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"THE INDISPENSABLE MAN":  
JOHN HORSE AND FLORIDA'S  
SECOND SEMINOLE WAR

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Within the past several decades, historians finally have begun to tell the story of African-American contributions to the taming of the western frontier and the settlement of the American West. Especially, readers young and old have been regaled with tales of the famed Buffalo Soldiers, whether from the motion picture *Lone Star* or from excellent histories such as Kevin Mulroy's *Freedom on the Border*.<sup>1</sup> The renown of the Buffalo Soldiers likely will grow in 1998, as the centennial anniversary of the Spanish-American War focuses attention on the troopers' heroism, as well as the discriminatory conditions under which they served their country.

That the origins and skills of many African-American pioneers of the West, including Buffalo Soldiers, can be traced to Florida is less well known. There, through a series of wars and less-heralded struggles, black men and women (whom later generations called Black Seminoles)--many runaway slaves and others the descendants of runaways--fought for their freedom for generations. The words Fort Mose, Negro Fort, and Sarrazota, among others, signalled a beacon of hope never totally extinguished before slavery's demise.<sup>2</sup>

One of those Florida struggles proved particularly crucial to the later history of the West. Among other things, the Second Seminole War of 1835-1842 likely stands as the largest slave rebellion in United States history. The conflict saw hundreds, if not 1,000 or more, African-Americans honing military skills against the United States Army. It also necessitated development of an experienced and adept leadership corps among black warriors and resulted in the relocation of most of Florida's African-American combatants to the West. As seen in Mulroy's work, no single leader of this Florida-connected community in the West has stood out more prominently than John Horse. The keys to understanding his later successes lie not so much in the West, though, as in his original homeland. In Florida the young lad John Cavallo or Gopher John matured through the hard testing of the Second Seminole War into the intrepid John Horse. His story carries its own impor-

tance for historians and for general readers, but it also illuminates those of numerous others to whom the historical record has not been so generous but for whom Florida also was remembered as home.<sup>3</sup>

John Cavallo entered this world in Spanish Florida about 1812.<sup>4</sup> His father was the Seminole chief or sub-chief Imotley (also known as Charles Cavallo or Captain Cavallo), and his mother was an African or African-American.<sup>5</sup> Imotley's association with the Alachua Seminoles and his son's later relationship with the Seminole chief Alligator suggest that John Cavallo likely was born in the Alachua Seminole heartland. It lay in northeast Florida, near present-day Gainesville and Lake City. There, the Seminoles grazed large herds of cattle.<sup>6</sup>

The Cavallo family's stay in northeast Florida proved short-lived after John's birth. In the 1810s Florida's Spanish rulers faced a takeover attempt backed by Georgia frontiersmen and one-time residents of the United States who had settled around the St. Marys and St. Johns Rivers. They called themselves Patriots, and the Patriot War of 1812-1814 witnessed Seminoles and associated blacks (often called slaves but more properly termed vassals, for responsibilities were reciprocal) fighting on behalf of the colonial government. One severe engagement occurred in today's Alachua County on September 27, 1812, when Seminoles and blacks turned back a force of Georgians. Within months reports circulated that the victors had sought refuge deep in the peninsula. "I have received from an Indian of note . . . the following information," Indian agent Benjamin Hawkins recorded, "[Seminole chief] Paine is dead of his wounds . . . [and] the warring Indians have quit this settlement [at Alachua], and gone to Tellaugue Chapcopopeau." He continued, "Such of the [cattle] stock as they could command have been driven in that direction, and the negroes were going the same way."<sup>7</sup>

The refugees found homes at several locations in the peninsula's southwestern quarter. The Seminoles settled principally in their hunting villages on the headwaters of the Peace River (Talakchopco hatchee). That area, some forty-five miles east of Tampa Bay, provided access to cattle grazing lands adjacent to the Peace and Kissimmee Rivers. The fertile region also controlled access to the south Florida hunting grounds. On the other hand, many of the blacks located closer to the bay to maintain their separate identity and control over their daily lives and to enjoy easier access to coastal trade. Possibly totalling as many as 200 individuals, they erected their largest settlement on the Manatee River, at its conjunction with the Braden River (in today's Bradenton). One account referred to the community as the "Sarrazota, or Runaway Negro Plantations."<sup>8</sup>

The refugee population grew within a few years. The process began when, in 1815, British officers turned over an Apalachicola River fortification (soon called the Negro Fort) to black veterans who had served in British ranks during the War of 1812. After about one year, United States Army forces destroyed the facility. Then, in 1817 and 1818 the American soldiers returned to the region under Andrew Jackson's leadership. The hostilities in this conflict, known as the First Seminole War, were directed primarily against blacks and Red Stick (or Tallahassee) Creeks, old and bitter enemies of Jackson. In April 1818 Jackson's white and Indian troops confronted black warriors on the Suwannee River's west bank. The warriors struggled desperately and successfully to permit their families to escape across the stream.<sup>9</sup>

The First Seminole War's Battle of the Suwannee sparked a movement into the peninsula similar to that of 1812 and 1813, as black warriors and their Red Stick Creek allies fled to the Tampa Bay area. The Creeks occupied villages on the Peace River headwaters and westward toward the bay, with Seminoles centering by 1818 seventy miles northwest at Chocachatti hammock in modern Hernando and Pasco Counties. The blacks headed mostly for the Manatee "negro plantations," but events occurring elsewhere soon caught up with them. Particularly, Spain ceded Florida to the United States. Then in early 1821 President James Monroe named Andrew Jackson as provisional governor. Quickly, the general requested permission to attack the Creeks and blacks. Denied that authority, Jackson's own Lower Creek allies descended upon the area, disrupted Seminole towns in the Chocachatti hammock, and destroyed the Manatee River "plantations" and other Tampa Bay settlements. The Peace River towns remained unscathed.<sup>10</sup>

Presumably the Cavallo family had found refuge in the Tampa Bay region prior to the Lower Creek raid of 1821. In any event, the raid set in motion relocations which resulted in the family establishing a more permanent home in the region. First, some of the displaced Chocachatti Seminoles returned to the Peace River headwaters. A leading tribal family, that of Buckra Woman, established a center for her cattle operations at a village three miles southeast of present-day Fort Meade in Polk County. Buckra Woman's son, the future Seminole chief Billy Bowlegs, accompanied her. The stream upon which they located their village yet bears the name Bowlegs Creek. Billy Bowlegs's half-brother, Alligator, probably lived there, too, while conducting cattle grazing westward along the Alafia River.<sup>11</sup>

Other refugee groups also established new homes. After the deaths of their chiefs Peter McQueen and Oponay in the early 1820s, the greater number of Red Stick Creeks departed either for the Alachua country, the Florida Panhandle, or their old homes in Alabama. Blacks who had lived at Mana-

tee scattered to the Bahama Islands or to small concentrations in the peninsula's interior, especially to the village of Minatti, just south of Lake Hancock, a Peace River source north of the present-day town of Bartow.<sup>12</sup>

