

Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal

VOL. 9, NO. 1

FALL 1998

OFFICIAL QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE KEY WEST MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY

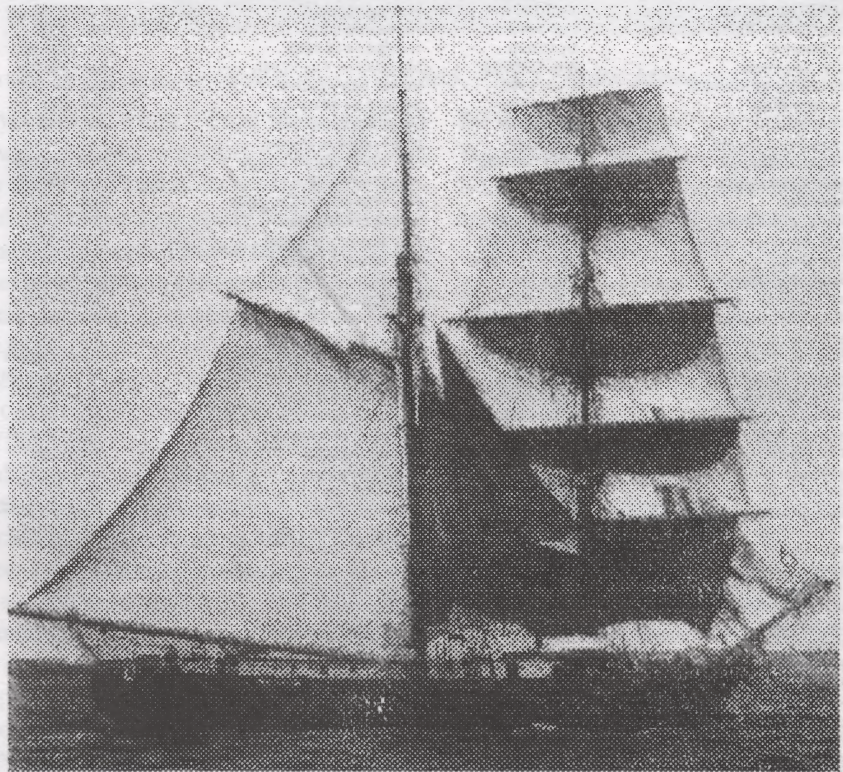
A Shipwreck Site at the Dry Tortugas

By Donna J. Souza, Ph.D.
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On March 6, 1892, the American Brig *Shannon* sailed from Mobile en route to Mantanzas, Cuba, with a cargo of lumber. The captain was anxious to reach their destination quickly to deliver his cargo and to charter his next consignment. He knew that he could cut two days from the voyage if he were to chart a course that would take him between the Marquesas Keys and the Dry Tortugas instead of the recommended course well to the west. He knew his ship was old; she had been in service for over 25 years and had just undergone some repairs.

Risking running aground in the Tortugas was nothing to take lightly. But he had made this trip the previous year and he knew the hazards first hand, not just from the stories of old seadogs. But she was loaded to the gunwales with lumber and the sooner he got her into port the better off they would be. He could take precautions. He could have the crew draw the chain up out of the locker to drop anchor as soon as the watch called the alarm for shallow water. He could have the crew rig the stream anchor so they could haul off the reef if they found themselves aground. He could save two days. He decided to take the risk.

The scenario set forth in the preceding paragraph is part fact and part speculation pieced together from historical documents and archaeological evidence. It is a fact that the *Shannon* left Mobile on March 6, 1892, with a cargo of lumber and headed for Mantanzas. It is also a fact that she never arrived at her destination. The Admiralty Court records in Key West, Florida, indicate that the *Shannon* wrecked in the



The American Brigantine Shannon. Photo credit: San Francisco Maritime National History Park, Al Barnes Collection.

Dry Tortugas 5 days out from Mobile.

I was introduced to the "Pulaski Reef Wreck Site" in 1994 and spent the better part of the summers of 1995 and 1996 recording and documenting the shipwreck. This site was analyzed in relation to five other shipwreck sites in the Dry Tortugas. The goal of the project focused on how those involved in the merchant sailing industry of the mid- to late 19th century reacted to the introduction of steam technology. For instance, I wanted to know how owners of sailing vessels reacted to having to compete with steamships, how were they able to maintain their traditional way

of life before the mast, and how they managed to eke out a living once the steamships became efficient and profitable. These questions are especially interesting when we consider that historical documents provide statistics that indicate that the transition from sail to steam was not as rapid or as smooth as might be believed. They show that as recently as the first decade of the 20th century, the number of sailing vessels built in the United States was greater than the number of steam vessels.

The Pulaski Reef Wreck Site, located in

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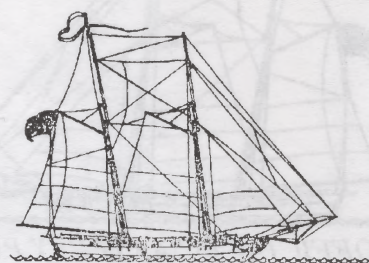
Society News

Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal Index

This issue begins our ninth year of the Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal. Following is a subject index for the first eight years:

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The Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal is published quarterly. Subscription is available through membership. Copyright 1998 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.

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Letters and articles are welcome. Please write to: Editor, Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal, KWMHS, P.O. Box 695, Key West, FL 33041 (305) 292-7903.

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Civil War Days in Key West

By Lewis G. Schmidt
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The following is a brief portrayal of what life was like for the Northern soldiers and sailors stationed at Key West during the war. It has been extracted from "The Civil War in Florida," Volume III, Florida's Keys and Fevers, by Lewis G. Schmidt, and is but a small portion of the events described in that work.

Part 2 (January thru mid June, 1862)

The ship *Sagamore*, while in port at Key West during high winds, celebrated the new year by the "fing of crackers." Walter Scofield reported: "Union forever on a flag, 12 flags on the island."

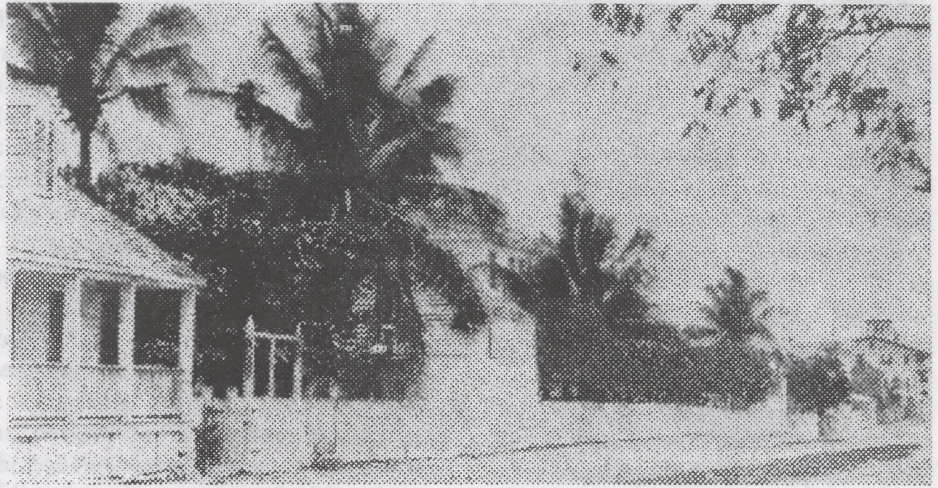
On January 8, "The steamer *Philadelphia* arrived from New York, bringing Company D, First Artillery, Brevet-Major Haskin commanding, to relieve Light Company K, of the same regiment, now stationed at Fort Taylor. Company K will return North on the *Philadelphia* when she returns from Fort Pickens."

The correspondent of the New York Herald reported that "I regret to say, from all I can see and hear, that many of the most wealthy and influential men of this place, although they have taken the oath of allegiance, are still at heart as strong secessionists as when they hoisted the Rebel flag over their stores and dwelling houses...Permitting such persons to remain among loyal people is wrong, especially so in a community like ours."

"Many of the citizens here, those known as 'conchs,' are natives of the Bahamas, and...are friends of Secession...These people should be driven from the place and never permitted to return...if it is still their wish to carry on their present traffic, it should not be done under the protection of the flag of the United States."

The property of Asa F. Tift, formerly a resident of this place, and now employed in New Orleans superintending the constructing of Rebel gunboats, was seized and taken possession of for the United States Government... It adjoins the Government wharf... Tift is a recreant son of New England."

Arriving at Key West on January 12 was the 90th New York Regiment. They disembarked from the *Illinois* two days later "and marched to their camp, near the barracks. All Key West was out to see the sight." One of the regiment's members, Henry



Duval Street and the Oldest House in 1865. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

Crydenwise, wrote: "I can truly say that I never was more agreeably disappointed in my life. I had looked for a barren uninhabited island but how vastly different I have found it instead of being barren there are trees of almost every shape and kind, among these are the cocoa and papaw... When we first landed, friend Roe and I were passing one of these trees. There was a group of children nearby and we asked for one [of the nuts]. One of them climbed the fence and gave us one, and they all cried Picaune, Picaune, (meaning five cents)...their money is called differently from ours." The 90th New York's camp "is about three fourths of a mile from a nice city of 4 or 5 thousand inhabitants. In this are churches of all denominations. I never met with a class of people who were more refined, friendly and hospitable."

"Captain Hunt, of the Engineers, is now busily engaged constructing formidable sand batteries on the northern and eastern sides of this island. They will mount many and very heavy guns...I have fear only regarding our supply of water. We are very short now."

"Several of the grogeries having been caught violating the order regarding the sale of liquor, have been visited by the Provost guard, the liquor destroyed, the establishments closed up, and the proprietors consigned to quarters in Fort Taylor."

