

Captain Dinsmore letter from Potter - 1836

April 9th, 1836

To

Capt. Silas Dinsmore

Sir,

You will take charge of the
Party about to proceed by way of Lynch's landing to
Galvezton, and collect all the horses ____ mules and
Able bodied negroes to be found between this and Lynch's
And in that neighborhood, and have them at Lynch's this
Evening to be put on board the steam Boat as the passes
Down the bayou – of course in the execution of this
Order you and your men will act with the prudence
Which a due regard to the feelings of our people may require,
But you will take care at the same time to exercise
All the _____ necessary for the faithful performance
Of your duty to the country in this perilous crisis –

Yours very respectfully,

Rob. Potter

Secretary of the Navy

Captain Silas Dinsmore Appointment By President Burnet - 1836

Republic of Texas

To all to whom these presents shall come greeting.
Know ye that reposing special trust and confidence
In the honor, patriotism, fidelity and abilities
Of Silas Dinsmore Esq.r., I have nominated and
By and with the advice and consent of my
Cabinet, do by these presents constitute and appoint
Him the said Silas Dinsmore Esq.r., a Captain
In the Navy of the Republic of Texas, as such
He will be diligent in the discharge of the duties
Of his station, taking care to conform himself
To the rules and regulations which may be
Adopted for the government of the Navy, the
Lawful orders of his Superior Officers, and the
Orders which he may from time to time receive
From the Navy Department of the Republic of
And all officers, Sailors, and marines who
May be pleased under command of the
Said Silas Dinsmore Esqr. Are hereby strictly
Enjoined and required to respect him as their
Superior Officer and to yield at all times
A prompt and ready obedience to all his
Orders appertaining to the public service.
Done at Harrisburg the 30th day of March AD
1836 and of the Republic the first.-

David G. Burnet (sig)
President of the Republic

Moses E. Morrell Letter – 1850/60?

Chambers County }
State of Texas }

To the Commissioner of Claims

The petition of M E. Morrell of aforesaid county
Respectfully Represents, that he was born in
New Jersey AD 1790. That in April 1836 he was
Employed in New Orleans under Capt. Irvine recruit-
-ing for the Regular service of Texas, which service
being performed. We was ordered to the Encampm-
-ent on the Navidad. There in the capacity of 1st
Sergeant, your Petitioner remained one year.

The government having purchased
vessels of war and not having inducements for
foreign seamen to man them, congress passed
an act authorizing Sailors in the Army to
supply their wants. This was cheerfully
complied with, and on our own resources, with-
-out any Officer we wended our way to the
then sand bank of now the City of Gal-
-veston. Our party 64 in number was then
distributed to the Schooners Inviniceble
and Brutus, on board the former I was
ordered, and after cruising for seven months
living on the spoils of ~~Green turtle~~ the enemy
green turtle and Beans. We sailed for the
harbor of Galveston. On our arrival the tide
being low the Invinible being encumbered
with plunder taken from the enemy, could
not cross the bar. The Brutus being lighter
succeeded, and we came to Anchor.
Next morning at 10PM, we was greeted
with the appearance of two Mexican Brig
mounting 36 guns, we only 7, having
made the signal to the Brutus. She receiving

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armed
all the Physical force of the Island ~~maned~~ to
to the teeth and all attempted to come to the apparent
conflict. But owing to the confusion of so
many volunteers, and their anxiety to aid us,
the pilot voice Hitchcock, could not be
heard, and she grounded. In the mean
time, all hands was called in our craft and the
resolution formed of resisting, (though 39 in number)
to the last. Having been deceived by our Ma-
-neuver, and no Brutus after receiving their
fire for half an hour we was compelled
to run her on shore. Two at a time we em-
-barked, and landed safely on the beach.
I have often seen records of valor, but here I
was an eye witness of one, and all hands. The
Commodore & Secretary of the Navy were receipt
of it. It was of 3rd Lieut. Smith who with
the assistance of one man rescued us all at
the peril of his own life. Col. Lynch then
commanding on the Island was on the beach
until all were landed and by his invitation
we went into the encampment on the Point

Early the next morning your
Petitioner while leaning against a tent
Listening to the conversation of its inmates
Was ran through both thighs with a
Bayonet by one Hogan, a Soldier of Capt.
Turners company. This was done without
any provocation on my part, as I never saw
the man until he had committed the act.
Considerable liquor having come ashore from
our vessel, and he having obtained a large
portion, was the cause of his attack. For
after his assaulting me, he pursued others