Charles Cavallo and his followers, with their black vassals, planted a settlement about one dozen miles northeast of today's Tampa close to Lake Thonotosassa. It rested strategically near the spot where the principal trail linking the Peace River headwaters to Tampa Bay intersected the main north-south route of access into south Florida, a path that crossed the Hillsborough River ford just a few miles to the north. A white trader visited the site in 1823. "[There is here] a settlement of Indians, who plant Corn, Pumpkins, Water Melons, etc., etc.," he informed territorial authorities, noting in the process the presence at Cavallo's village of seventy Indians and ten blacks. "This settlement is situated on the banks of a Lake about 1 Mile long, the land round which rises to a height for about 100 feet," he continued. "The scenery of the lake is extremely picturesque, the timber on the banks principally live oak & pine." The trader also described the area's black residents generally, although he misunderstood the nature of their relationship with the Indians. "The Indian Negroes are a fine formed athletic race, speak English as well as Indian & feel satisfied with their situation," he commented. "They have the easy unconstrained manner of the Indian but more vivacity, & from their understanding both languages possess considerable influence with their masters."<sup>13</sup>

The year 1823 brought major developments that affected the Cavallo villagers along with the rest of Florida. Territorial Governor William Pope DuVal concluded, with leading chiefs, the Treaty of Moultrie Creek. That document restricted Indians and associated blacks to a reservation in the peninsula's interior. Military authorities then established Fort Brooke on Tampa Bay in order to administer assistance for reservation residents; supervise their activities; and, likely, block any attempt to re-establish the free black community on the Manatee River. An officer sent out from the post in June toured the Peace River, Chocachatti, and Thonotosassa villages. "We visited Thlo-nota-Sassa Indian town fifteen miles N.E. from this place," he reported, "it containing about Ten families, is situated on a pine barren bordering on two small ponds, both nearly covered with grass &c, around these ponds there is a narrow skirt of Hammock,--heavily timbered,--the greater part of which in under cultivation, although the soil is *shallow* and of inferior quality." The lieutenant added, "*Very bad water.*"<sup>14</sup>

The "Thlonoto-sassa" village grew in the years that followed the Moultrie Creek treaty. Although conditions bordered on starvation at times within the Indian lands, the Cavallo settlement fared well because it enjoyed the closest proximity to Fort Brooke of any nearby village. Existing Indian trails permitted easy travel into the military post for purposes of trade. At the same time, Indians from the Peace River headwaters and from the north used the community as a stopover point on their journeys to Tampa Bay. Not surprisingly then, one army officer could estimate by 1826 that Thlonoto-sassa's population had reached 200.<sup>15</sup>

The Cavallo village's growing importance and central location would have affected young John in several ways. For one thing, he would have come to know well the principal Seminole leaders, especially those such as Alligator who lived to the east at Peace River. Almost certainly the youth lived for a period of time on that stream, for during the Second Seminole War's early stages he was known to some military authorities as "Pease Creek John."<sup>16</sup>

Likewise, Thlonoto-sassa's location made it easy for John to travel into Fort Brooke. George A. McCall, stationed at the outpost in 1826, recounted one story that offered a personal glimpse at the young man, his intelligence, his personality, and his shrewdness. McCall remembered:

A long-legged, lathy negro boy of some fourteen years, belonging to one of the Thlonoto-sasa Indians, called at this officer's quarters and offered for sale a brace of gophers. He received his quarter of a dollar; and Andrew, the cook, a negro slave, was ordered to put them in the crawl [a picketed enclosure used for fattening gophers], which at the time happened to be empty. He was also charged to feed them regularly with dried beans and other articles of vegetable diet. The next day the boy, John, brought another pair of gophers to the same officer, and received his quarter. The next day it was the same, and the next, and the next. The officer was delighted with his good fortune, and at the end of some ten days, not having kept the count strictly, he told Andrew to count the gophers, and let him know how many were in the crawl. Andrew did go to the crawl, in one corner of which a quantity of brush had been thrown, under which these *nocturnal* animals might retire during the day; and he did shake up the brush and toss it about very thoroughly, but he saw never a gopher but the two he had just put in.

Andrew, naturally enough, was first amazed, then perplexed, and finally confounded at the discovery he had made; for he could be sworn he had daily put a brace into the crawl for many days in succession; and so he protested to his master to whom he hastened with the news.

His master was no less surprised than Andrew; and in addition he was first disappointed, then vexed, and finally enraged at the cheat he began to suspect had been played upon him. He at once sent out his *Orderly* to look for Master John, who was soon brought before him, looking as pale as a negro can look. Under the fear of being well flogged if he did not confess, John let out the truth; which of course was, that he had leaped the paling every night and captured the gophers he had sold during the day before. The joke took. John was let off without flogging, but with the "*nomme de guerre*" of "*Gopher John*" tacked to him for life.<sup>17</sup>

When the young Cavallo received the name Gopher John in the mid-1820s, the Florida peninsula stood close to the brink of war. Broken promises, the venality of government agents, starvation, drought, raids into and out of the reserved lands, and intrusions of slave catchers had combined to stir deep fears and resentments among the Indians and blacks. By late 1825 conditions already had degenerated to such a point that Fort Brooke's commander, George M. Brooke, pleaded with superiors to make assistance available. "It is impossible for me, or any other officer who possesses the smallest feelings of humanity," he declared, "to resist affording some relief to men, women, and children, who are actually dying for the want of something to eat."<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile in the Florida Panhandle, especially in the lands between the Apalachicola and the Suwannee Rivers that would come to be known as Middle Florida, increasing numbers of affluent whites from Virginia, Kentucky, and the Carolinas began to establish large cotton plantations to be worked by gangs of black slaves. As these planters assumed greater power in territorial affairs, they demanded the removal of the Indians to the West and the enslavement of their black vassals.<sup>19</sup>

The troubles of 1826 and 1827 that came so close to provoking Indians and blacks to war eased somewhat after President John Quincy Adams permitted the grant of additional fertile lands and assistance to the reservation's inhabitants; still, the crisis produced a plethora of results with implications for the future. Officials established Fort King (present-day Ocala) a few miles below the reservation's northern bounds and near the Indian agency.