At Fort Taylor on the 17th, it was reported that a prisoner had recently escaped. The orders did not require "close confinement," and even if they did, it would have been impossible, since "this Fort was never built

for the confinement of political prisoners." It held only four cells, and could only hold 8 to 10 prisoners. "The men confined here have not been guilty of anything more than an attempt to run the blockade, no very great heinous crime." Heretofore, blockade runners were not personally confined (only the vessel and cargo) and when prizes were sent north, crew and passengers "are always liberated immediately... The Fort is built for the purpose of keeping out those who have no business in it, and not for the purpose of keeping in those who may be within the walls."

The Chaplain of the 90th New York "preached at the Methodist church...The methodist here are very noisy and full of the spirit...Henry Crydenwise attended "class meeting Sabbath school and listened to three sermons...The preacher has a very fine woman indeed...They have meeting every night either at the church or a private house."

The first member of the 90th New York to die at Key West, George Adams, died on January 19 and was buried in the Key West Post Cemetery. George was buried in grave #51 and was probably the first burial at the cemetery during the period of the Civil War, no burials having been identified in 1861. The earliest identified pre-war burials dated from 1851, and the cemetery may have been known as the "US Army Cemetery" during the 1800's.

"The 91st Regt [New York] arrived here from N.Y..." aboard the US transport *Erricson*. Besides the 90th and 91st New

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York, "there are four hundred and fifty regulars at Fort Taylor. Preparations are being made to erect a strong battery to command a channel on the back of the islands."

It was reported at Key West that "The water here is poor and rather scarce. The people here use rain water which is conducted from the roofs into cisterns. The water is better than you would expect, but when we have no rain for some time it becomes very scarce and warm. Last night and today [January 22] it has been raining...I tell you we welcome a shower and prize fresh water as gold dust."

"There are some Sesesh here but they keep very quiet... We have plenty to eat and that which is very good. Such as crackers, Soft bread, Pork, Salt, and fresh beef, Bacon, Beans, Rice, Homony, a few dried apples, Coffee, Tea, Sugar. We have two cooks in our company [90th New York] and so have it cooked fresh every meal. Besides this we have cracked peas, potatoes, desiccated potatoes for soups."

"It stormed again at Key West last night and on the 24th. It thundered and lightening and rained as I never saw it before. It is raining today by showers, our tents is better than I should think they could be," reported Thomas Jacobs of the 90th New York's Company E. "We have roll call in the morning at six o'clock, at half past six to seven drill, at seven breakfast and half past seven to ten wing drill. Officers drill till twelve, at four till six is dress parade and a plenty of police duty to do and extra guard."

We have buried two of our soldiers since we came here and there is twenty in the hospital...we have a scanty ration of old hos beef, a little rusty pork and hard crackers. Coffee to drink at breakfast and supper. The water we have to use here is rain water and scarce at that. Before the rain, they would not let us have only what we wanted to make coffee... Goodnight ma the drum has beat to go to bed."

The 90th New York held two drills on the following morning, and "This afternoon the regiment marched downtown and showed ourselves, got some water and came back, had a fine march... They have increased their guard from 35 to 56... There is about three thousand inhabitants on this island and about six of them are union men, the rest are coward down... The weather has come off very fair and hot again."

On Sunday, January 26, in the evening, many of the men walked to the Methodist Church in town, where the Chaplain of the 90th New York, "a whole souled Methodist," conducted a service. Henry Crydenwise reported that "Both Sabbaths that we have been here I have attended meeting and Sabbath School and have had charge of a class. The church was crowded with an orderly group of soldiers from the different commands. Class meetings and Sabbath School were also held regularly."

Surgeon C.H. Crane of the US Army took over as medical director at Key West in February and "immediately established a general hospital at the barracks, and placed" Surg. Cornick in charge. "Soon after an epidemic of typhoid fever prevailed, and my hospital was soon filled, accommodating comfortably from two to three hundred patients. The epidemic lasted for two months. The patients had every comfort, and the number of deaths was small."

On February 4, en route from the North, at 7:00 A.M. on Tuesday morning, the *Oriental* was turned toward Key West and steamed for the harbor, one of the finer deep water anchorages in the country, "with the Red, White and Blue waving beautifully from the stern," and passing Fort Taylor crowded with many of the Regulars anxious to be relieved by the 47th Pennsylvania. The deck was crowded with the regiment's men, with the band playing as they passed some of the men-at-war in the harbor and a prize ship that had just been captured at New Orleans. Arriving in the harbor at 8 A.M., the bands playing "national songs" and numerous onlookers, including many "colored women," along the shore watching the ship sail into port. Chaplain Rodrock wrote: the regiment "left Camp Griffin in the dead of winter, the ground, tents, and trees whitened with snow, and in less than two weeks came to Key West, into midsummer, with trees and grass green, and flowers and roses blooming."

After disembarking at 9:00 A.M. on the dock about one mile west of Fort Taylor, the regiment marched down the main street of the city in their regular order of column of divisions, and stacked their weapons, waiting until the unit would be notified where to make camp. Pvt. George Cromer of Company A of the 91st New York Regiment (which had arrived on January 19), a young man from Albany, New York, wrote that the 47th Pennsylvania arrived "all well and look bully." That is, with the exception of Pri-

vates McCoy who would survive the war; and Watt who would shortly die. and who had to be carried off the ship and to the hospital. In fact, two members of the regiment would die before the month was over.

During this time the men were able to purchase pineapples, coconuts, bananas and oranges at the many fruit shops near by; two large oranges selling for a "half dime."

At 12:00 in the afternoon, the men were ordered to fall in and stand to attention, and with their 23 member band playing and the ladies of Key West waving their handkerchiefs, and with quite a crowd of followers, the 1000 men marched to their new camp "one fourth mile out of the city, near the beach," across from the barracks of the 90th New York Regiment (whose camp was reported to be 3/4 mile from the city). The reporter of the New York Herald wrote: "The men in the regiment are strong Pennsylvania boys, but you could see that they came from a sea voyage which they were not accustomed to." He also commented on the fact that the 47th Pennsylvania was equipped with the best weapons available, and was the best looking Volunteer Regiment he had ever seen.

"Our camp lies in the woods 1/2 mile from the water south of the city and 1/2 mile south of us lies the not yet completed Fort Taylor with 30 cannons." Capt. Yard reported that after stacking arms and unslinging knapsacks, the men cleared places for their tents and prepared a camping place out of a dense thicket, in which the average height of the bushes were 14 feet. Except for the area of the village, the island was covered with thick underbrush, fifty plants and bushes of numerous varieties, including "mahogany bushes," and "Snake Cactus," some as high as twenty feet and fifteen inches in diameter, bearing the name because of the many small stems that shoot upward from the main trunk. The regiment's new camp, named "Camp Brannan," was situated about 350 feet from the sea, where the men spent Tuesday evening bathing themselves.

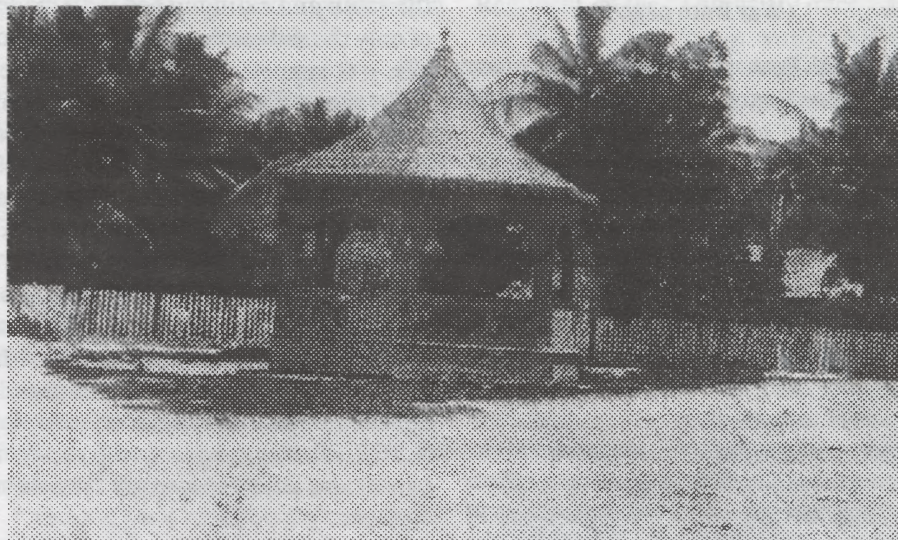
Someone failed to make the proper plans and initiate the correct orders, and as a result the regiment's tents had not been unloaded from the ship. Consequently, the night was spent in blankets on the beach, with knapsacks for pillows, "the canopy of heaven for a coverlid...[and] the moon for a candle." The tents would not arrive in camp until Thursday, and as a result Wednesday night would also be another under the stars with the mosquitoes.

The night proved to be an experience the regiment would not remember fondly, as any one familiar with southern coastal areas might guess. When the men awoke the next morning, in addition to being covered with dew and everything being wet, most had the appearance of an individual suffering from small pox, having had frequent visitations during the night from the local residents, the "gnats and mosquitoes." There was some excitement at 10:00 P.M. when the man-of-war *General Porter* fired on and captured an English blockade runner with half a million dollars in arms for the Rebels. The ship was captured and towed into port to the cheers of the troops, with the crew of 150 taken prisoners.

A member of the regiment described the Key West mosquito infestation as follows: "There is an article here, that I believe bothers the whole human race, and that is mosquitoes. Those on this island are not of the common kind, but regular tormentors--fix your net work as you may, you will receive their sting before morning. They are great on a serenade too, and if one is impolite enough to go to sleep as they are in the middle of a 'glee,' the leader will give you a tickler with his sting that it is impossible to resist; but for my part, I can easily dispense with that kind of music, and often wish that they would favor someone else who can appreciate their talents better than I can."

Henry Crydenwise of the 90th New York wrote from "Camp Morgan" that the mosquitoes were "very vicious so much so that I don't know but we will have to send them North to keep them quiet, if that won't do we will have to extract the stingers...The musketoos are getting to be very annoying...we didn't sleep well on account of them."

