

1999

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### Recommended Citation

Dunnavent, R. Black (1999) "A Muddy Water Warrior's Manual," *Florida Historical Quarterly*: Vol. 78: No. 4, Article 3.

Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol78/iss4/3>

## **A Muddy Water Warrior's Manual: Toward a Riverine Warfare Tactical Doctrine in the Second Seminole War**

*by* R. Blake Dunnavent

After days of tedious excursions in the miserable humidity of Florida's Everglades, Lieutenant John T. McLaughlin decided to return his disabled and sick to their island base. The sailors, now several years into the Second Seminole War, had become physically overwhelmed by the wet conditions, biting insects, and swamplife around them. Moving through terrain typified by "continuous portage over stumps and cypress knees with occasional glimpses of open water," the healthier of McLaughlin's men continued their assignment, paddling their small canoes to search out signs of enemy activity. Excitement arose as three canoes were discovered concealed in the undergrowth, but the force did not locate any Indians. When given orders to proceed to the coast, the men found a renewed strength as they maneuvered their own boats away from the anxiety of riverine warfare.<sup>1</sup>

Lieutenant McLaughlin's experience in the final months of the Second Seminole War provides an example of the development of a naval tactical doctrine for the operations in Florida's riverine environment. Drawing upon aspects of riverine operations originated in the American Revolution (including harassing fire,

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1. John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 23 December 1841, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commissioned Officers Below the Rank of Commander and from Warrant Officers, 1802-1884 (hereafter cited as Officers' Letters), Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 141, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

fire support, and riverine amphibious landings) and the War of 1812 (such as the daytime ambush), the naval forces in Florida from 1835 to 1842 found the challenges of Indian warfare and a semi-tropical environment reason to improve on the precedents and implement new tactics that would establish patterns for future riverine warfare. In contrast to the two former conflicts that predominantly implemented riverine warfare with blue water tactics (naval concepts and combat maneuvers associated with the oceans and seas), the navy's involvement in Florida initiated brown water tactics and the creation of forces to contend with the enemy in his native environment. From 1835 to 1842, naval officers introduced several mobile riverine force tactical concepts and also the first printed tactical document issued to all men in the riverine force.<sup>2</sup>

The need for naval forces on the coastal and inland waters of Florida became apparent early in the Second Seminole War. In 1836, the U.S. Army decided that a coastal blockade of the peninsula would prevent arms shipments from nearby Spanish Cuba from reaching the Seminoles. Additionally, army leaders realized that the navy could supplement the blockade by providing logistical support for military operations ashore; in order to counter the Seminoles' guerrilla operations, the navy, initially acting jointly

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2. The best one volume compilation on the U.S. Navy in the Second Seminole War is George E. Buker, *Swamp Sailors: Riverine Warfare in the Everglades, 1835-1842* (Gainesville, 1975). Buker, however, provides only an operational history. Although he accurately contends that the United States Vietnam Navy's Mobile Riverine Force originated in the nineteenth century, he neither focuses on the tactics that emerged nor analyzes their later influence on twentieth-century U.S. Navy riverine warfare tactical doctrine. Critical to understanding this form of combat is familiarization with several key terms. Tactical doctrine is the tentative set of guidelines under which a sailor operates when in combat. A riverine environment is an inland area with extensive water surface and/or inland waterways—rivers, canals, swamps, marshes, streams, bayous, and lakes—that provides routes for surface transportation and communications. A mobile riverine force refers to a "force composed of naval, ground, and air forces organized to conduct riverine operations from afloat and/or land bases of operations"; U.S. Marine Corps, FMFM 7-5A Draft, *MAGTF Riverine Operations*, Riverine Warfare Center of Excellence, Camp Lejeune, N.C., 1-3. Typically, the mobile riverine force conducted river assault operations defined as "[t]hose strike operations conducted in a riverine environment, characterized by the employment of ground combat units closely supported by riverine naval forces"; Department of the Navy, NWP 21(A), *Doctrine for Riverine Operations* (Washington, D.C., 1968), Glossary-2, MEF File, Marine Corps Archives, Quantico, Va.



with the army and later independently, began river assault operations along the inland waterways of Florida.<sup>3</sup>

