

LETTERS FROM COMMISSIONER, Volume VII. On file in the Field Notes Section,
Elliot Building, Tallahassee, Florida

General Land Office
December 7th, 1853

John Westcott, Esq.
Surv. Gen. St. Augustine, Fla.

Sir:

The five unapproved plats of townships subdivided by Dep. Surv. Hopkins, transmitted for examination and instructions, with your letter of 24th Sept. last, are herewith returned viz Towns. 34 S of Ranges 36 & 37 E, and Towns, 35 S of Ranges 37, 38 & 39 E. In Town. 34 R 36 you remark that "the lines (query, inconceivements?) do not correspond with the township lines, as surveyed by Houston - See Sec. 6 on the East boundary" in the diagram you have furnished. Houston makes the east boundary of T. 34, R. 36 to measure 6 miles 3 chs & 10 lks, whereas Hopkins shows the same to be exactly 6 miles. Query is Hopkins showing from actual measurement of the last miles which he makes 80 chains and Houston 83 chs 10 lks? which of the two is correct will remain for you to determine. You remark that "the same difficulty occurs in township 34 R. 37 and the additional of not connecting back from the posts on the north boundary and the variation noted." The accompanying diagram has been prepared to exhibit the state of the case from the field notes here on file. Mr. Hopkins in subdividing T. 34 R. 37 should have respected the corners established by Mr. Houston by connecting his section lines with the preestablished corners upon the north boundary of the township, instead of closing them at random on the said boundary in contravention of the general instructions dated 27 April 1853 attached to his contract, See page 1 on the 15th line of the same. The south boundary of T. 33, R. 37 should have measured the same as the north boundary of T. 34, R. 37 but the latter, it would seem (in consequence of Mr. Houston's mode of surveying the east of west boundary of the latter township) in establishing double corners thereon, exhibit two jogs only one of which is shown on your diagram, viz one of two chs. 70 lks and the other of 5 chs and 40 lks, both of them to the west of the corner for the township above, thereby making said north boundary 2 chs and 70 lks longer than the south boundary of the township above it; which latter boundary according to Mr. Houston's field notes shows six miles and Mr. Harris's subdivision of T. 33, R. 37 makes the same distance, and he inspected the corner established by Mr. Houston. Had Mr. Hopkins connected his lines with the preestablished corner upon the S boundary of T. 33, R. 37 or N. boundary

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of T. 34, R. 37, the sectional distance upon the same would have been as follows,
viz?

Of Sec.	1	77-30 instead of	82 - 30
	2	80-00 " "	81- 44
	3	80-00 " "	79 - 31
	4	80-00 ' "	80 - 52
	5	80-00 " "	79 - 53
	6	<u>85-40</u>	<u>79 - 60</u>
		482-70	482 - 70

Hopkins

The absence of specific instructions to Mr. Houston & Mr. Williams in regard to the programme of their surveys of townships & towns, and the subsequent neglect on the part of Mr. Hopkins to observe the general instructions for subdividing have together wrought these irregularities, so unnecessary and disreputable to the surveying service, and which we hope will never be permitted to occur again. Without re-surveys of the work and the demolition of the repudiated corners consequent thereon, it will be impossible to remedy the same, and as much of the land is swampy it is hardly regarded as warranting the expense of a thorough correction, and hence it has been concluded to return the plats for your qualified approval under the circumstances to be set forth and distinctly explained in your Certificate of approval.

I remain, very respectfully,
Your OBSvt.

John Wilson
Commissioner

P. S. Your letter of 28th Oct. enclosing a table of contents in certain features in Fla. town. 1 S, R. 8 W has been received.