The following description of the 90th New York's Camp Morgan survives: "Along on the edge of the waters is a long row of tents occupied by the officers and opposite or in front of these (each company in front of their respective officers) the company tents run in straight or parallel lines. At the head of the center company is a tall white flag pole from which float the stars and stripes, then between the officers and company tents is our parade ground which is about ten rods wide and forty long . . . I wish you could see it and witness our [90th New York] parades. It is no small sight to see eight or nine hundred men advancing in column [sic] every one having the same step and going through the same



Music Stand and Parade Grounds Key West in 1865. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

maneuvers...Friend Roe and I have a very nice tent with a good bedstead in one side of our own make then we have a mosquito bar or net," wrote Henry Crydenwise.

Members of the two companies of Regulars from the barracks, who were headed for St. Louis to rejoin their regiment, had their pictures taken in the afternoon and were escorted to the docks by the 90th New York to board the *Oriental*. Before the *Oriental* left to return to New York, Chaplain Rodrock of the 47th Pennsylvania recorded that "Capt. Tuzo had a sumptuous repast prepared for the officers of our regiment, which was served up in a handsome style; and the invited guests heartily enjoyed themselves and keenly relished the many choice dainties prepared for them on the occasion." In just a few months, the *Oriental* would sink in a storm off the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

Cpl. Williamson, soon to come down with the fevers, wrote: "If Eden were as beautiful as this village, no doubt Adam felt the loss severely." We can only wonder how the Corporal felt when sickness drove him homeward in August, only to die in September as a casualty who would not appear in any statistical analysis of the war. In fact, during the 19 month period that the 47th Pennsylvania would serve at Key West and the Tortugas, the regiment would lose, in addition to Cpl. Williamson, 34 men who would die of disease, and another two as the result of a suicide and a shooting accident.

February 7 was a day of regimental parades as three of them were held, all to the accompaniment of the 47th Pennsylvania's band, and capped in the evening with a

drill in front of the barracks. The regiment ordered that only one officer of each company was to be absent at the same time; and the day's highlight was observed when brandy was confiscated from a nearby house, since the sale of liquor was forbidden, and "it was dumped in the street, giving many a sickly feeling."

The men spent Saturday, February 8, cleaning their "estates" and burning brush, and the 47th Pennsylvania's Company B was involved in a "street parade" in the city, where the men remained for about an hour and then returned to camp. It was reported that one company of the 90th New York was on picket each night, and this may have been true of all the regiments on the island. Pvt. Cromer, with the 91st New York Regiment, wrote that they had fun with some of the "green ones tonight" while he was on guard duty, and related the following account of the incident, probably referring to a member of the 47th: "After the taps beat at night the countersign is out and a Dutchman who was on guard duty sang out 'where come dat' instead of 'who goes there' when approached by an officer who answered 'a friend with the countersign.' The Dutchman answered 'vell if you don't tell me somedings I vill shoot' and the officer walked up and told him he would show him how to take aim. The 'poor devil' handed him the piece and the officer took it and walked back to camp." The heavy Pennsylvania German accent of many of the members of the 47th Pennsylvania must have lent itself to campground and barracks humor.

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The 47th Pennsylvania's clerks were busy this date as Regimental Order #20 was issued:

"In accordance with General Order #2, water permits will be issued to the quartermaster Sgt. of each company each evening at 6:45 for the succeeding day. A sufficient number of men will be detailed to carry water, but they will not be excused from other duty. No bathing will be allowed after 5:30 A.M. The right wing of the regiment will bathe tomorrow morning from 5 to 5:30 A.M. They will be in charge of a commanding officer of each company. The commanding officer will see that the men avail themselves of this time of bathing as it is essential to the health and welfare of the regiment. All bathing in daytime is absolutely prohibited. Hours of service and roll call are: Reveille at daybreak; police immediately after; call for drill 5:30; recall 7; breakfast 7:15; surgeon's call 7:45; guard mounting 9; call for drill 10; recall 11; dinner 12; 1st Sgt. call 1; call for drill 3:30; recall 5; dress parade 5:30; tattoo at 8; taps 8:30. These calls will be beat by the drum at the central guard quarters five minutes before the time stated." The regimental drills were held in the mornings and company drill in the afternoon, while at dress parade in the evening many citizens of the community would be in attendance and the camp quite crowded.

"The troops at Key West have set their camps in complete order, and have already resumed the routine of drill . . . The band of the Forty-seventh Pennsylvania Regiment visits Fort Taylor and performs to the Ninetieth and Ninety-first New York Regiments, encamped at either extremity of the town. The Ninety-first regiment has many printers in the ranks, and having type, press and all the necessary implements of the craft, they execute their own printing . . . as soon as they obtain paper, which they have ordered from New York."

"About daylight on the morning of the 9th a sentinel on duty over the Government property at Tifts' wharf discovered smoke issuing from the cabin of the prize schooner *Emma*, captured by the steamer Connecticut, and lying at the Government wharf, in a position where, had the fire obtained headway, she would have endangered a vast amount of Government property. Through the prompt exertions of the crew of the *Santiago de Cuba*, who came ashore in boats, the fire was confined to

the cabin and extinguished with the loss of only the sails and rigging of the schooner. It is supposed by some to have been set by secessionists. The wharf adjoining that at which the vessel lay contained some nine hundred tons of coal, and beyond this are immense storehouses filled with eight or ten thousand barrels of army stores . . . there is no fire engine on the island."

A general order from "Headquarters of the US Army" ordered that "all drills will be dispensed with on the Sabbath," but the 47th Pennsylvania ordered Sunday morning inspections under arms for 7:30 A.M., including the guard with their companies and all other men not "absolutely engaged."

After Sunday morning inspection, as many men as possible were allowed to go to church in the city, including Musician Wharton and some of the men of Company C, who attended the "large and beautiful" Episcopal Church in town, whose minister was described as a Union man. There had been some previous difficulties between the minister and his congregation, when at the close of a sermon he would offer a prayer "to behold and bless thy servant, the President of the United States and all others in authority," and members would close their prayer books and evidence their disapproval. "The then Captain Brannan at the time," on hearing of the problem, required all the parishioners to take the oath of allegiance, after which they could "say amen as loud and as hearty as the best Union men on the island."

The day was hot and the mosquitoes were fierce as a dress parade was held at 5:30 in the evening, attended by many of the local citizens, after which Lt. Allen G. Balliet of the 47th Pennsylvania's Company B escorted 30 to 40 men to the Methodist Church for a sermon by the Chaplain of the 91st New York. Lt. Balliet was a 27 year old carpenter from Allentown, Pa., and with his group and the men from other regiments, the church would be filled.

The 47th Pennsylvania's Company H's Capt. Kacy did not rest this Sabbath, as he issued Company Order #7: "Sgt. R.S. Gardner will have under his command tents #1 & 2 and will be held personally responsible for the clean up of the men in person, clothing, arms, accoutrements, and quarters. Sgt. James Hahn will have under him tents #3 & 4 and be held responsible the same as #1 & 2. Sgt. Lynch will have under his control tents #5 & 6 and will be likewise held responsible. The Sergrts.

Gardner, Hahn and Lynch will have the men of the company on the parade ground at 5:30 A.M. and when one of them is on guard, the other two will attend to this drill duty and divide the squad between their respective commands."

Thomas Jacobs of the 90th New York ate dinner with a Key West family whose acquaintance he had made. "This evening is very lively, I can hear singing in different directions, in their tents prayer meetings."

On the 12th, fifty-seven "secession prisoners" from Ship Island arrived at Key West, bringing their total on the island to 200 or 300, most from captured islands or blockade runners and gunboats.

On February 13 in the afternoon, the 47th Pennsylvania's first funeral at Key West was held. Pvt. Frederick Watt, a 19 year old laborer from Newport or Miller Township in Perry County, Pa., who arrived at Key West sick with measles and a cold he had caught on board ship, died of brain fever or "Pneumonia Typhoides" as it was variously reported, and was buried with military honors. Chaplain Rodrock reported that he had died of "brain fever, contracted on board the *Oriental*. Aged 23 years." He was the fifth member of Capt. Kacy's Company H to die since the regiment was mustered in.

The young man was buried in Grave #27 of the Post Cemetery on the day of his death, probably out of fear of the contagious nature of the disease and a lack of refrigeration or other means of preserving the body. Pvt. Watt's mortal remains would eventually travel north in 1927, when the Key West Post Cemetery would be abandoned, and the bodies shipped on the tug "*Jenkins*" to Barrancas National Cemetery on the Naval Air Station grounds at Pensacola, Florida. He would be reinterred in Section 17, Grave #92 (see "Relocation of Key West Post Cemetery," by Lewis G. Schmidt).

During the night of the 15th there was considerable excitement when the lighthouse keeper failed to keep the light lit at the "signal wharf," and was arrested and brought to headquarters. A ship had been sighted at the time, but the "pilot expertly took the ship back to sea."

At 7:00 P.M. on the 16th, a slave sought refuge in the 47th Pennsylvania's camp, having escaped from his mulatto master on Providence Island. The Black was taken into the camp and fed and dressed in a complete uniform of the regiment, after which he was given some tobacco, when he started

to smoke his pipe and relate the following tale:

"My name is Walter Bowten and I was born in 1835 [translated from a letter in German]. My parents were born slaves but they worked to free themselves. I was a servant until I was 13 years old and then my master put me into the field to make sugar and molasses. I tried to escape, but my master came on the ship and took me back. I was never in the north but I would like to see that land. Where my master lives is not much of a place, it is only one island where tangerines, oranges, lemons and coconuts grow. I do not have a cent of money from my master and would rather be with the white folks than with a mulatto. I had to work every day from morning until night, and on Sunday we had to work until 8 in the morning. We had two changes of clothing, one for work and one change for good, and when the clothing was torn, our master would threaten and whip us. Our master would not let us go to the soldiers and said he would shoot us, but we came away anyway even if he would shoot us. At one time a ship came from New York and the Captain asked my master if he wanted to sell me and my master was willing to consider it. However I left and I am here with you."