In early 1836, small naval vessels patrolled the coastline and keys, hoping to engage Seminole warriors encamped on the shore or near river mouths. In March, however, Lieutenant Levin M. Powell, commander of two cutters from the *U.S. Vandalia*, received orders to "proceed to the examination of the river Manatee, the Mullet Keys and to cruise along the main coast North of Anclote Keys with a view to intercept the hostile Indians in their retreat coastwise" from the army's advancing infantry. Although Powell's force did not encounter any Indians, this brief expedition established a precedent for subsequent operations.<sup>4</sup>

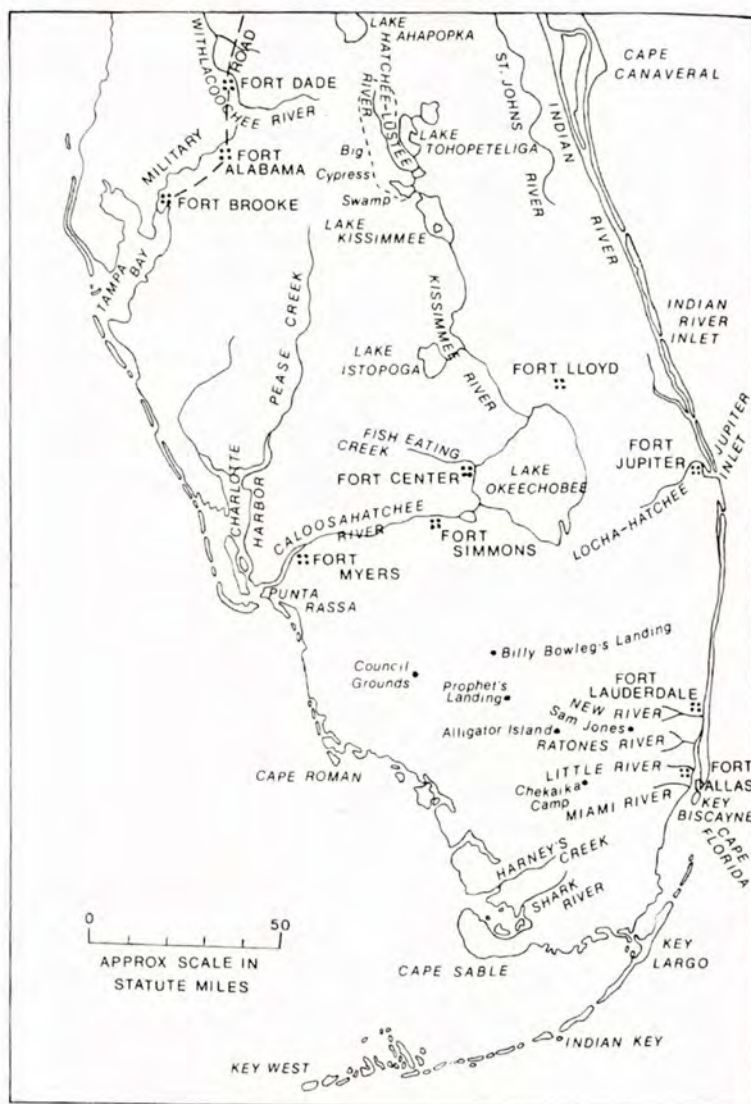
On April 12, Colonel Persifor F. Smith ordered Powell again to assist the army on a small operation up the Myacca River, charging him "with the superintendence of the operations afloat." After the combined force "advanced as far as the depth of water would permit," sailors and soldiers disembarked and marched along both banks of the river. When the supplies and the men were exhausted, General Smith ordered the force back to their base.<sup>5</sup>

Powell, using the experience he had gained in the Spring expeditions, launched an extended riverine operation against the Seminoles in October. Initially, Powell's force operated along the coastline and only went inland to investigate suspicious activity, such as campfire smoke or fleeing Indians. But using coastal patrols to flesh out the Seminoles proved futile and, on October 29, Powell commenced a two-pronged maneuver in the New River area. In the

3. Virginia Bergman Peters, *The Florida Wars* (Hamden, N.J., 1979), 162-163; Buker, *Swamp Sailors*; Mark Freitas and Braddock W. Treadway, "Stygian Myth: U.S. Riverine Operations Against the Guerrilla" (M.A. thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 1994), 24, 26; The Secretary of the Navy to William B. Shubrick, 14 June 1839, Records Relating to the Service of the Navy and Marine Corps on the Coast of Florida, 1835-1842 (hereafter cited as Records), Record Group 45, Entry 186, National Archives.

