

1939

A Prelude to the Creek War of 1813-1814, John Innerarity to James Innerarity

Elizabeth Howard West



Part of the [American Studies Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq>

University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Florida Historical Quarterly by an authorized editor of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.

Recommended Citation

West, Elizabeth Howard (1939) "A Prelude to the Creek War of 1813-1814, John Innerarity to James Innerarity," *Florida Historical Quarterly*: Vol. 18 : No. 4 , Article 3.

Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol18/iss4/3>

A PRELUDE TO THE CREEK WAR OF
1813-1814

IN A LETTER OF JOHN INNERARITY TO
JAMES INNERARITY

NOTE-This letter is of unusual historical significance, for it describes the visit of McQueen and his Creeks to Pensacola, which resulted in the attack of the whites on the Indians at Burnt Corn Creek, the first fight of the war. Without this Creek victory as fuel for the war party and aid in bringing the waverers along with them, Big Warrior's peace party might well have carried the majority with them instead. Innerarity's letter is important in the light it throws on the relations of Governor Manrique with McQueen, and his furnishing the Indians with a large amount of ammunition-some of which must have been used at the Fort Mimms massacre. - *Ed.*

INTRODUCTION

Both writer and addressee of the letter here printed were at the date of its writing partners in the firm of John Forbes & Company, the name under which Panton, Leslie & Company was re-organized in 1804, three years after the death of William Panton, senior partner of Panton, Leslie & Company and of its predecessor, Panton & Forbes. Both were nephews of Panton; James, the older brother, had charge of the House at Mobile; John, the younger, was in charge at the Pensacola House,

The text as here printed has had to be pieced together from fragments in three collections, viz: in the Greenslade papers, the property of Admiral John W. Greenslade, U.S.N. and his family, inherited from the late Mrs. Marie Taylor Greenslade (Mrs. John W. Greenslade) ; in the Cruzat papers, a legacy to the Florida Historical Society from the late Mrs. Heloise Hulse Cruzat ; and in the Georgia Department of Archives and History.

The Greenslade fragment is an eight-page draft, in John Innerarity's hand, of the first part of the

letter; the Cruzat fragment, a one-page duplicate, partly in the same hand, partly in a clerk's, of its last part. An original letter, of July 30, 1813, also in John Innerarity's hand, follows; it is addressed to James Innerarity, and endorsed by him as received on August 6. The Georgia fragment is a typescript of an extract from the letter of July 27, which was enclosed in a letter, dated Aug. 14, 1813, from Brigadier-General Ferdinand Leigh Claiborne, of the Louisiana and Mississippi Territory Volunteers, to the Governor of Georgia.

Virtually nothing but the part referring to the visit of a group of Creek and Shawanese Indians to Pensacola in quest of Spanish aid for their projected anti-American war is here printed.

Tecumseh, the famous Shawanese chief, had visited the Southern Indians about two years before, in the hope of uniting them solidly with other tribes in a general war which, as he expected, would annihilate the Americans and thus reestablish Indian ownership of the country. Though he was only partially successful in gaining Southern Indian support, his influence, together with conditions existing in the Creek country, seems to have been the immediate cause of the bloody conflict known as the Creek War of 1813-1814.

It is an interesting coincidence, which adds to the dramatic quality of Innerarity's account, that the Battle of Burnt Corn Creek, the first of the Creek War, was fought on the same day his letter was written, by at least a part of the Indians whose visit the letter describes; their American antagonists being commanded by Colonel James Caller, "of the Militia."

Although part of the letter as originally written seems irrevocably lost, the part here printed seems in its restored form to be complete.

ELIZABETH HOWARD WEST *

* * *

Greenslade Papers
1813, July 27
John Innerarity to James Innerarity
A.L. 8 p. [incomplete]

[July 27, 1813]

My Dear Brother

I had the [pleasure of receiving] your esteemed favors of the 25th Ins^t [Poor D'O]lives ¹ went away from here quite panic struck & with such precipitation as not to afford me time to drop you a few lines. On receiving your letter by him I went up to the Governors ² in order to prevail upon him not to furnish the Indians w^t any ammuniton, but when I arrived they were in Conference in his Sala de Audiencia, & I stepped into the Secretary's office in order to learn from Reggio ³ the Governor's intentions. While there the Governor sent for me, in order as he said to impart to me all their proceedings & particularly to inform me of their vehement threats & menaces against me if I did not furnish them wt. powder Ball & Father Coleman ⁴ was present-His words were "han echado veneno contra la Casa de v" - "han dicho qe echarian