They also constructed a road to link that post with Fort Brooke. The northward extension of the Indian lands angered white frontier settlers, who saw the peninsula as a magnet for runaway slaves. In addition, because of the brutal tactics that he utilized during the period, one army officer, Francis L. Dade, particularly came to be detested by Indians and blacks. Finally, as Governor DuVal pressured Indians for surrender of runaway slaves, black interpreters such as the well-known leader Abraham emerged as principal counselors to Seminole and Creek chiefs.<sup>20</sup>

After the 1828 election of Andrew Jackson as President, the pot of problems for Florida's Indians and blacks again was set to boil. In 1830 the territory's one-time provisional governor gained congressional approval of the Indian Removal Act, two years after which his agents secured a Florida removal treaty under questionable circumstances. Although some chiefs accepted the principle of relocation, others resisted. Especially, on the Peace River headwaters the chief of the Red Stick Creeks, Holata Micco, prepared for war, utilizing as his agent the young Creek warrior Osceola. By 1835 Osceola and the black warrior Harry, who lived at the Peace River village of Minatti, were attempting to achieve unity for armed resistance by goading whites to overreact to various provocations.<sup>21</sup>

The scheme advanced toward success as the months passed. By the fall, alarm gripped the frontier, as local militia companies hurriedly organized. In late November, Osceola murdered one pro-immigration chief. Three weeks afterward he raided a militia baggage train a few miles northwest of Fort King. On December 28 the Creek leader gunned down the Indian agent and several others at Fort King. At the time a regular-army relief column commanded by Francis Dade pushed up the military road from Fort Brooke. Chiefs Micanopy and Alligator awaited the soldiers just north of the Withlacoochee River crossing. The Seminole leaders positioned their men, Indian and black, slightly south of where the road branched off to the black counselor Abraham's town of Peliklakaha, probably at that time the territory's largest free black settlement. When Dade soldiers appeared on the road, Abraham goaded Micanopy to action, whereupon the chief shot and killed the officer. A massacre of the soldiers ensued, and the Second Seminole War had begun.<sup>22</sup>

John Cavallo's activities during the Second Seminole War's first year are not known with specificity, but they may be surmised. Indians and blacks, aided by hundreds of rebelling slaves from frontier farms and plantations, repulsed virtually every effort by United States and volunteer forces to subdue or restrain them. Much fighting took place on or near the Fort Brooke-

Fort King military road. A minor but deadly affray happened in May close to Lake Thonotosassa. One officer claimed it amounted to "one of the severest battles fought during the war, and the most decisive victory yet gained over the enemy."<sup>23</sup> Army reports usually listed among the principal hostile leaders the names of Osceola, Alligator, Abraham, and another black counselor, John Caesar. John Cavallo, as later events suggest, probably allied himself with Osceola, Alligator, or both.<sup>24</sup>

From the conflict's beginning United States officials understood the key role of blacks and their leaders in the struggle. As one general discovered, "This . . . is a negro, not an Indian war."<sup>25</sup> By early April 1836 this fact already had influenced planning for United States Army operations. "The war has not been as yet carried into the enemy's settlements on the Meacca [Myakka River] and Pease creek [Peace River]," General Winfield Scott informed a subordinate. "That country is believed to be one of his strongholds, and the place of concealment for many families and negroes."<sup>26</sup> Scott's forces thereafter scoured the Peace River headwaters, destroying the vicinity's villages and encampments. When General Thomas Sidney Jesup received command authority late in the year, he pursued a similar policy, concentrating attention on black towns and villages. During December 1836 and January 1837 his men captured 131 hostiles. Among the casualties was black leader John Caesar, killed on January 17 in the wake of a raid two miles from St. Augustine.<sup>27</sup>

While his predecessors had suffered damaged reputations arising out of the failure of their Florida operations, Jesup's initiatives succeeded to the extent that they compelled many of the combatants, including John Cavallo, to consider peace. The first discussions were held on February 3, 1837, at Fort Armstrong, a post located near the Dade Massacre site and Abraham's Peliklakaha, now in ruins. Alligator and Abraham included themselves with a delegation of "inferior chiefs." They agreed to a temporary truce with follow-up negotiations to occur within a few weeks.<sup>28</sup>

Available source materials fail to mention John Cavallo's attendance at the Fort Armstrong discussions. Nonetheless, participants clearly felt his presence at the subsequent negotiations, and, despite his Seminole heritage, army officials perceived him as a black man, rather than an Indian. By early April General Jesup was referring to John Cavallo as a "principal chief," and presumably he made reference to him on February 18 when he recorded that "Abraham has just come in with a flag [of truce], accompanied by a nephew of the Indian chief Cloud, and a negro chief."<sup>29</sup> On March 6, the day of final negotiations at the Withlacoochee River outpost of Fort Dade, John stood in



for Alligator and signed the peace document on his behalf. "[Seminole head chief] Micanopy is extremely taciturn," noted one army officer who was present. "Abraham is his 'sense-bearer' [or advisor]; Alligator his 'spokesman.'"<sup>30</sup> Just as Abraham aided Micanopy as "sense-bearer," John, by March 1837, served Alligator.

Although the Fort Dade agreement briefly offered the hope of peace, events that followed saw its promise fail to materialize and also propelled John Cavallo to assume greater leadership responsibilities. Pursuant to the pact, the Indians agreed to leave Florida and Jesup gave his word to protect blacks who emigrated with them. To ensure compliance, black and Indian hostages were placed within Jesup's custody, among them Cavallo. Beginning March 7, 1837, they were detained at a spot close to Fort Dade, but by early April they had been relocated to an "emigrating camp" near Tampa Bay's Fort Brooke. At least once during the month John departed the camp, for Jesup recorded on April 13, "John Cowaya set out to collect his people and cattle."<sup>31</sup>

John Cavallo's cooperation proved short-lived. On April 5 Jesup had acted on his promises of protection for blacks by barring access to unauthorized whites to "any part of the territory, between the St. Johns river and the Gulf of Mexico." The act recognized tensions approaching a crisis point. As the general explained, he had "reason to believe that the interference of unprincipled white men with the negro property of the Seminole Indians if not immediately checked, will prevent their emigration and lead to a renewal of the war."<sup>32</sup> Jesup's judgment proved as sound as his order was ineffective. Men claiming ownership of runaway slaves soon plagued Fort Brooke with demands for Black Seminoles. Meanwhile, passions heightened as rumors swirled among the Indians that Alligator's people, as Jesup described it, "were to be executed so soon as they should place themselves in our power."<sup>33</sup>

In the circumstances Cavallo bolted, as a result of which the situation destabilized further. "Jumper and Abraham came in with a message from Micanopy," Jesup recorded on May 1. "He sent word that John Cowaya had stolen five of our horses, and had run away with all his people; and that Alligator had gone in pursuit of him."<sup>34</sup> Furious at Cavallo's action, the general angrily ordered all blacks immediately incarcerated in a camp near Fort Brooke. When John's sister asked for permission "to leave the Picketts," Jesup bluntly denied the request "in consequence of the bad conduct of her relations."<sup>35</sup> Then, on June 2, John returned with Osceola and approximately 200 warriors, surrounded the camp, and took away its residents. They may have numbered as many as 700 Indians and blacks. Upon receipt of the news, Jesup informed his superiors, "This campaign so far as relates to In-

dian migration has entirely failed."<sup>36</sup>

Jesup's despair turned to hardened determination aimed at John Cavallo and other blacks. As to Cavallo, the general would declare before too long, "Wherever *John Cavallo* was present, foul play might be expected."<sup>37</sup> Within days of the "grab," as Jesup put it, the general authorized volunteer forces to seize blacks and to retain them as slaves, and he pursued consideration of the use of vicious bloodhounds. He also accepted the possibility of a deal by which some Indians might not be compelled to emigrate. "I am very sure they [the Indians] could be confined to a small district near Florida Point," he explained, "and would accept peace and the small district referred to, as the condition for the surrender of all runaway negroes."<sup>38</sup>