4. Levin M. Powell to Thomas T. Webb, 28 March 1836, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Captains' Letters, 1805-61 and 1866-85 (hereafter cited as Captains' Letters), Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 125, Reel 120, National Archives; Buker, *Swamp Sailors*, 221. Unlike future sustained riverine operations, such as those during the Vietnam Conflict, those of the Second Seminole War consisted of individual riverine expeditions conducted for weeks and months instead of years. In addition, naval officers serving in Florida rarely named these expeditions or operations.

5. Levin M. Powell to Thomas T. Webb, 27 April 1836, Records, Record Group 45, Entry 186.



The Lower Peninsula during the Second Seminole War. In Virginia Bergman Peters, *The Florida Wars* (Hamden, Conn., 1979), 222.

first mobile riverine force tactic of the war, Powell divided his forces and ordered the ground element to “ascend the Ratonnes to its head waters, and with the marines of the expedition march up on the



New river, while Lieut. Smith would enter the river from the sea." The ground force rowed to its assigned landing site, disembarked, and marched toward the New River. The waterborne component ascended the New River to block—and thereby contend with and cut off—the escape of any Indians forced by the ground unit toward New River. While the foray failed to discover any Indians residing in the area, Powell had employed a blocking movement in the first mobile riverine tactic of the Second Seminole War.<sup>6</sup>

On November 1, Powell decided to move upstream into the Everglades to search out enemy sanctuaries and record the topography of the region. This expedition penetrated about twenty miles into the Everglades and undertook similar operations along surrounding rivers throughout November.<sup>7</sup>

Although unsuccessful in rooting out Seminoles, Powell was inspired by this operation, and on September 24, 1837, Powell wrote to Secretary of War Joel R. Poinsett, volunteering his services for another expedition into the Everglades. A combined force of sailors and army infantry was organized under Powell's command, as was a small fleet of fourteen pirogues or canoes, twelve newly built shallow draft boats, and two additional boats. Powell's naval force was to be the third unit in a search-and-destroy campaign conducted by Major General Thomas S. Jesup, the army commander in Florida. One ground force would operate between the Pease Creek and Caesium River while another would proceed inland from the headwaters of the Caloosahatchee River. The naval force would operate on the east coast in an attempt to locate enemy sanctuaries and "endeavor to capture the women & children, to fall upon the war parties—and to harass & terrify the nation, by this unexpected" maneuver.<sup>8</sup>

6. Levin M. Powell to Thomas Crabb, 8 December 1836, in *Army and Navy Chronicle*, 13 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1835-1842), 4: 298-99; Alexander J. Dallas to Secretary of the Navy, 23 December 1836, Records, Record Group 45, Entry 186.

7. Powell to Crabb, 8 December 1836, 298-99; Alexander J. Dallas to Secretary of the Navy, 23 December 1836.

8. George E. Buker, "Lieutenant Levin M. Powell, U.S.N., Pioneer of Riverine Warfare," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 47 (January 1969), 267-69; idem, *Swamp Sailors*, 57-61; John K. Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War* (Gainesville, 1967), 219-20; Secretary of the Navy to Alexander J. Dallas, 1 November 1837, Records, Record Group 45, Entry 186; Levin M. Powell to Secretary of the Navy, 2 May 1838, enclosed in Alexander J. Dallas to Secretary of the Navy, 16 July 1838, Captains' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 125, Reel 241; Levin M. Powell's memorandum, 10 October 1837, quoted in Buker, *Swamp Sailors*, 56.