*Miss West, librarian, Texas Technological College, and formerly of the Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, and Texas State Librarian, is writing the story of William Panton and his large share in the history of the southern region during the last years of the 18th century. - *Ed.*

1. D'Olives : See also *infra*, p.
2. The governor: Mateo Gonzales Manrique, Civil and Military Governor at Pensacola, May 8, 1813 - March 31, 1815.
3. Reggio: Probably [Carlos] Reggio. See an undated petition (in the Cruzat Papers) of inhabitants of West Florida [probably between 1819 and the formal transfer of Florida to the United States in 1821], where mention is made on folio 2 of "el Secretario del Gobierno Dn Carlos Reggio."
4. Father Coleman: The Parish Priest of Pensacola.

pronto abaxo su Casa alta." ⁵ McQueen further said that the house had acquired all their property from the Nation & that they now must give back a part of it to assist them, nay he told the Governor that he must compel us. The Chiefs had all retired previous to the Gov^r's sending for me. He told me in continuation that they had carried their insolence & audacity so far as to tell him that he (the Gov^r) had two tongues, two hearts, that he was an American, & all this because he would not give them guns & swords, and the quantity of ammunition they demanded (25 Cases of Gunpowder) & because he told them that he was a subordinate Chief, th[at he could not take] any part with them in their war, nor could [he violate the treaty ⁷ of friendship [p. 2] and limits betw]een Spain & the U.S. They even told [him that if he did not assist] them they would kill all the Spaniards [whom they found out of Pensacola] & carried their threats & menaces to the [utmost pitch with a view of in]timidating the Gov^r to give them whatever [they should ask. This was] the second Conference on the day after their arrival & not one of [the Chiefs] had hitherto come to see me, nor did they until the third day, when McQueen came with all his Warriors & squatted

5. "Han echado... ": i.e. "They have spat venom at your House"; "they have said in a moment they would tear down your lofty House."
6. Peter McQueen: "a half-blood, of property and influence, shrewd, sanguinary, and deceitful. . . had already declared for war. . ." (Claiborne, John F.H. *Life and times of General A I* . . . New York, 1860, p. 67). See also Pickett, *History of Alabama*. . . Birmingham, 1900, Chap. XXXVI, p. 521: "Peter McQueen, at the head of the Tallase warriors; High-Head Jim, with the Autaugas; and Josiah Francis, with the Alabamas. . . departed for Pensacola with many pack-horses. . ." (Note that this reference corresponds to v.II, chap. XXXII, p. 253, of edition III, Charleston, 1851.)
7. "The treaty of friendship and limits. . ." : "Pinckney's Treaty," 1795, between the United States and Spain.

themselves on the galleries & stair case as thick as they could be strewed & in all their military attire with their shaker⁸ who trembled, grinned horribly, & made the most convulsive movements so as to endeavour to inspire terror. But all this warlike array was lost upon me, & I was about ordering their shaker out of the house, but the interpreter told me not to pay any attention to him. M^cQueen then was about to harangue me, but I interrupted him & told him of what the Governor had informed me, of their threats - & exclaimed against their ingratitude, I told them that they ought to be ashamed of their conduct towards the house & that they were very much mistaken if they thought to get any thing from me by threats & menaces, that I was indeed very much surprised how they could have the assurance to ask any thing from me when I had been from month to month & day to day in the Constant expectation of receiving a large sum from them in Cash in payment of their debts according to their solemn promises to me. Altho' M^cQueen every now & then interrupted me & tried to change the conversation, yet I continued to talk