To force his opponents' hands, Jesup conceived a broad based campaign aimed directly at their strongholds. Following the Fort Brooke rescue, Micanopy with many of the camp's occupants had fled eastward to the Kissimmee River, crossed that stream, and made camp. Alligator and John Cavallo soon joined the chief. Abraham reported that Cavallo's following then included fifteen Seminoles and an undetermined number of blacks. Jesup believed that blacks also were occupying the upper Peace River area westward of the Kissimmee, where they were attempting to harvest a corn crop. Accordingly, the commander ordered forces to the Peace River. The men erected Fort Fraser north of today's Bartow and bridged nearby Saddle Creek to give access to Peace River and the now-deserted black village of Minatti. Colonel Zachary Taylor then brought up a large contingent from Fort Brooke and passed beyond the Peace to the Kissimmee River.<sup>39</sup>

The Indians and blacks on the Kissimmee's eastern side reacted to Jesup's initiative by dispersing for their own protection. Already in September, though, Micanopy and Alligator had dispatched John Cavallo to find Osceola and the Seminole chief Coacoochee (or Wild Cat). They ordered Cavallo to consult with the Indian leaders and, if necessary, serve as their interpreter. In October, Jesup seized Coacoochee and several others in violation of a truce. With the army's commander maintaining such pressures against his allies, an ailing Osceola opted to parley. "On the 20th [of October], John Cavallo, a sub-chief, a hostage who had violated his parole in May of last year, came into Saint Augustine with a message from [Osceola] and Coa-Hajo," Jesup reported, "stating that they had encamped near [Fort Peyton, southwest of St. Augustine] and desired to see General [Joseph M.] Hernandez." Jesup added, "I . . . required General Hernandez to seize them and take them to Saint Augustine."<sup>40</sup> An army surgeon added detail. "[Osceola] and his band of Indian warriors encamped about a mile from Fort

Peyton; and sent in an ambassador (*John Cavalho*), to Gen. Hernandez," he observed, "desiring to see and converse with him at the camp, but without an escort, saying he would be perfectly safe among them without troops."<sup>41</sup>

What has been described as "the most notorious treachery of the Second Seminole War" resulted on October 21.<sup>42</sup> Hernandez, on Jesup's orders, placed Osceola, John Cavallo, and over seventy others under arrest and jailed them in St. Augustine's Castillo de San Marcos along with Coacoochee. In defiance, several prisoners led by Coacoochee and Cavallo soon plotted escape from the moated Spanish fortress. They accomplished their daring deed on the night of November 29. Kenneth W. Porter concluded that Cavallo led the escapees. "One of the tallest and strongest of the men--I suspect the powerful six foot Indian Negro John Cavallo--vaulted onto the wide platform beneath the window, followed by several others," Porter wrote. "Seizing one of his slighter comrades by the ankles, he boosted him up so that the Indian's feet were on the Negro's shoulders, from which, working his toes into niches already carved in the hard coquina, perhaps stepping up to the handle of a knife wedged firmly into a crevice between the rocks, the Indian was able to clutch the edge beneath the window and, with a spring and a wriggle, pull himself up onto it, one end of the knotted line gripped between his teeth."<sup>43</sup>

News of the escape spread fast, and events thereafter proceeded quickly. Coacoochee, John Cavallo, sixteen warriors, and two women sped south to rejoin Alligator and other allies. "20 Indians mostly Mikisukis headed by that daring rascal Co-oo-coo-chy and John Cavallo escap'd from Fort St. Marks," wrote an officer stationed near present-day Orlando on December 3. "If they get down among the Indians, good bye to peace this year at least." He added, "Gen. J. is much cast down by this occurrence."<sup>44</sup> Cast down or not, Jesup hurried Colonel Taylor and his men south down the Kissimmee River valley. With Abraham (now in army custody) as guide, the force directed itself toward Alligator's camp.<sup>45</sup>

As the chase tightened, army commanders' thoughts often centered on Cavallo. After Taylor sent out delegations to visit Indian camps, for example, his representatives returned with word of the high esteem in which the black leader was held by his allies. "Ou-la-too-chee [Holatochee] and Jumper express great solicitude in regard to the safety of two Indians who were captured with [Osceola]," the colonel informed Jesup on December 7, "viz Ah-pi-ock-ha-jo & John Co-y-o/the former brother in law to Micanopy-(the latter the same to Ou-la-too-chee)."<sup>46</sup> The general's response evidenced no similar solicitude. "John Cowaggee . . . is the greatest rascal in the nation except Alligator," he snapped.<sup>47</sup>

The relentless pursuit soon reached its climax. On Christmas Day, 1837, Taylor received additional news when "a brother-in-law of John Cavallo" was captured just north of Lake Okeechobee. He informed the colonel "that a large body of the Seminoles, headed by John Co-hua [Cavallo], Co-a-coo-chee, and, no doubt, Alligator, with other chiefs, were encamped five or six miles from us, near the Mickasukies, with a cypress swamp and dense hammock between them and the latter."<sup>48</sup> Taylor's opponents, numbering between 380 and 480, were close and ready for a fight. One historian insisted, "Never had Indians prepared a battleground with greater care."<sup>49</sup> The United States soldiers advanced through swampy terrain and locked themselves in mortal combat with their deadly foe. Two-and-one half hours later 26 soldiers lay dead, with 112 wounded. Of Indians and blacks, who had been outnumbered two to one, 11 died and 14 others suffered wounds.<sup>50</sup>

Although the soldiers sustained greater losses, the Indians and blacks had suffered heavy blows. In the circumstances, they retreated down Lake Okeechobee's shore to the south and west. Taylor soon withdrew to Fort Bassinger, a post north of the lake on the Kissimmee River. Meanwhile, Jesup activated his own forces on the Atlantic coast. "The Indians are suffering for food," an officer recorded on February 8, "[and] in all their camps we found they had subsisted on palmetto roots and the cabbage tree, which is never eaten by them except when hard run." He continued, "One hundred and sixty Indians and negroes have come in [to Fort Bassinger] since the fight, and they say many more will come in soon, that they are tired of the war and hungry."<sup>51</sup> Jesup also had tired, and on February 11 officially proposed allowing the Indians to remain in Florida. As for blacks, "I determined to separate all the negroes from the Indians and send them out of the country as soon as possible."<sup>52</sup>

Almost two months passed before Alligator and Cavallo capitulated, accepting removal from Florida to the Arkansas Territory. They did so only after Jesup sent a message to Cavallo, specifically promising him "freedom and protection."<sup>53</sup> Soon word went out that "Alligator, one of the most active and warlike of the hostiles, had surrendered at Fort Bassinger on the 4th of April." A report explained, "He was found with 88 of his people, among whom was John Cowaya, and 27 blacks, to the southwest of Lake Okeechobee. Alligator was to return to his party, and, by means of runners, collect all the scattered Indians and concentrate them at Pease creek."<sup>54</sup> On April 14 Colonel Persifor F. Smith noted Cavallo's arrival at his camp: "John Coh-wy-

yah his family, about 10 have come in. Charley Coh-wy-yah will be here tomorrow with his people."<sup>55</sup> Abraham described his fellow black leader's state of mind. "John Cavallo is in and contented," he wrote. "Glad to hear of the peace."<sup>56</sup>