Beginning on December 26, then, Powell's force traveled the Indian and St. Sebastian Rivers in search of the elusive foe, discovering only three fleeing Indians in the process. His expedition was part of the first large-scale joint operation of the war in which riverine naval forces operated in concert with non-riverine forces to achieve strategic goals. From December 1836 to January 1837, Powell's naval arm was amalgamated into General Jesup's overall search-and-destroy campaign against the Indians. While the main body of ground troops pressed southward, Powell's group, part of a three-pronged blocking element, conducted river assault operations on the Indian, St. Sebastian, St. Lucie, and Jupiter Rivers. On January 15, Powell discovered a trail, and his men "secured the boats from observation in a creek" and marched along the trail. Shortly thereafter Powell's force engaged the enemy: in the opening moments the Americans repulsed their attackers, but the Seminoles, well-entrenched, concealed, and able to maintain a sustained volume of fire, eventually forced Powell's detachment to retreat to the boats. Strategically, Powell's force accomplished its mission, and although Powell lost the battle, this engagement demonstrated the tactical freedom of movement and safety provided by the rivercraft.<sup>9</sup>

Several months following, Powell received orders to assist Army Lieutenant Colonel James Bankhead in a joint operation into the Everglades. On March 23, they attempted to entrap a band of Seminoles on an island within the Everglades. Bankhead ordered one ground unit to disembark and proceed in a straight line toward the suspected enemy position. The colonel directed another ground element to attack the left flank and rear of the position while Powell's men moved in the boats to the right flank of the island because of the depth of the water. Although the Indians chose not to battle, this operation exemplified the tactical flexibility of mobile riverine forces and the use of naval elements as transports and maneuvering units.<sup>10</sup>

From April 1838 until late 1840, the navy was not actively involved in riverine warfare. While its forces occasionally transited

9. Levin M. Powell to Alexander J. Dallas, 17 January 1838, Officers' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 115; Powell to Secretary of the Navy, 2 May 1838.

10. Levin M. Powell to Alexander J. Dallas, 2 May 1838, Captains' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 125, Reel 241; Report from an unknown officer in Colonel Bankhead's command, in *Army and Navy Chronicle*, 6: 268-69.



short distances on rivers or marginally penetrated the glades, these incidents were infrequent and consisted principally of naval mapping expeditions and rescue attempts for shipwrecked victims.<sup>11</sup>

But Powell's excursions into the Everglades did establish a pattern of riverine operations that Lieutenant John T. McLaughlin would continue in the 1840s. A veteran of military and riverine operations in Florida from 1836 to 1839, McLaughlin conferred with the Secretaries of the Navy and War about riverine tactics in the winter of 1839. On December 2, Secretary of the Navy James K. Paulding concurred with McLaughlin that his "suggestion as to the practicability of penetrating the Everglades and capturing the Indian Women and Children undoubtedly concealed there, is practicable." Paulding ordered McLaughlin to acquire flat-bottomed boats and plantation canoes so as "to penetrate the Everglades further than has yet been done by white men, Surprise and capture the Indian Women and Children, and thus end a War which has cost so many millions." McLaughlin selected a west coast site, near Lostman's Key, from which to enter the glades on this mission. His recommendation to inject a naval presence into the Everglades hinted not only of his conceptualization of riverine forces but also his desire to pursue total war.<sup>12</sup>

Throughout the early summer of 1840, McLaughlin explored, mapped, and occasionally entered the Everglades from the western coast. McLaughlin realized, however, that the eastern reaches of the Everglades, which consisted of meandering streams that bisected the glades and proceeded in every direction, required more thorough exploration and mapping to make operations plausible. Therefore, in July, McLaughlin led a force twenty-two miles into the Everglades via the Miami River. This group met no enemy opposition and confirmed the feasibility of coast-to-coast operations.<sup>13</sup>

McLaughlin's preparations manifested about five months later in the first large-scale joint operation of the war, combining his forces, which consisted of 150 sailors and marines, with U.S. Army Colonel William S. Harney's 100 ground troops to "surprise and attack" the

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11. Buker, *Swamp Sailors*, 69-96.

12. Secretary of the Navy to John T. McLaughlin, 2 December 1839, 1 May 1840, Records, Record Group 45, Entry 186; Secretary of the Navy to John T. McLaughlin, 2 December 1839, in Clarence Dewin Carter, ed., *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, 27 vols. *The Territory of Florida, 1839-1845* (Washington, D.C., 1962), 26: 4.

13. John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 4 August 1840, Officers' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 129; Buker, *Swamp Sailors*, 105-106.



