

WES MAP  
memoir

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

A CONSIDERABLE portion of the State of Florida, south of Tampa Bay, is a comparatively unknown region. Its natural features oppose great obstacles to the prosecution of surveys and explorations; and, although many have been from time to time accomplished under the direction of different commanding officers of the troops stationed there, the results have not all been connected, nor embodied into an available form. Sketches of the country have been made, undoubtedly in all cases, by officers who have accompanied the examinations, and these have subsequently been compiled, and, where authority was given for it, published. The maps thus furnished have, however, been necessarily constructed upon a scale too small to exhibit more than the general features of the country, and the lines traversed have been plotted from surveys made either without instruments or with those of the roughest description. The written reports, which would give more specific and complete details and supply information that the surface of a map could not, have rarely been published, and have existed only in the archives of the department. They could not therefore be made available to officers in the field, and would be, under any circumstances, difficult to refer to; for, many of them relating to expeditions undertaken for other objects than the exploration of the country, the material collected, at different times, in regard to the topography, would be scattered throughout numerous and extended reports, embracing other subjects, and covering a long interval of time. As a large portion of the region is submerged during some seasons of the year, trails and other local marks are soon obliterated; and, when new, troops have been ordered into the country, they have been obliged to purchase the knowledge, possessed by their predecessors, with a fresh expenditure of time, hardship and danger. Extensive reconnaissances were made along the coast and in the interior, during the years 1841 and 1842, at which time the south-eastern and south-western shores, the Everglades, the Big Cypress Swamp, Lake Okechobee, and the adjacent region, were traversed in various directions by officers of the army and navy, and much accomplished towards the topographical development of the State. Many similar explorations, some of them attended with great difficulties, have been recently made, under the direction of Cols. MUNROE and BROWN, Second Artillery, by the officers of their command. Most of these have appeared to be over an unexamined country, though a comparison of the reports and sketches with those that were made in 1842 shows that some of the routes passed over at the two periods must have been nearly identical. Had the parties last in the field possessed, in a form suitable for reference, all of the information gathered by those who preceded them, their labors would probably have been much lightened.

During the compilation of the accompanying map, a number of reports, made by the officers above referred to, have been obtained from the Adjutant

General's Department, and it has been thought desirable, from the considerations mentioned, to extract the topographical information contained in them, and to present it in a connected form. Such material as could be procured from other reliable sources has been appended. The short time allowed for the work has precluded anything like a thorough investigation as to what is now known of the region in question; those facts only being presented which were at hand or could without delay be collected. For convenience of reference and to conform as nearly as possible to the original reports, the lines of communication referred to in them have been separately taken up, and in connection with these is mentioned whatever could be learned concerning the adjacent localities. The country considered being, for the greater part, a flat expanse, where the prairie of one day may at another be converted into a lake, and where the lakes, rivers, swamps and hammocks are subjected to such changes as can be produced by an additional layer of water of a depth sometimes as great as three feet, all statements relating to its surface are liable at times to considerable modifications.

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## INLAND ROUTES FROM FORT JUPITER TO FORT LAUDERDALE\* (View Locator Map)

Old Fort Jupiter stands upon the southern shore of Jupiter River, about three miles from the bar at the mouth of the Inlet. It is upon the western point, formed by the junction of Jupiter River and Jones's Creek, a stream that rises three or four miles to the south. The land in the immediate vicinity is grown up with thick scrub, and is bare of timber. The back country is a high pine region, through which the old road to Fort Von Swearingen may still be distinctly traced. Half a mile distant from the old Fort, upon the eastern point made by the creek and river, is the new post, Now called Fort Jupiter. Here the pine land is still more elevated, and continues so for five miles back; the timber coming down to the water's edge, and is the water itself being of sufficient depth for small boats, close in to the shore. Abundance of wood, suitable for building purposes, can be conveniently obtained. The soil is fertile. There is an excellent anchorage, and a good place for loading and unloading boats, making the site of the present Fort preferable to that of the old one, or any other location in the vicinity.

Objections exist to it now as a military position, from the fact that the Inlet is closed, and the post rendered inaccessible, from the sea, to the smallest coasting vessels. The closing of the inlet causes the locality -- at other times salubrious -- to be an unhealthy one; the water on the inside of the bar then becoming fresh, and inducing a rapid growth of vegetable matter, which, decaying, taints the atmosphere and endangers disease. The alternate opening and closing of this inlet is somewhat remarkable. Between the years 1840 and 1844, it was closed. At the latter period, Capt. Davis, the mail carrier from Fort Capron to Cape Florida, endeavored, with a party of five men, to excavate a channel. After digging for several hours, they succeeded by, nightfall in starting outward a stream of water four inches in depth. Upon this they desisted from labor and went to their camp, which was some fifty feet from the ditch. The river inside was unusually high from a freshet in the everglades, and a strong north wind was blowing. At night, the sleeping party were awakened by a flood of water, and had to abandon their camp equipage and run for their lives, barely escaping being carried out to sea. The next day there was a channel nearly a quarter of a mile wide, and the rush of water could be traced far out upon the ocean.

The inlet stayed open till 1847, when it closed till 1853, during which year it opened itself, but remained in that condition only a short time. in 1855, Maj. Raskin, First Artillery, in command of the post, endeavored again to clear the channel. Sand hills of considerable size, which had accumulated, were cut through, and the attempt would doubtless have been successful but for the low condition of the water during that unusually dry year. A small amount of labor