

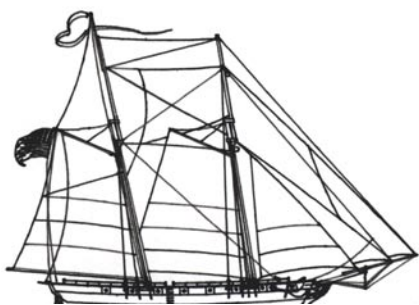
# Florida Keys

## Sea Heritage Journal

VOL. 15, NO. 1

FALL 2004

USS SHARK




---

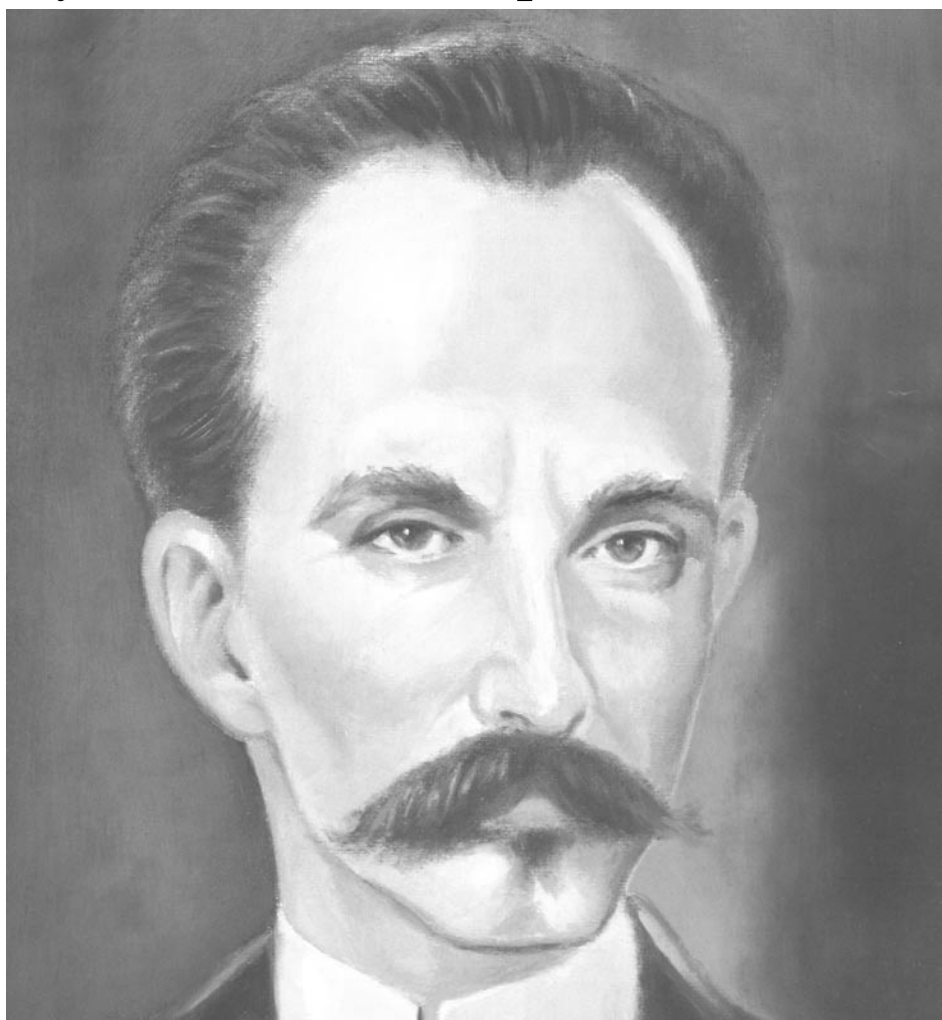
 OFFICIAL QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE KEY WEST MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 

---

## The Insurgents of Key West and the Expedition of 1895

By Dr. Consuelo E. Stebbins

When Jefferson Browne published his history on Key West in 1912, he acknowledged the important role that the Cuban emigre colony had played in the revolutions in Cuba. Browne (115) wrote, A history of Key West which does not treat of the several revolutionary movements in Cuba, with which Key West was so closely connected, would fail in its purpose of faithfully portraying the events which have shaped or affected its destiny. The flood of Cuban emigres to Key West began during the Ten Years War (1868-78) when Cuban exiles fled Spanish persecution in Cuba and found work in the cigar factories in Key West. Even after the Ten Years War ended in 1878, the majority of these exiled Cubans remained in Key West where they plotted and sacrificed their earnings to support an insurrection in Cuba. Here, only 90 miles from their native island, the emigre colony dedicated themselves to liberating Cuba from Spain. The 1885 census of Key West demonstrates the extent of the Cuban emigre population in Key West. The census shows Key West with a total population of 13,945. The population can be divided into three sections based on birthplaces; the largest group, 4,741



*Jose Marti the leader of the Cuban Revolutionary Party. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

(34%), cited their birthplace as Key West. The second largest group was Cubans, 4,517 (32%), followed by Bahamians, 3,458 (25%). The 1885 census reported a work force of 5,100. Approximately 2,111 (41%) worked in the cigar industry

followed by maritime with a much smaller workforce at 785 (15%).

Key West's reputation as one of the major centers for providing the rebels in Cuba with guns and munitions is well documented in

(Continued on page 10)

## Society News

By Tom & Lynda Hambright

We began our fifteen year with the Fall edition appearing during the Winter. I guess we can blame the problems this year on the hurricanes that hit in other part of Florida but thankfully Sister Louis Gabriel kept her watch over Key West (Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal Winter 1993/94). Hopefully we can get back on schedule soon.

As I write this in early December the problems of the reef and Florida Bay are in the headlines again. Some of us have been looking for historic information on Florida Bay and how that may help with the problems today. Ed Little and I had found antidotal references to a large fish kill in the late 1800s but were never able to find any real evidence. We had the reference from Hackley's Diary of the fish kill from fresh water in January 1857. Sometimes research comes easy and in this case I found the information by answering the phone. In mid November I received a call from Pat Ayers of the Library of Congress asking if I had any information about the fish kill of 1878, which I did not but of course wanted what she had. She was kind enough to fax me the following letters from "Proceedings of the United States National Museum, Volume 1" published in 1879. Ms. Ayers is still looking for any other reports from 1878 and has promised to keep us informed.

**On the Destruction of Fish in the Vicinity of the Tortugas During the Months of September and October 1878.**  
By Lieut. J. P. Jefferson, Dr.

Joseph T. Porter and  
Thomas Moore.

The following information, relative to the dying of fish in the Gulf of Mexico during the month of September last, will be found of much interest, as bearing upon the sudden destruction in large numbers of marine animals, and their accumulation in geological Strata. - Editor.

Fort Jefferson, Dry Tortugas, Fla., October 16, 1878.

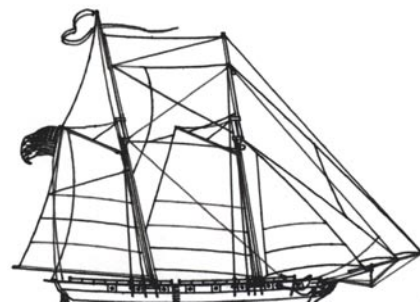
I have the honor to enclose herewith the skin of a fish\* which was found on the beach here. I send it because many old fishermen say that they never before saw one like it. Some five or six were picked up from a multitude of other fish; and to report this great mortality among them is my principal reason for addressing you. Some three or four weeks ago, the fishing smacks over in Florida Bay lost about all their fish in their wells, and attributed it to fresh water, which they supposed had from some cause or other come down in great volume from the mainland. On the 9th instant, the sailing-vessel which connects us with Key West met water of a dark color about midway between here and there, but saw no dead fish. On her return, on the night of the 11th, she struck it off Rebecca Shoals, about 25 miles east of here, and found it extending some 10 miles out in the Gulf. That same night it came down upon us here, and the next morning the beach and surface of the water, as far as the eye could reach, were covered with dead fish. The appearance of the water had entirely changed; instead of the

(Continued on page 8)

## New Member

Peter E. Hess, Wilmington, DE;  
Frank & Pam Holden, Key West;

Michael Lyons, Key West; John  
Petzold, Key West.



The Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal is published quarterly. Subscription is available through membership. Copyright 2004 by the Key West Maritime Historical Society of the Florida Keys, Inc. The art on the masthead, the USS Shark, was drawn by Bill Muir.

Editor: Lynda Hambright  
Production: Tom Hambright

Letters and articles are welcome. Please write to: Editor, Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal, KWMHS, P.O. Box 695, Key West, FL 33041.

## Key West Maritime Historical Society Board of Directors

President: Edward J. Little, Jr.  
Vice President: Winifred Fryzel  
Secretary: Corey Malcom  
Treasurer: Lynda Hambright

Shauna Cameron  
Tom Hambright  
Mary Haffenreffer  
Nancy Jameson  
John Jones  
Sheri Lohr  
Don Lowe  
T.J. McDermott  
Julie McEnroe  
William McKinley  
John Viele

# Five Blacks in Navy Blue:

## A Report on Civil War Sailors Buried in Key West Cemetary



*The Battleship Maine Plot in the Key West Cemetery. Photo credit: Tom Hambright.*

Anthony D. Atwood

Florida International University

In the heart of Key West lies the city cemetery, the last resting place for generations of the inhabitants of this old and important Florida town. One section of the cemetery of historical note is the area commonly known as “The Maine Plot.” It came by this name because twenty-four dead sailors off the battleship USS **Maine** are buried there. The **Maine** was blown up in Havana harbor February 25, 1898 with the disastrous loss of most of the crew. Many of the victims were originally interred in Havana and later exhumed and put to final rest at the United States National Cemetery of

Arlington. Twenty-four, however, were brought to Key West. Here they were buried with honors in a section of the cemetery that was already accommodating a number of deceased military members. Soon afterward the USS **Maine** burials, the section was enclosed within a now one-hundred-year-old wrought iron fence.

The Maine plot at the Key West cemetery is the last resting place of 84 persons altogether; 83 adults and one infant girl child. Among them rest a number of Union soldiers and sailors of the War of the Rebellion who died in Key West during that war. Subsequent to the USS **Maine** interment, additional burials

of military members and a few civilians continued to occur over the years, the latest was in the 1970’s.<sup>1</sup>

Five of them were Black Civil War Navy men

The questions of this investigation are the questions of their identity. Who were they? Why were they in Key West? What can be discovered of the details of their lives? When and how did they die? Only the slim documentation of their enlistment records, hospital and death records remain to draw from. The five sailors were Charles Tillman, George E. Jackson, Thomas Thomas, Henry Keen and Prince Carroway.

(Continued on page 4)

(Navy from page 3)

Charles Tillman,

United States Navy

Charles Tillman was born in Wilmington, Delaware in 1834. He was a waiter by trade, stood 5 foot 8 inches tall, and joined the Navy at Philadelphia on January 27, 1862. His enlistment term was for three years and he was rated a Landsman.<sup>2</sup> For the next year and a half, he served aboard the USS **Miami**, last recorded for muster on July 1, 1863. USS **Miami** served with the Atlantic Blockade Squadron of the U.S. Navy during the Civil War and much of its activity during this time was on station patrolling off Albemarle Sound and Pamlico Sound. Sometime after July 1st, Tillman went aboard USS **Augusta Dinsmore**. Transferring sailors between ships cross-decking) to even up manpower shortages occasioned by battle casualties, or more usually from losses to illness and disease was a common Navy practice. Whether Navy initiated, or less likely through Tillman's own request, in joining the ship's company of **Augusta Dinsmore**, Tillman became part of the West Gulf Squadron, headquartered at Key West.

The fevers, diseases and debilitations associated with service in the tropics were known to strike hardest those new to the region. January 23, 1864 he was admitted to the Navy and Marine Hospital at Key West.<sup>3</sup> He was one of thirtytwo sailors admitted that month into the hospital originally built as a 60-bed facility.<sup>4</sup> Three New Yorkers, two Englishmen, a Scot and four Irishmen were among his fellow patients.

Six of the thirty two did not leave the hospital alive. Charles Tillman was one of these six. He died on January 30, 1864, one week after

being admitted.

George E. Jackson,

United States Navy

George E. Jackson of Nova Scotia joined the Navy in Boston, Massachusetts, January 22, 1863, at the age of nineteen. He signed up for one year, with the rating of Ordinary Seaman.<sup>5</sup> As the war wore on, the naval service, like the army, would later resort to conscription to fill its ranks. We may speculate from his Nova Scotia heritage and his presence in the sea town of Boston, that Jackson was familiar with the maritime. His relatively advanced rank and the short length of the enlistment term agreed upon, indicate Jackson had specific expertise to offer or experience in such matters. The records also describe him as mulatto, being of mixed race. Color sensitivity was a commonplace of the times, with gradations of shading such as Negro, mulatto, quadroon and octaroon being routine descriptors. There were Europeans in Jackson's family tree, and it is a good possibility he was a merchant mariner before volunteering.

There were 2,748 Black Navy volunteers in 1860. Half (1,379) were former slaves. Another 1,202 (44 percent) came from Free states. Jackson was one of 167 Black foreigners who signed up, along with twenty-two others from Canada. The majority of these foreign sailors, 107 of them, were from the West Indies. A few hailed from as far away as Hawaii and the Philippines.<sup>6</sup>

That summer he was sent from his duty station aboard USS **Restless** into the Navy and Marine Hospital in Key West, June 12, 1863, with the Ship's Doctor's diagnosis of febris continua communis.<sup>7</sup> The doctor reported: "Geo. E. Jackson

O.S. (Ordinary Seaman), Born Granville, N.S. About 19 yrs. Shipped (enlisted) Boston Jan. 22, 1863 suffers with Febris Continua Communis. Symptoms appeared May 21. Common to this type: has had no bad symptoms: constipation predominant: has been treated with laxatives, and a Febrifugo mixture. Not contracted in line of duty."

Jackson was suffering from far worse than intermittent fevers alone. A report by the attending physician at the hospital entitled "Certificate of Death" attests to the following:<sup>8</sup> I hereby certify that George E. Jackson, who was an Ordinary Seaman in the Navy, while attached to the U.S. Marine Hospital and holding the rank above mentioned, departed this life at the Marine Hospital of the 8th day of July in the year 1863, and that he died of "Pythisis Pulmonalis," as set forth in the record of his case as reported by Acting Surgeon Chas W. Page, to wit: 'US Bark **Restless** June 12<sup>th</sup> 1863. George E. Jackson, OS, affected with Febris Continua Communis - symptoms appeared May 21st/63 common to this type; has had no bad symptoms; constipation predominant; has been treated with laxatives and Febrifuges. Disease did not originate in line of duty.'

After admission into this hospital Tuberculosis symptoms were soon developed, under the influence of which his vital forces diminished and he died at 11 o'clock AM July 8, 1863.

--George J. Sweet, Assistant Surgeon

Doctor Sweet then added a postscript by way of a postmortem: "The above named George E. Jackson deceased was born Granville Nova Scotia is 19 years of age 5 feet 4 inches high, is a mulatto, has black eyes, wooley hair

--he entered the U.S. Naval Service on the 22nd day of January in the year 1863.

His naval career was less than six months.

Thomas Thomas,  
United States Navy

The War of the Rebellion was one of only three times during which the North American continent as experienced near total mobilization. On New Years' Day, 1861, only 16,367 men were serving in the United States military. By the final month of war, May 1865, over one million were in the Federal Army.<sup>9</sup> Against them, practically every able-bodied male between 16 and 60 years of age in the rebellious states, about 600,000 men, took up arms.

One source of armed manpower for the Union was Black Americans. Initially, accepting Blacks to fight was resisted by the national government. The course of the fighting proved, however, that only total defeat of the confederacy would preserve the Union and that defeating the rebels would require nothing less than the entire resources and commitment the government could bring to bear. First Black freedmen living in the north, then former slaves of the border states, and eventually large numbers of escaped slaves from the confederate states, known as "contraband" for their ambivalent legal standing, were recruited. They were sworn in, armed, organized into regiments, usually under white officers, and deployed in-theater across the continent.<sup>10</sup>

During the course of the war, close to 180,000 Black Americans went into the army. A major depot for the program at Camp Stanton, Maryland. During the winter of 1863 the 19th Regiment and 30th Regiment of United States Colored Troops were raised in and around Camp Stanton. Among the men who joined as a private soldier was Thomas Thomas.