Seminoles "on the borders of the Cypress swamp at the N.E. corner of the Everglades and to pursue and chase the Indians to the last point to which we can follow them." Furthermore, McLaughlin planned for the naval force to proceed further into the Everglades after the joint venture and emerge on the west coast where transport ships would ferry them around Capes Romano and Sable to their base.<sup>14</sup>

On December 31, the combined force departed Fort Dallas and entered the Everglades. Several days into the campaign, near some islands between the New and Little Rivers, a boat with two Indians aboard appeared in front of the advancing forces and quickly maneuvered away. A number of the riverine column's canoes were dispatched to apprehend the fleeing Indians, but an hour of searching resulted in nothing.<sup>15</sup>

More significantly, however, McLaughlin implemented a tactic first introduced in the War of 1812—the daytime waterborne ambush. This tactic first emerged when Commodore Isaac Chauncey conceived and carried out a plan for hitting the British with a surprise attack on the St. Lawrence River. He ordered one of his subordinates to "take three gigs with only their crew . . . in each boat, and proceed down the St. Lawrence, secret himself on some of the islands and wait a favorable opportunity to surprise a brigade of loaded boats." The officer immediately set out down the river and prepared an ambush for any unsuspecting British forces. During the Second Seminole War, as McLaughlin's men slowly paddled their canoes toward an island, they spotted four enemy canoes heading in their direction. McLaughlin ordered his men to disperse in their canoes and to conceal themselves in the surrounding sawgrass to ambush the approaching Indians. When the Indians were within range, the sailors opened fire and inflicted a number of casualties. Those Seminoles who escaped injury or death jumped into the water and eventually fled into the surrounding sawgrass.<sup>16</sup>

14. John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 31 December 1840, Officers' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 132. McLaughlin noted that although the military and naval forces worked together, both maintained separate commands, marginally paralleling the Mobile Riverine Force command structure in the Vietnam Conflict.

15. John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 24 January 1841, Officers' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 133; Buker, *Swamp Sailors*, 112.

16. Buker, *Swamp Sailors*, 112; Isaac Chauncey to Secretary of the Navy, 20 June 1814, in John Brannan, ed., *Official Letters of the Military and Naval Officers of the United States During the War with Great Britain in the Years 1812-1815* (Washington, D.C., 1823), 341.

On January 12, 1841, Harney ordered his men back to Fort Dallas, but McLaughlin continued deeper into the glades as he had planned. For six days McLaughlin's men examined Alligator and Council Islands, among others, finally entering Harney's River which emptied into the Gulf of Mexico. On January 19, McLaughlin and his men emerged from the Everglades and were picked up by his transports. The use of transports were indicative of another tactic introduced during the War of 1812—the employment of larger vessels from mobile bases which provided logistical support for riverine operations. Both McLaughlin and Powell sailed to designated points, unloaded the smaller boats and proceeded into the interior. McLaughlin, however, slightly altered this procedure when he began coast-to-coast operations that entailed offloading the men on one coast then sailing to the opposite coastline and awaiting the arrival of the riverine force.<sup>17</sup>

The twenty-one day operation convinced McLaughlin that more extensive transits into the Everglades were necessary. It took him eight months to replace the men lost during his previous operations, and his determination to create a force solely of marines and sailors slowed the process more.

As he waited for McLaughlin, Lieutenant John Rodgers, one of McLaughlin's subordinates, led four minor operations through the Everglades. On one of these excursions, "Our course . . . was circuitous and led through creeks which the Indians had cleared with thin hatchets." Rodgers and his men disembarked from the boats and "commenced a march toward an Indian town," but they did not intercept any Indians.<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, McLaughlin gathered enough men and supplies for his planned operation into the interior. On October 10, he and his two hundred men proceeded along Shark River and into the Everglades to join forces with an army unit at Chakika's Island. Nine days into the journey, on their way to Cape Romano, the force spotted two Seminoles in a canoe; McLaughlin ordered a small de-

17. John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 24 January 1841; Buker, *Swamp Sailors*, 112.

18. John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 14 March 1841, Records, Record Group 45, Entry 186; Report of an Expedition, 11 June 1841; John Rodgers to Extract, 22 June 1841; John Worth to Thomas Childs, 12 July 1841; Rodgers to Jones, 17 August 1841; Worth to Rodgers, 20 September 1841, all in Box #5, Folder for January 1841-June 1841, Papers of the Rodgers Family, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Library of Congress.



tachment to pursue the Indians. Two days later, the entire force destroyed packs, cooking utensils, three canoes, and fifty-six acres of beans, peas, and pumpkins discovered on a nearby island. After this somewhat successful outing, McLaughlin's outfit exited the glades near Cape Romano where transports again awaited them.

