that of the deputation who acted under my instructions, for carrying out the humane objects of this mediation; also, in justice to the suffering chiefs and warriors, whose confidence in the purity of our motives, as well as in the sincerity of the Government, by the assurances held out to them under your authority in my talk, had thus placed themselves under the flag of truce before the American army, and I do hereby, most solemnly protest against this unprecedented violation of that sacred rule which has ever been recognised by every nation, civilized and uncivilized, of treating with all due respect those who had ever presented themselves under a flag of truce before their enemy, for the purpose of proposing the termination of a warfare. Moreover, I respectfully appeal to and submit for your decision, whether justice and policy do not require at your hands that these captives should be forthwith liberated, that they may go and confer with their people, and that whatever obstacles may have been thrown in the way of their coming in to make peace may be removed. In a word, under all the circumstances of the case, so far as the particular captives alluded to are concerned, I feel myself called upon, by every sense of justice and honor, to ask that they may be releas-

ed and placed at liberty, to determine with their people what to do under all the circumstances of their affairs, as freely and untrammelled as they were previous to the council held with them by the Cherokee mediation, as it was through the influence of the Cherokee talk they had consented to go under the flag of truce into General Jesup's headquarters. The detailed report of the deputation of their proceedings on this mission not having as yet been fully made out, I have deemed it important to present the facts herein briefly stated without delay ; and should it be deemed necessary, or you shall desire it, I will communicate to you the full report of the deputation as soon as it may be in readiness.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient, humble servant,

JOHN ROSS.

Hon. JOEL R. POINSETT,  
*Secretary of War.*









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