His army service was short.

While the vast majority of the men needed to fight the war served in the army, the navy nevertheless required its own share of manpower to prosecute hostilities against the states in rebellion. During the Spring of 1864, the Black troops raised in Maryland were assigned to the 4th Division of 9th Army Corps. 9th Corps area of responsibility was the Department of North Carolina, including the seized rebel ports of New Bern and Wilmington and the maritime areas of Pamlico and Albemarle Sound, working in cooperation with naval operations. As part of the reorganization, the Navy was augmented by drafts of 9th Corps soldiers. They were released from the Army and enlisted into the Navy. Among them was Thomas Thomas, who joined the Navy on April 21, 1864 in Baltimore.<sup>12</sup>

Thomas was enlisted into the Navy for three years, with the rate of Landsman. Maryland was recorded as his birthplace, and he stood 5 foot 4 inches tall. He served on the blockade squadron ships USS **Massachusetts**, USS **Donegal**, and USS **Neptune**.<sup>13</sup>

January 6, 1865 the Acting Assistant Surgeon of the USS **Neptune** requested that Thomas, affected with scrofula, be admitted into the Navy Hospital.<sup>14</sup> Surgeon Scolley Parker reported: "Thomas Thomas, Landsman, 25, born in Maryland, shipped [enlisted] in Baltimore, transferred from the Army, has been affected with Scrofula of 1 year's duration, manifesting itself in enlargement of the glands and various parts of the body with Oedema of the eyes. Treatment [illegible] and tonics. Origin not in the line of duty."<sup>15</sup>

He died March 6, 1865.

Henry Keen,  
United States Navy

Henry Keen was a Floridian raised in slavery in Columbia County, Florida. A sixteen year old boy, in the Spring of 1864 he sought his freedom, making his way to the Union outpost at Cedar Keys, Florida, on the Gulf of Mexico. This cluster of little islands just off the west coast of Florida near the Suwannee River had been Federal territory since early in the war.

Cedar Keys was the western terminus of the Florida Railroad. The railroad ran from Fernandina on the east coast through Baldwin, outside of Jacksonville, then southwest across the middle of the state, passed through Gainesville and arrived on Depot Key of the Cedar Keys at the end of a two hundred yard trestle bridge from the mainland. Cedar Keys, with a harbor and rail head, was of interest to the national authorities.

January 16, 1862, USS **Hatteras** arrived and shelled the town. A Navy shore party captured the officer and fourteen of his twenty caretaker troops garrisoning the place. The rest fled and Cedar Keys remained a Union outpost for the rest of the war Cedar Keys was usually left in peace by the state government, because of the shortage of rebel soldiers in Florida available for offensive action. On several occasions Federal expeditions staging from Cedar Keys fought with Confederates in the interior. At the time of Henry Keen's arrival at Cedar Keys here was an enlistment drive going on, an initiative of the Key West Army Department. Principally being recruited were white refugees to fill the new United States 2nd Florida Cavalry, a unit then being raised from disaffected

(Continued on page 6)

(Navy from page 5)

Floridians to prosecute hostilities against their home state. During the year, 102 men were recruited at Cedar Keys for the unit, also known as the Refugee Rangers.

Keen was brought aboard USS **Nita** and enlisted into the Navy May 5th, 1864.<sup>16</sup> He enlisted for the duration of the war as a 1st Class Cabin Boy. The same day in Virginia the national army, lost in a forest so dense it was called the Wilderness, collided face to face with state troops. Over the next few days they fought so fiercely the woods around them caught fire and consumed the dead, wounded and healthy alike. That day in the Roanoke River of North Carolina, the confederate warship CSS **Albemarle** fired broadsides into USS **Miami**. On the Red River of Louisiana, Navy warships USS **Covington**, **Signal** and **Warner** were attacked by state troops. May 5th, the rebel cruiser, CSS **Georgia** was commissioned, and in Georgia the Battle of Rock Face Ridge began.

All this catastrophe was widely known as "The Cruel War." Federal losses included 110,070 deaths as a result of battle, and 199,720 deaths as a result of disease. One in thirteen servicemen would die of illness. Among them was Henry Keen Six weeks after joining the Navy, the Ship's Surgeon of USS **Nita** directed his admission to the Navy and Marine Hospital in Key West, June 21, 1864.<sup>17</sup> Ship's Surgeon, G.S. Parker, reported:

"The within case, Henry Keen afflicted with dysentery, has been under my treatment for the past four days. When he was first taken I gave (illegible) and ingestions of starch water. Since I have given mild astringents. The disease was caused by change of station and unnecessary exposure to the sun. There is no evidence that this disease

originated in the line of duty."

Keen was carried on the muster report for USS **Nita** dated June 30th. On July 11th, a small army of confederates making a raid in force went north of Washington, DC, and then turned back and marched into the suburbs of the capital.<sup>18</sup> They came within sight of the newly completed dome of the Congress. When the rebels had closed the range between themselves and the fortifications surrounding the city, they began firing on Washington with their rifles and light field pieces. As he inspected the defenses, President Lincoln came under fire.<sup>19</sup> Standing beside him, Army Surgeon Crawford of the 102nd Pennsylvania volunteers was wounded.<sup>20</sup> The Commander in Chief was forced to take cover behind the parapets of Fort Stevens, approximately four miles from the White House.

That same day in the Key West Hospital, Henry Keen died. His service had lasted 67 days.

#### Prince Carroway, United States Navy

Prince Carroway was a slave born about 1846 in Calhoun, County, North Florida. In February of 1864, this young man of eighteen became a contraband, a runaway who sought freedom and safety at St. Andrew's on the Gulf coast of the Florida panhandle. At the time St. Andrew's was a desolated coastal hamlet, beside the bay with the same name. The sector was under the watch of the US Navy. Ships of the blockade had passed through St. Andrew's Bay and sent patrols ashore to destroy rebel saltworks on several occasions. In December, 1863, the USS **Restless**, the sloop USS **Caroline**, and sidewheel steamer USS **Bloomer** made a concerted attack.<sup>21</sup> St. Andrew was shelled by naval gunnery and burnt to the

ground. Over a ten-day campaign of scorched earth the Navy turned to the task of destroying the rebel saltworks, helped by contraband laborers and guides. Acting Master William R. Browne later reported the destruction of: "290 saltworks, 33 covered wagons, 12 flatboats, 2 sloops of 5 tons each, 6 oxcarts, 4000 bushels of salt, 268 buildings, 529 iron kettles averaging 150 gallons each, 105 iron boilers for boiling brine, and it is believed from what we saw that the enemy destroyed as many more to prevent us from doing so."<sup>22</sup>

Subsequently, the Navy remained on station in the area and mounted additional raids to discomfort the rebellion. Their presence provided protection to the refugee Union sympathizers, runaway slaves and confederate deserters who made their way there. Together with moral support and encouragement, the Navy sometimes provided foodstuffs, blankets and essentials to these displaced persons as part of a larger effort to destabilize the rebel state of Florida. In February, 1864, Prince Carroway ran away from slavery and made his way to St. Andrew.

In addition to harassing rebel salt production, and providing aid and comfort to the civil population, there was also the ongoing Union recruiting into the armed forces taking place, at St. Andrew, as with Cedar Keys and a few other locations on the coast. White males, both Union sympathizers and confederate deserters, were recruited for the Refugee Rangers, the United States 2nd Florida Cavalry. Black males were being enlisted into the 2nd United States Colored Troops, a Black regiment stationed at garrison duty at Key West.<sup>23</sup> While Army recruitment was the primary military concern, sometimes the needs of the Navy

were met by the enlistment of refugees

On February 29, 1864 Carroway was brought aboard the USS **Restless**, then on station at St. Andrew and sworn into the Navy. His rank was Cabin Boy 3rd Class. His enlistment records his age as 18, his height 5'2", and his occupation, farmer.<sup>24</sup> When later admitted to the hospital the following April 24th, Carroway's age was recorded as 19. His birthday was between February 29th and April 23rd. He was enlisted for the duration of the war. It was a war he would not outlive.