Cavallo's departure from Florida came in June. He first journeyed to Fort Fraser on the Peace River's headwaters, an area familiar from his youth. From there he followed the Indian trail, now an improved military road, past Thlonoto-sassa's ruins to Fort Brooke. By early June defiant spirits had revived among those awaiting departure, and some black detainees reportedly began urging Seminoles "to go off."<sup>57</sup> Twenty of Alligator's warriors accepted the challenge. Authorities thereupon hastened the Cavallos' leave-taking, so that by the fourteenth the emigrating party of 300 Indians and 30 blacks had reached New Orleans. With John went one male aged 1-10 and two aged 10-25, together with his wife, one female aged under 10 and two females aged 10-25. The group also included six "slaves," while his father's party encompassed six more "slaves." Perhaps the term slave represented the same vassalage relationship as that between Florida's Indians and blacks.<sup>58</sup>

The last significant black leader to surrender during the Second Seminole War, John did not remain away from Florida for long. The territory held out good earnings potential for the exile for services as a guide and interpreter (the Second Seminole War endured after several false hopes of peace). More importantly, Cavallo faced an unexpected challenge. General Jesup had promised Cavallo his freedom, but the black leader's father died after their arrival in the West and Charles Cavallo's widow insisted that John was her "slave" by right of inheritance. Needing funds as well as formal documentation of his freedom, he returned to Florida, apparently in 1839, to work for the army. He had convinced officials that he particularly could help their cause by inducing relatives and friends to emigrate.<sup>59</sup>

John's activities and whereabouts for much of 1839 and 1840 are not known, but that he encountered danger seems certain. An officer explained in 1841 how very valuable guides and interpreters had become to the army, whether of black or mixed black and Indian ancestry. "An accident gave Col. [William S.] Harney the services of a Negro guide who carried him to the Everglades," explained Ethan Allen Hitchcock. "That Negro was the only man in America, black or white, who could have performed that service in a part of the country never before visited."<sup>60</sup> The Indians yet at war knew better than anyone how true the statement was, and they took pains to eliminate the guides and interpreters whenever possible. One incident illustrates the point. In 1839 some unfortunate men were captured on the Caloosahatchee River. According to a survivor: "The negro interpreter Sandy [and one other man]

were allowed to live four days. They then tied them to a pine tree and inserted in their flesh slivers of light wood, setting them on fire, and at the same time placing torches at their feet. In this way it was five or six hours before they died."<sup>61</sup>

The record of Cavallo's return to Florida becomes clearer early in 1841. By then he had become the trusted interpreter for Colonel William Jenkins Worth, who was about to become the war's commanding officer. The colonel spent most of January scouring the countryside around Lake Thonotosassa and the Peace River headwaters, endeavoring to bring Coacoochee to the bargaining table. Cavallo's patience by that time appeared to be growing thin, as promises of his freedom went unkept. On February 9 one of Worth's aides informed his diary, "Gopher John, says he has become dissatisfied & means to go off with his family."<sup>62</sup> The colonel placated his interpreter, for Cavallo remained. Coacoochee came in to Fort Cummings (at present-day Lake Alfred) in early March, and, doubtlessly utilizing John's influence, Worth reached an emigration agreement with the chief. Commented the colonel's aide: "We are openly, publicly & notoriously negotiating with the few Indians remaining in Florida, having by universal approbation relinquished every hostile attitude except that of holding such positions in the country as may facilitate our intercourse with these Indians."<sup>63</sup>

The next major operation involving Cavallo occurred in August. It took place on shipboard just upstream from the Peace River's mouth at Charlotte Harbor, where the chief Hospetarke and his followers had been lured. Recalled another of Worth's proteges: "The black interpreter, known as Gopher John, stood in the vicinity. His tall person, gaudily decked for the occasion with ribands and silver work, rose far above the group, now cheerful and merry, who were to learn from his mouth that their plans were frustrated, and that they were captives; a result they little anticipated."<sup>64</sup> An onlooker further described the scene. "Worth induced the old chief and his warriors on board of the boat," he told his wife, "when we met them assembled round a long table, with the Col. presiding and his officers immediately round him--soldiers were secretly placed on different parts of the vessel and every thing prepared for the final disclosure; they met without moving a muscle, and continued their seats unmoved, beyond a heaving of the chest."<sup>65</sup>

By late 1841 one of John's ideas had proved beneficial to Worth, and the colonel had come to hold the interpreter in ever-growing respect. Cavallo had recommended that Worth bring from the West a delegation headed by Alligator for the purpose of inducing more surrenders. The old friends and allies traveled together, with Worth, into the interior and down to the

Caloosahatchee River. John may then have joined Worth on a visit to Governor Richard Keith Call at Tallahassee for, on the colonel's return to Fort Brooke, he finally freed his interpreter. The document of February 22, 1842, declared: "In execution of the promise made by a former commander of the Florida army as certified by his successor, Brigadier General Taylor, the Interpreter John Cohai, commonly called Gopher John, his wife and increase, Indian negroes, having complied with the terms of the foregoing recited order, are regarded as having established a right to their freedom from all further services for their former Indian Master."<sup>66</sup>

Freedom did not lessen Worth's dependence on Cavallo's skills. In mid-February Major William G. Belknap urgently requested his presence at his upper Peace River camp, to which Worth agreed. In responding the colonel commended the interpreter, noting that he was "strictly honest and excellent at a pinch."<sup>67</sup> Four days later Worth demanded Cavallo's return. On March 4 he directed an aide to reiterate the order. On the ninth Belknap dispatched both Alligator and John, but the major pleaded for Cavallo's immediate presence back at Peace River because "the Indians who remain with me . . . insist on the return."<sup>68</sup> Worth declined accommodation. Belknap tried again, reminding his commanding officer of the statement that the interpreter was "excellent at a pinch." The major's aide observed, "That pinch I am instructed by Major Belknap to say has arrived and that the public interests demand his presence here forthwith."<sup>69</sup> Repeated urgings from Belknap's camp came to little avail. "The negro Gopher John cannot be spared," the colonel's aide asserted. "There is much dissatisfaction among some of the Indians [at Fort Brooke], the cause & removal of which can only be affected by the shrewdness & management of John, and the comd officer regards his presence at this Post of paramount importance."<sup>70</sup>

By spring 1842 the time of Cavallo's second departure from Florida drew near, but, before leaving, he still would chance upon an old friend and also grapple with a potentially fatal confrontation. In both instances, given his newly granted freedom, he expressed good humor and, understandably, a sense of relief.