8. "Their Shaker": Either High-Head [High-headed] Jim or Josiah Francis, the brother-in-law of Sam McNac [Manac, Moniac. Tuskegee]. See the sworn statement of McNac in Halbert & Hall, *The War* (Chicago and Montgomery, 1895): ". . . An Indian came to me, who goes by the name of High-Headed Jim, and whom I found had been appointed to head a party sent from the Autassee Town, on the Tallapoosa, on a trip to Pensacola. He shook hands with me, and immediately began to tremble and jerk in every part of his frame, and the very calves of his legs would be convulsed, and he would get entirely out of breath with the agitation. This practice was introduced in May or June last by the Prophet Francis, who says that he was instructed by the Spirit. . ." Claiborne, *op. cit.* p. 69-71, quotes a statement of McNac of July 13, 1813, apparently written by Dale from dictation, which he "forwarded to Colonel James Caller, commanding the 15th regiment of militia, Mississippi Territory." This differs in some details from the sworn statement, though on the whole in agreement therewith.

to them with the utmost firmness & most placid composure, & M^cQueen had no other resource left but to deny all what the Gov^r had informed me. He & another Chief attakulpie then began their talk, - told me how they had taken up the Tomahawk, & that the whole Nation w^t the exception of the [Cowetas] and Tuckabatchies had joined them, that the Chactaws were also about [to join them and that the] flame of war, would be kindled from the Mississippi [to the Lakes of Canada]. They said that the Great Spirit above had [spoken to many of the c]hiefs, & had commanded them to go to war. [p. 3] They magnified greatly their resourc[es and strength and the extent of their] designs & after a long talked [sic] conclu[ed by saying now they] would know their friends from their en[emies, and that if the House was] really their friends, as they had alw[ays professed; now was the time] to show it by acts of friendship [by assisting them with plenty] of ammunition & clothing-that if [we did] not, they would then be convinced that we would not take their talks, & that we held to the talks of the Big Warrior.⁹ They then asked me if I had any paper from him, if I had said they, burn it, fling it into the sea, it is of no account, 'ere now he is killed, & so will soon all those who do not abandon his steps & cause. To all this I pleaded extreme poverty, told them that they had made us poor, that I had more need to receive from them than to give, that I was no King nor Governor, nor Chief to give them presents but merely a Merchant, that not withstanding as they represented their distress to be very great I would give them a few blankets & some flaps and salt This they thought

9. Big Warrior (Tustinuggee Thlucco) : the leader of the Creek party friendly to the Americans. (See Pickett, *op. cit.* (1900 ed) p. 514.

was a beginning & that they could draw me on by degrees & they accordingly pretended to be pleased & gave me all their hands on going away after a conversation of upwards of two hours in presence of Father Coleman & Arroyo.¹⁰ In the afternoon the Shawanese Chiefs waited upon me & began a long talk informing me that all the Nations between the Missouri, the Mississippi & the Lakes had joined in the war excepting one Nation, meaning I believe the Cherokees, that they were all now like one fire, that they were determined to make the land clean of the Americans or to lose their lives, that they had come a great way to see their Brothers, the Creeks, who had none to look to here at present except the Governor and us and that therefore [they hoped and expec]ted that we would be their friends & furnis[h [them liberally with what] we could, & that when they went back they [would inform their friends [p. 4] the English of what we had done] for them, with a great deal of such [like stuff to which I gave v]ague answers. The next day they assem[bled on the square to receive the] Governor's presents & sent several messengers [to me to send my present to the] square also that. they all might see it. [Finding it therefore, useless and unsafe] entirely to resist, I sent them eight [Damaged Blankets, 100 l^{bs} Tobacco, 1]0 l^{bs} Wampum Beads, 5 l[b] Vermillion & 3 B^{ls} Salt. When they saw this present they set no bounds to their fury, scattered the Vermillion in the sand, flung the beads in the air and trampled upon the blankets. They then came to the house much enraged, asked if I took them for Children or Warriors, expressed the utmost contempt for the present, & clamorously demanded ammuniton. I told them I had none but

10. Arroyo : Francisco Gutierrez de Arroyo, Secretary.

this would not satisfy them. I took them up to the loft of the Brick Store & shewed them the empty barrels. They were quite incredulous, & said that at least they knew I had plenty of lead for they had seen it, but I told them I had but little & could not spare any. Finding they could neither by threats, nor artifices shake my inflexible determination not to furnish them with a single ounce of powder or lead, or flint, they then insisted on my furnishing them with plenty of blankets, Hatchets, Knives, Strouds &^c telling me for my government of the number of their Towns, but to all this I lent a deaf ear. They then returned to the Square rejected with contempt the Governor's present which was very considerable, not less than

