

June 19, 1863
Pinellas Point Florida

Captain Kearney,

It saddens me to report to you that last night in Clearwater Harbor, the Federal gunboat Tahoma destroyed and sank Her Majesty's blockade runner Mary Jane. The Federal boat caught the Mary Jane off St. Josephs Sound after sinking another blockade runner Harrietton off Anclote Key yesterday afternoon. Tahoma chased Mary Jane into Clearwater harbor where she ran aground and was helpless under the merciless Federal boats guns. The cursed Tahoma has plagued our coast for over a year now destroying southern merchant ships and raiding the coast. Pvt. Tad and I have had to flee our home and hide in the swamp to avoid capture as her marines have raided our settlement on more than one occasion.

I cannot tell you what the loss of the Mary Jane means to patriots here at Pinellas Point. Since the Federal Navy has bottled up Tampa Bay, we do not get much in the way of regular news or supplies from Fort Brooke in Tampa. Our British friends were our only source of the few items that separate us as civilized people from the savages. We no longer have a reliable source of coffee, tea, sugar, cigars, the odd bolt of cloth for Mrs. Dye, or trinkets for Katie and many other items.

Many of Mary Janes sailors escaped capture or drowning. Pvt. Tad and I have volunteered to serve for a week on a Confederate Blockade runner that will attempt to get these sailors south out of Punta Rassa, past the Federal blockade to a British Navy ship south of the Tortugas. As these sailors have done so much for us, honor demands we now help them in their hour of need. We sail at the next new moon. The captain of the ship, having lost much of his crew to the yellow fever wont sail without the extra hands.

My hopes and prayers go out to our honored generals and comrades in arms at the Pennsylvania campaign. May God give them a swift and decisive victory. Upon return, I will report to you the success of this mission. Until then I will remain,

Your Trusted Servant,

Pvt. Thos. A. Dye OOO
2nd Florida Volunteer Infantry.