By the 18th, the 47th Pennsylvania's Camp Brannan had begun to take form, as the regiment's large round Sibley Tents had been erected. The tents were named after Henry H. Sibley who later became a Confederate Brigadier General, and had the general appearance of a large Indian teepee 12 feet tall and 18 feet in diameter, supported by either a center pole or external framework. Each housed 16 to 19 men, whose areas were arranged in the tent like the spokes of a wheel, with their feet to the fireplace in the center. In the case of the 47th Pennsylvania at this time, seven tents were allocated per company. Allowing one tent at the head of each company street for the three officers of each company, the remaining six tents were arranged along the company street and were each occupied by the 16 to 19 men as described.

The men had acquired a violin and a banjo and there was music every evening, arrangements having even been made with the crew of one of the ships for some dances. Other men of the regiment entertained themselves with singing, and wanted to take their musical instruments into the city to give concerts. "The boys are satisfied with the area, but not with the mosquitoes," and

spend many evenings walking the beach looking for "pretty sea shells."

Pvt. Isaac Schlocter of the 47th Pennsylvania's Company H, who would be discharged with a surgeon's certificate in September of 1863, was arrested and confined for disorderly conduct on Thursday. The peddlers had been visiting the camps everyday, and brought some crabs which sold very quickly. The 47th Pennsylvania's minstrel group gave their first concert in the evening on February 20 and were well received. It was held in the City Hall which was packed with patrons at 25 cents per ticket, the group making more than \$50, and as a result planning more concerts.

"About eight o'clock on the morning of the 21st...a steamer was reported in sight to the eastward, by the lookout in the cupola of the Russel House, and as she turned the buoy into the main ship channel, your correspondent, with many others, took up a line of march for the Government wharf, to await her arrival. When she came in sight clear of Fort Taylor...I soon recognized the old *Philadelphia*, and by the time she had let go her anchor I was, through the kindness of a friend in loaning his boat, alongside, and was the first, I believe, to welcome General J.M. Brannan to the headquarters of his department... With his staff [he] proceeded to the Russell House, where quarters had been provided, until the officers quarters at the barracks could be cleared for their reception. As the General landed, a salute was fired from Fort Taylor."

The General was returning to his old post at Key West and Fort Taylor. The men had been ordered to "clean everything up nice and shiny," but did not provide an escort for the arrival. The General made his first appearance before the 47th Pennsylvania Regiment at the brigade dress parade which was commanded by Col. Good on the parade ground, and he seemed pleased with the improvement in the manual of arms that the men had made with their new weapons. After dress parade he rode past the different streets of the 47th Pennsylvania's encampment to the cheers of the men, "who liked and had perfect confidence in him," tipping his hat as he passed.

Washington's birthday fell on Saturday the 22nd, and at 9 AM the whole brigade was formed in front of the barracks, in divisions which made three sides of a square, with the officers in front and the General and staff in the center. A prayer was offered by the Chaplain of the 90th New York

Regiment, to the "Throne of Grace," asking for "success to our arms, that this wicked rebellion might be put down, and that we might hereafter celebrate the anniversary of Washington's birthday in peace." Washington's farewell address was then read, and at 10:00 A.M. the brigade was moved in column through the town, stopping in front of the judge's home which flew a Federal Flag on top, and where the band played the Star Spangled Banner. As the General and his staff rode by and saluted, the parade continued on to Fort Taylor for the firing of a national salute of 34 guns (one for each state). Immediately after the salute, then an *an-of-war Pensacola* which was lying in port, "let go all its guns, one after the other... The effect was splendid, and the loud barking of its 'bull dogs' was dangerous to secesh window glass." The regiments then returned to their respective camps, "tired from the morning's marches, activities, and the long exposure to the heat of this hot island."

After resting, washing, and enjoying a "tin of hot rice soup" for dinner, a holiday was given and a program of events was initiated. It began with music by the 47th Pennsylvania's band and an "oration by Capt. Gobin," followed by a foot race of two men from each company across the barrack ground and back, with first place getting \$5 and second place \$2.50. Next was a wheelbarrow match, two men from each company to wheel a barrow 50 yards blindfolded at a mark or stake, first prize \$5 and second prize \$2.50. The third event was a sack race, with two men from each company to run 50 yards in sacks up to their necks, and for the same prizes. The last contest was a pig chase, with ten men from each company to run after a shaved and greased pig, and the men catching it and holding it by the tail, received the pig as a prize. A great crowd of citizens was on hand to watch, and the band played between each event.

Cpl. Jacob K. Keefer of the 47th's Company C, a 29 year old printer from Sunbury, who in 1865 would advance through the ranks to 2nd Lieutenant, took second in the foot race; and it was claimed by his supporters that over 400 yards he would have been the winner. The wheelbarrow race was full of fun and enjoyed by all, with some of the contestants further away from the stake at the finish than they were at the start. "But the big thing of the day was

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the sack business." Pvt. P.M. Randall was one of the representatives of Company C, and he was doing well when as he neared the finish line he lost his balance and fell down; but "old dad" rolled himself across the line to second place and \$2.50. The pig race was a failure, since there were too many runners, and "Mr. Porker, being a secessionist, became weak in the knees at the sight of so many Union troops, and would not run. All the many Key West ladies in attendance at the celebrations of the 47th Pennsylvania, declared "they never enjoyed themselves so much." The other regiments also celebrated the occasion, and it was reported that the 90th New York held pig, sack and foot races.

The 90th New York "had several games. One was a pig race. That is to have a large ring and put a pig in it. Then some were selected from each company to catch him and the one who caught it had it. Then they had sack races . . . to put some boys in large sacks and then let them run some, some foot races."

On February 23, Pvt. Andrew Bellis of the 47th Pennsylvania's Company A died, the second member to be buried in the Key West Post Cemetery since the regiment's arrival less than three weeks before. He died from what was variously reported as a scorpion bite, snake bite and erysipelas. Pvt. Jacob Apple of Company B wrote home that the death was due to a scorpion bite and that "it is full of them here and all kinds of other animals."

"By order of Gen. Brannan, Major Gausler has been appointed Provost Marshal of the island, and his guard increased to one hundred men. We have now a most efficient patrol through the city, while on every wharf a sentry is stationed to guard the large amount of government property that is stored in almost every warehouse along the waterfront. Smoking on the wharves is now, very properly, strictly prohibited . . . Our streets are to be regularly cleaned, pig-pens and other nuisances of a like nature are to be done away with . . . I have, from the precautions that are to be taken, no fear of yellow fever or any other disease of like nature making its appearance among us this summer."

Sadly, the writer was to be mistaken in his estimation. It would be a short time before typhoid fever would make its appearance, and in late summer yellow fever would arrive with a vengeance.

On the 24th, the band of the 47th Pennsylvania gave a ball for the officers, which was "numerously attended by the knights of the spur and tinsel." But, there were only enough ladies in attendance to form "six sets. . . As for the performance on the light fantastic toe, I have seen some that was more pleasing to my fancy--it was too much on the bobbin round style," wrote Musician Wharton. The ladies were not too familiar with the northern figures, but did their best to learn and were always ready to fill a set to keep the ball in motion, and which was still in progress at 3 A.M.

The 47th Pennsylvania's band continued with their entertainment on the 26th, holding a concert Wednesday evening. Although the wind and rain affected attendance, many ladies turned out and the band cleared over \$50, "pretty well for a few hours blowing."

Lt. Geety attended a social gathering this evening at the home of the pastor of the Episcopal Church, a Mr. Herricks, where he met many "lovely ladies," or so he wrote his wife. One can only wonder what his wife thought of that letter. The Lieutenant was preparing a collection of shells for shipment to his wife, and described the process for making salt from sea water which he states is too coarse to be used for anything but pickling. Amusements were pretty scarce and the inhabitants patronized almost anything, as "some of the boys of the regiment got up a Negro band of minstrels, and their houses were so crowded that many were refused admittance . . . From the amusements and sea bathing you can perceive the northern 'mud sills' are enjoying themselves, and if they keep it up this island will soon become famous as a watering place."

At Key West in March, excavations for the West Martello Tower were completed and masonry work begun, with the central tower expected to be completed in March. The East Martello had not been started.

Four members of the military establishment at Key West, including two from the 47th Pennsylvania and one each from the 90th and 91st New York, would die at Key West in March.

The 91st New York Regiment was located in a camp with walled-in barracks, and Pvt. Cromer wrote that the men were smuggling their mail north by giving them to the Spaniards that run the "fruit sloops," to be mailed in Havana. His regiment was eating well: coffee and bread in the morning; rice, potatoes and pork at noon; fresh fish, tea

and bread at night; with fresh beef twice each week. The regiment sold its soap and bacon to buy the fresh fish.

On March 2, the 47th Pennsylvania lost another member to disease as 20-year-old Pvt. Henry Beltz of Company B died from typhoid fever or "Typhoid Pneumonia," as typhoid began to stalk the soldiers on the island.

On March 11, the men were busy clearing part of the island to build more barracks, and were not too happy with the work, more interested in being soldiers than laborers. In the evening, three members of the 47th Pennsylvania's band gave a concert to a full house, playing piano, clarinet, and violin. One of the group's selections was the Anvil Chorus, played to an audience composed mainly of officers of the navy and their "scholars . . . midshipmen whose greatest ambition in a concert room, is to be the owner of a quizzing glass to stare a lady out of countenance and make himself ridiculous; while out of the room his delight is to swagger, smoke and talk boisterously." One suspects there was a little bit of competition between the soldiers and sailors for the ladies.

