



# Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal

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OFFICIAL QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE KEY WEST MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## FISHING FOR KING MACKEREL IN THE "GOOD OLD DAYS"

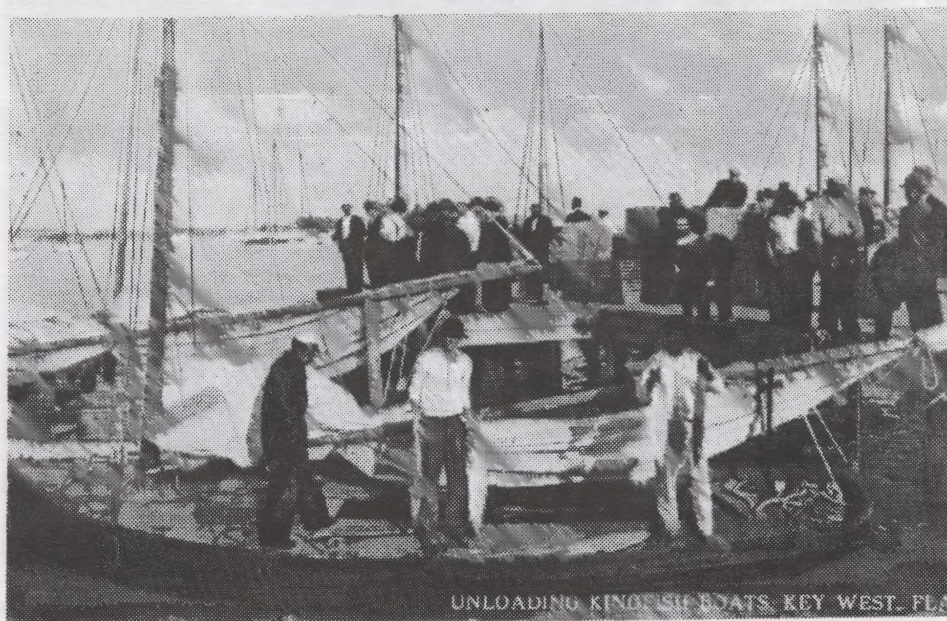
By Edward J. Little Jr.  
President, Key West Maritime  
Historical Society  
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### INTRODUCTION

If you are one of that special breed of anglers that contract "kingfish fever" every winter when the word spreads around the docks that the "run" has arrived, you probably already know quite a bit about king mackerel (*Scomberomous cavalla*). You know where the fish school up, how to get them to bite, and what to do (or just as importantly, not to do!) when a 30 pound (plus) "smoker" king makes that long first run after taking the hook. But, what you may not know is that fishing for king mackerel has long had an important role in the maritime history of the Florida Keys.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

History doesn't record who caught the first king mackerel (kingfish) in the Florida Keys. What we do know is that since the 1780's kingfish were known to colonial Americans and to European visitors to the Keys. For example, in 1772, William DeBrahm authored a guide to coastwise piloting that included descriptions of the natural resources of Florida. He reported that in addition to many of the inshore species of fish now familiar to us, "farther off, near the stream, are kingfish, dolphins, bonetoes, albacores...". Incidentally, this spelling, "kingfish" was also used by John Lee Williams in his 1837 "guide" to the Territory of Florida. Conversely, another early chronicle of Florida, that of James Grant Forbes (published in 1821) cites "king fish (no hyphen) among



UNLOADING KINGFISH BOATS, KEY WEST, FLA

*Unloading Kingfish from a smackee at the dock in Key West Harbor. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

the list of fishes of the Florida Keys.

Prior to 1822, the Keys still belonged to Spain. There were no permanent settlements on these islands. That year, the U.S. took possession of Florida. Soon, a few enterprising Americans began building a small town at Key West. Much of its economy centered on the salvaging of sailing vessels sunk or grounded on the coral reefs of the Keys. But, there was another business in addition to this "wrecking" (as the salvage industry was called) that contributed greatly to the prosperity of the new town: fishing for the market at Havana (the nearest large city). Spaniards from Cuba, and the English from the Bahamas, had long been frequenting the

Keys to fish, to catch sea turtles, and to cut lumber. But, after the U.S. Navy planted the American flag at Key West, the government moved to exclude these "interlopers" from the Keys. It was not long before the rich fishing grounds of the region were being visited by American fishermen. They mostly hailed from New England ports. Each winter, they would sail their fishing sloops to the Keys. These vessels each had a live well amidships. The catch, which chiefly consisted of groupers, could be held alive in the well until the trip ended at Havana. In time, the crews of these vessels "put down roots" at Key West and the fishing industry

(Continued on page 10)

# Society News

By John Viele



Michael McManus speaking to KWMHS on January 10. Photo credit: Tom Hambricht.

## Christmas Social - December 11

Society members gathered at the Harbor Walk at the foot of Greene St. to socialize, listen to Christmas carols played by the Horace O'Bryant School band, and witness the lighting of the Christmas decorations and tree.

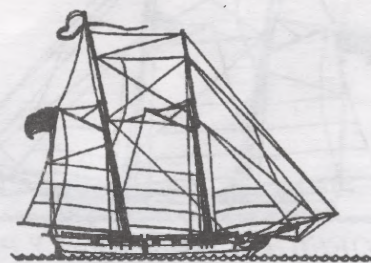
## Lecture - January 10

Michael McManus, author, university professor, and art museum director presented a fascinating slide show on the

history and art of scrimshaw. On their long voyages in search of whales, seamen from New England and New York learned to create objects of utility and beauty from whales' teeth and bone. Among them were such things as fids, sewing chests, bodkins, cribbage boards, and even a chair. McManus illustrated his lecture with color slides reproduced from the collections of four great whaling museums. His appearance was funded by the Florida Humanities Council's Speakers Bureau.

## New Members

Bobby and Kathy Bauer, Belleview, FL; Ladd, Jr., Key West; Sheri Lohr, Key West; Thomas Knowles, Tallahassee; Shirley and Richard Loud, St. Augustine; John Roper, Ray Henderson, Alburg, VT; Joseph P. Key West.



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**Production:** Tom Hambricht

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

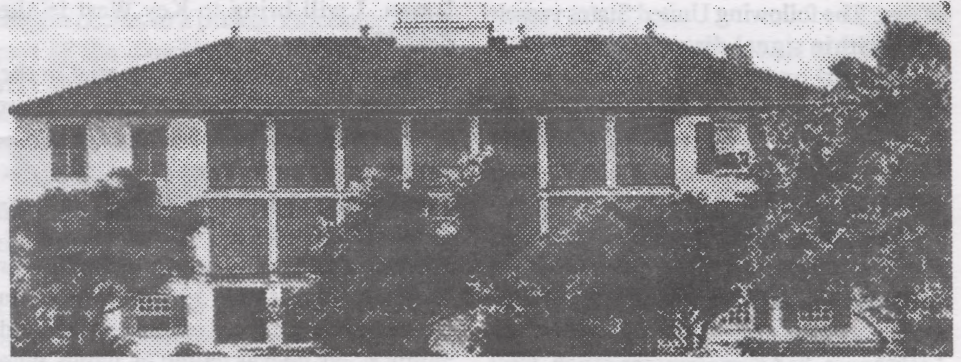
PART 6 (August 1863 thru December 1863)

The average temperature was 81 degrees during August. The Key West Post Cemetery records indicate that there were two deaths during the month, but no members of the 47th Pennsylvania would die during August. A refreshing change, considering it was the beginning of what was normally the Yellow Fever season. The fever would not prove to be a problem in the District of Key West and the Tortugas in 1863, although the mosquitoes were still "very annoying", "terrible", "worse than ever", and "terribly blood thirsty".

Mrs. Garvins was still supplying the troops with ice cream, and the *Matchless* was sailing back and forth, maintaining communication between the Dry Tortugas and Key West.

On Saturday, August 8, Henry Hornbeck "Rose at 4 1/2, proceeded to Slaughter House, procured rations of Fresh Beef. Closed [Commissary] Office to day to witness the Regatta... There are 4 classes of Boats entered for the race. They started at 11 A.M. As was imagined the U.S. Schooner '*Nonpareil*' proved victorious, she fired two guns as she entered the harbor, coming in like a streak of lightning, about 15 minutes ahead of any of the Boats. A good deal of betting going on. The Judges with a great many ladies were aboard the Schooner '*Wanderer*' a splendid Boat, towed by the Tug '*Reaney*', they proceeded to Sand Key."