The old friend was George A. McCall, the one-time officer at Fort Brooke during the 1820s and now returned to Florida as an aide to Worth. In early April 1842, Worth, McCall, Cavallo, and a contingent of Worth's men set out north from Fort Brooke toward Abraham's Peliklakaha and its vicinity. At a Wahoo Swamp camp on April 17 the old acquaintances chanced to spend some time together. McCall recounted the incident as follows:

Yesterday morning before breakfast, "Gopher John," who has grown up from a long-legged, ill-looking negro boy to be a fine-looking

fellow of six feet, as straight as an Indian, with just a smile of red blood mantling to his forehead[, came over to my tent]. He dresses remarkably well, and has altogether a jaunty air that would fix your attention at sight. He retains his *cognomen* with the Indians as well as with the whites who lived in the Indian country before the war. The Gopher is with us as interpreter. Well, as I have said, he brought me early yesterday morning a mess of fish--the yellow perch--in return for a hook and line which I had given him the day before.<sup>71</sup>

John insisted upon cooking the fish for McCall's breakfast, and his culinary achievements delighted the officer. Naturally he praised his chef. The story re-commenced later in the day:

In the evening, after supper, I was sitting at the fire in front of my tent, enjoying a good cigar . . . when the Gopher came strolling along, and saluting me with a "Good even, Captain," (he always pronounces the first syllable of the word as if written with an *o*.) he seated himself on the ground on the opposite side of the fire, and rolled the tobacco-smoke in a broad curl about his head. Observing that his dog, a great Indian cur, was seated in a very quiet and respectful attitude at his side, I opened the conversation with asking the *name* of his wolfish follower.

"He name 'Fuse,' sir," was the reply.

"Fuse, Fuse, Fuse!" said I, mustering up my remaining knowledge of the Seminole tongue without success, "what is that in English, John?"

"He English himself, sir."

"How is that, John?"

"Why, sir, you see, when dis dog was giv' to me, he was a little puppy 'bout so big," showing with his hands the length (about eight inches) of the juvenile wolfish cur. "At dat same time I wos courtin' for a wife, and all de gal *fuse* me, (refused me.) Dis so provoking to me, I git mad,--

and I call de dog 'Fuse.'"<sup>72</sup>

Two days later Worth's troops found themselves engaged in spirited fighting near Lake Apopka. Not unusually, as noted by an officer present, "The fire of the enemy was concentrated principally upon the Indian guides and negro interpreters."<sup>73</sup> That circumstance gave rise to the following story, recounted by Worth's son-in-law John T. Sprague:



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The tall figure of the negro interpreter, Gopher John, his loud voice, and negro accent, the repeated discharge of his unerring rifle, well known to the Indians as he was, made him a conspicuous object of assault. The balls flew by him so thick, striking the trees around, that he suspected his courage was oozing out, when, pulling from his pocket a well-filled flask: "God-e, massa," said he to an officer by his side, "I feel all over, mighty queer, de Ingen fight so strong! I must take a big un;" and suiting the action to the word, he drained his bottle, reprimed his rifle, whooped, and was soon lost in the midst of foliage and smoke.<sup>74</sup>

Cavallo left Florida's soil for the last time three months after the Lake Apopka fight. During the final weeks he stayed alongside Worth and McCall, retaining their trust and respect in the Second Seminole War's twilight hours. All told, during his second period of Florida residence he assisted in bringing in over 500 Indians. As Kenneth W. Porter concluded, "During the last two years of the war [he] was very nearly the 'indispensable man' in the army's relations both with the Indians who were still 'out' and those who had finally consented to 'come in.'"<sup>75</sup>

When John Cavallo left Florida Territory in July 1842, he left behind remarkable accomplishments and an important legacy. Significantly, though, he took with him qualities of mature leadership tested in open warfare against the United States Army; a keen knowledge of military strategy observed first hand from officers such as William J. Worth; and close ties with other leaders such as Abraham, Alligator, and Coacoochee. Many of his peers already looked to Cavallo for leadership, and they did so increasingly as the West challenged Florida's Black Seminoles in subsequent decades. In the West, John Cavallo would emerge as John Horse, the leader who helped heroically to preserve and protect his people. In the process, he would help give birth to the idea of Buffalo Soldiers and lay foundations upon which many African-Americans would stand as they joined in pioneering and conquering the western frontier.<sup>76</sup>

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Kevin Mulroy, *Freedom on the Border: The Seminole Maroons in Florida, the Indian Territory, Coahuila, and Texas* (Lubbock, TX, 1993); See also, William Leckie, *Buffalo Soldiers: A Narrative of Negro Cavalry in the West* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1976); Alwyn Barr, *Black Texans: A History of Negroes in Texas* (Austin, Texas, 1973); Arthur Burton, *Black, Red and Deadly: Black and Indian Gunfighters of the Indian Territory, 1870-1907* (Austin, Texas, 1991); John Carroll ed., *The Black Mili-*

ary Experience in the American West (New York, 1971); Jack D. Foner, *Blacks and the Military in American History* (New York, 1974); Arlen I. Fowler, *The Black Infantry in the West, 1869-1891* (Westport, CT, 1971).

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Jane L. Landers, "Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose: A Free Black Town in Spanish Colonial Florida," *American Historical Review* 95 (February 1990): 9-30; idem, "Traditions of African-American Freedom and Community in Spanish Colonial Florida," in David R. Colburn and Jane L. Landers, eds., *The African-American Heritage of Florida* (Gainesville, 1995), 17-41; James W. Covington, "The Negro Fort," *Gulf Coast Historical Review* 5 (Spring 1990): 79-91; Canter Brown, Jr., "The 'Sarrazota, or Runaway Negro Plantations': Tampa Bay's First Black Community, 1812-1821," *Tampa Bay History* 12 (Fall/Winter 1990): 5-19; and idem, *African-Americans on the Tampa Bay Frontier* (Tampa, 1997), 9-20.

<sup>3</sup> On the Second Seminole War and its race war aspects, see Joshua R. Giddings, *The Exiles of Florida: The Crimes Committed By Our Government Against the Maroons, Who Flew From South Carolina and Other Slave States, Seeking Protection Under Spanish Laws* (Columbus, OH, 1858). Kenneth Wiggins Porter has led twentieth century historians in exploring this field. His many works include "Relations Between Negroes and Indians Within the Present Limits of the United States," *Journal of Negro History* 17 (July 1932): 287-367; "Florida Slaves and Free Negroes in the Seminole War, 1835-1842," *Journal of Negro History* 38 (April 1943): 390-421; "Negro Guides and Interpreters in the Early Stages of the Seminole War, Dec. 28, 1835-6 Mar. 6, 1837," *Journal of Negro History* 35 (April 1950): 174-82; and "Negroes and the Seminole War, 1835-1842," *Journal of Southern History* 30 (1964): 427-50. In 1996 the University Press of Florida posthumously published a long-neglected manuscript of Porter's, which incorporated many of the essays cited above into a single narrative. See Kenneth Wiggins Porter, *The Black Seminoles: History of a Freedom-Seeking People*, ed. by Alcione M. Amos and Thomas P. Senter (Gainesville, 1996).

<sup>4</sup> An army officer writing in 1826 placed John's age at fourteen. George A. McCall, *Letters From The Frontiers* (Philadelphia, 1868; reprint ed., Gainesville, FL, 1974), 165.