20 Barrels flour

25 D^o Corn

about 50 Blankets

a quantity of Scissors; Knives, Razors, Ribbons &^c

4 or 5 Steers

about 1000 lb Gunpowder & a proportion of Ball &^c &^c

and sets up the *War-whoop*, in every direction. Some of them went to the Tan Yard, broke a large Iron pot, stole two spades, an axe & [a hoe, and would have] committed other excesses, but advice & information was [given to the Governor, who] ordered to beat to arms. In the meantime [M^c-Queen and a few others came] to the House, & told me that he had been for [p. 5] two days laboring & spending his breath for my good, but as I would not (he said) take it for my good, I must now take it for evil, & then he told the Interpreter to tell me to hear a few words he had to say to me before he turned his back upon me. I told him that provided I liked his talk I would hear him, but if not

I would leave him. He had just begun when we heard the noise of drums in the yard, & Captⁿ Cardoso from the foot of the Store Stair Case & at the head of his Comp^y hailed me in a Stentorian voice, & requested me to tell M^cQueen & his Chiefs that by order of the Gov^r they must quit the town directly. I went down stairs & begged him personally to communicate the Governor's orders, as I did not wish to irritate them any further. He accordingly came on the Piazza brandishing his Sabre & told the Spanish Interpreter to order M^cQueen out of the house directly, to which the latter replied that he would retire when he had finished his Talk with me, but Cardoso brandishing his Sabre in his face made him retire forcibly. M^cQueen now seemed quite submissive, shook me by the hand, told me he was my friend, said that the Town had got alarmed for nothing, & that he nor none of the others intended to do any harm until they crossed the Spanish limits. I then accompanied him to the Square, where all the Militia & every body were under arms. The Fort & Block Houses were manned, the colours hoisted, & strong guards placed in every direction. When the Indians saw this they assembled in their turn in a body, & at one end of the square presented a line of Cavalry. The young men were loading their Carabines & seemed to wait the event with a great deal of composure until they saw the Artillery Men dragging the field pieces across the square, which seemed to appal them., The Governor then surrounded by Officers called M^cQueen & one or two more Chiefs & told them that he was very sorry to see the scandalous manner in which they had behaved, that they had rejected his & my presents, that they called themselves friends, but by their Conduct shewed themselves enemies, that I was under his protection, &

a great deal of such like milky [p. 6] discourse, instead of threatening to punish them severely for their audacity & insolence, as every body round him advised him to do & particularly col. Soto. ¹¹ He concluded by again offering the presents, & begged me to make a little sacrifice rather than suffer them to go away discontented. I told him that they did not deserve any thing & that I would not give more than what I had already offered. Montero & some others joined him in the request & I was reluctantly obliged to give them a piece of blue & red Strouds, 1 p^c of 3^t Blkts & a Barrel of Sugar & Coffee, which they eagerly accepted & seemed extremely well pleased. The Governor's present alone was upward of Two Thousand Dollars & they had received some trifles from different people in Town. The Troops were beat to arms on account of their conduct at the Tan Yard & the Governor more alarmed for my safety than myself had sent Cardoso to the house, & even after tranquillity was restored he sent a Centry to the House. M^cQueen & the Chiefs came to see me in the afternoon, expressed their regret at what had happened, and made great proffers of friendship. I did not, however, fail to rebuke them very sharply for their conduct, which had rendered them unworthy of the Governor's goodness or rather weakness. Next day some Shawanese came to the House & remained all day. The old Chief harangued me the whole day. He begged that as a proof of my friendship I would only fill his Horn with powder, but I was determined that even this sin should not lie on my head, & told him I had none. It is remarkable that of the whole band of Indians, not a single one would taste a drop of liquor, or any

11. Col. Soto : Jose de Soto; afterwards Acting Civil and Military Governor at Pensacola, March 31, 1815 - March 3, 1816.