The yacht race was held between Sand Key Lighthouse and Key West, with "some thirty boats entered. Boats of all kinds, from a Captain's gig to a thirty or forty ton schooner. The wind was fine, and a splendid day they had for the purpose. Each boat had a flag that it might be known, and as they moved off, the fleet made a grand display. From the ramparts of Fort Taylor the sight was magnificent, for from that point one had a full view, and an opportunity afforded of following the different parties, with the eye, until they gained the turning point and their return to the starting ground. A steam tug followed the party, having on board ladies, the committee and guests, who had a jolly time of it, and an opportunity of tripping the 'light fantastic toe', to the fine music of the 47th's Band, led by that excellent



The Maine Hospital. Photo credit: Monroe County Public Library.

musician, Prof. Bush. Quartermaster Lock's schooner *Nonpareil* won the race, out distancing all its competitors."

On the 13th, at Key West, the "*Juanita*" returned, having been out a short time on a cruise. An enormous shark caught near Pinkneys Wharf, by several citizens, they dispatched him instanter, and chucked him overboard again. Rather dangerous for swimming around these diggings I imagine. After Supper Ginkinger, Weiss, Watson, Mennig, Jake Beck & Myself with a number of citizens, went out with Steam Tug, to Sand Key, she taking a mail to put aboard Schooner '*Nonpareil*', lying in wait of Steamer for the North. Returned from the trip by half past 9, a very pleasant sea ride, with a good deal of jollity."

There were no burials in the Key West Post Cemetery in September, and there would not be any more burials throughout the remainder of the year, at least none whose graves were identified when the cemetery was relocated in the 1900's. One man would die at the Marine Hospital.

On September 14, it was reported that "the naval coal depot, which has just been finished here at large expense to the Government, was last week partially filled up with 1500 tons of coal, when the foundation commenced to settle, and the centre column, supporting the railroad and roof, went down about ten inches, when they hurried the coal out again, and now the building must be appropriated for some other purpose. It is very well calculated for storage of provisions, clothing, materials, &c."

Dr. "George" Sweet wrote from the "U.S. Marine Hospital on Friday. "I have lately concluded to get married to Miss [Emma] Johnson... She's a splendid woman in every respect. She's about ma's height only a little broader across the shoulders—weighs 118—brown hair & blue or between blue

& gray eyes... I have taken another Hospital at 1500\$ a year with but little to do—the Engineer Hospital—I can take care of the Hospitals with two hours work a day, but the town practice is hard—I do it all—my pay this month will be over 500\$. They pay promptly—I took the Engineer Hospital the 28th of last month... Enclosed you will find a letter from my old Capt on the *Huntsville*."

Lying in the harbor at Key West on September 19 were the steamers *San Jacinto*, *Tahoma*, *Odela*, *Nita* and *Marigold*; and the sailing vessels *Restless*, *Dale*, *Beauregard* and *Eugenia*. "The prize steamers *James Battle* and *Lizzie Davis* are also lying at anchor... Our latest dates here are New York papers of the 8th, and New Orleans papers of the 12th."

And on the 22nd, "After Supper there was a horse race took place, starting from the Salt Works, and stopping at the Barracks. Considerable betting and excitement this evening." And on the 29th, another "Horse Race between Lieut. Dennigs Mare & a horse of H. Miller a citizen. Lieut Dennig proving the best, won 100 Dollars, another race to come off soon.

The rear walls of the counterscarp galleries of both Martello Towers were finished in October at Key West. Bricks were scarce, and 800,000 per month were needed. The average temperature was 74 degrees. The Key West Post Cemetery recorded no burials in October, but three men would die at the Marine Hospital.

At Key West on October 6, Acting Master Burgess "visited and searched the sloop *Last Trial*, lying in this harbor, and find her loaded with 26 sacks of salt and without papers and colors... she put in here in distress and... intended to run the blockade. Her captain (George Elliot) had already

(Continued on page 4)

(Civil War from page 3)

left the vessel, but was arrested by the provost marshal...I have seized her as a prize of war. The following United States vessels were within signal distance [probably in the harbor] and entitled to share in the capture: *San Jacinto, Dale, Huntsville, Tahoma, Tioga, Wanderer, Eugenie, Marigold, and Sunflower, and tender schooners Sea Bird and Fox.*"

Henry Hornbeck "Issued Fresh Beef this morning. Ginkinger & Myself went aboard Schooner *'Nonpareil'* bound for Sand Key after a mail, a flag being hoisted on the Lighthouse, had a fine trip, sea rough. Capt Gobin & Robt Moore also along. Went ashore in a small boat, and were shown through the Lighthouse by the keeper which is a very large Iron Light House, took dinner aboard *'Nonpareil'*, we brought away no mail, being but a few official packages for the Navy. Returned by 2 P.M. After Supper took a walk about town & played a few games of Euchre."

And on October 11 after ablutions, Henry Hornbeck spent the greater part of the day reading "*'Don Quixote'*. Ginkinger, Weiss & Myself attended the funeral of Mr Boyle an old resident of Key West, having a Carriage & Ginkingers horse, took a ride about city, visited Mrs Garvins, took a stroll in the evening." On the 15th, Henry Hornbeck was "Busy in office all morning. After dinner at District Court, kept at it until 5 P.M. After Supper played a game of Billiards at Careys...To day very warm again." On the 17th Henry Hornbeck spent the morning reading at Key West. "After dinner engaged at Court until 5 P.M. After Supper Sergt of Co D & Myself played a game of Billiards, after which Bob Moore, Ginkinger, John Watson, the Co D Sergt & Myself took a ride around the island. Stopped at Gigmonds where there was a dance, remained a short time, then returned to office...Mosquitoes very bad to night."

The following is just one example of the many captures of blockade runners too numerous to edit from the original history as narrated in Volume III of the Florida Civil War series.

On the 20th, the *Fort Henry's* tender *Annie* captured the British schooner *Martha Jane* off Bayport on the west coast, "loaded with 26,609 pounds (as per manifest) sea-island cotton. There was also found on the persons and crew \$1,206.88 in gold, silver, and United States Treasury notes, and \$127.70 in Confederate States money. The money I have forwarded

to the prize commissioners at Key West. I send to Key West, in the prize, her captain and supercargo. The balance of her crew, 3 men, I will bring to Key West in the *Fort Henry.*"

There were no burials indicated in the Key West Post Cemetery in November, nor did any members of the 47th Pennsylvania die this month. One man died at the Marine Hospital in Key West. The average temperature was 70 degrees.

While at Key West aboard the *James L. Davis* on November 15, Eugene Chapin "went with three naval officers out to 'Old Sandy's', as he was called by name, who was an old colored man who kept a fruit garden in the suburbs. We were ushered into the house, and took seats around a square table in the parlor, and then gave our order for some fruit which he brought to us on individual plates. There were delicious grapes, guavas, oranges, etc., and after we had eaten what fruit we wanted, we each paid him fifty cents, his price per plate of fruit, and then we took a look about the garden and retired."

At Key West on the evening of November 25, "Dr Sweet U.S.N. was married to Miss Emma H. Johnson of this place at the Episcopal Church which was a very good marriage." The wedding of Dr. "George" Sweet to Emma Johnson was held on a Wednesday. "The Naval and Army Officers are intending to have a big time. The Officers of the Flag Ship want to give a big thing on board for him (in the way of a party), but they had made arrangements for a reception at the house (George's)...Capt. Rogers (George's old Capt) presents a China Tea Set worth about \$50. You will see it published in the New York Herald & Times."

Henry Hornbeck witnessed the ceremonies, "after which there was a magnificent ball in Howes building, the General, Admiral, Colonel & other Noted Characters were amongst the guests, and the affair passed off pleasantly, the Band of our Regt also serenaded the party."

In describing the wedding, Horace Sweet wrote: "The cake was passed around...all went home about 2 AM...The Bride Maids (5 maids & grooms men) were dressed in white silk dress, veils & satin slippers...Head Dresses & Ribbons...The grooms & grooms men were dressed in black coats & pants, white vests & cravets...When they came out of the church they played (on the organ) Home Sweet Home but changed it to Home Sweets Going

Home."

"Four sentries stationed, two at the [??] & two at the doors, the naval and land officers done all they could. They furnished the Brass Band, Sentries & Guards. They were stationed around the church, house & through the streets. The band was recalled from Tortugas...The church was half filled with naval officers", including the "Old Admiral", who had the first kiss from the bride.

The workers at the fortifications in Key West demanded back pay and a raise in December; their rate was \$1.40 per day. The town had some excitement in December as a spark from a railway locomotive set the mess hall on fire, burning it to the ground; and nature retaliated with a violent storm which caused heavy damage, putting the railroad out of service.

There were no burials in the Key West Post Cemetery and no deaths in the 47th Pennsylvania in December, for the second month in a row. There were also no deaths reported at the Marine Hospital.