It was reported on the 23rd that "The trees are all being cut down, while artillery roads, thirty feet wide, are being run from one part of the island to another, at different points. Our men have been working hard, but we daily expect 500 contrabands from Port Royal, when we will have easy times."

Suits against the following vessels and their cargoes, captured by our naval vessels in the Gulf of Mexico during the past two months have commenced in the District Court of the United States, which holds its session at Key West, in which the United States is a party, or has an interest. Hon. William Marvin is a Judge of this Court . . . [with] Prize Commissioner George D. Allen": steamship *Magnolia*, \$250,000; schooners *Adeline*, \$3,000; *Annabella*, \$10,000; *Florida*, \$13,000; *Lion*, \$15,000; *Eugene Smith*, \$5,000; *Henry Travers*, \$12,000; *Wm. Mallory*, \$15,000; *Cora*, \$30,000; *Fashion*, \$1,000; *Olive Branch*, \$6,000; *Emma*, \$13,000; *Isabel*, \$5,000; sloop *Margaret*, \$4,000; Spanish barque *Teureta*, \$75,000; total \$457,000.

The month of April brought seven new deaths to the 47th Pennsylvania (only five were known to have been buried in the Key West Post Cemetery), primarily from typhoid fever which was increasing in frequency. Additionally, at least five men of the 90th New York, two men of the 91st New York,



An unidentified street view in Key West in 1865. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

and at least one other soldier died during the month at Key West and were buried in the post cemetery. Two men died at the Marine Hospital.

"Many on the Island are sick and some are dying. There is scarcely a day but what some soldier from one of the three regiments here is borne to the silent tomb."

Surgeon Robert Morris reported that "The ponds in this vicinity are a fruitful source of disease; for the rains wash into them a large quantity of vegetable matter, which, during the process of decomposition, evolves so much malaria or bad air that the odor is very offensive, particularly when the wind blows over them towards the camp. One of these ponds, that nearest the encampment, has recently been filled up, and no doubt the salubrity has been thereby much increased."

A narrow gauge railroad was also extended to the East Martello Tower in April, and half of its foundations and escarpments had been laid. The West Martello Tower was ready for its gun platform this month, as many delays were encountered due to the bricks and mortar which were unfit for use in conditions as wet as those in the Keys.

On Saturday, April 5, the 90th New York published the first issue of their newspaper "New Era," edited by their quartermaster.

Henry Crydenwise of the 90th New York attended church on Sunday and wrote "I had share of a class of girls...they dress so finely with little jockey hats, white dresses and white lace capes...they strongly

remind me of my ideal of angelic spirits...Today was communion day in all the churches of Key West."

What was thought to be a good omen occurred on Thursday at Key West, when an eagle perched on top of the flag staff of the 90th New York Regiment.

On the following Saturday morning, a member of the 90th New York, leaned on the muzzle of his rifle while on sentry duty, causing it to discharge and shatter his thumb and narrowly miss his head. It was thought his foot had come in contact with the gun's lock. A few days ago, another member of the 90th New York had also caused his musket to accidentally discharge while cleaning it. There was considerable danger in the camps without being exposed to battle or disease, especially so when it involved members of the 90th New York.

Members of the 91st New York "had some fun" on Friday the 25th, as they planted an old spar on the parade grounds, which they had soaped for a climb. "After there were five or six went up and got all the grease off, we gave it up." This was followed by a sack race "with coffee sacks," a "tug of war," and a greased pig chase which resulted in a fight between two companies for possession of the pig.

The edition of the New Era which was published on the 26th, as it was each week, printed the following as an example of its period humor: "Joke-Young lady in Key West, asked if she liked codfish balls, replied she didn't know, she never attended one."

Between 10:00 and 11:00 the evening of the 27th, 15 sailors from the naval vessels in the harbor, "were very drunk & noisy in the City of Key West." The Provost Marshal reported they were boat crews who had brought officers ashore and were waiting for them to return, or they would have been arrested. The matter was reported to the naval commander, with the request that it not be allowed to happen again.

There were ten burials in the Key West Post Cemetery in May. Two each from the 47th Pennsylvania and 90th New York, four from the 91st New York, one from the 1st US Artillery, and a "citizen refugee."

Pvt. George Klein, with the 47th Pennsylvania's Company F, wrote home on Saturday complaining about the heat, but worse than the heat were the mosquitoes. "With the heat, you can stand in the shade, but those bloodsuckers love the shade too." His company was stationed at Fort Taylor, and the men sat around on the concrete in the evening trying to decide how to get a little more peace at night. Some men slept on the cannons and others in their beds, but the mosquitoes found them no matter where they slept, and many woke up with swollen eyes. They were finally issued netting to protect themselves, "otherwise they would lose more blood to them than the Rebels."

Everyone was wishing for a drink of spring water from home, as good water continued to be a problem. One of the compa-

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nies was sent 160 miles by steamer for fresh water, and ten days later when they returned with the water, "it was not fit for humans to drink." A "distillery machine" was brought from New York, and the men now drank the distilled sea water from that, and used it to fill the cisterns in the fort. Pvt. Klein couldn't even remember when it last rained. Even the leaves on the trees were turning yellow from the heat and lack of water.

The health had improved, but for awhile the hospitals had been full and it seemed like someone died every day. A few days previous, twenty men arrived from Fort Jefferson who looked so pitiful, they were given furloughs to go home. And yesterday twenty five more arrived, who could not even keep their balance. Pvt. Klein wrote that "the men have enough to work and eat; in the morning, bread and coffee, and in the evening, coffee and bread." In the afternoon, bean soup with the melted skin of bacon. Everything was the same every day, and the only thing to look forward to was the sea air. He wrote that "right now we are building two lighthouses on the island with batteries on top" (the two Martello Towers), one and two miles from the fort. They had also been working on a water battery, but gave that up because of the heat, which was so bad the Private didn't even attempt to visit Camp Brannan and the other men of the 47th Pennsylvania. Most of the work was being done by the Blacks.

Cpl. Nichols wrote: "I thought I would look around a little and what I could get good to Eat. So we Struck Some yams and commenced to dig, but did not dig long before a Scorpen Stung me in the finger and I cut a peace out and Sucked it and put Tobacco on it. My arm and hand commenced to Swell Some But Not Much. So Next Morning I ask the doctor what would happen to a man if a Scorpen would Sting him. He layed he would die Shure as hell. I said-doc-give up go home you dont know your bus's." Cpl. Nichols also reported that "this is a Good Place to catch turtle and gather Sea Shells."

The men even captured a centipede of such unusual length that they wasted good whiskey to preserve it. Felt to be a terrible waste by many, since a good drink was so scarce that a report circulated about a proprietor of a store in town who was able to sell a coconut for 50 cents, but "we may as well state that the lucious nut was filled

with whiskey."

On May 14, Henry Crydenwise of the 90th New York reported that "We have had shower after shower here lately and the weather is quite cold for K.W. so that overcoats are needed when on guard in the evening . . . I am on guard about one day in four . . . When I was on guard down town the other day, I went into an old negro womans house and had a fine breakfast consisting of roast Beef fried onions a sweet johny cake smoking hot boiled homony butter good tea &c &c all for two bits cheap enough." The bread at Key West was "first rate," as Henry reported his weekly expenses no more than 50 cents.

Thomas Jacobs of the 90th New York was working in the hospital and reported "just sent four to their quarters, and have at present 34 taking medison. I half to talk a little once in a while as the sick and those that are getting better, many of them dont exercise any jugment and what they should eat or where they should go, I will have disiplin. The mail goes tomorrow morning . . . The museuetos bight horribal."

The New Era, which was issued May 17, reported that "A rattlesnake some six feet in length, was captured in the vicinity of the camp of the 90th New York Regiment last week, by a member of the 47th Penn. Vols. A short time ago a snake of the same species was caught on the mainland. The skin of the reptile was sufficiently large to make his captor a neatly fitting vest."

May 22nd was reserved as a day of celebration by the 90th New York Regiment, in honor of the recent Union victories. A monument was erected in the center of the parade ground inscribed with New Orleans, Yorktown, Williamsburg and other victories. A southeasterly wind prevailed throughout the day and evening, and marred the usual activities associated with the celebrations which were conducted in the afternoon; "full dress parade, target shooting, greased poles, vocal and instrumental music, dancing, etc. etc."

The shooting was to be for prizes, with a comic parade by the Sergeants. It was anticipated that "in the evening there will be a grand illumination with transparencies and trophies adapted to the occasion, the front of the company streets will be decorated with festoons and lanterns, and the camp and tents of the officers will be arranged for the reception of visitors at 4 PM. The officers and soldiers of the brigade, officers of the Navy, and citizens generally are respectfully invited." The

celebration did not turn out quite as expected, but "in spite of wind and weather, the camp presented a beautiful appearance. The broad level parade ground, adorned with graceful arches, waving festoons, obelisks, and trophies, presented an imposing spectacle."

"The high winds prevented the grand effect which an illumination in the evening would have produced, but taken altogether, the celebration was a success, and seemed to give satisfaction to the thousands who visited the camp. The officers and company quarters were elegantly trimmed. The marquee of Col. Morgan was tastefully decorated with transparencies on the outside and trimmed with flags interwoven with laurel and jessamine in the interior, the whole lit with lanterns of various colors. The tables groaned under the weight of a bountiful repast and mountains of mysterious bottles lay near the tents as there was a continual pop that did not sound as much like the weasel as the song would have us believe."

Other tents also had transparencies in front of them, showing scenes and slogans, which were apparently back lighted on thin or transparent paper, imprinted or painted with various devices. One tent had "a beautiful column painted with shields and devices, and there was a flagpole in the center of the parade ground surrounded by a pagoda formed of green leaves with flags of all nations artistically arranged, and surmounting all a transparency with the motto Excelsior surrounded by stars. At the lower end of the parade ground was a beautiful white obelisk some thirty feet in height which was inscribed with names of various heroes, and the names of the latest victories, allegories, and trophies on each side of the base, surrounded by arms, drums, flags, cannon, etc. In front of the Chaplain's quarters a barrel with two bulls eye looking objects on top, and labeled Seccession spirits played out." The streets and company tents were similarly decorated.