For most of 1864, Carroway mustered with the ship's company.<sup>25</sup> Subsequently he was transferred to USS **Dale**. That December, USS **Dale** supported raids by the Refugee Rangers at Port Charlotte, and up the Myakka River and the Peace River from the Federal base at Fort Myers.<sup>26</sup> Carroway's health was in decline during March, 1865. Palm Sunday, April 9, 1865, the confederate army of Robert E Lee surrendered. Good Friday, 1865, the national Commander-in-Chief was shot. On Easter, 1865, President Lincoln was prepared to lay in state.

April 24th, 1865 Carroway was detached from USS **Dale** and admitted to the Naval and Marine Hospital in Key West. The standard list of Patient's Clothing, &c. records that Carroway was possessed of a full kit, including a hammock two blankets, handkerchiefs and 2 pair of shoes. The small young man was seriously ill. "He is laboring under incipient porthisis pulmonalis symptoms. Night sweats. Hectic. Emaciation. Cracked pot sound on base of left lung. He has been declining rapidly for the last month, resisting all treatment. Treatment of Morrhuæ and whiskey, chalybeates and acid sulfur. Disease did not originate in the line of duty."<sup>28</sup>

Carroway died May 7, 1865. Three days later Jefferson Davis was captured at Irwinsville Georgia. The following day Tallahassee surrendered.

#### Notes

1. Tom Hambright, "The Maine Winslow Plot," Florida Collection, Key West Library (1991), 1-2.

2. David L. Valuska, *The African American in the Union Navy: 1861-1865* (New York & London: Garland Publishing Co., 1993), 168.

3. US Navy, "Names of Seamen Admitted Into the Hospital at Key West," Hospital Log, January 1864, Navy and Marine Hospital Records, Florida Collection (Key West Library).

4. Albert W. Diddle MD, "Medical Events in the History of Key West: The Marine Hospital," *Florida Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 15 (May 1944): 448.

5. Valuska, *The African American in the Union Navy: 1861-1865*, 201.

6. Valuska, *The African American in the Union Navy: 1861-1865*, 53.

7. US Navy, "Form G," Hospital Ticket, Naval and Marine Hospital Key West, Florida Collection (Key West Library, June 12, 1863, No. 165, p 2

8. Assistant Surgeon George J. Sweet, "Form of Death Certificate," Death Certificate of George E. Jackson, USN, Navy Hospital Records, July 8, 1863, Florida Collection (Key West Library).

9. Frederick Phisterer, *Statistical Record of the Armies of the United States* (New York: Jack Russell), 63.

10. Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers* (New York & London: Macmillan, 1990), 66-67.

11. Phisterer, *Statistical Record*

*of the Armies of the United States*, 57.

12. United States Navy, "Service Records 1861-1865," NARA/Howard University Black Sailors Compilation.

13. United States Navy, "Service Records 1861-1865."

14. US Navy, "Form G," January 6, 1865, No. 328.

15. US Navy, "Form G," January 6, 1865, No. 328, p 2.

16. United States Navy, "Service Records 1861-1865."

17. US Navy, "Form G," June 21, 1864, No. 179.

18. Robert Selph Henry, *The Story of the Confederacy* (Garden City & New York: Garden City Publishing Co., 1931), 398

19. Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln, The War Years* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1939), Vol 3, 142-3.

20. Charles Osbourne, *Jubal: The Life and Times of General Juba Early* (Chapel Hill: Algonquin, 1992), 338.

21. George E. Buker, CDR, *Blockade Runners, Refugees, and Contrabands* (Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 1993), 54.

22. Buker, *Blockade Runners, Refugees, and Contrabands*, 55.

23. Buker, *Blockade Runners, Refugees, and Contrabands*, 131.

24. United States Navy, "Service Records 1861-1865."

25. USS **Restless**, "Rendezvous Report," April 1, 1864.

26. Buker, *Blockade Runners, Refugees, and Contrabands*, 118.

27. US Navy, "Form G," April 24, 1865, No. 70

28. US Navy, "Form G," April 24, 1865, No. "10, p 2

*Chief Warrant Officer Anthony Atwood U.S. Navy Reserve is a graduate student at Florida International University.*

(News from page 2)

usual clear blue or green, it was very dark, like cypress water, and when viewed at depths over 10 feet, was almost black, precisely like the Saint John's River. We could not perceive any change in the saltiness of the water but not having any other means of determining this, had to depend upon taste. There was no appreciable change in temperature. From the fact that almost all the fish that first came ashore were small and of such varieties as frequent shoal water, I infer that the dark water must have been of less density than the sea; still, great numbers of "grouper" have been seen, and these are generally found in 3 or 4 fathoms, I believe. The destruction must have been very great, for here, on a key containing but a few acres, and with a very limited extent of beach, we have buried at least twenty cart-loads; they have come ashore in such numbers that it has been a serious matter how to dispose of them.

It is said that in 1856 or '57 there was a similar occurrence of limited extent over in the bay, and frequently the smacks fishing near shore; along the coast meet fresh water which kills their fish; but all the fishermen here unite in saying that nothing of this kind has ever, to their knowledge, happened out on the reef. As to the extent of this I have no means of knowing will endeavor to have forwarded with this, however, copies of the Key West papers, which will probably contain a more complete account than I have been able to give. One other fact in connection with this: among the dead fish were mullet, which, I believe run up fresh or brackish-water streams. Almost all the conchs around here were killed

also. Whether or not sponges, coral, &c., have been affected we have not been able to determine, the weather having been too rough to visit the beds.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. P. Jefferson,

Lieutenant Fifth United States Artillery.

\*This on examination by Professor Gill was pronounced to be *Aulozlonz coloratum*.

To Professor Baird

-----  
Fort Jefferson Dry Tortugas, Florida, November 4, 1878

Professor: I have taken the liberty to forward you, by express from Key West, a box containing two "ribbon fish" preserved in alcohol. One of them was brought over to me by Mr. Moore, lighthouse-keeper at Loggerhead Light. The remaining specimen of "ribbon fish" in the jar (which is perfect) was picked up on a neighboring key this a.m. I am informed that these fish are a rare species, and very seldom seen.

The destruction of fish in Florida Bay and in this vicinity has been great this season. I obtained some sea-water, but not having the appliance for analyzing it, I have also taken the liberty so enclose it in the same box with the jar of fish.

Should you discover anything abnormal in the water which will account for the recent destruction of the fish in this vicinity, I will be under many obligations if you will inform me.

Joseph Y. Porter,

Assistant Surgeon, U. S. Army,  
Post Surgeon.

P.S.-Since writing the above, Mr. Moore brought us some curious specimens of fish; and a curious eel-like fish with but one eye, evidently an abnormality, has been found, which I have also enclosed in the

box.

The dark cypress looking water previously alluded to made its appearance here a day or so ago, but did not fortunately remain more than 24 hours, but during that period there was again destruction of fish.

\*The following is a list of species of fishes forwarded by Dr. Porter,-Editor.

*Auloutorea coloratum*, Mull & Treach; *Monacanthus pardajis*. Rupp; *Dectylepteras volitans*, (Linn) Lao; *Blepharichihys oriniyus* (Akerly) Gill; *Ceratacanthus curauticus*, (Mitch.) Gill; *Belone* sp. (Head).

-----  
Oct. 11th, at 7 a. m., saw the water a very dark color and dead fish drifting southwest; 9 a. m., dead fish on the beach and drifting by as far as we could see east and west of the Key.

Oct. 12th, 4 p. m., fish of all kinds on the beach, weighing from a few grains up to Jewfish weighing about 150 lbs.

Oct, 13, 14, 15, and 16.-Dead fish drifting on this Key and at Fort Jefferson, distance from this Key 3 3/4 miles.