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and for their preservation, and by command of Col. Lynch was shot. Having no medical aid, I was ordered to the Houston Hospital here. Without any nourishment, laying under a tree for one month. (The Hospital being full) Shavings for a pallet and sticks for pillow. I was visited by that friend of the ~~of the~~ friendless Gen. Rusk. He seeing my situation, and that of my other fellow sufferers, that same day procured a passage for the erection of a comfortable building, in which by the aid of my Bounty land and Dr. Watson. In the three months I was able to walk Since I have served under Commodore E. W. Moore in whom I have found a friend and under whose orders I have sailed during his Command while not employed in the service of the Republic. I have sustained myself by instructing the youth of several counties and that with considerable elate. I am now 68 years old and my former exertions are failing me, the weakness of my legs is increasing from the effects of my wounds, and an act being passed by the government for the aid of those injured while in their service. I come a humble petitioner seeking this aid. I am aware that vouchers will be asked for, but with the exception of one, they are all dead

Those who were present at the time was Col. Lynch. Com. Thompson Capt. Turner. Dr. Brumline. (James Duncan now living) and 500 soldiers. Had the U. States passed the Pension Bill I should

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not have been a petitioner. Should the recommendation of all the Old citizens of Galveston be required they could be obtained vouching for my service and character.

I was at the time of my confinement in the Hospital compelled to sell my Bounty land to obtain my daily food as the provision of the government was miserable. To this assertion Dr Ashbel Smith will cheerfully subscribe.

I believe I have been longer in the service of Texas than any living man in it, and have always received honorable discharges with their approbate. Furthermore the Petitioner saith not but Humbly pray his petition may be considered and some appropriations made to make him comfortable and sustain him in his old age.

M. E. Morrell

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Benjamin F. Hughes Letter - 1881

Galveston May the 5th 1881
Messors Stewart & Halricht

I came to Brazos I though about the last of November 1835 but Tom Smith sais the companies from Georgia Got there in December. Any how we about 40 of us Tog them in a schooner commanded by Capt. Hitchcock about Or near there some time but little after. We were sent from New Orleans by an agent or maybe an acting officer for sending recruits to Texas & the bills was posted about New Orleans with glowing account & prospects of the country that fired the minds of a good many youngsters & I felt like with the rest left a good ship to come. We were at first destined for this place Galveston but Capt. Hitchcock got scared as we hove in sight of another vessel that he said he feared was a Mexican war vessel & he put up the helm & kept off & I believe the other vessel was suspicious as she also kept off but any how when night we came up to the wind & kept on in close hall until morning & then we saw no more of her & Capt. Hitchcock concluded to put into the Brazos where a short distance from where we landed we found what was called the Georgia Battalion Commanded by Fanin & Ward & we were distributed to diferant Companies. I first given to Capt. Ticknor & it was Found I was tolerably handy with a pen which was when I was young more so than now & Capt Horton offer a While said he needed some one to take charge of his Papers & do his writing as his official duties otherwise made it inconvenient for him to do himself & beside the old man was rather a poor penman anyhow as I supose plenty now living knows as he lived many years after. Anyhow with him I ended my army service at Goliad as I was taken from the ranks a few minutes before they were killed by the request of a lady to Col. Holzinger. I wrote two or three copies of the capitulation as dictated to me in English one for Dr. Shackelford. I was then taken to Matamoras & then turned loose & got up to Matagorda

From there I got to Galveston & shipped in the war schooner
Invincible & went to New York & returned after capturing
A couple of vessels & knocking down the little town of
Sea sal (Sisal) on the coast. One of the vessels we got the Eliza
Russell had to be given up as I believe she was under charter
To an English subject or some how that way. I cant now
Recollect any how we came onto Galveston & was followed by
Two briggs of war and as we could not get in over the bar
They attacked us & crowded us in & we got a ground & sunk this
Was in the later part of August 1837 & we were discharged
Soon after Lieutenant J. G. Hurd now residing here came
Out in a small boat to help us land after the fight &
our vessel sunk. Write to him & he will vouch
for my service in the invincible when he was lieutenant
on the Brutus & Old John Leibenburg
in Lake Charles LA was with us & sent to help bring one
of the vessels home that we captured. I don't know that
that he is now living. He was in 1876. For my army service
I refer you to Dilard Cooper, I lost his address. & J. Smith
In Richmond Fort Bend that was with us Cooper first recognized
me in 1876 in Austin. John W. Hughes in Grand Gulf
Mississippi knows of me being in the (illegible) of
The country though he was not with us & so does Col.
B. F. Atkins in Columbia Brazoria county & Col. Denis a
Son in law of Capt Horton & a lawyer I think in Hempsted
as he told me he often heard the old men speak of
Frank Hughes his Kentucky boy as he thought a great deal
Of me. I was at the meeting in Palestine though I was
Very feeble & not well. I was tested & got my certificate
of membership in a printed form with the moto of
the state seal & signed by Moses Austin Brown after
testing by Gus N. Brian & others which was no trouble
for me to prove to the satisfaction of anybody
& old Lieutenant J. G. Hurd here will testify to navy service.

