

In Camp, Fernandina, Fla. Jan. 30th 1863

Dear Parents

I wrote to you soon after our arrival here but was not acqu[a]inted enough with the place and our object here to give much of a description. Our Col. [Colonel] as post commander has his Head Quarters in the celebrated Senator Daiv Ulee's [David Levy Yulee's] house whoos [*sic*] name has been conspic[u]ous in the Confederate States. An old resident of this place tells me that as long ago as 1848 Ulee made a speech in which he said after speaking six hours in behalf of the Union (as he was then a Union man) "People of the State of Florida, Stick to the old Government by all means as it is our only safety." His house is a large old fashioned one painted yellow situated in the centre of the town, not a fruit or a shade tree and but few residences in town but what have better taste and location. Gen. Finegan's [General Joseph Finegan's] residence is situated on an emminance [eminence] that commands a view of the whole town and island. It is a large 3 story building with verandas at each floor and an observatory on the top which makes it a very sightly place; directly south of the house is a large Indian mound, perfect in shape, and is supposed to have been there many years; from the observatory can be seen a species of Maratello [Martello] Tower on Cumberland Island built of oyster shells and resembles the one on Tybee Island. The rebels had sand batteries with guns in them instead of the fort to protect the entrance. There was 30 for one two and four guns but not near all were filled. The Planter and John Addams [John Adams] a ferry boat have been reconnoitering up the St. Mary's river. They captured 6 guerillas. A portion of the negro Brig. [brigade] were all the troops that were there: a captain of a cavalry company was master of some of them and was immediately killed. They hated to have the negroes guard them so they would not eat anything for 36 hours when they eat a very little. One beg[g]ed of them to shoot him rather than have negroes guard him. The chapla[i]n has come for the mail. We are well.

John L. Rowley E 7 C V [Company E, 7th Connecticut Volunteers]
Port Royal, SC

Addressed to Elias Rowley, Winsted, Ct.

Transcribed by Anna Bjornsson, University of Florida, 2008 and Nicole Milano,
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