Names of some of the dead fish: Jewfish, Common Garfish, Yellow Tails, Sucking Fish, Mutton Fish, Lamp Suckers, Grouper, Moraena, Skipjack, Armed *Enoploasus*, Runners, Pennant's Globe Fish, Grunts, Horned Ostracion, Porgie, Great Pipe Fish, Pogie, Porcupine Fish, Three-tailed Porgee, Ribbon Fish, and fish we call Parrot, and numberless fish I have no name for. There is a fish called Snapper that we could not find dead, and have not seen since alive up to the 27th, but the water remains quite clear.

Oct. 30 and 31.-The water colored a light brown. I do not see any fish dead or alive.



Thomas Moore, Keeper  
of Loggerhead Light, Florida

-----  
On The Mortality Of Fishes In  
The Gulf Of Mexico In 1878

By Lieut. J. P. Jefferson, U. S. A.  
Key West, Florida.

Prof. Spencer F. Baird,  
Smithsonian Institution,  
Washington, D.C.

Professor I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your valued favor of October 30th, which reached me after a delay, I being absent from Fort Jefferson. This absence, coupled with my wish to get all possible facts in regard to the destruction of fish in these and neighboring waters, will account for my apparent tardiness.

Since my communication in October another large body of the dark-colored water described therein made its way down the coast, across Florida Bay, striking Tortugas about the 20th of November, and extending up the reef as far as Key West probably further. At Key West its approach could be seen distinctly; at first, belts of it, some narrow, others broad, came into the harbor following the various channels leading to the northward, and only in these belts were the fish affected; in the course of twenty-four hours, however, all the water in the harbor was similarly colored, and the surface was covered with dead and dying fish.

They seemed to be affected very much as I have seen them when "fish berries" were thrown into a pond--coming to the surface, swimming around in circles, sometimes on the side or back, the movements growing weaker rapidly and ceasing altogether in 20 or 30 minutes. I noticed one fact which may or may not be of importance; I took a small

fish, known here as a cow-fish, from the water when just about dead, and, having examined it for a minute or two, cast it back when to my surprise it swam off briskly, going down at once.

As in the previous instance, the shores at Fort Jefferson and neighboring keys were covered with fish, and here at Key West, the north side of the island was in similar condition. From correspondence and conversation I have gathered, in addition to the above, the following facts, some, and possibly all, of which may be of interest.

A fishing-smack sailed some 70 or 80 miles to the westward from Fort Jefferson without getting clear of the water. Another smack found the surface of the water out some 15 miles in the Gulf Stream covered with dead fish--large sharks, turtles, king-fish, &c.; but no porpoises, and, as far as I have heard, no dead porpoises have been seen. An officer coming over from New Orleans by steamer was more than 12 hours passing through a field of dead fish. Oysters in Tampa Bay were killed by the water. In October the Caloosahatchee River overflowed its banks along its entire length except at a bluff at Fort Meyers, and the whole country in that section was under water, reported to be the result of the overflow of Lake Okeechobee. A gentleman who knows that part of the State well tells me that the swampy land bordering on Okeechobee is grown up largely with dogwood; the water in the lake gradually rising and spreading over the surrounding marshes or swamps probably kept these dogwood trees wholly or partly submerged for weeks, until the divide between Okeechobee and the headwaters of Caloosahatchee River gave way.

In the possible poisonous effect of water impregnated with dogwood, &c., a theory of the cause of the loss of fish-life may be found. I understand from Dr. Joseph Y. Porter, U. S. A., that he forwarded to your address a bottle of water. I am in hopes that an analysis it will enable you to settle the question; if so, I would be indebted greatly to you if you would inform me.

In regard to my former letter, you can make any use of it you desire, as well also as this. I am happy to know that you consider the subject of some importance. I feared that I might be imposing upon your valuable time.

If there are any of the small fish of this vicinity which you desire I will be glad to do what I can towards obtaining them, either preserved in spirits or the skins. Please give me common names, if possible; for I have no books and no technical knowledge.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. P. Jefferson,  
Lieutenant Fifth Regiment Artillery  
December 1878.

-----  
Part of the Diary of William R. Hackley for January 3, 1857. "The calm weather has lasted so long that the fresh water from the Everglades has drifted down to the Keys. The fishermen say that yesterday in the Northwest Channel the water was fresh enough to drink and that they did drink full drafts of it. The water at the wharfs and in the harbor this morning has the green tinge peculiar to the water near the coasts of the mainland. The fish continue to die in great numbers and of all kinds: kingfish, mullet, morays, trunk fish, grunts etc. lined the beaches making a horrible stench and the water is covered with the dead and drifting out with the tide."

(Insurgents from page 1)

the literature. C. Neale Ronning (23) identifies Key West as the most important center for the insurrectionist movement in the United States and abroad by the mid 1880s. Key West had gained this reputation as being central to the insurrectionist movement for several reasons. First, the island's cigar industry provided much needed financial support for the rebel activities. Second, Key West was home to the largest concentration of ex military officers. According to Jorge Ibarra, Key West had replaced New York as the center for leadership within the states due to the large concentration of military veterans whose nucleus was made up of 17 generals and various colonels of the Ten Years War (58). Among these veterans were two generals, Serafn Sanchez and Carlos Roloff, who would lead the 1895 expedition from Key West. Another reason why Key West was so important to the insurrectionist movement was that the emigre colony in Key West represented the ideals of the revolution. A review of the census clearly demonstrates that wealthy factory owners lived along side of modest cigar workers in neighborhoods where the native conchs, Bahamians, and Cubans peacefully coexisted.

For more than 30 years, the Cuban emigre colony in Key West conspired with patriots in the U.S. and abroad to organize a rebellion in Cuba. Jefferson Browne describes the colony's organization of clubs that raised monies to support the revolutions:

There was not a single member of the Cuban community [in Key West] who did not look forward to a new revolutionary movement against Spain, and an organization was maintained

for that purpose...They organized themselves into political groups called clubs, which were given patriotic names. Every Cuban was expected to belong to one of these clubs, and men, women and children were enrolled in this singular organization...Some of the most noted leaders of the former revolution were ever ready to land an expedition in Cuba and start a new revolution. (119-120)

The military leaders in Key West realized by the mid 1880s, the need to establish a broader based organization which would unify these political clubs not only in Key West, but also in Cuba, Central America, and throughout the Caribbean. Consequently, a new secretive organization called the Cuban Convention was founded. Reverend Manuel Deulofeu acknowledged the important role that the Cuban Convention: "Among the various patriotic clubs formed in Key West after the Pact of Zanjn, there was one which because of its membership, its rules, and its resources achieved significant revolutionary accomplishments." (79) Through the formation of new clubs, a network was extended beyond Key West to other rebel centers in Cuba and throughout the Caribbean. To maintain its secret identity, the organization operated under another name, Club Luz de Yara and each of its members were known only by their number. Membership was limited to 25 and these members were charged with the task of establishing as many clubs as possible in order to collect the necessary funds for a new revolution. Within a short period of time, over 70 clubs were established in Key West and in Cuba.

Even though membership in the secretive clubs continued to

increase, unity among the insurgent colonies was yet to be achieved. Tampa and Key West continued to work independently of each other and of New York. A new organization under new leadership was essential to bring unity among the emigre colonies; the leader who emerged was Jose Marti, and the organization was known as the Cuban Revolutionary Party.

In November 26, 1891 Jose Marti was invited by the Club Ignacio Agramonte in Tampa to deliver a speech commemorating the death of eight medical students in Havana on November 27, 1871. Marti's speech ignited the crowds in Tampa, and news of its reception was quickly relayed to Key West. On the following day, J. D. Poyo, one of the most important Cuban patriotic leaders in Key West and editor of the Cuban newspaper, *El Yara*, printed a copy of Marti's speech in his newspaper. Poyo described how passionately the crowds in Tampa had supported Marti's views. When Marti returned to New York, he was moved by the reception Poyo's article had received in Key West. Marti knew that it was time for him to visit Key West because the majority of the veterans lived in Key West, not Tampa. Because Marti respected the authority of the veterans in Key West, he would not travel to Key West unless he were invited.