At Key West on December 10, Henry Hornbeck was busy issuing rations again to the companies. "After Supper visited Mrs Garvins, also witnessed a Masquerade Ball at Pitchers which was a very comical affair, everything passed off pleasantly. Rained to night & all day again. Very disagreeable weather. Retired at Midnight."

During the week of the 21st, a ship arrived at Key West from New York with "a good lot of turkeys, potatoes, turnips, onions, etc." This was quite a treat for the citizens and "well did all parties go in when they were put up at auction, but right smart did they pay for the whistle. Turkeys brought the snug price of from five to six dollars a piece, and other articles in proportion." Musician Wharton reported that they were of the size he paid 50 or 75 cents for at home. He wrote: "I was amused in one case where a women paid six dollars for a gobler, and in half an hour sent to a store for a bit and a half (eighteen cents) worth of potatoes, getting ten for that amount, showing that whatever privations she had to put up with, a turkey had to grace the Christmas table."

"Spanish doubloons, cargoes of prize schooners *Frolic* and *Harriet* and steamer *Mail*, were sold at auction on the 24th instant, by the United States Marshal, twenty four dollars and sixty-eight cents each."

Henry Hornbeck was "In office to day. Orders coming in thick for provisions & whiskey, for the Christmas. After Supper

Ginkinger, Weiss & Myself visited Capt Bell, of the U.S. Tug 'Reaney', at his home, and were regaled with egg nog which is a great drink here on Christmas Eve, visited also Mrs McGrath, and at Boyles where a splendid supper was arranged by the Wenches. After which went to the Ball, at the Court House, remained there until 1 A.M. then went with String Band to Light House where they serenaded, retired at 1/2 past 2 A.M."

On Christmas, Henry Hornbeck "Rose at 3 A.M. & proceeded to Slaughter House, had two Cattle & two Sheep cut up and served to the troops. Conveyed Fresh Meat to a number of citizens this morning, being Gen'l Woodburys gift, then had breakfast. Went to Fort Stables, had the horse fed, visited Mrs Abbott in Fort Taylor, also Mrs Heebner, from both of whom we rec'd Christmas Cakes & a drink, which were excellent & twice as natural. Had several invitations to dinner. We took dinner at Capt Bells at 2 P.M. which was a splendid affair. A fine turkey served up, & finished up our dinner with excellent Mince pie, after the dinner we again took a ride about the Island, took the horse to Fort Stables & returned to office."

"At 5 P.M. a party of Masqueraders (or what we term in our State Fantastics) paraded the street headed with music, a very comical party. Took a walk to night, Churches finely decorated. Retired early at 1/2 past 8 P.M. Weather beautiful."

On the 28th, "This afternoon went aboard 'San Jacinto', and was shown all through the Steamer by the Steward. She is a staunch powerful vessel. Ball & Supper to night aboard of her. Our Band playing."

Eugene Chapin reported the ball as he wrote: "While at Key West I...was invited to several small parties, consisting of music and private fandangoes. I also received an invitation to attend a grand ball which was given by the officers of the United States Steamer *San Jacinto*...which was a most brilliant and grand affair. Admiral Bailey and his staff officers were there, and a number of Spanish gentlemen and ladies, including the Spanish Consul and his retinue, some of whom were from Havana, Cuba."

"The band music belonged to the steamer, and the dancing was fine. It was the first ball of the kind I had ever attended, and the officers, all dressed in their showy uniforms, and the ladies, in their rich, gay colors and expensive ornaments of dia-

monds and jewels, all gracefully dancing, made, indeed, a very interesting and dazzling scene to look upon, and one which seldom occurs in a person's lifetime. I took part in the dancing and enjoyed myself very much, until the early hours of morning, when I retired to my quarters on board the ship" *James L. Davis*.

On December 30, "Our Band played to night and paraded by moonlight through the different streets."

On the 31st "After breakfast [Henry Hornbeck] went to Fort Taylor, attended inspection & Muster for pay, visited with Ginkinger, Mrs Abbott, Mrs Heebner & Mrs Good. Steamer *America* arrived from New York this morning, having aboard the numerous Veterans from furlough & numerous Recruits being the Tortugas crowd, did not come to the wharf until 3 oclock P.M...Hard at work all afternoon issuing rations to troops, remained up all night, most of time at a Ball, held at Mrs Shaws residence, at 12M our Band played on the ramparts at Fort Taylor & a gun fired."

"The present season is the carnival of the citizens of this city. They have been enjoying themselves during the holidays with balls, parties, and masquerades." The activities commenced a week before Christmas and ended with New Year. "Their masquerades are similar to our old fashioned Bell snickles, only they have the fun to themselves-do not throw apples, cakes, or nuts to the children for a regular scramble, but march through the streets, headed by a Negro and Dago (Spaniard) with fiddle and guitar, and after satisfying their ambition in making themselves ridiculous, retire to some private house, where young ladies have already assembled, and end the evening with performances on the heel and toe."

Balls and parties were "still the rage" in Key West, and the Union Club gave a ball at the Court House on New Year's Eve, attended "by some sixty ladies...The room was decorated by the Stars and Stripes and signal flags of the Navy. A circle on the floor, in colored chalk, contained our national emblem, crossed, and eagle in the centre, and the American Shield below, the whole making a pretty picture, and the design proving the good taste of the Master's Mate who was the artist."

If there was enough of that rum the veterans found, the rank and file of the 47th Pennsylvania had some parties of their own. Pvt. Brecht spent his time compos-

ing the following poem in German:

"Reflections at the End of the Year 1863

by W. Brecht

Unceasing rolls the wheel of time  
And with it pulls humanity and all its  
lot;

With happiness, with sorrow, and with  
grief

Moving into the lap of the past;  
Each night of sin or virtue  
Becomes a plundering of fleeing time  
Only the fruit of virtue compares to

youth,  
That plants the seed for the world to  
come.

So we conclude again today  
A part of time with spirit dim;  
What has the blood of our brothers  
brought us

And the many victims claimed?  
And still the murder of our brothers,  
And still the spirit of passion,  
And still from afar bitter war grievance,

That rob the land of its strength!

Also in this year for us now gone by  
So many hopes were not fulfilled,  
Many a beam that had cast its clear  
light

Has wrapped itself in gloom again;  
Many a word spoken true and open,  
Was disgracefully and profanely turned  
around,

And the deed we hoped would bring  
us blessing,

The traitors impudently destroyed.

As with the worst of storms  
Only with lightning and thunder will  
clear,

And the good spirit-the true, that uplifts  
Always returns anew to life.

So shall the storms of these days,  
When the passions have cooled,  
Create again the better condition,  
Where man can feel humane again.

And in this belief and trust  
Let us move on into the new year,  
And build onto this era,  
That the pure had at their side;  
Yes, from him, the Creator of all things,  
Shall we beg the proper penance,  
And if we bring it in humility,  
He will not scorn our petition.

Fort Taylor, Key  
West, Florida 'Ende 1863'"

## Hackley's Diary

*William Hackley practiced law in Key West from 1829 to 1857. He kept a diary for part of the time. Here is the diary for January 1856.*

Monday, January 1. Rose at 6:15, bathed and walked as yesterday. At 9 A.M. barometer 29.73, thermometer 65, wind north northeast moderate, weather cloudy and raw. Read papers. Received from the clerk \$65.00 being my fee in the case of the Brig **R.W. Charlton**. Gave Elsie \$1.00 for a New Year's gift. Matilda spent the day at Mrs. Mary Fontane's and I went for dinner. Mrs. Fontane, Matilda and I were alone, Philip Fontane dined out. After dark I returned to the Fontane's where a company of Masquers came and danced until about midnight at which time Matilda came home. I had taken the children home about 9 and remained with them. Bought from G.L. Allen a Gutta Percha shower bath which is also fitted for injections both anal and vaginal and a small attachment for eye baths, paid \$4.00.

Tuesday, January 2. Rose about 6:30, bathed and walked as usual. The **Jasper** got in last night and is at the wharf. The **John Smith** got away for Pensacola early this morning. Paid Wills \$160.00 rent for 8 months. Received of Asa F. Tift a \$10.00 fee in the case of mates of the Ship **H.M. Hays**. Walked with Matilda and the children. Read volume four of Household Words and Livingston's Law Magazine.

Wednesday, January 3. Rose at 6 A.M. walked as usual. Paid Captain Lester for the music he bought in New York for Matilda, \$1.87. G.L. Allen was in the office all morning talking about hemp. Put a quantity of rotten apples and apple in a half-barrel which had held molasses and poured water to it and some molasses and stirred it well. The Sloop of War **Princeton** came to anchor off the Marine Hospital about 2 P.M. and the **Pampero** came in from New Orleans about 12. Walked around by the duck ponds and Army Quarters. After 8 went to Alexander Patterson's.