On the 24th, "The Key West Herald" was published for the first time. Musician Henry Wharton of the 47th Pennsylvania was responsible for this short-lived publication since the regiment would leave for the South Carolina Low country within three weeks.

Two members of the 47th Pennsylvania died in June, one by an accidental shooting. The Key West Post Cemetery records indicated that five members of the 90th New York and two members of the 91st New York would also die this month. Two additional men would die at the Marine Hospital.

Details were formed from the various companies of the 47th Pennsylvania, and the men were busy building barracks for the regiment near the lighthouse about 300 yards from the South Beach.

"Up along the south beach was formerly the burying ground, but the great storm of 1846, which swept over this island, the sea overflowing the whole island, disturbed the quiet resting place of the dead; and there are now but few graves; from those few still remaining I copy from one the following inscription: Sacred to the memory of, Daniel P. Augur, Commander of the United States Revenue Cutter Dexter who died off the harbor of Key West, April 28, 1834, aged 53 years. This stone was erected by the officers and crew of the Dexter as a tribute of respect to the memory of their late commander. These graves have defied the wind and waves while the tenements of the graves around them were swept around in the bushes, where they remained until a few years ago, when their bones were collected by the laborers of Fort Taylor, who built a railroad up the beach for hauling sand, and were then interred. The six graves which still remained are those of persons who died far away from their northern homes, and the waves which beat high against the shore only 50 feet distant together with the wind, chant a solemn dirge over their neglected graves."

"There is now however a cemetery laid off nicely into lots, one of which, lot #92, I noticed belonged to Stephen R. Mallory now Secretary of the Navy in the Southern Confederacy. In the center of the lot is a marble obelisk erected."

There was much excitement June 9 as 1st Sgt. Charles Nolf of the 47th Pennsylvania's Company I was accidentally shot by a member of the 90th New York Regiment while he was walking on the south beach. The 24 year old bricklayer from Allentown, Pa., was shot through the brain and killed instantly while he was on the beach gathering shells with a few of his friends from the company. In front of the Sergeant and his friends were four members of the 90th New York with loaded rifles on their shoulders (Henry Crydenwise thought the two parties were out hunting, and one of the four men in the front party was carrying the gun on his shoulder when it went off). One of them was carelessly playing with the trigger of his gun, "when bang! off went the load, the ball entering the forehead of Nolf, killing him instantly."

Some members of his company "were bent

on revenge," but an investigation proved it an accident, although the carrying of loaded rifles was strictly prohibited. Members of the 90th New York were apparently a menace where weapons were concerned, since this was at least the third known incident in the 90th New York of the accidental discharge of a personal weapon.

It was reported that only 11 members of the 47th Pennsylvania were sick in the hospital, most with dysentery and diarrhea, and none serious. It may be that the fates were changing gears, and while phasing out typhoid fever were getting ready to usher in yellow fever as a far more terrible replacement.

On the morning of June 17, "At seven o'clock . . . we had a street parade of the Forty-seventh Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers, and the regiment never looked better than on that occasion. They are in all respects one of the finest volunteer regiments in our grand army, and a credit to their State and all connected with their present high state of discipline. Depend upon it, you will hear from the Forty-seventh before long in a manner that will cause other regiments to envy them the reputation they are about to gain. In the afternoon three companies of the Forty-seventh embarked on board a schooner and sailed . . . the balance will go [the next day] on board of other sailing vessels."

And at last, the 47th Pennsylvania was on its way again, as Companies A, F, and D embarked under sail with the schooner *Emilene* on Tuesday; while on the 17th and 18th, Companies B, C, and I boarded and embarked, also under sail, on the brig *Sea Lark* for a "pleasant voyage" to Hilton Head, S.C."

The 7th New Hampshire, having left the Tortugas the day before, arrived at Key West at 8:00 A.M. on the *Ericson*, "where we took aboard Companies B & D, also of the First U.S. Artillery, and some horses and stores, and early the next morning we were under way for Hilton Head, Port Royal, S.C." Four companies of the 90th New York had been assigned to the Tortugas.

Finally, on the 19th, the 47th Pennsylvania's Companies E and H sailed from Key West at 10:02 P.M., but failed to identify their ship in the company's records; and at 6:00 P.M., Companies G and K boarded the sloop *Ellen Benan* and set sail at 2:00 A.M. the next morning, Friday, the sloop under command of Capt. Remy. The voyages were made under sail and would take relatively long, compared to

their steamer trip from Annapolis to Key West on the *Oriental*.

Pvt. Lewis Metzger of the 47th's Company K recorded in his diary that he took passage on the "on the 19th June and by sailboat, *Tanger*, went to Hilton Head" in what must have been an extremely slow passage, reportedly arriving on the 28th of June.

Left behind by the regiment were several men sick in the hospital, and an additional man was left to nurse them at Key West. All eight men would be dead from disease before the regiment returned in December.

At Key West on June 20, "All the soldiers have left the island except about 3 or 4 hundred of us so we are really alone."

It was on this very day, Friday, that the bark *Adventure*, three days from Havana, Cuba, put into Key West in distress. "She was quarantined for ten days and lay at the station for three days longer than the official term. About this time, four of her crew sick, with fever, were taken into the Marine Hospital, where one died and the others recovered from yellow fever. Just one month later, the disease was spreading though the island, which had previously been contending with typhoid fever among the troops. On July 27, a soldier of the 90th New York was attacked and the disease afterwards spread through the garrison, which consisted of 448 men; yielding 2 cases in July, 153 in August, 137 in September, and 39 in October, or a total of 331 cases, 71 of which proved fatal. It is thus seen that this garrison furnished 87% of the cases and 71% of the mortality occasioned by yellow fever during the year 1862."

Although the 47th would finally fight its first battle in South Carolina, and suffer many losses while on station there, it might have proved to be just as dangerous to remain at Key West. The Post Cemetery records indicate yellow fever struck Key West with its first fatality in August, and the 90th New York Regiment lost at least 78 men who died from all causes during the period June through November 1862. Sixty-three of them died during the two month period of August and September. In fact, during the 20-day period from August 23 through September 11, at least 41 soldiers died, and 35 of these were members of the 90th New York. Three were members of the 47th that had remained behind when the regiment sailed, two were from Regu-

(Continued on page 12)

lar Army units and one was an assistant sutler.

The preceding figures result only from an examination of the burials at the Key West Post Cemetery and do not take into account those persons who may have died and been buried in unmarked graves or at other locations. Certainly, men, women, and children were also dying in the city. Walter McFarland, who was Supervising Engineer for the Department of Key West and the Tortugas, reported that 26 of his men died during this period from "Yellow Jack," two as early as July 28, and McFarland himself barely survived an infection of the disease.

Even the ships at sea were not safe during the period, as the Frigate *St. Lawrence* suffered 32 deaths from yellow fever in August and September, 26 of them occurring during September alone.

And Emily Holder, at Fort Jefferson, reported "The yellow fever raged for two months at Key West; the entire city was a vast hospital, and there were 200 deaths within four weeks from the dread disease. The one death at the Tortugas, if it was genuine Yellow Fever, was a sporadic case, as there was no other until later in the season, and we refrained from giving it that name." She also reported that she was told by the Chaplain that "four paymasters and five surgeons died on the naval vessels, and it was very fatal among the sailors; four and five days was the length generally of the course the fever ran."

Cuba had always been blamed for importation of the disease to the Florida Keys, but Assistant Surgeon Cornick of the U.S. Army suggested a local origin for the problem at Key West. "Some local conditions no doubt favored its spread and added to its virulence, such as a large amount of decaying vegetation resulting from the clearing of land for military purposes, the breaking of ground for gardens, the excavations involved in the construction of fortifications, and during the progress of the last, the opening and removal of about three hundred graves which is said to have occasioned an intolerable odor" (possibly the previously described cemetery on the south beach).

Surgeon Cornick treated yellow fever at Key West during this period as follows: "As soon as the patient is attacked with symptoms of the fever he is placed to his chin in a hot bath containing from four to eight ounces of mustard until he gets into

a profuse perspiration or complains of being faint; he is then put in bed between blankets and fifteen to twenty grains of calomel are administered, followed in four hours by an ounce or two of castor oil. By the time the oil has had a good effect his pulse as a rule becomes almost natural, though in many cases quite frequent. I then give him ten grains of quinine every hour until he has taken two doses, after which five grains every two hours until he complains of ringing in his ears or other indications of the action of the remedy. I also give sweet spirit of nitre to keep the kidneys in good working order, from the derangement of which we have so much to fear. Should the patient after this complain of uneasiness I give, as a preventive of black vomit, one drop of creosote in the form of a pill; this has been attended with the happiest results, sometimes even after black vomit has made its appearance. If the patient complains of much uneasiness about the stomach I generally resort to sinapisms, which will in most instances give relief. After this he is treated upon general principles."

Yellow fever would follow the 47th Pennsylvania to Hilton Head in August, with members of the 7th New Hampshire Regiment who had been left sick at Fort Jefferson, and with Surgeon Cornick who arrived with them on the steamer *Delaware* which had left Key West August 14. Fortunately the disease did not spread at that time to the regiment and most other units in the area.