It was this October 1841 expedition that produced one of the first written records of tactical doctrine in American riverine warfare history. McLaughlin's General Orders, issued on 5 October 1841, detailed tactics for riverine columns, landing procedures, and command and control aspects. Concerning command he stated that of the five detachments assigned to his force each detachment commander "is alone responsible for its efficiency; and, under him, each officer, non commissioned officer & coxswain in charge of a boat will be held directly responsible for the order and efficiency of his boat." According to McLaughlin, the boats in the column were to proceed in single file with ten spaces between each boat. While underway, silence was to be observed and no one was permitted to stand up in his boat. The landing instructions stated that "each boat will come to in the order of sailing to the right or left of its advance as shall be directed, each preserving its interval whenever [it] is practicable." When the force prepared to bivouac for the night "each detachment will come to on the right or left of its advance and four canoes being distant for it." Moreover, "Each detachment will encamp in front of its boats and no officer or man will be permitted to be absent from his camp after the guard shall be set without permission."<sup>19</sup>

Following the distribution of this document and throughout the remainder of the war, naval personnel operated under these orders. McLaughlin attempted, by issuing his orders, to provide his subordinates with a standardized form of tactics upon which they could act. Yet as the corresponding documentation suggests, McLaughlin did not want these to restrict the independent initiative critical to combat situations.

Upon arrival at Punta Rassa on October 26, McLaughlin devised a subsequent mission to "ascend the Caloosahatchee River into the Everglades & crossing at the Southern extremity of Lake

19. John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 25 October 1841, Officers' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 139; General Orders to the Florida Expedition, 5 October 1841, enclosed in John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 17 January 1842, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 142.

Okeechobee seek the source of the Locha Hatchie River & descend to Fort Jupiter." On November 3, McLaughlin departed up the Caloosahatchee with 150 naval and 60 military personnel. After five days of hard rowing, the force exited the Caloosahatchee into Lake Thompson and then into the Everglades. Within five days the force recovered three boats stolen from an earlier army expedition. For seventeen days, McLaughlin and his men scoured the Everglades from Lake Okeechobee to Key Biscayne, where they emerged from the interior on 25 November.<sup>20</sup>

McLaughlin immediately launched another joint operation. Only two days after completing the previous expedition, a force again entered the Everglades, reaching camp at Prophet's Landing on December 1. From this location Lieutenant Rodgers led scouting parties into the Big Cypress Swamp, eventually to join forces with an army unit supposedly advancing toward Rodgers' position. When Rodgers returned on December 6, having traveled some twenty-five miles in waist-deep mud, he had neither discovered any Indians nor found the army unit. A dispatch then arrived from Colonel William J. Worth advising McLaughlin to proceed to Fort Pierce. On December 12, his force reached Council Island and a day later moved through the cypress swamp near the Locha Hatchie. Again, McLaughlin's men laboriously searched for Seminoles in the fatiguing terrain. They returned to Key Biscayne on December 23 without engaging any.<sup>21</sup>

Following this month-long operation, McLaughlin devised an offensive against the Indians that "will be disposed of in two commands and enter the Everglades from opposite sides of the territory." One group would "drive through the cypress Locha Hatchie & Halpatioke Swamp on the East side-and through the Mangroves . . . at the Headwaters of the Caloosahatchee on the West side into the Okeechobee" in order to surprise enemy forces in a pincer movement.<sup>22</sup>

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20. John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 30 October 1841, Officers' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 139; John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 25 November 1841, Officers' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 140.

21. John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 23 December 1841, Officers' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 141.

22. John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 17 January 1842; John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 17 January 1842, Records, Record Group 45, Entry 186.