Thursday, January 4. Rose before 6. Bathed and walked up to the salt ponds. Saw Hattie's heifer. The **Jasper** got away for New Orleans about 8 A.M. John Davis bought me a fan from Havana for \$2.00 which I paid him. Walked with Mrs. Charles Tift, Matilda and children. Went half way to the salt ponds.

Friday, January 5. Rose about 6:40 and bathed. Read Livingston's Law Magazine and Chitty's Criminal Practice to prepare for the District Court which sits on Monday, if my commission as U.S. Attorney comes in the mail, if not, Court will be adjourned. P.M. Read Household Word and walked out to the salt ponds and round by Fitzpatrick's Road home. A ship came in with three companies of troops for the Caloosahatchee and 40 men for the company here. Captain Israel Vogdes and family came in the ship. Matilda and I went to Alexander Patterson's after tea.

Saturday, January 6. Rose at 5:30. Walked out by the salt ponds and crossed the plain and back home by the Lighthouse and bathed after I got home. When I got down after breakfast found C. Williams about to go fishing with Purser Hunter of the Sloop of War **Princeton** and two officers. He ask me to go and I went and found a heavy sea and fresh wind from the east northeast by which I was made nearly seasick. Before we got to the sand bar a signal of recall was made and we ran back found that the **Activa**, which was in sight when we went out, brought news of a ship being ashore at Tortugas. The **Dart** did not go as the **Florida** and **Champion** had both gone. Got back at 12, wrote my journal after dinner. P.M. Read Household Word. Matilda and the children rode with Mrs. S.F. Jones. I walked round by the Fort and got wet by a shower while on South Beach.

Sunday, January 7. The **Isabel** came in last night about 12. Got letters from Miles, both tickets blank. Hatty got a letter from Mother. The **Pampero** left for New Orleans about 8 A.M. Went home about 10 and put on my slippers and did not leave the house the rest of the day but read papers the whole time.

Monday, January 8. Rose about 6:30 and bathed. My arches are sore and they feel as if they had been sprained and I did not go for a walk in consequence. At 11 the District Court met and the jury was called but my commission as District Attorney not having come on the **Isabel**, court adjourned until January 22. Called on Dr. Badaraque and had a tooth filled the only one that needed but they all need the tarter scraped and I am to call again and have them scraped. Saw Dr. Frederick Weedon, the old man looks much broken. P.M. Read

papers. Walked out with Matilda, Mary Ann Porter, her boy and the children.

Tuesday, January 9. Rose at 6:20 bathed. The wind blowing fresh from north northeast I feared to walk least I should take cold. Wrote to the Secretary of Interior enclosing emolument account, to the Solicitor of Treasury with the state of docket. Wrote to W. Miles of Baltimore enclosing \$5.00 for a lottery ticket and to Jackson Morton asking him to send me Patent Office Report for 1853, put them in the Post Office. P.M. Read Household Words. Walked with Matilda and the children.

Wednesday, January 10. Rose about 6 and bathed. Wrote to Luther Tucker, Albany for Almanac and Cultivator, Leland Clay & Company for Comic World and to Mother. Read Agriculturist. Walked round by duck ponds and called at Captain Israel Vogdes' for Hatty and Charlotte who were on a visit to his children.

Thursday, January 11. Rose about 6 and walked round by the Fort and bathed. At 1 A.M. the **Northern Light** from Greytown came in and took on board about 100 tons of coal and got off before 8. The **Isabel** did not get in. About 10 went out to the lot with Allen and worked cutting and breaking hemp till 12. His machine gets it out faster than it has yet been done but the hemp should be steeped before it can be worked to advantage. Got in a good perspiration and bathed when I got home. Made my hands quite sore though not quite blistered. Went up to the Quarters with Matilda and Mrs. Tift and called on all the ladies.

Friday, January 12. Rose at 5:30 and walked up to the salt ponds and across the plain to the South Beach and along the beach by the Fort and home and bathed. Paid Joseph Whalton \$1.25 for rent of Box 11 in the Post Office. The **Florida** and **Champion** are in from Tortugas with cargo and materials of the Brig **Tartar**, of Charleston, South Carolina. The brig loaded with rice bilged when she ran aground. The **Princeton** came in to the wharf to fill her coal. P.M. Read Household Words.

Saturday, January 13. Woke at 5 and rose at 5:15 and walked to the salt ponds and got to the Episcopal Church on my return just as the sun rose. Bathed. Paid my library dues of \$5.00 for 1854. Bought

of Robert P. Campbell Maunders Treasury of Belles Letter for \$2.00. Went to the dentist and had two jaw teeth on the left side filed apart and some decay in one filed out and had the tarter scraped off all the roots. Reverend and Mrs. C.C. Adams dined with us and about sunset Matilda and I walked with Mrs. Adams nearly home when meeting Mr. Adams, who had left us about 4, we turned back. I was not at the office in the P.M.

Sunday, January 14. Rose at 5:50 and walked to the sand ponds. Read papers. P.M. Siesta.

Monday, January 15. Rose at 5:20 and walked to the salt ponds. Bathed. Received an invitation to dinner Friday next from Major William H. Chase and one for wife and self to a ball to be given to the officers of the *Princeton* by the Army officers on Wednesday night and I subscribed to a ball to be given to the officers of the *Princeton* by the citizen. Walked up half-way to the salt ponds with Hatty and Charlotte. Charlotte found a Hypo Campus a perfect specimen. Annie has had swelling behind the right ear for four days which proved to be the mumps. Mary Ann Porter had the mumps last summer and Annie has been to see her but Joseph Packer's little girl has them also and she has not visited Mrs. Porter so that the disease must be sporadic. Matilda and I went to Alexander Patterson's after tea.

Tuesday, January 16. Rose at 5:20 and walked to the salt ponds. Bathed. Read Law Magazine. P. M. Read Household Words. Walked with Matilda and Charlotte.

Wednesday, January 17. Rose at 5:20 and walked to the salt ponds. Bathed. Just at sunrise and even before the sun was visible there was a rainbow in the west northwest. Read Chitty Criminal Law. Judge William Marvin gave me the evidence and bail bonds in the case of James Walker saying that he had no doubt but I would be the District Attorney. Dined at Alexander Patterson's where Matilda and the children have been all day. Bought of Robert P. Campbell a gold cross for Matilda for \$9.00, he asked \$10.00 for it for the last year. There have been frequent heavy claps of thunder during the day. P.M. Read Household Words. Matilda and the Pattersons went up to the Quarters before noon and I lay down and took a nap when at half past 9 Alexander Patterson came down for me the tide being all over the beach and remained till

2:30 when I walked home and got to the gate just as the carriage drove up. Commenced raining just as we got home and rained hard about 3 A.M. Pleasant party.

Thursday, January 18. Rose at 7 and bathed. I feel pretty well, this is the first ball I have attended for many years. Read Household Words and I did not feel like reading law. P.M. Siesta. Bought a Kingfish for \$.50. After tea went to Alexander Patterson's.

Friday, January 19. Rose about 6:30 and bathed. Wrote out a copy of an indictment against James Walker for stealing from a vessel in distress. Judge William Marvin gave me some ideas as to the form etc. Bought a small tin bucket which will hold about 3 pounds of butter or better the old one having worn out. At 4 P.M. went to Major William H. Chase's and shortly after sat down to dinner. There were five officers from the *Princeton*, five citizens and Captain Israel Vogdes. We had a good dinner and sat till after 8 drinking toasts and James C. Clapp and I drank water alone.

Saturday, January 20. Rose before 6 and walked around by Porter's Spring and west to the Fort, they are getting on fast in the work and in a few weeks have the guns on the sea face mounted. Added a third count to the indictment against James Walker. Paid \$4.47 for a barrel of potatoes. The *Jasper* got in about 11:30 A.M. from St. Marks. Bought a Kingfish from the *Dart* for \$.40 and cut it into rounds to take home in my basket, the whole fish being very inconvenient to carry. The children did not go on the afternoon walk as Captain Israel Vogdes' two children came down to spend the evening. Went with Matilda to the church where the choir was practicing and as we were to soon, stopped a short time at Dr. S.F. Jones' house.

Sunday, January 21. Rose late as there having been a heavy rain in the night I did not intend to walk. Bathed. Read Household Words. P.M. Siesta.