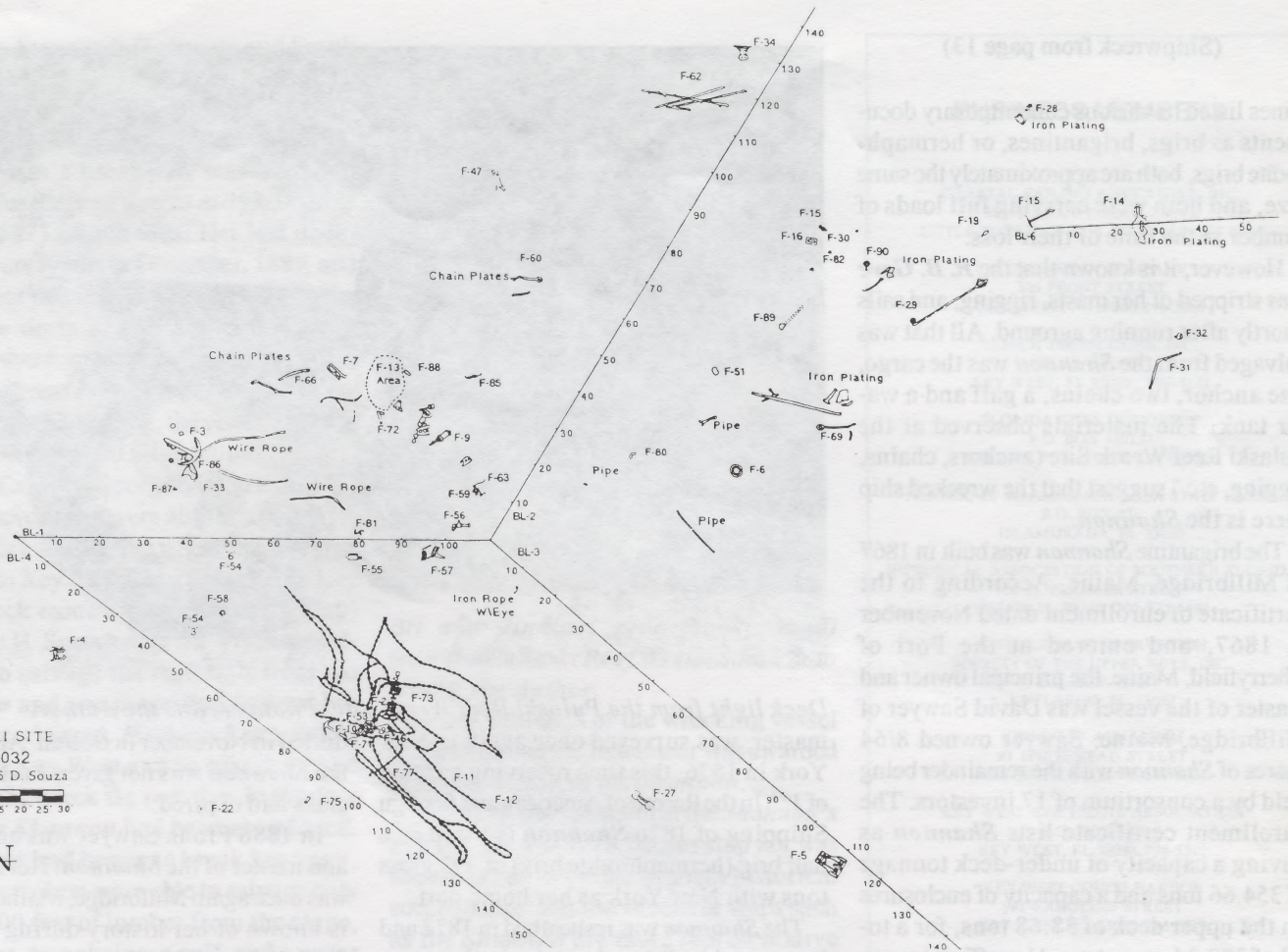
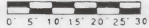
The net result of all this as far as the 47th Pennsylvania was concerned, was that Key West was a good place to leave in June of 1862. The regiment would return again in December, but till then, yellow fever had run its course and conditions had returned to normal.

Hopefully, the reader now has some feeling for what life in the military was like at Key West during the Civil War. Part 3 of this series will describe the many fevers prevalent throughout the area, as well as their treatments.

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Pan American Airways	Sum 1995
Parla Agustin	Sum 1995
Parson George W.	Spr 1996
Pawnee USS	Fall 1995
Peary Robert E.	Spr 1997
Perry Matthew Lt.	Sum 1992
Philippe Odet Dr.	Spr 1995
Planter Village of	Win 1993/94
Poem by Fred Ewert	Spr 1994
Policeman Till Murder	Spr 1994
Porter David	Sum 1994
Porter David part 3	Win 1994/95
Porter David part 4	Spr 1995
Porter David part 2	Fall 1994
Powell Kim	Win 1996/97
Price Andrew	Spr 1992
Quarterboat Number 4	Win 1995/96
Railroad and Hurneane	Win 1995/96
Red Cross Nurse song	Spr 1991
Rosillo Domingo Flight	Sum 1995
Rowing Program article	Sum 1991
Sailing Club History	Win 1990
Sailing to Panama	Win 1997
Sailing in the Keys	Sum 1992
Sailing Trip	Fall 1992
Sailing Trip	Sum 1992
Salas Juan	Fall 1993
Salt Industry	Fall 1996
Sand Key Cholera	Spr 1996
Schooners old	Win 1991/92
Seahawk Deep Ocean	Fall 1990
Ship Building	Fall 1992
Ship Wreck	Fall 1991
Shipping	Win 1997/98
Shrimping Key West	Fall 1997
Simonton buys Key West	Fall 1993
Singleton Genny speaking about	Sum 1991
Slavery in Florida	Spr 1994
Smith Walter Murder of Bradley	Fall 1995
Spanish 1622 Navigation	Sum 1994
Spanish American War	Spr 1998
Spanish American War	Win 1997/98
Spanish Wreck deep water	Fall 1990
Street Names	Sum 1998
Strobel Benjamin B. Dr.	Spr 1995
Strobel Benjamin B. Dr.	Win 1995/96
Sturtevant USS sinking of	Fall 1991
Submarine off Keys in WW 11	Sum 1992
Surveys of Keys	Spr 1993
Tampa Spanish American War	Spr 1998
Taussig Joseph K. War or 98	Spr 1998
Tawes Leonard Captain's Log	Win 1991/92
Telegraph to Cuba	Fall 1991
Thetis USCG History	Sum 1993
Thomas Vicent C. Capt. Memory	Spr 1997
Thompson Norberg and Key West	Fall 1997
Till Clarence Murder of	Spr 1994
Tortugas Fishing by Cubans	Win 1996/97
Turtle Cannery Society works to save	Spr 1992
Turtle Fisheries in the U.S.	Spr 1997
Turtle Soup Canning	Fall 1997
Valbanera Wreck of	Sum 1996
Verguena Y Victoria Poem	Sum 1991
Voyage 1930 Diary of	Fall 1992
Voyage along Keys 1784	Sum 1993
Voyage in Keys 1824-1825	Sum 1992
Voyage to Key West in 1829	Win 1995/96
Waft Poem	Spr 1993
Waterhouse Henry F. Dr.	Spr 1995
Western Union visit Key West	Spr 1991
Whitaker Frank Murder Victim	Spr 1994
Whitehead William Diary	Fall 1992
Wisteria Lighthouse Tender	Fall 1992
Wisteria Island	Fall 1992
Wisteria Lighthouse Tender	Sum 1998
World War II Key West	Win 1992/93
World War II Key West	Win 1991/92
World War II Key West	Spr 1992
World War II in Keys	Sum 1992
Wreck Bird Key Tortugas	Sum 1997
Wreck Brig Cimbis	Fall 1990
Wreck Isaac Allerton	Win 1991/92
Wreck Speedwell	Win 1997/98
Wreck Sea Monster	Spr 1991
Wreck Newark	Spr 1991
Wreck Ship of the Brides	Sum 1991
Wreck ship Tagliom	Sum 1991
Wreckers Song	Win 1995/96
Wrecking 1831	Win 1992/93
Wrecking bark	Win 1990
Wrecking Ghost Ship	Win 1990
Wrecking in 1860	Fall 1995
Wrecking locomotive	Fall 1990
Wrecking Merchants	Spr 1996
Wrecking Valbanera	Sum 1996
WWII in Key West	Fall 1991
Yellow Fever in Key West	Spr 1992

PULASKI SITE
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The Pulaski Reef Wreck Site map. Photo credit: the Author.

(Shipwreck from page 1)

the Dry Tortugas National Park approximately 2.5 miles northwest of Pulaski Light, contains a variety of anchors, chains, deck machinery, and rigging. The hull itself has decomposed leaving only structural hardware such as pins, fasteners, and drift bolts. From studying these materials I was able to determine that the ship that wrecked there was a square-rigged sailing vessel dating from the middle to late 19th century of approximately 350 to 450 gross tons.

The vessel had undergone repairs and had been re-sheathed more than once and had been in service for several years. Since no ballast was located at the site it was deemed that she was carrying a full load of cargo (that acted as ballast) that was salvaged or had since deteriorated. The patterning of materials associated with the bow and stern sections indicate that the vessel was sailing from north to south. Two undeployed anchors provided strong evidence that the vessel had run aground with little or no warning and that the crew had no time to react to prevent the disaster. Widely distributed materials suggest that the vessel ran aground in rough seas and

broke apart rapidly. There is evidence at the site that some salvage took place, but the presence of materials highly prized by salvors such as the anchors and rigging show that salvage was minimal.

Throughout the 1995 and 1996 field seasons, the wrecked vessel at the Pulaski Site remained unidentified. The research design for the project was developed to collect information based solely on the analysis of the archaeological materials located at the site and the research questions were of sufficiently broad nature that identification of the wreck was not necessary. Even though identification of the vessel was never a goal of the project, determining the full history of a vessel adds another dimension to the interpretation of the materials and, in a sense, brings closure to the wreck event. As is frequently the case with archaeological projects, the clues to the vessel's identification were found during the final week of the project. During excavations two parrels were found. These artifacts were recorded, photographed, plotted onto the field map, and entered into the field notes.