thing else but water. Some of the Chiefs before they went away expressed great compunction for what had happened, & a hope that the path to Pensacola would remain as open to them as before. M^cQueen & his party said they would not injure any thing belonging to us, but that you must leave Mobbille & come here with your family, for it was their intention to take Mobbille at an appointed time & that they would not be able to contain their young men, who would be very impetuous. All this I know is balder dash, but if they are, (as I have [p. 7] no doubt they will be) joined by the Chactaws they will annoy the inhabitants very much. The league seems to be very formidable & I fear will daily gain much additional strength. They have all gone Stark mad & the fermentation will communicate like wild-fire. They will spill much innocent blood with the Ammunition which the Gov^r involuntarily gave them. Indian John arrived three days ago from Appal^a w^t letters from Doyle, of which I inclose one to yourself. All there is as yet quiet, but God knows how long it may continue so. The Harrols have arrived here with Cattle & report from second hand authority that the Big Warrior has been shot. At all events he says it is impossible 'that he could have held out until now, as he was surrounded by the Indians in great force. If he falls those who espouse his cause will be intimidated & overawed & his present opponents will bear down every thing before them. Should the Semanories be compelled to join the Confederacy, Doyle & Hambly's situation will be very critical, & our Stores & property will not be in safety.

'Tis a pity that D'Olives abandoned his plantation with so much precipitation as I do not think he had any thing to fear, being an old Spanish resident, and had he remained your overseer would not

have flinched from his post. This abandonment is an *invitation* to the Indians to come & destroy & burn all the buildings. Being on the water edge a barge or canoe might be kept in readiness to remove the Negroes in case of necessity, or they might be armed so as to defend themselves against any small party that might appear as it is not probable they would come in a body, & if you had an Indian Interpreter they would not, I think, molest you at all, further than killing stock, or demanding provisions. Charles & all the Browns are in the Nation & a part of them fortified with the Big Warrior. Could not Col Bowyer, or Captⁿ Wilkinson spare a few troops for the defence of [p. 8] the inhabitants on this side of the bay? For my part I think the danger is greatly magnified, & I would not myself be in the least afraid to stay at the Brick y^d provided the Negroes were all well armed, & with the precaution of having a Barge or Canoe in readiness for any sudden emergency, especially if Col. B or Captⁿ W-could spare a few troops. If you send back a few Negroes, I think D'Olives would also return to his Saw Mill, & between you you might keep, a trusty scout.

30th Since M^r Dodge's arrival I have been constantly trying to arrange matters so as to mount my horse to pay you a visit, but I am quite chained to the oar & find it impossible to absent myself even for a day. The only danger that I conceive is to be apprehended is from the sun during these intolerable heats. Could you by no means come here for a short time. You might go to Mobile point by the return of some of Col. Bowyer's boats, & from thence there are almost always, opportunities to this place. I am very anxious to see you on many accounts.

I was quite electrified a few days ago by the receipt of M^r Milne's A/Cur^t of which I inclose Copy. In addition to his charging the *full* Com^s on the several Invoices shipped by him, he makes the, *exorbitant & unwarrantable* charge of 5 PC^t Com on my Bill remittances, with which he has had no trouble whatever excepting that of sending them to his Bk, or by a Clerk for presentation & recovery, and is it possible that for so doing he can exact. \$455.96 Com on 7 Bills to which must be added the Bill on Shepard for \$3.277 which has been accepted since the date of his A/Cur^t & the total Com for the recovery of 8 Bills will \$620!! & which I must place to P & L unless you can get him to retract, as I never contemplated that he would have charged any other Com than that of paying & receiving. You informed me that he was to do our business on half Com, I pray you therefore most earnestly to write him *immediately* on the subject of this *monstrous* charge. If he [next sheet lost.]

[The following incomplete letter found in the Cruzat papers, seems to be the last part of the foregoing.]
[Copied by a clerk.]

Please to present my most cordial & respectful comp^{ts} to Capⁿ Wilkinson & inform him that I have been at the Gov^r respecting the mails, which M^r Dodge has just succeeded in recovering, & carries with him overland along w^t a dispatch f^m the Gov^r to Captⁿ Wilkinson. I would have written him in answer to his letter but am overwhelmed with business -a propos, you may shew him that part of the present which relates to Indians, but it must not be made public, otherwise our red friends would be incensed beyond the power of appeasement.

Valery purposes going next week to the Brick Y^d to finish your chimney. Would he not answer your

purpose for the management of it? What wages would you allow him? He is the only person in this place competent.

[In John Innerarity's hand.]

If you cannot come round here immediately, you will please write me by any overland conveyance, or via Mobile p^t directing y^r letters to the care of Captⁿ Walsh who is now with me & will return early tomorrow morning- He will forward them to me without loss of time & you can never be in want of an opportunity.