Monday, January 22. Rose about 6 and walked around by the Fort. Bathed. It rained during the night. The *Isabel* got in about 2 A.M. and in going out got ashore on Sand Key where she now lies and the *Jasper* has gone to her assistance. Got a letter from the Solicitor of the Treasury on business and also one from the Treasurer enclosing the last quarter's salary. I got a letter from Dell sending for Elsie and one from Andrews dated Houston, he

says that my dog Frank is in Texas, also a letter from Senator Stephen Mallory about the streets but not one word about my commission. Looked up the draft of the deed I prepared sometime since and got Willis to make a copy of it. The District Court met at 11 A.M. pursuant to adjournment and was adjourned until the 12th of February. My nomination has been confirmed by the Senate a notice thereof being in the papers. The *Isabel* got off and came back and anchored near the *Princeton*. She is not hurt, having been on the sand spit off the northern end of the Key. The children were all at a party at George Alderslade's, Annie having gone about 4 P.M. and got back about 6, the others having gone at 7 P.M. and got back at 9. George Meade came up and spent the evening.

Tuesday, January 23. Rose rather late the weather being cold and walked round by the Fort. The *Jasper* got off about 8:30 and the *Isabel* went over to Havana last night. Sold Robert P. Campbell my Treasury Warrant. Matilda was at Alexander Patterson's fixing the girls for the ball and I went up there to dinner.

Wednesday, January 24. Rose before the sun and walked around by the Fort. I remained at the ball last night till about 1:30 when being tired and the atmosphere of the room being very oppressive I went home. Matilda stayed till after 3. There were a great many present, too many for the rooms. I bought yesterday of Walburg and paid him this morning for a chain and clasp for Matilda's Cross \$5.50, for burning glass \$1.00, one half dozen plated forks \$3.00 and traded my marine alarm clock for a difference of \$3.00, making in all \$12.50. Read papers and walked in the evening with the children round by the Fort.

Thursday, January 25. Rose at 5:50 and walked to the salt ponds. Bathed. Read papers. P.M. Read Harper's.

Friday, January 26. Rose at 5:45 and walked to the salt ponds. Bathed. Last night having the symptoms of a violent cold coming on took a glass of hot whiskey toddy which I do not think did any good. The *Star of the West* came in last night about 2 A.M. without a pilot. The *Activa* also got in bringing the quit claim deeds to the ends of Eaton and Caroline Streets executed by William C. Greene. The City Council met and authorized the Mayor to sign and execute a quite claim deed to the same streets which he did and Mrs. Greene

(Continued on page 14)

# USCGC Joshua Appleby (WLM 556)



Launching of the USCGC *Joshua Appleby*. Photo credit: Marinette Marine Corporation.

The following is quoted from the program for the christening and launching ceremony of USCGC *Joshua Appleby* on August 8, 1998. The *Appleby* was built by Marinette Marine Corporation, Marinette, Wisconsin who published the program.

Coast Guard Cutter *Joshua Appleby* is the sixth cutter of the Keeper Class of Coastal Buoy Tenders constructed by Marinette Marine Corporation. *Joshua Appleby's* namesake was keeper of Sand Key Light, located nine miles southwest of Key West, at the southern approach to the Florida Keys. Keeper Appleby kept the Sand Key Light burning through three major storms from 1841 through 1844. He and four other people lost their lives when a hurricane destroyed the lighthouse in 1846.

*Joshua Appleby* will join her sister cutters which form a new fleet of technically advanced and highly capable buoy

tenders. Automated engineering controls and computer-based navigation and communications systems will assist her smaller crew in servicing aids to navigation. Additionally, *Joshua Appleby* is designed, constructed and equipped to ably perform other Coast Guard missions, such as search and rescue, marine environmental protection and maritime law enforcement. She will be homeported in St. Petersburg, FL.

## JOSHUA APPLEBY SAND KEY LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER (1837 - 1846)

Joshua Appleby was born December 5, 1773, in Rhode Island. Like many Rhode Islanders, Appleby turned to the sea for his living at an early age. It was this early upbringing that tied Joshua Appleby to a long life of sea-faring.

Appleby wed Sara Vial and they had a lovely daughter named Eliza. By all accounts, Appleby was very fond of his little Eliza. When Eliza turned one year

old, Sara died, leaving Appleby to take care of the family. It is not known what occupation Joshua took up to provide for Eliza, only that he obtained property in Newport, Rhode Island, and later married Mary Forrester.

In 1820, Joshua Appleby moved to the Florida Keys and was one of the earliest settlers on Key Vaca. The settlement was known for their aid to mariners in distress. A Notice to Mariners read, "Immediately at the west end of the Key is the settlement, where there is a flag staff erected. This port has boats and provisions of all kinds to relieve those who may be so unfortunate as to get on the Florida Reef."

While at Key Vaca, Joshua fished, turtled, and salvaged shipwrecks to earn a living. Unfortunately in 1823, accusations found their way to Commander David Porter that Appleby had conspired to "run ashore gently" pirated ships that were captured by a Colombian Privateer. The ships could then be sold legally as salvage. Commander Porter, who was tasked with ir-



radiating piracy in the Florida Keys, arrested Appleby and shipped him to Charleston, South Carolina, for trial.

Evidently, the high profile legal case was very complicated and attracted the attention of President James Monroe and Secretary of the Navy Smith Thompson. In a letter from Secretary Thompson, Appleby was ordered to be released, "As regards the conduct of Joshua Appleby, detained under arrest, it is not expedient to institute against him any further proceeding, his offense does not amount to a positive violation of any law of the United States, you will, therefore, direct him to be forthwith liberated." Appleby was cleared and his good name restored as he was able to obtain a license to salvage. This license required the applicant to show that he was not a part of any prior misconduct salvaging wrecks.

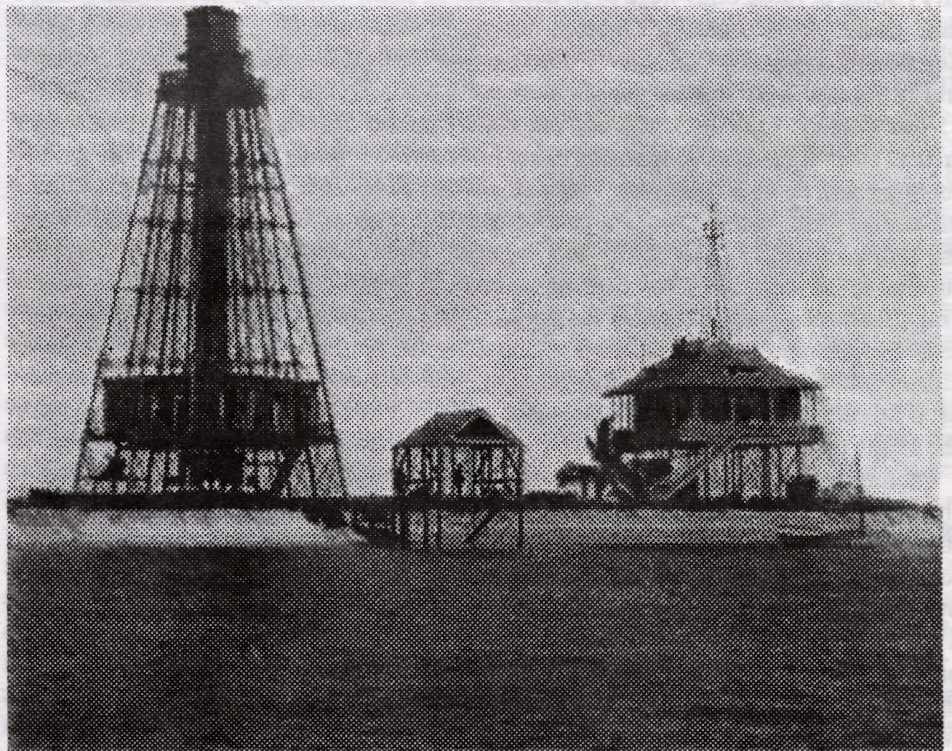
In 1833, Appleby's second wife, Mary, passed away. This, coupled with his advancing age, may have prompted him to accept his final job. On July 27, 1837, Appleby was appointed keeper of the Sand Key Light near Key West, Florida. He was to be paid \$600.00 a year to keep the light lit and the buildings kept.

It did not take long for Appleby to display his courage under difficult circumstances. Appleby kept the Sand Key light burning throughout both the Hurricanes of 1841 and 1842 despite the fact that the keeper's house was destroyed and the light badly damaged during the second storm.

In 1843 a sea wall was constructed along southern shore of the key to protect the light and the site for a new house. District Superintendent A. Gordon remarked that the wall was "a fine piece of masonry." He also noted "A keeper's house should be prepared at the earliest convenience of the Government: for both the keeper and his assistant have lacked ordinary comfort for the year past."

No sooner had the keeper's house been erected and improvements made when the great Hurricane of 1844 swept away half of Sand Key, the Keeper's new house, and badly damaged the sea wall. The occupants of the island again set about making repairs. Records indicate that it took nearly one year to repair the wall and build a new keeper's house.