On December 5, 1891 Jose Marti wrote to J. D. Poyo explaining that the purpose of his proposed visit was to bring his message that men should be able to live in a free society where they could express their opinions as openly as they did in Key West. J.D. Poyo printed a copy of Marti's letter in *El Yara* where it received great applause in the cigar factories. After listening to Marti's letter, Francisco Sarmiento,



*Cuban Revolutionary Party headquarters were in this building which stood at Whitehead and Caroline Streets to the north of the Presidential Gates to Truman Annex. The Cuban coat-of-arms can be seen on the corner of the building. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

a cigar worker in Eduardo Gato's factory, stood up and asked his coworkers to extend an invitation to Marti to visit Key West. J.D. Poyo appointed a committee to oversee the arrangements for Marti's visit. When the committee met at the San Carlos, they agreed to raise the necessary funds for Marti's visit. The committee had no intention of replacing the current leadership in Key West as these former military officers were secretly conspiring with their agents in Cuba (Alpizar, 83-84). The committee extended an invitation to Jose Marti, who graciously accepted.

On Christmas day, Marti arrived in Key West. Gerardo Castellanos describes the scene on Mart's

arrival:

The wharf was crowded with thousands of Cubans who were waiting for him to arrive on the steamship, **Olivetti**. Representatives of the various revolutionary clubs throughout the island were present with their pennants and banners. As Marti stepped off of the steamship, a band of musicians played the patriotic Himno Bayames and the crowds became ecstatic. Jose Francisco Lamadriz, a leading veteran and President of the Cuban Convention, was the first to welcome Marti to the Key. With a trembling voice, Marti embraced Lamadriz and said, "I am embracing our past

revolutionary efforts" and Lamadriz answered him, "And I embrace our new revolution." (259-260)

The crowds on the wharf proceeded to accompany Marti down Duval Street towards the San Carlos. When they reached the San Carlos, it was impossible for them to continue on Duval Street because of the large crowds who were emotionally overwhelmed by Marti's presence in Key West. Figueredo describes Marti's reaction, "He stood up in the carriage, and with his head uncovered, he looked up at the sky and then at the people, who adored him. The crowds were emotionally (Continued on page 12)

(Insurgents from page 11)

overwhelmed by his presence; with tears streaming down their faces, they applauded him wildly. Later, the procession continued to the home of Teodoro Prez where a banner reading “Sartorius and Marti” was hung from the second floor balcony. (The home still stands in the 1100 block of Duval, now the La Ti Da.)

Due to illness, Marti was unable to deliver his first speech in Key West until several weeks later on January 3, 1892 at the San Carlos Institute. His speech was enthusiastically received by the audience who lovingly referred to him as “Maestro.” Confident by the reception he had received, Marti focused on his plan to establish a new revolutionary organization, which would unite all of the emigre colonies in the U.S. and abroad.

On January 3, 1892, Jose Marti summoned three local leading patriots, who were also officers of the Cuban Convention: President Jose Francisco Lamadriz, vice President J.D. Poyo, and Secretary Fernando Figueredo. After listening to their reports about the work already in progress by the Cuban Convention, Alpizar (88) writes that Marti was so impressed by their organization that Marti remarked; “The work has already been done here in Key West. Now, I need to focus on organizing the other Cuban emigre centers.” According to Alpizar (88), Marti wrote the Bases for the Cuban Revolutionary Party that night, which were founded on the principles of the Cuban Convention. Alpizar (89) notes that the Cuban Revolution Party was not founded until Marti became aware of the details and the organization of the Cuban Convention even though similar resolutions had been drafted in Tampa prior to Marti’s

visit to Key West. On April 10, the Cuban Revolutionary Party was announced in Key West, Tampa, and New York by all of the clubs that had joined the association. Jose Marti was elected as the Delegate and Benjamn J. Guerra, the Treasurer. The title of Delegate, gave Marti the authority to direct the activities of the organization.

The organization of the Cuban Revolutionary Party gained popular support for the insurrection. By April 10, thirty-four clubs from eight emigre colonies had approved the Bases: thirteen in Key West, seven in New York Party, five in Kingston, five in Tampa, and one in Philadelphia, Boston, Ocala, and New Orleans (Ronning, 80). On June 29, 1892, Marti asked the presidents of the various clubs to meet with the veterans from the Ten Years War so that they could elect their army’s commander in chief. By mid-August the votes were counted, and General Maximo Gomez was elected Commander in Chief of the Cuban Revolutionary Army.

By the end of 1894, Marti had organized an expedition that would carry not only the military command for the revolution, but arms, munitions, dynamite, and other equipment. Luis del Moral describes Marti’s plan: Three ships would depart from Fernandina, Florida. The first ship would pick up Maceo and his soldiers; the second would head directly to Cuba after picking up the Sanchez and Roloff in Key West; the third would head for Santo Domingo to pick up Gomez, Marti, Enrique Collazo and Mayia Rodriquez (243). Unfortunatley, Sanchez and Roloff had confided the information to Fernando Lopez de Queralta, a veteran of the Ten Years War, who then unwittingly revealed the details of the Fernandina Plan. When the American authorities learned of the plan, they confiscated the majority

of the arms and munitions. After having worked so hard, for so many years to organize the expedition, Marti was greatly disappointed by the plan’s failure; however, he was confident that the emigre colonies and especially Key West would finance other expeditions.

During the year 1895, the events escalated quickly. On February 24, the war for independence began in Cuba. In a letter to Gonzalo de Quesada dated March 2, 1895, Serafin Sanchez describes the climate in Key West: “More than 500 Cuban men on the Key are following me around begging to know when they will sail for Cuba; there are two Spanish gunboats headed for the Key and another is already here; there are Cuban and American spies in the streets; an American gunboat is patrolling the area; custom agents are on alert; we are hemmed in on all sides.” (Moral 246) Undaunted, Serafin repeatedly asks Gonzalo de Quesada to send him guns and munitions for his expedition. By April, knowing that Marti and Gomez were already in Cuba, Serafin was eager to join them. He complains to Gonzalo de Quesada, “I feel like I am cursed...I can’t believe that even with the money we’ve collected for our expedition, we haven’t left for Cuba yet.” (Moral 247) On June 5 Serafin excitedly writes to Gonzalo de Quesada, “After such a long wait, I am finally leaving. At last, I’ll be able to fight in Cuba.” (Moral 248)

The details of the Sanchez/Roloff Expedition were chronicled by Colonel Fermin Valdes Domnguez in his diary, “Diario del Soldado.” Fermin Valdes was medical doctor and a close childhood friend of Jose Marti. Fermin Valdes was in living in Tampa when he received his orders in April to report to Key West. He arrived in Key West on April 19 and stayed at a boarding

house located on Whitehead and Truman streets which was known for its covert activities. The following account was translated from Fermin Valdes Dominguez "Diario del Soldado:"

May 21. No word yet on when and how we are to leave for Cuba. Charles Hernandez left for New York with a message from generals Serafin Sanchez and Carlos Roloff. J.D. Poyo keeps reassuring me that the moment is almost at hand.

June 6. At 8:30 this morning, I ran into Raimundo Sanchez, who told me that General Serafin Sanchez was looking for me. I headed directly to the generals home, and there I learned that all was ready for our expedition. Within minutes, Serafin and I were walking down Duval Street towards Rocky Road [Truman Avenue]. We headed towards the Atlantic side of the island, using the back alleys to avoid detection. Several hours later, we arrived at the huge sand dunes between the two forts that guard the island on the Atlantic side. General Carlos Roloff, Colonel Rogelio Castillo, Aureole Amulet, Pedro Pinata, Rosendo Garcia, Juan de Dios Barrios, Raymond Sanchez, Ramon Marian, Eduardo Hernandez, and Enrique Valdez were waiting for us. It took us two hours to cross the sand dunes, but we finally arrived at the shoreline with our hands and legs bleeding from the mangroves and the other bushes. Two Cuban sailors were waiting for us in a rather large skiff. A crate of rifles and some ammunition were loaded into the boat and then one by one, twelve of us went aboard.

