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Andrew Jackson



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TWO UNCOLLECTED LETTERS OF ANDREW JACKSON

*(Maj. Gen. Andrew Jackson to Willie Blount,
Governor of Tennessee. The Capture of Pensacola.)*

Head-Quarters, 7th Military District,
Tensaw, Nov. 14, 1814.

Sir-On last evening I returned from Pensacola to this place - I reached that post on the evening of the 6th. On my approach sent Maj. Pierre with a flag to communicate the object of my visit to the governor of Pensacola. He approached Fort St. George with his flag displayed, and was fired on by the cannon from the fort-he returned and made report thereof to me. I immediately went with the adjutant general and the major with a small escort, and viewed the fort and found it defended by both British and Spanish troops. I immediately determined to storm the town, retired and encamped my troops for the night, and made the necessary arrangements to carry my determination into effect the next day.

On the morning of the 7th I marched with the effective regulars of the 3d, 39th and 44th infantry, part of General Coffee's brigade, the Mississippi dragoons, and part of the West Tennessee regiment, commanded by Lieut. Col. Hammonds (Col. Lowery having deserted and gone home) and part of the Choctaws led by Maj. Blue, of the 39th, and Maj. Kennedy of Mississippi territory. Being encamped on the west of the town I calculated they would expect the assault from that quarter, and be prepared to rake me from the fort, and the British armed vessels, seven in number, that lay in the bay,

To cherish this idea, I sent out part of the mounted men to show themselves on the west, whilst I passed in rear of the Fort undiscovered, to the east of the town. When I appeared within a mile, I was in full view. My pride was never more heightened, than viewing the uniform firmness of my troops, and with what undaunted courage they advanced, with a strong fort ready to assail them on the right, 7 British armed vessels on the left, strong block-houses and batteries of cannon in their front, but they still advanced with unshaken firmness, entered the town, when a battery of two cannon was opened upon the centre column, composed of the regulars, with ball and grape, and a shower of musketry from the houses and gardens. The battery was immediately stormed by Capt. Levall and company, and carried, and the musketry was soon silenced by the steady and well directed fire of the regulars.

The governor met Cols. Williamson and Smith, who led the dismounted volunteers, with a flag, begged for mercy, and surrendered the town and fort unconditionally; mercy was granted and protection given to the citizens and their property-and still Spanish treachery kept us out of possession of the fort until nearly 12 o'clock at night.

Never was more cool, determined bravery displayed by any troops; and the Choctaws advanced to the charge with equal bravery. On the morning of the eight I prepared to march and storm the Barancas, but before I could move tremendous explosions told me that the Barancas, with all its appendages, was blown up. I despatched a detachment of 200 men to explore it, who returned in the night with the information that it was blown up, all

the combustible parts burnt, the cannon spiked and dismantled, except two; this being the case I determined to withdraw my troops, but before I did, I had the pleasure to see the British depart. Col. Nicholls abandoned the fort on the night of the 6th and betook himself to his shipping, with his friend Captain Woodbine, and their red friends.

The steady firmness of my troops has drawn a just respect from our enemies-It has convinced the red sticks that they have no strong hold or protection, only in the friendship of the United States-the good order and conduct of my troops whilst in Pensacola, has convinced the Spaniards of our friendship, and our prowess, and has drawn from the citizens an expression, that our Choctaws are more civilized than the British.

In great haste, I am respectfully sir,

ANDREW JACKSON, Maj. Gen. Com.

(Copied from *The* Boston, Mass., December 30, 1814. In the possession of F. W. Hoskins, Pensacola.)

* * *

Hermitage Decbr. 29th 1825

Sir

I have received your letter of the 3rd instant with enclosure, which I have read with much satisfaction and for which receive my thanks-had I have been in Congress it would have given me much pleasure to have lent my feeble aid to whatever would have promoted the prosperity of Florida. I shall always feel a deep interest in her welfare.

Public men must expect to meet with opposition and contumacy-but what a great consolation, when

we can pass in review our whole public course, and find that purity of intention, and conscious rectitude of principle, inspired all our actions, and public good, not private aggrandisement, induced all our acts-these are consolations to the mind, that wealth & power, without them, cannot give.

the Honble
Jos. M. White Esqr

I am Sir very respectfully
your most obdt. Servt.
Andrew Jackson

(The above letter has been presented to The Florida Historical Society by Miss Gertrude N. L'Engle, a grand daughter of Thomas Baltzell, law partner of Joseph M. White to whom it was written.)