In October 1846, Appleby's daughter, Eliza, and her young son, Thomas, came to visit Appleby at Sand Key from Newport, Rhode Island. In addition, two other guests from Newport were visiting. Little



*Top: The first Sand Key Lighthouse sketched by William Whitehead. Bottom The Sand Key Lighthouse built after the Hurricane of 1846. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

did the occupants of Sand Key realize, but a hurricane more fearsome than any of the previous storms that had damaged the island was headed North. On October 11, 1846, the storm hit the island with terrifying force. Tragically, the light, the house,

and all occupants were swept out to sea and never found. In fact the island itself was swept away to a depth of six feet below the water. Joshua Appleby paid the supreme sacrifice while serving his country that others might be safe from the sea.

expanded.

### THE FISHERY FOR KING MACKEREL PRIOR TO 1900

When Key West was only a small settlement, much of the islander's food supply came from the sea. Thus, from 1820's on, king mackerel were probably in demand among the populace. Also, in those early days, it seems likely that exports of salted king mackerel to Havana were begun. Salt was used as a preservative because until 1890, there was no icemaking plant at Key West. By the early 1880's Havana had become the major market for king mackerel caught off the Keys.

Fishing for king mackerel was usually done from November through April. That was when huge schools of this species migrated to the Keys. Fishing was done by trolling under sail. Page 1 shows the type of vessel that was used in the nearshore fisheries of the Keys during the 19th century (some of these craft were even used early into the 20th century). This was the Key West sloop-rigged "smackee". These sturdy vessels were seldom longer than 25 feet (LOA). They typically carried a crew of two. A catch of groupers or other "bottom" fish could be held alive in a well amidships. But, active, surface schooling fish such as king mackerel, did not survive in the well. So, when trolling for kings, the well served just to hold the day's catch temporarily. By nightfall, crew would either return to port and sell the catch, or if intending to fish the next day, split the kings open and salt them.

Each smackee was equipped with kingfish "drails". These were cotton handlines that ended in a short leader of brass wire to which a single stout hook was attached by wrapping ("ganging") with thin wire. The wire leader prevented the sharp teeth of the kings from cutting the hooks off the cotton line. The hook was usually baited with pieces of skin from a freshly caught kingfish. Of course, the question arises, "what bait was used to catch the first king of the trip, so it could be used in turn as bait"? A fisherman (asked in 1885) replied this way: "oh, anything we happen to have..., sometimes a pork rind, a white rag, or something that looks white. This trip I took his stockings (pointing to his shipmate, a lad of seventeen or eighteen years) and first rate bait they made, too. The fish bit fast, and we caught nearly thirty before we had a chance to put on



*Typical wooden powerboats used for Kingfish. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

any other bait".

When on the grounds, a smackee sailed back and forth until a kingfish school was located. It towed two drails, one to each side of the vessel. The baits skipped near the surface almost ten fathoms astern. Two more drails were kept in reserve. Once a fish struck, and as it was being pulled in, one of the "reserve" drails was set out. So, at all times, there were two lines fishing astern. If the fish ceased biting, the smackee was tacked and sailed back over the same track she just passed over. Often several boats would sail side by side and close together when "working" a school. Kingfish schools often bite very fast, so one can imagine the dexterity with which the crews must pull in the fish and still manage their boats. On a good day a single boat might take 200 to 250 kingfish. But, there were times when the kings refuse to bite, or when too little wind (or too much wind) prevented fishing. So, the crews often stayed out as long as a week before catching enough fish to turn a profit.

An interesting (to some nowadays) aspect of the fishery for king mackerel was the location of the traditional grounds. Various period sources state the "principal grounds are from Love [Looe] Key to Sombrero Key". The boats usually fished "outside the range of the coastline, over bottom that slopes toward the Gulf Stream, and sometimes even in the inside waters of the latter". These grounds are "resorted to by the fishermen in preference to wa-

ters nearer Key West, where the same species [kingfish] occurs, but are not so plentiful".

Towards the end of the century, there were approximately 20 to 30 vessels in the king mackerel fishery. In 1895 (the only year for which I've found catch statistics) 420,000 pounds of kingfish, worth a total of \$7,000 (!) were landed at Key West. This doesn't include the many king mackerel that were undoubtedly taken by the island's anglers for sport and the family table.

We know (from a diary written in the 1850's by Key West lawyer William Hackley) that prominent Key West businessmen often embarked on expeditions to go kingfishing. At least one of the islands largest and finest wrecking schooners was employed in this service from time to time. As did the commercial fleet, these sports anglers also sailed up the Keys to fish, but not so far. They fished closer to home at American Shoal. The trips usually began at dawn and ended early in the afternoon. Hackley records that on two of the kingfishing trips he made, the catches were 23 and 79 fish respectively. Of the latter trip, the largest king weighed 40 pounds, and the smallest fish were "15 to 20 pounds". Not bad for short day's work, even by today's standards!

### THE FISHERY FOR KING MACKEREL AFTER 1900

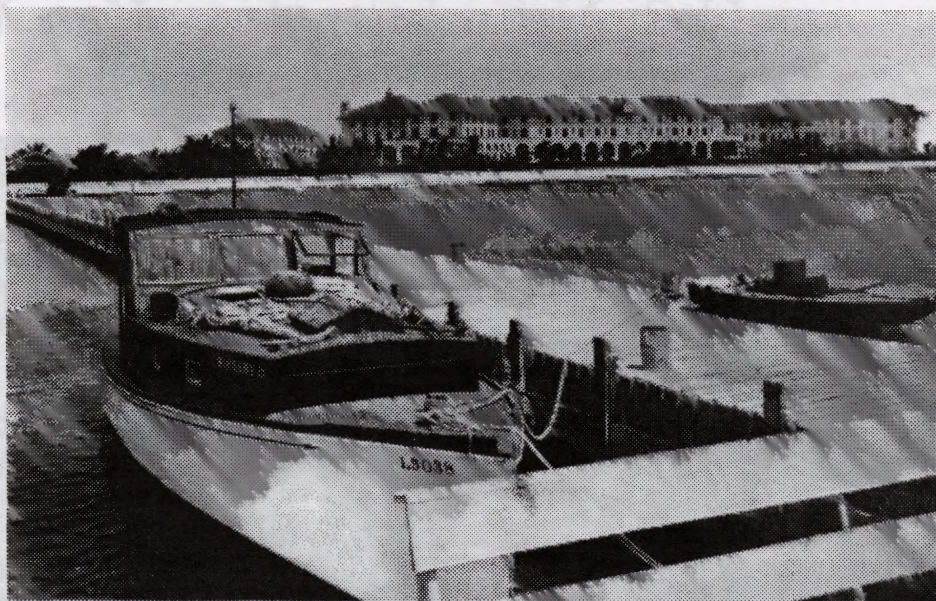
With the dawn of the twentieth century, change came to the fisheries of the Florida

Keys. The old sailing craft were replaced with power boats. More importantly, the railroad linked the Keys to the great urban markets of the mainland. There, the demand for fresh fish was strong (particularly in the winter). In addition, over the years, the ice making facilities at Key West had been improved and expanded. Thus, by the end of World War One, the seafood dealers of the island were shipping fish to northern markets in lots that filled whole railroad cars.

As one observer remarked in 1923, "for kingfish fishing a seaworthy powerboat is of the first importance". Although some sailing vessels were still in use, they were considered "rather unsuitable except under unusually favorable weather." The powerboats were wooden vessels 24-50 feet long with full displacement hulls. They were decked over forward of the helm and open aft. Few had wheelhouses or trunk cabins. Power was provided by "Palmer", "Regal", or similar types of twocycle in-board gasoline engines. Such single and double cylinder engines were generally rated at 2 to 16 h.p. So, the boats they powered were no speed demons. Old timers remember going in such craft and remarking (as a joke) "look, she's making a ripple at the bow. We're really going fast now"! Because of the limited speed and range of these fishing vessels, they were often accompanied on the grounds by larger "runboats". These served as "motherships" to carry ice, fuel, and other provisions to the troll boats. The runboats also served as a handy means to transport catches of king mackerel back to port, so that the trolling boats could make more extended fishing trips.

The actual method of catching king mackerel differed little from that used in the 19th century. The two-man crews trolled cotton handlines astern, one man fishing while the other managed the boat. Strips of kingfish flesh were still the favored bait. Even so, block tin squids were trolled in order to catch the first kings of the trip for bait. Reportedly, it was "not unusual for a boat to cruise about for most of a day without catching a fish, and often the catch scarcely pays for the fuel consumed. But, in the long run, the fishing is usually profitable as a catch of several thousand pounds now and then more than offsets the days of loss".