We set sail around noon leaving the salt ponds behind us. Serafin Sanchez, his brother, and Roloff were on deck; the rest of us had to hide in the cabin so that we wouldn't be spotted from observers on the island or by the American ships



*Founders of Cuban Revolutionary Party in Key West. Standing, left to right: Genaro Hernandez, Serafin Bello, Aurelio C. Rodriguez, Jose G. Pompey, Frank E. Bolio, Francisco Maria Gonzalez, Seated Gualterio Garcia, Jose Marti and Angel Pelaez Pozo. Photo credit: The Author.*

that were anchored off shore. The wind was in our favor, and soon the boat was distancing itself from the island.

As soon as it was safe, I joined Sanchez and Roloff on deck. They said that for two months, they and others have been secretly transferring weapons and ammunition stored in Key West to a schooner. General Roloff received a telegram from Benjamn Guerra informing him that a squadron was camped on Pine Key near Bahia Honda. We would join up with this squadron and wait for a ship to take us to Cuba.

By night, it was obvious that we were lost. Our skipper, Angelo Figueredo, was unfamiliar with the waters around Pine Key. The generals aboard and Angelo decided to turn back and ask the skipper of a sponge boat which we had passed for directions. We soon located the sponge boat, and the old sailor agreed to lead us to the key after charging us 10 pesos for his services!

June 7. At 10:30 am, we finally

arrived at Pine Key. The water was too shallow to bring the boat ashore, so we removed our shoes and pants and waded to shore. The beach looked desolate; only thin pine trees and some sad looking palm trees grew on that rocky soil. Near the beach, we saw a wooden hut belonging to Severiano, a native Cuban who lives on this key. For twenty years, he has earned his living by pillaging shipwrecks nearby. This loyal Cuban and his wife were our hosts and without any hesitation, they offered us their modest home which consisted of a room with several hammocks, and a few tables and chairs. That morning, we lunched on canned meat, fried eggs, plantains, and some coffee. We were tired, but in great spirits because we knew that soon, we would be leaving for Cuba. We anxiously waited for news of our ship. When Rogelio Castillo arrived from Key West, he warned us that the American warship, Revenue Cutter, was anchored off

(Continued on page 14)

(Insurgents from page 13)

of Bahia Honda, about five miles from Pine Key.

June 10. We spent the past few nights in Severiano's hut. Today, we plan to join the soldiers at the campsite, which is about two miles away.

June 16. No word yet on our ship. Serafin received a telegram today from Gonzalo de Quesada advising us to abandon the camp immediately because the Revenue Cutter was searching for us. Serafin replied that we wouldnt leave Pine Key until we were headed for Cuba or taken as prisoners. The generals confiscated all the weapons in camp and banned any written correspondence because the soldiers are threatening to desert.

June 17. The soldiers are desperate for food and for rest. They are so tired of fending off the mosquitoes that some have even collapsed while standing. They blame the officers for the lack of provisions.

June 18. General Sanchez addressed the soldiers this morning. He told them that they must remain strong because soon we would be fighting alongside our brothers in Cuba. Fortunately, a schooner arrived this morning with ample provisions. A large meal was prepared which seemed to appease the soldiers somewhat. However, several did manage to escape yesterday. When they arrived in Key West, they tried to justify their desertion by describing our harsh living conditions here. But, everyone knows that they're cowards.

June 19. The details of Marti's death reached us today. He was killed in his first skirmish with the Spanish forces on May 19 at Dos Rios. Memories of his thoughts, ideals, and courage only strengthen our resolve. Memories

of his courage and genius renew our commitment.

June 20. The generals must have received encouraging news today because General Sanchez appears somewhat relieved. The fear of our soldiers deserting has passed, so the officers returned the confiscated weapons along with my diary. Apparently, the American authorities are not a threat to us because we have observed several American warships passing by this key. They must know that we are here.

June 21. The summer heat and the humidity are taking its toll. Worse of all is the relentless attack of thousands of mosquitoes during the day and at night. The soldiers are getting weaker due to malnutrition and bad rain water.

June 24. We have been living on this miserable key for several weeks. The soldiers built some low lying huts from pine wood and palm fronds, but the roofs leak when it rains. Our soldiers are hungry. Frequently, only one meal is served during the day and it's always the same: salt meat, crackers, and rice when available. The constant attack of the mosquitoes is worse than the hunger we feel. They make it impossible for us to sleep during the night or to rest during the day. The soldiers' bodies are scorched from being so close to the huge bonfires which don't seem to stop the mosquitoes. This wait is unbearable.

July 2. Today is General Sanchez's birthday. Two companies under the command of Higinio Esquerria and Julian Sierra paraded in front of the general displaying their flags and playing their cornets. Clemente Vivanco delivered a short speech that expressed the patriotism we all feel for Cuba.

July 3. Terrible news. We learned that our ship had actually

arrived on two separate occasions, but our lookouts failed to recognize it. Apparently, Marin and several others were watching the coastline, and they mistakenly thought that our ship was the Revenue Cutter. When they realized their mistake, it was too late. Now it seems that the boiler on our ship is broken, and another ship will have to be contracted. Our supporters in Key West managed to raise an additional \$10,000 to contract another ship for our expedition. Our weapons are being transferred to a small boat so that they can be taken to the new ship when it arrives. Sanchez believes that when Roloff returns from New York, we can leave without any interference from the U.S. authorities.

July 5. There's activity in camp today. The soldiers are dressing in new clothes which arrived yesterday on an American schooner. This schooner will probably transport us to the ship when it arrives. Some of our companions will remain behind because they are either sick or afraid of fighting. Brigadier Jose Mayia Rodriguez arrived in camp today with 40 more soldiers. They had been waiting for us on the ship that was supposed to take us to Cuba. Mayia Rodriguez is an experienced military leader with exceptional

EDUCATION PROGRAM  
SPONSORS  
\$100 OR MORE

RALPH BATES  
CAPT. RICHARD G. BRIGHT  
BETTY L. DESBIENS  
BUD DRETTMANN  
JOHN & BEATRICE DUKE  
MARY HAFFENREFFER  
TOM & LYNDA HAMBRIGHT  
DR. & MRS. RICHARD F. HNAT  
CLYDE W. HENSLEY  
JOHN H. JONES  
EDWARD B. KNIGHT  
TOM KNOWLES  
RADM J.H. MAURER  
ROSS & ANN MCKEE  
BILL MUIR  
JOHN & KAY PLIMPTON  
DAN & VIRGINIA PROBERT  
LARRY & GRETCHEN RACHLIN  
MRS. WILLIAM SHALLOW  
ED SWIFT  
JAN & TY SYMROSKI

leadership skills. He is well liked and respected. The arrival of his soldiers has broken the monotony of our daily lives. The majority of his force is comprised of veteran soldiers, but there is a contingency of younger recruits from Oriente and Camaguey, who are healthy and excited about fighting in Cuba.

Mayia expects our ship to arrive in a few days. He left Santo Domingo with his soldiers, but when the ship arrived off the coast of Cuba, the captain wasn't familiar with the waters, so they were unable to land. They decided to join up with our squadron here. Hopefully, our captain will be more experienced with the Cuban coastline.

July 8. We expect our ship to arrive tonight. By tomorrow, we should be off this miserable key.

July 8 was the last entry Fermin Valdes made in his diary while in the United States. After successfully leaving the U.S. the expeditionary soldiers saw the lights from the port town of Tunas de Zaza in the district of Sancti Spiritus on July 24. The ship was headed for Punta Caney where they landed safely at around 9:30 pm. By 11:00 pm, they had unloaded 300 rifles, 200 machetes, 14,000 bullets, 650,000 pounds of dynamite and other supplies. After many years of self sacrifice, the Cuban emigre colony in Key West had returned their loyal sons back to their native country.

The Cuban War of Independence ended on October 10, 1898. After three decades of struggling to liberate Cuba, thousands of the Cuban emigres assembled at a monument in the Key West cemetery to honor the loss of their heroes who died in battle. Tragically, Jose Marti and General Serafin Sanchez were among those who died. The gathering at the

cemetery brought closure to thirty years of heroic sacrifice by the emigre colony on the rebellion.