It was not until a few weeks later when

the site data were being analyzed that the full significance of the parrels was realized. The parrels were proof that the vessel wrecked at the Pulaski Site was square-rigged. From a list of vessels known to have been wrecked or stranded on or near Pulaski Reef, it is known that the overwhelming majority of vessels that came to grief during the middle to late 19th century were schooners. Only two square-rigged vessels are known to have been wrecked on Pulaski Reef; the brig *R. B. Gove* and the brigantine *Shannon*.

A trip down to the Key West Public Library to view the Admiralty Court Records provided the information necessary to determine which of the two square-rigged vessels were the more likely candidate for a positive identification based on the profile pieced together from the archaeology. This proved somewhat difficult as the similarities between the two vessels were uncanny. Both were built in Maine in the 1860s, had undergone several repairs, were recaulked and resheathed more than once, and were old when lost. Both vessels were some-

(Continued on page 14)

(Shipwreck from page 13)

times listed in various contemporary documents as brigs, brigantines, or hermaphrodite brigs, both are approximately the same size, and both were carrying full loads of lumber at the time of their loss.

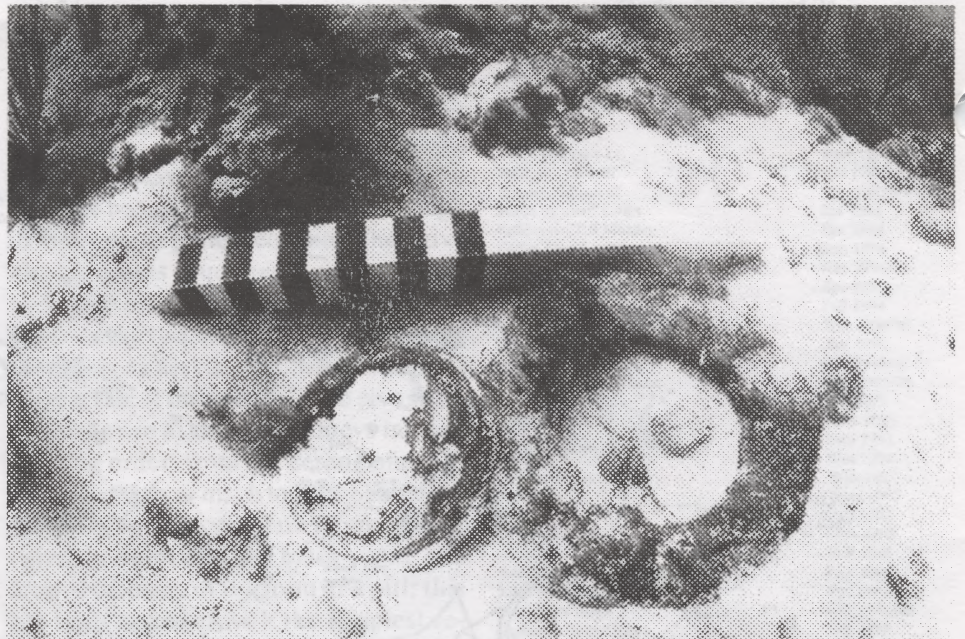
However, it is known that the *R. B. Gove* was stripped of her masts, rigging, and sails shortly after running aground. All that was salvaged from the *Shannon* was the cargo, one anchor, two chains, a gaff and a water tank. The materials observed at the Pulaski Reef Wreck Site (anchors, chains, rigging, etc.) suggest that the wrecked ship there is the *Shannon*.

The brigantine *Shannon* was built in 1867 in Millbridge, Maine. According to the certificate of enrollment dated November 1, 1867, and entered at the Port of Cherryfield, Maine, the principal owner and master of the vessel was David Sawyer of Millbridge, Maine. Sawyer owned 8/64 shares of *Shannon* with the remainder being held by a consortium of 17 investors. The enrollment certificate lists *Shannon* as having a capacity of under-deck tonnage of 354.66 tons and a capacity of enclosures on the upper deck of 38.68 tons, for a total of 393.34 gross tons. Her official number was 23567.

According to the 1869 American Lloyds Register of American and Foreign Shipping, the *Shannon* was listed as being of 386 tons and built of mixed materials with two decks and constructed with iron fastenings. She had a rating of 1³ which indicates it was vessel of second class, first grade. The vessel had a half poop and a house cabin and had been surveyed in Boston during October of 1868, less than one year after its official enrollment. The owner is listed as J. W. Sawyer and Organization.

In August of 1873 the *Shannon* was sheathed with Muntz metal. After having been surveyed in New York during 1874, she was assigned a rating of 1³ once again. In 1875 she was surveyed in Boston. The 1875 American Lloyds Register of American and Foreign Shipping indicates that *Shannon* belonged to the port of Millbridge, Maine, and was 383 gross tons, 120 feet in length, 29.9 feet in beam, and 15.6 feet deep with a draft of 14 feet. The fastenings are indicated as being copper and iron. During that year the *Shannon* required repairs of oak material and was assigned a rating of 1³ to be in effect for a period of 3 to 4 years.

The *Shannon*, with David Sawyer as its



Deck light from the Pulaski Reef Wreck site. Photo credit: the Author.

master, was surveyed once again in New York in 1876, this time receiving a rating of 1^{1/4}. In the Record of American and Foreign Shipping of 1876 *Shannon* is listed as a half brig (hermaphrodite brig) of 393 gross tons with New York as her home port.

The *Shannon* was resheathed in 1877 and it required additional repairs in that year. She was surveyed in September 1878 in Millbridge, Maine, and underwent further repairs. By 1879, the *Shannon*, home port New York, had a new master, Mr. Moore. The *Shannon* was surveyed in November 1881 in Millbridge, Maine, and required repairs and caulking. She was given a rating of class 1^{1/2} for 5 years. Moore's tenure as captain was apparently short-lived because the *Shannon* was back under the ownership of the Sawyers by 1882. With Joseph Sawyer as its owner and Frank Sawyer as its master, she was listed as having a length of 119.8 feet, a breadth of 29.7 feet, and a depth of 14.9 feet. During 1882, *Shannon* once again required resheathing.

The *Shannon* was surveyed in 1882 and 1883 in Philadelphia, and in New York in 1884, 1885, and 1886. By 1886 she once again had a new master, Mr. Nash, and was listed as being of 393 tons. In that year she required repairs, and her topsides were recaulked. In 1887 her tonnage was downgraded to 374 gross tons and her insurance class of 5 years expired. The *Shannon* required more recaulking in May and July, and additional repairs were completed in August of that same year. *Shannon* underwent a special survey that was con-

ducted in November in Boston. At that time, the *Shannon* was not given a rating as her class had expired.

In 1888 Frank Sawyer was both owner and master of the *Shannon*. Her home port was once again Millbridge, Maine, but little is known of her history during the years from 1888 to 1891. It is known, however, that she was surveyed in March 1889 in Havana, Cuba. No details of this survey have been located. She underwent an additional survey in New York in December, 1889 and some repairs were made at that time.

By 1892 the owners of the *Shannon* are

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listed a J. Stewart & Company and Frank Sawyer & Company of home port Millbridge, Maine. According to the Merchant Sailing Vessels of the United States of 1892, the Shannon's home port was Machias, Maine. Her tonnage was set at 393.34 gross tons and 373.68 net tons. Her last documented survey was in December, 1889, and her master was Captain George M. Peck.

On the night of March 11, 1892, the weather was hazy with a moderate breeze, and smooth seas in moonlight (Wreck Report 1892). Without warning, the vessel stranded on Pulaski Reef and bilged almost immediately. Captain George M. Peck and his crew of seven men were able to make their way to Tortugas Harbor where they secured passage to Key West. Upon arriving in Key West, Peck made arrangements for Captain John H. Saunders of the wrecker *Hollyhock* to salvage the materials from the *Shannon* and any cargo that had not become waterlogged. *Hollyhock* got underway from Key West and on March 14 and reached the wreck the next day. In the days since the *Shannon* had been abandoned, heavy seas had begun to break her apart, and the wreckers were able to salvage only the 45,000 feet of lumber from the cargo, an anchor, two chains, a gaff, and a water tank (Admiralty Records 1891-1895).

According to the Wreck Report filed March 15, 1892, by Captain Peck, the *Shannon* was owned by Charles M. Stemash of Bangor, Maine, at the time she was lost. The estimated value of the vessel was \$5,000 and the estimated value of the cargo was \$2,890. At the time she went down, the *Shannon* was carrying a part of the cargo on deck. The estimated cargo weight carried by the *Shannon* on this voyage was 560 tons.

On the Wreck Report, Captain Peck admits that the vessel was overloaded. Overloading the vessel with cargo would have increased the draft of the vessel and the deck load may have made her top-heavy and therefore unstable. The Wreck Report also indicates that the vessel was insured for \$3,000 and that Captain Peck did not know if the cargo was insured. Peck stated that both the vessel and its cargo were total losses. He explained that the weather was so hazy that the lights of the Tortugas were not visible in their full range and the *Shannon* struck the reef before the crew had an opportunity to prevent it (Wreck Report 1892). The salvaged materials were sold at auction in Key West for \$536.24. Fifty per cent of this amount was awarded to



Bit and windlass gear (background) from the Pulaski Reef Wreck Site. Photo credit: the Author.

Captain Saunders of the wrecking vessel *Hollyhock* and the remainder was awarded to Captain Peck of the *Shannon*.

That is all that is known of the *Shannon's* history. She was not a famous ship nor was she involved in events of great historical consequence. But the wrecks of ships such as the *Shannon* are more representative of the ordinary vessels of trade and provide much information about the cultural and behavioral factors that dictated the persistence of sail in the age of steam.

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Dr. Donna J. Souza is an Archaeologist with Brown University. Her book "The Persistence of Sail in the Age of Steam, Underwater Archaeological Evidence from the Dry Tortugas" was published in 1998 by Plenum.

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Key West Harbor and Approaches in 1851. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

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