By the early 1930's, it seems that the most popular kingfishing grounds had shifted more to the westward. These were



*A sportfishing yacht at the Casa Marina Dock. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

described thusly in 1936: "About 45 miles west of Key West, in the vicinity of Marquesas Keys... is a watery waste dubbed "No Man's Land" ... Commercial fishermen risk the elements and dangerous straits to assemble in this place when the fish [king mackerel] are running... the author [angling writer Moise Kaplan] has observed there, during January, all kinds of vessels, from comfortable yachts to mere floating barques everything that could carry one or more fishermen and hold a hundred or more of these fishes. The total poundage of great kingfishes taken from this single place, when the commercial fleet's operation is at its height, is tremendous".

That was indeed true. Annual catch statistics indicate that king mackerel landings at Key West averaged about 400,000 pounds in the years immediately following World War One. They reached the million pound level by the late 1920's. Reportedly, the crews were paid about six cents a pound for their fish during the interwar period. The number of vessels involved is poorly known. A number of crews and boats from more northerly ports came to the Keys each winter to join Key West locals on the kingfish grounds. A reasonable estimate is that 75 to 100 boats were in the commercial fishery. They were also joined by the vessels of the growing fraternity of sports anglers and charterboat captains. There were at least three charter boats operating out of Key West in the early 1920's, and with passing years, their numbers swelled. In addition, starting in the 1920's, there were a handful of charterboats based at Pirate's Cove resort

on Sugarloaf Key, and at the Long Key Fishing Camp (before it was swept away by the 1935 hurricane).

The boats used for king fishing by sports anglers and by the charter captains differed somewhat from those used by the commercial trollers. Above is a typical "sportsfishing yacht" of the early 1930's tied to the dock at Key West's Casa Marina Resort. Unlike the commercial boats, the sportsfishing boats usually had a trunk cabin, a glassed enclosed wheelhouse, more horsepower, and a higher standard of exterior finish. The sports anglers also had their own ideas about the tackle they used for trolling. No simple cotton handlines for them! Instead, heavy duty rods and reels were used. And, "patent spoons", trolling feathers, and other lures were usually favored by the anglers. Although anglers probably ventured all the way to "No Man's Land", most fishing reports of the period indicate that sportfishing generally occurred closer to the Keys, along the reef, and off Northwest Channel. Such reports often cite catches of better than 400 lbs of kingfish per angling trip. Now, those were the good old days!

*Ed Little is a marine biologist who works for the National Marine Fisheries Service. He routinely samples the landings of commercial fishermen and sports anglers to gather data on species biology, catch/effort, and trends in the fisheries. He has lived at Key West since 1976 and is an avid fisherman.*

# U.S. Naval Station, Key West 1883

*Captain A.W. Johnson requested Lieutenant Commander J.K. Winn, Commanding Office Naval Station, Key West to report the problems and needs for the stations. Captain Johnson forwarded the letter to the Chief of Bureau of Yards and Docks.*

USS Powhatan, 2nd Rate  
Navy Yard, New York  
Aug 9, 1883

Rear Admiral  
E.F. Nichols, U.S. Navy  
Chief of Bureau of Yards & Docks  
Navy Department

Admiral:

On the occasion of my recent visit to Key West, Fla. in the US St. "*Powhatan*" I requested the energetic and efficient commander of that depot, Lt. Comdr. Winn to give me the results of his long experience as Store Keeper of the Station and Lighthouse Inspector of that district, upon the importance of Key West to Naval and other purposes; and I have the pleasure to forward for your consideration the paper containing his very sensible views and suggestions.

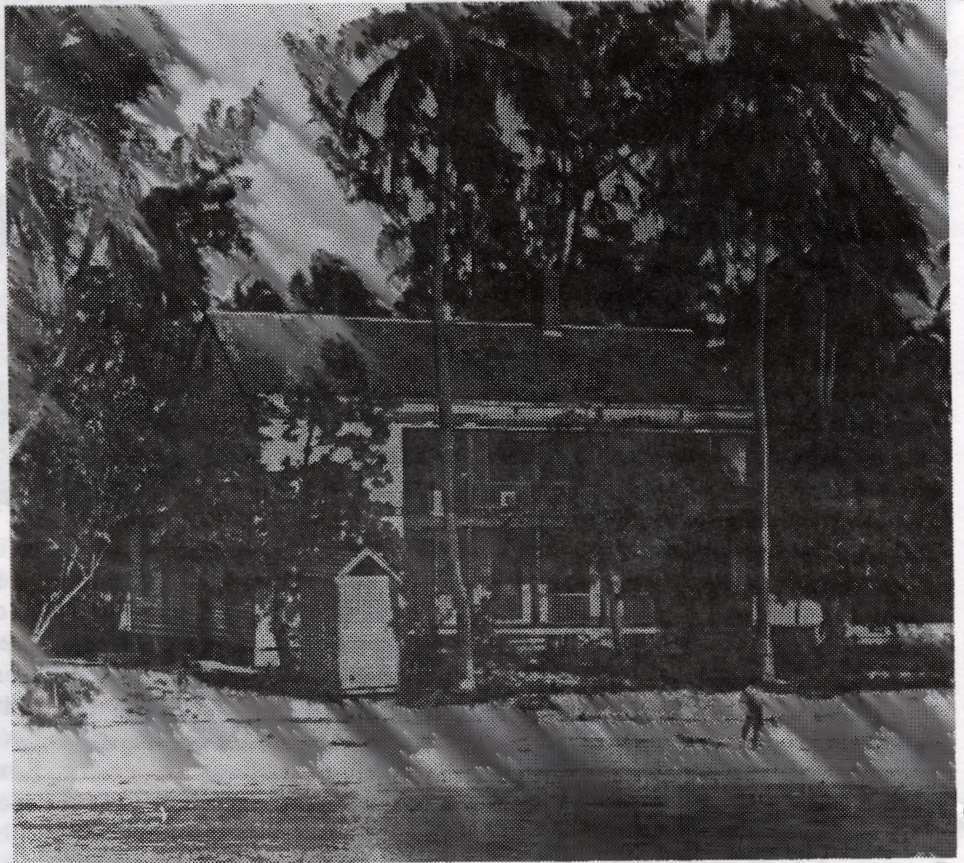
I have the honor to be,  
Very respectfully  
Your Obedient Servant.  
A.W. Johnson  
Captain, Commanding.

Key West, Fla. May 1883

Captain A.W. Johnson USN  
Cmdg. USS Powhatan  
Key West Florida

Sir:

I desire to invite your attention to the importance of this place as a Naval Station, prefacing my remarks by stating that during the greater part of the time during the past 15 years, I have been either in the N.A. [North Atlantic] Squadron, or on duty here and feel that I am in a position to know its needs and its importance to the Navy in particular, and the United States in general.