#### References

Alpizar Poyo, Raoul. *Cayo Hueso y Jose Dolores Poyo* (Havana: Imp. P. Fernandez y Cia, 1947).

Browne, Jefferson. *Key West: The Old and the New* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1973).

Castallanos, Gerardo. *Motivos de Cayo Hueso*. (Havana, UCAR, Garcia y Cia, 1935).

Deulofeu, Manuel Leonart. *Heroes del Destierro. La Emigracion* (Cienfuegos: Imprenta de M. Maestre, 1904).

Figueredo, Fernando. "En Cayo Hueso" *Revista de Cayo Hueso*, May 18, 1898.

Ibarra, Jorge. *Jose Marti: Dirigente e Ideologo Revolucionario* (Havana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1980).

Moral, Luis F. *Serafin Sanchez: Un Caracter al Servicio de Cuba*, (Havana: Ediciones Mirador, 1955).

Ronning, C. Neale. *Jose Marti and the Emigre Colony in Key West* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1990).

Valdes Dominguez. Fermin *Diario de Soldado*, 4 vols (Havana: Universidad de La Habana, 1972-1974).

*Dr. Consuelo E. Stebbins, a Key West Native, is Assistant Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Central Florida. She has done extensive research in the Key West Emigre Community and the Cuban War of Independence. Her book, Tragedy in Havana, recounts the 1871 execution of the medical students in Havana having been accused of vandalizing the grave site of Gonzalo Castañón, who was assassinated in Key West in 1870.*

#### BUSINESS MEMBERS

COASTAL SAILING ADVENTURE, INC.  
28555 JOLLY ROGER DRIVE  
LITTLE TORCH KEY, FL 33042-0839 295-8844

CONCH TOUR TRAINS, INC.  
601 DUVAL ST.  
KEY WEST, FL 33040 294-4142

FLORIDA KEYS DISCOVERY  
P.O. BOX 430137  
BIG PINE KEY, FL 33042 872-3725

FRIENDS OF ISLAMORADA AREA STATE PARKS  
P.O. BOX 236  
ISLAMORADA, FL 33036

HERITAGE HARBOR TOURS  
201 FRONT STREET  
KEY WEST, FL 33040 305-295-8687

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA  
101 W. FLAGLER STREET  
MIAMI, FL 33130 305-375-1492

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION  
SOCIETY OF THE UPPER KEYS, INC.  
P.O. BOX 2200  
KEY LARGO, FL 33037

KEY WEST AQUARIUM  
#1 WHITEHEAD STREET  
KEY WEST, FL 33040 296-2051

KEY WEST BAR PILOTS ASSOCIATION  
P.O. BOX 848  
KEY WEST, FL 33041 296-5512

KEY WEST CONCH HARBOR  
951 CAROLINE STREET  
KEY WEST, FL 33040 294-2833

KEY WEST ENGINE SERVICE, INC.  
P.O. BOX 2521  
KEY WEST, FL 33045

THE LANGLEY PRESS, INC.  
821 GEORGIA STREET  
KEY WEST, FL 33040 294-3156

MEL FISHER MARITIME HERITAGE SOCIETY  
200 GREENE ST.  
KEY WEST, FL 33040 294-2633

MYSTIC SEAPORT  
P.O. BOX 6000  
MYSTIC, CT 6355-0990

OLD TOWN TROLLEY  
6631 MALONEY AVENUE  
KEY WEST, FL 33040 296-6688

PIGEON KEY FOUNDATION  
P.O. BOX 500130  
MARATHON, FL 33050

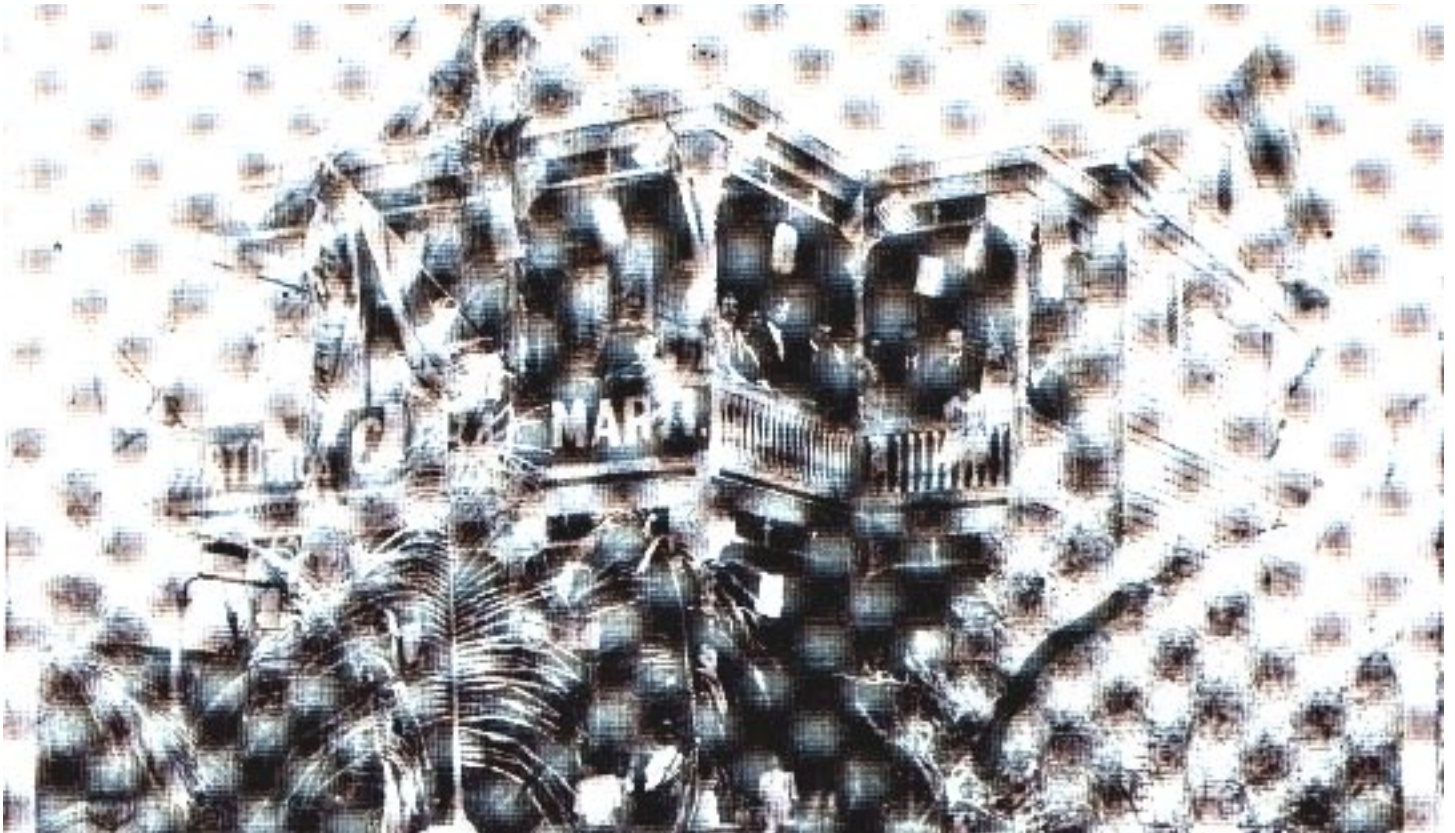
A.R. SAVAGE & SONS, INC.  
1803 EASTPORT DR.  
TAMPA, FL 33605 813-247-4550

SEACAMP ASSOC.  
RT. 3, BOX 170  
BIG PINE KEY, FL 33043 872-2331

SEA STORE  
614 GREENE ST.  
KEY WEST, FL 33040 294-3438

SOUTHERNMOST HOTEL IN THE USA  
1319 DUVAL STREET  
KEY WEST, FL 33040 296-6577

ST. LOUIS AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER CO.  
3928 CLAYTON AVE.  
ST. LOUIS, MO 63110 314-533-7710



*Jose Marti speaking from the balcony of the house at 1112 Duval Street. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

Key West Maritime Historical Society  
P.O. Box 695  
Key West, FL 33041

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
KEY WEST, FL  
PERMIT NO. 30