Lieutenant John B. Marchand, commander of the western element, departed from Fort Dallas on February 11, 1842, and entered the Everglades via Harney's River. After establishing a camp eight miles south of Coconut Island, Marchand ordered Acting Lieutenant C.R.P. Rodgers to scout the region west of Fort Dallas and south of the Everglades for Indians. Simultaneously one of Marchand's units under Acting Lieutenant James S. Biddle's command ascended the Miami River, hoping to join up with Marchand before he arrived at Fort Dallas. Biddle's force, however, unknowingly passed Marchand en route to the Everglades. Biddle pressed farther into the interior north of Fort Henry, and about eighteen to twenty miles from the fort, his unit located and pursued a small band of Indians who led the Americans to a Seminole village. The soldiers destroyed the Indians' homes and foodstuffs and before returning to Fort Dallas where they rejoined Marchand and reentered the Everglades. By late March, Marchand's command completed its mission and arrived at Key Biscayne.<sup>23</sup>

In the meantime, Lieutenant John Rodgers, commander of the eastern detachment, departed for the glades along the Locha Hatchie River. His group operated in the oppressive conditions for sixty days, examining the region around the Caesium River, Lake Tohopekaliga, and Lake Okeechobee. Rodgers established bases throughout the region from which his troops carried out exhaustive searches for the enemy. Once again, the Americans never engaged any Indians although they did destroy numerous dwellings and crops. Frustrated, Rodgers ordered his force to Key Biscayne.<sup>24</sup>

In April 1842, in their final attempts of the war to locate enemy forces, McLaughlin sent Lieutenant James S. Biddle to the mangroves near Cape Sable to drive the Seminoles, if there, "back upon the pines while with another detachment he will keep a look out upon the neighborhood of Coconut Island and Long Key to prevent an escape from that quarter into the Big Cypress." Addition-

23. On this particular mission, McLaughlin remained at Indian Key while Marchand and Rodgers carried out the pincer movement. The lack of approximate dates for Marchand's actions results from McLaughlin's neglect of chronology in his correspondence to the Secretary of the Navy; John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 18 March 1842, Officers' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 143; Buker, *Swamp Sailors*, 129-32.

24. John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 29 April 1842, Officers' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 143; Buker, *Swamp Sailors*, 127-29.

ally, McLaughlin ordered Marine Corps Lieutenant Thomas T. Sloan to investigate the area between the New and Miami Rivers. About five miles from Fort Dallas, Sloan located several Indian settlements and immediately destroyed them. In the meantime, McLaughlin and his units moved up Hillsborough River and discovered an island with abundant crops ready for harvest. A small detachment remained behind to ambush the Indians, but because the enemy did not return, this group soon departed and joined up with McLaughlin farther down the east coast. Two months later, the U.S. government terminated the war, and the officers and men of the navy's riverine force returned to the blue water fleet.<sup>25</sup>

McLaughlin's tactical doctrine combined with the implementation of new tactics improved the effectiveness of riverine combat operations and expeditions in the Second Seminole War. As George E. Buker explains, military and naval leaders knew "that these continual treks into the Everglades were placing an almost intolerable burden upon the Seminoles." More specifically, the riverine raids forced the Seminoles to implement restrictive measures to insure their continued survival and fighting capabilities. These included the limitation of movement within the Everglades and reliance "on ambush, fire, and flight to resist the Americans." Moreover, because of the scarcity of powder the Seminoles were "forbidden to discharge a gun except in combat." In the end, such limitations on the Seminoles proved that, although federal forces seldom engaged Seminoles in direct combat, the navy's riverine warfare tactics were effective against the Indians.<sup>26</sup>

Significantly, the U.S. Navy's role in the Second Seminole War provided critical brown water experience for a blue water navy. Officers and enlisted men who served in Florida later used their experience on the rivers of America during the Civil War. Yet, personal knowledge only partially contributed to the foundation of riverine warfare tactics. Correspondence and the General Orders furnished an additional starting point for future naval leaders who, by the 1960s, had to formalize tactical doctrine in an equally difficult environment in South Vietnam.

25. John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 27 March 1842, Officers' Letters, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 143; John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 29 April 1842; John T. McLaughlin to Secretary of the Navy, 26 May 1842, Record Group 45, Microfilm Collection 148, Reel 144.

26. Buker, *Swamp Sailors*, 134.