I pray God that you may have recovered from your indisposition & am in haste &^c

[Another letter, dated 30th July 10 P. M. follows. The whole bears the following address and endorsement:]

Address : James Innerarity, Esq^r

Merchant

Mobile

[Endorsement, in James Innerarity's hand] :

John Innerarity

Dup 27th

Origl. 30th > July 13

recd. 6th August

[In pencil, by a later hand].:

1813

Indian troubles in Pensacola

* * *

The two letters of Gen. J. F. H. Claiborne which follow relate to the incident and period, and were of assistance in establishing the date, of Innerarity's letter.*

The text below is copied from the J.F.H. Claiborne Letter-book "F", in the Mississippi Dept. of Archives and History. 2/19/35.

(on reverse)

4th Augst 1813 / Cap^t Wilkinson / to / Gen^l Claiborne / -The Shawnese / Indians in / Pensacola.

*Grateful acknowledgment is made to Dr. McCain, Director of Archives of Mississippi, for copies of these two letters; and to Mrs. J. E. Hays, Director of the Georgia Department of Archives and History, and to Admiral John W. Greenslade, United States Navy, for copies of John Innerarity's letter.

(original letter)

Mobile 4th August, 1813. -

General, -

I had the honor to receive your letter of the 2^d Ins^t yesterday noon, - and agreeably to order, have placed in the hands of Captain Morrison,

996.dozen of musket cartridges,-

50.stand of muskets .-

50.cartridge Boxes and Belts.-

12.Swords and Sword belts.-

800-flints.-

100 pounds of Rifle Powder, - and

392 pounds of Lead. - all of which articles;

I hope, - may reach your cantonment in safety and without damage. -

It was unnecessary General, for you to observe, "*the fortress under my command must not be surrendered, but in the last extremity*". -Be assured Sir, it will never [p. 2] be surrendered, so long as I have the controul, - under *any circumstances*, or in *any extremity*, - and I possess the physical means (altho my Garrison is small) to resist any force that may be sent against me from Pensacola, - at least, until reinforcements could arrive. -

You shall be promptly advised of the approach of an Enemy: - which I fear we shall not have the pleasure of seeing, - even tho, - they do now and then *threaten*. -

For your information I enclose an extract of a letter from Jn^o to James Innerarity, - in relation to the outrages, committed by M^cQueens party in Pensacola : - which confirms the report, of a number of *Shawanese* being among the Creeks, instigating them to hostility. -

It gives me sincere pleasure to learn, that Colonel Caller acted with much bravery: - for it was

currently rumored in Mobile, - that he drew off the Militia in person from the battle Ground. -

- I have obtained two or three mails (*in one bag*) from the Governor of Pensacola, - which were carried thither, by M^cQueens banditti. - various letters of importance were broken open, - and no doubt a great number destroyed or kept. - there must be some thing rotten in the councils at [p. 3] Pensacola. -

It will afford me much happiness to see you in Mobile, - and I am in hopes you will make my house your home, - as we have a chamber & parlour at your service, which I flatter myself you will command. -

with sentiments of sincere regard & esteem

I have the honor to be

General

your most ob^d Serv^t

James: B. Wilkinson

Capt. Com^d FtCharlotte

Honorable

Brigadier General

Ferdinand L. Claiborne

* * *

The text below is copied from the J.F.H. Claiborne Letter-book "F", in the Mississippi Dept. of Archives and History. 2/18/35. (on reverse)

14th Aug. 1813 / Copy of Letter to the / Governor of Georgia / -This document may / be adapted in the / history of the Creek / War / - Gen. Claiborne's / Letter / - (28) / John Inerarity / - The best mode of fighting / in War is to penetrate / their country & fight / them at their very doors -