& he being a commishioned officer ought to have a great
Deal of weight. Capt. Calder in Richmond examined
me in 1876 & found no fault. Why there should
be such an ado now I cant see when there is but few
has any beter proof & none that has been absent from
the country from 37 to 76. I was sent for by Cap Jude
Calders partner to come & see to my affairs but being
Afflicted with a brain fever I could not get in
Time until all had been repealed that had
Been done. I filled out an application & just as I was
To mail it to you I saw in the paper that we need

Not send our application until July but I will loose
no time then in forwarding it. Two old vetrons
signed ole Rosewall the district clerk & the affore
mentioned Lieutenant J. G. Hurd. I wrote to Gov. Houston
of my affairs land claims in the country when I was
on duty in the US Navy & he told me it would always
stand good to my heirs :& I never came & I after saw him
in Washington as Senator & he told me to about the same &
after Gov. Davis wrote to me about the same effect. I suppose
Though they were two honest men raised & lived under a diferant
Political dispensation to fore see the changes & corruptions that
Was to sucede them as we was raised with more wisdom & simplicity
Than the generation to sucede us which was & is eager & ready
To prosper at our expence & use every means in the way of fraud
To accomplish that end. Late a number of our old men think very
Strange of our old Gov who encouraged taking out of our mouths
The last morsle. I cant see why he should feel to use us as he does
We did not throw the state in debt we are generally too poor to
Do anything some of which now at the age 3 score & ten years
Have to look out a days work at reduced wages to get a little to
Eat at the cheapes rate. One poor old man old Richard O'Hanlon
Died in the charity hospital here a few months since & I live
these 2 last winters work out fine

In a good room at the rent of one dollar a month because im unable
To labor & pass my time with my books of which I still have
A few left as I had to sell at auction a tolerable respectable
Library for my subsistence of which in general is 5 cts worth
Of bread & a few dipers of water a day. I feel it severely after living
An official number of years in the US Navy until our civil
War in which I participated in in the part of my country &
Owe nothing to any prodigal dissipated made of living for my
Misfortune. I did though think Texas would have treated me better in
My old age as we did not fight under a money stipulation at
The time I came. I hought how it looked & does look to foreignners to see
How we are treated with real contempt & when they did make a
Pittance of a grant of 150 dollars require us to be recorded proper.
Shame shame to the people that would sugest to think of such.
I admit I for one was in a starving condition & was & am unable
To work & business I could do I cant get simply because im old &
There is plenty of young men. No one objects to my habits as in
One of finances & behavior & always the one thing but im old
Which is the next thing to criminal. Im invited in the best society
On all sides but I visit none in my fallen condition as I
Can not make the appearance according to the time in which
I now live. I will lieve when I pass of the material upon interests
Book which will embrace my career & some interesting incidents

Of this country & my career in the US Navy & army in fact my journals
From 1835 to 1875 in September when my last vessel was
Sunk in a storm on my way here to Texas. I have never yet recovered
My strength since living two days & nights in the water on fragments
Of wreck. Negroes can have situations in the customs house but I cant even
Get a menial situation. My service a float in the US Navy was from Feb the
9th 1842 to April the 9th 1844. Then from June the 2nd of that year to the
Taking of Veracruz & from that in the army until it was disbanded I was
Then in mercantile sea service until the 5th of July 1853 & then
Again from Oct 6, 1857 until Jan the 1st 1860, then again from Oct. the
13th the same year to Oct 23rd. 1861 all of which honorably on record in
Washington. I thought to come to Texas & find every thing properly on
Record with plenty of my own hand writing on file in the
War office but I come & find everything in a confused state. I have
No doubt that they have paid benefits to improper persons
Such as would lend a yoke or two of oxen to some commands
For a few days & others like so called service brought in so
Any how. There are a few old men now scattered about the US
That were real soldiers that dose not yet know they haven't
Yet been brought to any consideration & it was only from judge
Calders partner that I accidently found out. Having got through
With this leter I recon your pacience will be exhausted

Your Obedient Servant

B F Hughes

P.S. Please try & expedited as much as possible
& tell me what land certificate is worth.