<sup>5</sup> The Cavallo name has been rendered in a variety of forms, including Cohia, Cohea, Cowaya, Coh-wy-yah, and Coaih. Kenneth Wiggins Porter, "Thlonoto-sassa: A Note on an Obscure Seminole Village of the Early 1820s," *Florida Anthropologist* 13 (December 1960): 116; idem, "Seminole Flight from Fort Marion," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 22 (January 1944): 113-33.

<sup>6</sup> Porter, "Thlonoto-sassa," 118; James W. Covington, *The Seminoles of Florida* (Gainesville, FL, 1993), 3-27; Edward F. Keuchel, *History of Columbia County, Florida* (Tallahassee, 1981), 13-14. On the Patriot War, see Rembert W. Patrick, *Florida Fiasco: Rampant Rebels on the Georgia-Florida Border 1810-1815* (Athens, GA, 1954).

<sup>7</sup> Patrick, *Florida Fiasco*, 195-205; *American State Papers: Indian Affairs*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1932-1834), I, 838.

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- <sup>8</sup> Canter Brown, Jr., *Florida's Peace River Frontier* (Orlando, FL, 1991), 5-9; idem, "Sarrazota, or Runaway Negro Plantations," 5-6.
- <sup>9</sup> James W. Covington, "The Negro Fort," *Gulf Coast Historical Review* 5 (Spring 1990): 79-91; Giddings, *Exiles of Florida*, 46-56. On the First Seminole War, see Virginia Bergman Peters, *The Florida Wars* (Hamden, CT, 1979), 17-59; and John K. Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War, 1835-1842* (Gainesville, FL, 1967), 18-28.
- <sup>10</sup> Brown, *Florida's Peace River Frontier*, 10-21; idem, "Sarrazota, or Runaway Negro Plantations," 13-16.
- <sup>11</sup> Brown, *Florida's Peace River Frontier*, 22-27, 39, 371-74.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid. On the survivors of the Creek raid of 1821 who fled to the Bahamas, see Brown, "Sarrazota, or Runaway Negro Plantations," 15-16; Kenneth W. Porter, "Notes on Seminole Negroes in the Bahamas," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 24 (July 1945): 56-60; John M. Goggin, "The Seminole Negroes of Andros Island, Bahamas," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 24 (January 1946): 210-26; and Harry A. Kersey, Jr., "The Seminole Negroes of Andros Island Revisited: Some New Pieces to an Old Puzzle," *Florida Anthropologist* 34 (December 1981): 169-76.
- <sup>13</sup> Porter, "Thlonoto-sassa," 115-18; Mark F. Boyd, "Horatio S. Dexter and Events Leading to the Treaty of Moultrie Creek with the Seminole Indians," *Florida Anthropologist* 11 (September 1958): 82, 84, 90. On southwest Florida's Indian trails see, for example, "Map of Florida, Seminole Indian Reservation, c. 1827," map #757, record group 75, Cartographic Division, National Archives.
- <sup>14</sup> Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 42-49; James W. Covington, "Life at Fort Brooke 1824-1836," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 36 (April 1958): 319-21; "Lieut. Yancey's Notes," June 30, 1824, in Letters Received, 1824-1853, Office of U. S. Indian Affairs, Florida Superintendency, M-234, roll 1, National Archives.
- <sup>15</sup> McCall, *Letters From The Frontiers*, 141.
- <sup>16</sup> *Niles' Weekly Register*, March 25, 1837.
- <sup>17</sup> McCall, *Letters From The Frontiers*, 164-65.
- <sup>18</sup> Canter Brown, Jr., "The Florida Crisis of 1826-1827 and the Second Seminole War," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 73 (April 1995): 419-30; *St. Augustine East Florida Herald*, March 28, 1826.
- <sup>19</sup> On the development of Middle Florida during the territorial period, see Julia Floyd Smith, *Slavery and Plantation Growth in Antebellum Florida, 1821-1860* (Gainesville, FL, 1973). Regarding slavery and race relations in Florida Territory, see Larry E. Rivers, "A Troublesome Property: Master-Slave Relations in Florida, 1821-1865" in Colburn and Landers, eds., *African-American Heritage of Florida*, 104-27; Canter Brown, Jr., "Race Relations in Territorial Florida, 1821-1845," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 73 (January 1995): 287-307; Larry E. Rivers, "Slavery in Microcosm: Leon County, Florida, 1824-1860," *Journal of Negro History* 46 (Fall 1981): 235-45; idem, "Dignity and Importance": Slavery in Jefferson County, Florida--1827 to 1860," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 61 (April 1983): 404-30; idem, "Slavery and the Politi-

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cal Economy of Gadsden County, Florida: 1823-1861," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 70 (July 1991): 1-19; idem, "Madison County, Florida—1830 to 1860: A Case Study in Land, Labor, and Prosperity," *Journal of Negro History* 78 (Fall 1993): 233-44.

<sup>20</sup> Brown, "Florida Crisis," 426-38; Porter, "Negro Abraham," 8-12.

<sup>21</sup> Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 72-99; Brown, *Florida's Peace River Frontier*, 36-43.

<sup>22</sup> Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 87-113; Sprague, *The Origin, Progress, and Conclusion of the Florida War* (New York, 1848; reprint ed., Gainesville, FL, 1964), 90-91; Brown, "Florida Crisis of 1826-1827," 440-42. On the Dade Massacre, see Frank Laumer, *Dade's Last Command* (Gainesville, FL, 1995).

<sup>23</sup> Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 87-189; Porter, "Negroes and the Seminole War," 428-35; *Key West Inquirer*, May 28, 1836.

<sup>24</sup> Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 87-189; Peters, *Florida Wars*, 105-36.

<sup>25</sup> Thomas S. Jesup quoted in Porter, "Negroes and the Seminole War," 427.

<sup>26</sup> *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, 7 vols. (Washington, DC, 1832-1860), VII, 274.

<sup>27</sup> Canter Brown, Jr., "Persifer F. Smith, the Louisiana Volunteers, and Florida's Second Seminole War," *Louisiana History* 34 (Fall 1993): 407-10; idem, *Florida's Peace River Frontier*, 43-46; Porter, "Negroes and the Seminole War," 436; idem, "John Caesar," 199-200.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas Childs, "Major Childs, U.S.A., Extracts from His Correspondence with His Family," *Historical Magazine*, 3rd Series, Vol. 3 (March 1874): 169; entry of February 3, 1837, General Thomas S. Jesup Diary, October 1, 1836-May 30, 1837, MS-79, Florida Collection, State Library of Florida, Tallahassee (hereafter cited as Jesup Diary).

<sup>29</sup> House Document No. 78, 25th Congress, 2d sess., 76, Appendix, 148.

<sup>30</sup> *Niles' Weekly Register*, March 25, 1837; entry of March 6, 1837, Jesup Diary; Thomas Childs, "Major Childs, U.S.A.: Extracts from His Correspondence with His Family," *Historical Magazine*, 3rd Series, Vol. 3 (April 1875): 280.