Aug. 14th

Cantonment near Fort Stoddart 1813

Sir

Having an opportunity by an express which passes by an indirect rout through East Florida

to Col. Hawkins, I have considered it proper to communicate to you as the Governor of Georgia, circumstances relative to the approaching War with the Creek Indians, which have come into my possession since my arrival at this place from Baton Rouge, which was on the 30th Ult. When I arrived I found the inhabitants on Tombigby and Alabama in a state of the utmost confusion and alarm. They were flying from all quarters to the west side of the Tombigby, leaving behind them rich and highly cultivated farms, with immense crops & stocks of cattle &c an easy prey to the Hostile Indians. I took every possible pains to ascertain the disposition of the Creeks towards the American Government, and from, the unquestionable testimony of many respectable planters, (??) and half breed Indians, who reside on the East side of Alabama who are perfectly acquainted with the dispositions & intentions of the unfriendly Creeks, I deemed it advisable forthwith to make such a disposition of the disposable force under my command, as would best secure protection to the most exposed part of the Eastern Frontier of this Territory. Sometime previously to my arrival, information which could be relied on, was received, that McQueen, who appears to be a leading man with the unfriendly Creeks, was on his way to Pensacola, with a party of about three hundred Indians, who were going there to procure powder and other warlike stores from the Governor of that place. [p. 2] Immediately on the receipt of this intelligence two gentlemen of respectability were dispatched to Pensacola to ascertain whether the Governor of that place would furnish munitions of war to the Indians, and also to discover their intentions towards us. Their report was that the Governor had supplied them with a considerable quantity of powder, lead Flints

&c., and that the Indians did not hesitate to declare openly at all times that their objects were hostile to the Whites, and that they were determined to attack and destroy the settlements on Tombigby and Alabama. Information was also brought that this party of McQueens would proceed from Pensacola north to the Whetstone Hill about 80 miles east of Tombigby, where they were to be met by a party from the nation, would distribute their stores & immediately attack our defenceless frontier. When these things were known Col. Caller of the Militia hastily collected about 175 mounted men and proceeded to the trace leading from Pensacola into the nation, with a view to prevent the Junction of these two parties and also to distroy the stores which they were conveying into the Nation. On the 27th July the Co^l with his Militia met the Indians on the edge of the Escambia low grounds and gave them battle. The Savages were soon drove & when every thing declared for the Colonels party, contrary to his express orders & expectations a retreat was ordered by a Junior officer, and notwithstanding every exertion of Colonel Caller and some of his officers & men the Militia could not be rallied, but retreated in confusion, with the loss of two killed and eight or ten wounded. The loss of the Enemy was much greater. From the information which I have collected there can be no doubt that the Civil [p. 3] War between the Creeks has originated with the British in Canada. It is stated to me by some of the most intelligent half Breeds that the little Warrior who had been with the British army in Canada had written orders from the commander in that quarter, to the governor at Pensacola to furnish the Indians with whatever arms & ammunition they might require. These orders, when the little warrior was killed fell into the hands of

McQueen, and upon them there is no doubt but he was supplied. Inclosed is an extract from a letter of John Innerarity of the house of John Fords [?] & Co. of Pensacola which shews that the Indians have obtained by threats & otherwise considerable warlike supplies. And shews too that the Spanish Government of that place is too weak to support their authority. When we are at war with a Savage Nation, who are thus able to procure warlike supplies from the Spanish government immediately on our borders, which enables them to commit depredations on our frontiers, & to support a contest with our troops, which will create verry considerable expenditures of Government; Sound Policy would dictate that such dispositions should be made as effectually to distroy these resources. This can only be done by taking possession of Pensacola and such other places in East Florida as border on our lines. This measure I hope will be adopted. I have now at the different Frontier Stations about seven hundred men & expect in a few days to be reinforced by the 7th Regiment. I sincerely hope that I may then be ordered by Genl. Flournoy under whom I act, to penetrate into the Creek Nation. More could be effected now; by one thousand men, than could be accomplished three months hence by double that number. [p. 4] If I am ordered to act on the defencive only much serious injury will be done on the Frontiers. The best mode of fighting Indians is to penetrate into the heart of their settlements and to give them battle at the threshold of their doors.

Genl Flournoy has been unwell since his arrival in this country, but is now fortunately in good health his Head Quarters are at the Bay of St. Louis, but will unquestionably be transferred to this place should our difficulties continue. with the Muscogeas.

He is highly esteemed and approved by the twelve months volunteers of the State of Louisiana & the Mississippi Territory under my command, & by the officers and men of the Regular Army serving under his orders - Should any thing of interest occur in your quarter in regard to our Indian Enemy, I shall feel under obligations for any communications your Excellency may make me on that interesting subject-

[end]