<sup>31</sup> Entries of March 7 to April 13, 1837, Jesup Diary; *Niles' Weekly Register*, April 29, 1837; House Document No. 78, Appendix, 148.

<sup>32</sup> *Niles' Weekly Register*, April 29, 1837.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas S. Jesup to J. R. Poinsett, May 8, June 7, 1837, Letters Received, Office of Indian Affairs, Florida Superintendency of Emigration, 1824-1838, M-234, roll 290, National Archives (hereafter cited as Seminole Emigration Letters).

<sup>34</sup> Entry of May 1, 1837, Jesup Diary.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, entries of May 5-12, 1837.

<sup>36</sup> Jesup to Poinsett, June 7, 1837; Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 204; Porter, "Negro Abraham," 25, 27.

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- <sup>37</sup> James F. Sunderman, ed., *Journey Into Wilderness: An Army Surgeon's Account of Life in Camp and Field during the Creek and Seminole Wars 1836-1838* By Jacob Rhett Motte (Gainesville, FL, 1963), 138.
- <sup>38</sup> Jesup to Poinsett, June 16, 1837, Seminole Emigration Letters; House Document No. 78, Appendix, 167-68; Giddings, *Exiles of Florida*, 158-59.
- <sup>39</sup> John C. Casey to Thomas S. Jesup, July 24, 1837, General Jesup—Letters Received from the Officers of the Ordnance, Artillery, Dragoons, Infantry, Quartermaster, and other Branches, Generals' Papers and Books, box 2, Record Group 94, National Archives; *ibid.*, R. H. Peyton to J. A. Chambers, May 26, 1837, box 5; House Document No. 78, Appendix, 171-72; Brown, *Florida's Peace River Frontier*, 49-51.
- <sup>40</sup> Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 205-16; Porter, "Negroes and the Seminole War," 442; Jesup to Poinsett, June 6, 1838, Thomas S. Jesup Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
- <sup>41</sup> Sunderman, *Journey Into Wilderness*, 138.
- <sup>42</sup> Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 216.
- <sup>43</sup> Porter, "Seminole Flight from Fort Marion," 126-27.
- <sup>44</sup> Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 224; N. S. Jarvis to William Jarvis, December 3, 1837, Nathan S. Jarvis Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.
- <sup>45</sup> Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 219-26; entries of December 7-11, 1837, Journal of the Seminole War, 1837-38, Robert C. Buchanan Papers, MS 159, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore. See also Frank F. White, ed., "A Journal of Lt. Robert C. Buchanan During the Seminole War: The Battle of Okeechobee," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 29 (October 1950), 132-51.
- <sup>46</sup> Zachary Taylor to Thomas S. Jesup, December 7, 1837, Zachary Taylor Papers, Library of Congress.
- <sup>47</sup> Jesup to Taylor, December 19, 1837, Letters Received by the Adjutant General, M-567, roll 167, National Archives.
- <sup>48</sup> White, "Journal of Lt. Robert C. Buchanan," 145; *Army and Navy Chronicle*, February 8, 1838.
- <sup>49</sup> Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 227.
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 228. On the Battle of Lake Okeechobee, see also Willard Steele, *The Battle of Okeechobee* (Miami, 1987); Phillip Thomas Tucker, "A Forgotten Sacrifice: Richard Gentry, Missouri Volunteers, and the Battle of Okeechobee," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 70 (October 1991): 150-65; and John K. Mahon, "Missouri Volunteers at the Battle of Okeechobee: Christmas Day 1837," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 70 (October 1991): 166-76.
- <sup>51</sup> Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 231-36; *Baltimore Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, March 3, 1838.
- <sup>52</sup> Jesup to Poinsett, June 6, 1838; Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 235-36.

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- <sup>53</sup> Jesup quoted in Porter, "Negroes and the Seminole War," 444.
- <sup>54</sup> *Army and Navy Chronicle*, May 10, 1838.
- <sup>55</sup> Persifor F. Smith, quoted in Porter, "Thlonoto-sassa," 118.
- <sup>56</sup> Porter, "Negro Abraham," 39.
- <sup>57</sup> Nathan S. Jarvis Diary, 1837-1839, entry of June 5, 1838, P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida, Gainesville.
- <sup>58</sup> St. Augustine *Florida Herald*, July 14, 1838; Giddings, *Exiles of Florida*, 251; "Muster Roll of a Company of Seminole Indians about to Emigrate West of the Mississippi River under the direction of Capt. P. Morrison [c. June 1838]," in Seminole Emigration Letters.
- <sup>59</sup> "Statement of Indian Negroes with the Army of Florida on the 1st of June 1841" and proclamation of W. J. Worth, February 22, 1842, in Seminole Emigration Letters, roll 291; Porter, "Seminole Flight from Fort Marion," 133.
- <sup>60</sup> Ethan Allen Hitchcock to John Bell, February 28, 1841, Ethan Allen Hitchcock Collection, Library of Congress.
- <sup>61</sup> "Seminole Indians' Grim Prophet Issued Torture Death Warrants for White and Negro Prisoners," *Tampa Sunday Tribune*, January 2, 1955.
- <sup>62</sup> Entries of January 4-February 19, 1841, Ethan Allen Hitchcock Diaries (December 1840-January 1841) and (February-March 1841), Thomas Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK.
- <sup>63</sup> March 1841); Ethan Allen Hitchcock to W. W. S. Bliss, March 11, 1841, Hitchcock Collection.
- <sup>64</sup> Sprague, *Origin, Progress, and Conclusion of the Florida War*, 300.
- <sup>65</sup> William W. Hoxton to Eliza L. Hoxton, August 26, 1841, Randolph Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond.
- <sup>66</sup> Porter, "Negroes and the Seminole War," 449; Mahon, *History of the Second Seminole War*, 304; "Recollections of Incidents and Characters During Fifty Years of Military Service," 54-56, Samuel Cooper Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; W. J. Worth to Winfield Scott, February 14, 1842, in William G. Belknap Correspondence, William W. Belknap Papers, Princeton University Library, Princeton, NJ (hereafter cited as Belknap Correspondence); proclamation of W. J. Worth, February 22, 1842.
- <sup>67</sup> W. J. Worth to William G. Belknap, February 23, 1842, Belknap Correspondence.
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, John Garland to Belknap, March 1, 1842, M. C. M. Hammond to Belknap, March 4, 1842, and Belknap to Garland, March 9, 1842.
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, H. H. Sibley to F. D. Callender, March 10, 1842.
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, Belknap to Worth, March 11, 17, 1842, M. C. M. Hammond to Belknap, March 11, 1842.
- <sup>71</sup> McCall, *Letters From The Frontiers*, 399.

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 400-401.

<sup>73</sup> Sprague, *Origin, Progress, and Conclusion of the Florida War*, 459.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> McCall, *Letters From The Frontiers*, 406; Porter, "Negroes and the Seminole War," 449.

<sup>76</sup> "Statement of Indian Negroes with the Army of Florida on the 1st of June 1841"; Edwin C. McReynolds, *The Seminoles* (Norman, OK, 1957), 233-34.