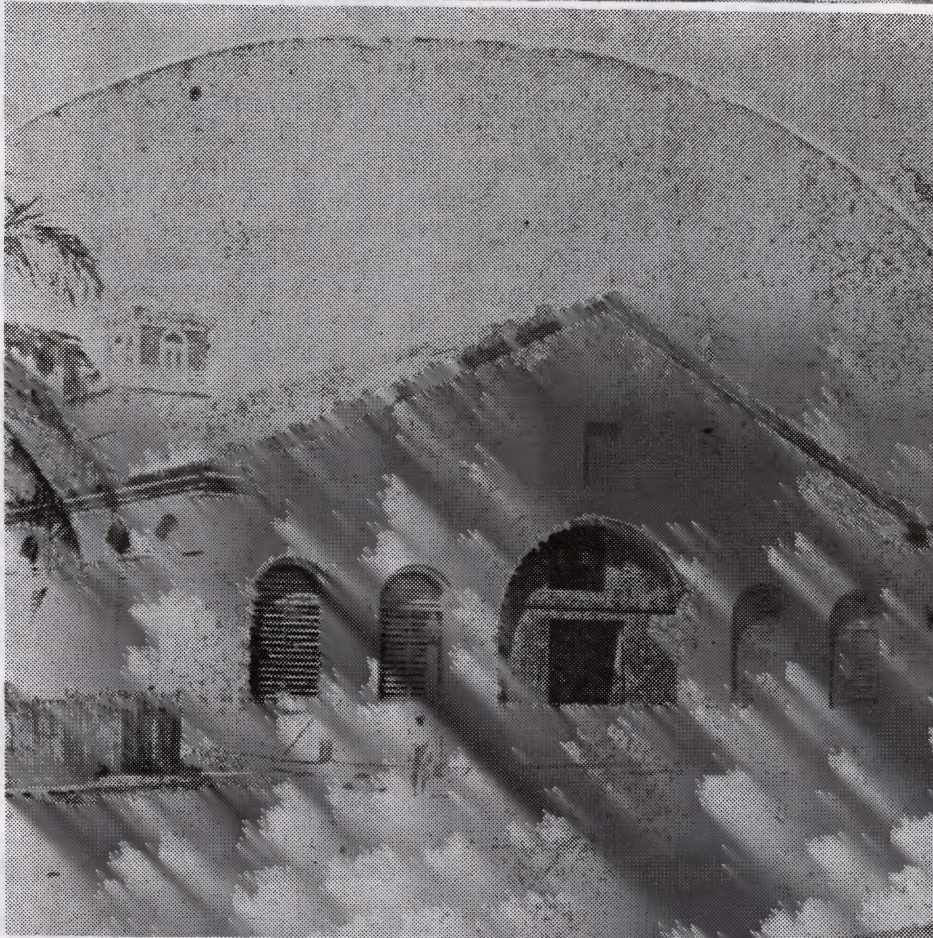
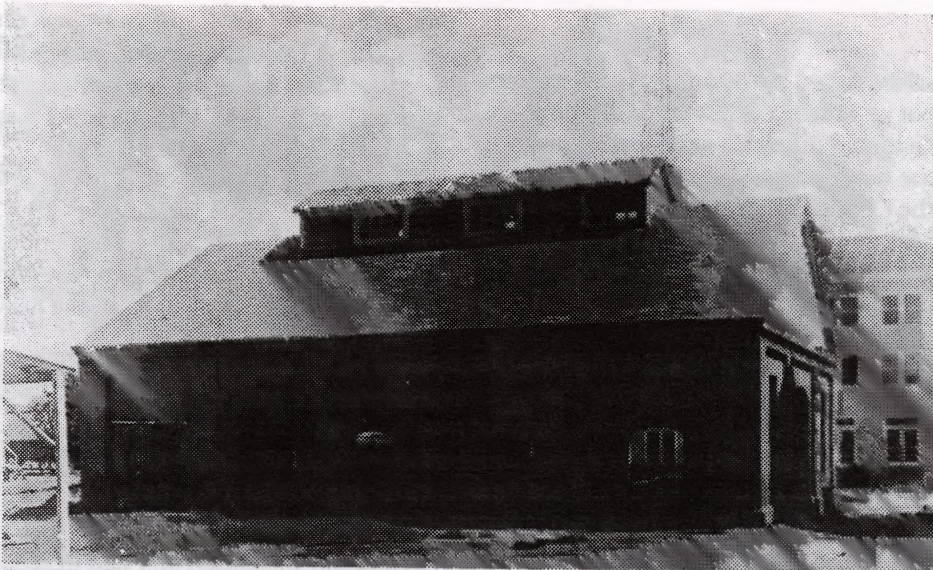
*The Mallory House and lot on today's Truman Annex. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

There is no necessity for me to dwell upon its excellent harbor, or how easily it can be defended, its close proximity to the West Indies and South America makes it the natural rendezvous and base for Military or Naval operations in the case the Isthmus Canal is ever finished, American interest must have control of it, and there is not little doubt that a large fleet will have to occupy these waters. Why then should not this place be built up and properly equipped for such contingencies? We all know the important part it played during the war, and how every thing crowded in here during the excitement consequent upon the capture of the "*Virginia*" by the Spaniards. Then Key West "Naval Station" has been considered important, while in times of peace, every dollar which is spent here for the preservation of the property, we have, is regrettably restrained. We have every year at least ten visits from Naval vessels calling here for stores and coal, none ever need be detained here twenty four hours except by accident, yet

two officers, the Commandant and a Pay Master, with two clerks and seven civil employees attend to all the duties. Surely this is economical enough, (especially when compared with Pensacola yard). Then why is it that we cannot have a fair share of the appropriations? Nothing is ever asked for that is not absolutely necessary to preserve the property. There should be something done looking to the future needs of the place. A few thousand dollars a year, properly expended, would gradually build it up, so that when it was needed, it would be ready for the emergency, which must sooner or later arise. Now to accomplish this, I beg leave to submit my views on the subject. The Navy Department should at once and without delay obtain possession of the so called "Mallory Lot" which contains about 40 thousand square feet, and is situated between the Custom House Lot and the Naval land where the coal shed is located. This is the only lot of land on the western side of the island between the Naval Store House and Wharf and Fort

Taylor that is owned by private parties. Both owners, being merchants will not sell to each other, or to any private parties, as they fear competition. They will sell to the Government, and I have for several years urged the purchase of this lot as being absolutely necessary for the preservation of our water privileges. These owners are both well along in years and upon the demise of either, this lot must be put upon the market, then whoever purchases it, will do so with the intention of building wharves and storehouses which will not only greatly interfere with, but render comparatively useless, the present Naval and Lighthouse wharves, also enhancing the danger from fire and other injury to the Government Property on either side. Again, with the property in possession of the Government the railroad now running through the public street and connecting the various buildings with the Naval Wharf, could be relaid along the waterfront on government land where no private or corporate interest could interfere. There are two dwellings on this lot which could at small expense, be fitted up for officers quarters, which are greatly needed. This is the only station where quarters are not provided, though the expense of living here is at least 50 per cent higher than any other station, and if there should be no present use for this property. The above consideration should induce its purchase, while any Foreign complications would fully demonstrate the wisdom of the acquisition.

You have doubtless already seen that the bulkheads along the waterfront of the Naval land from Coal shed to Machine Shop, have fallen. I have tried for years to have concrete bulkheads built in order to properly preserve these lands. This has been delayed year after year and where piling has been put in the "Teredo" completely destroys it in about three years. The only way is to build a permanent rock or concrete wall, which, though its original cost would be slightly in excess of pilings would last indefinitely. Through the past economy we have lost already several thousand feet of land by the encroachment of the sea. The Foundry built in 1873 was never fully or properly equipped. This has been represented to the Bureau of Steam Engineering and its needs acknowledged, there it ends! The Machine Shop is in about the same condition. Cisterns should be build near Machine Shop for the purpose of supplying water to the boilers. I have seen



Top: The Navy Foundry. Bottom: Naval Headquarters building. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

water carted from the store house cisterns to the Machine Shop, a distance of 1/4 of a mile, in barrels, there being nothing here but two small iron tanks. This is all "penny wise and pound foolish" when a few dollars will build a cistern that will hold water enough to carry through any season. In view of these facts I believe that proper representations would fully convince the Department how necessary it is

to more thoroughly equip and maintain this station.

Very Respectfully  
Your Obedient Servant

J.K. Winn, Lt. Comdr. USN  
Commanding Station

(Hackley from page 7)

relinquished her dower in the same. Drew out an abstract of the titles of Simonton, Greene, Whitehead and Fleming and sent the deed, abstract, copy of resolution of the Council in a private letter to Senator Mallory. Enclosed to R. A. Maitland to be put in charge of the Adams Express agent on board of the *Star of the West* which got off at 2 P.M. At 3:50 commenced raining and I hurried home and by 4 commenced raining heavily from about west accompanied with thunder and lighting. A good deal of water fell. Mary Ann Porter spent the evening with us her mother could not come the ground being so damp and her health bad. She went home about 9.

Saturday, January 27. Rose about 6:30 and bathed. The roads are so muddy that I did not walk this morning. Last night my throat being sore put a wet bandage on it. Matilda, Hattie and Annie all have sore throats and colds. The winter has had many changes from hot to cold and a great deal of water has fallen, every northern has been preceded by heavy rainfalls attended with thunder and lighting. At 4 P.M. went up to see Mrs. C.C. Adams with Matilda. The children had gone up to the Barracks earlier to see Captain Israel Vogdes' children. I went to the church with Matilda to practice in the choir.

Sunday, January 28. Rose at 5:45 and walked up the beach to the salt ponds and back the same way, went on the Fort to see the work they are getting along fast. Read papers. P.M. Read Harper's. A seaman who died yesterday on board the *Princeton* was buried about 3 from the wharf, a detachment of men and officers landed with the corpse. Walked to the Fort with Matilda and children.

Monday, January 29. Rose at 5:45 and walked by South Beach, salt ponds, plains, Long Road and Barracks home. Bathed. Read papers. A complaint has been made to me that a Negro named Abram Phillips stabbed the mate of the Bark *Milton*, William Bradford Master. Phillips was brought before the Judge William Marvin and was committed for trial. Read papers. Walked with Matilda, children and Mrs. Tift round by South Beach and the Fort. My palate is swollen.

Tuesday, January 30. Lay in bed till after 6. Did not walk. Bathed. Last night put on wet bandage and washed my throat with strong alum water. At 8:30 A.M. barometer 29.59, thermometer 71, wind east southeast

moderate, weather cloudy, raw and disagreeable. Yesterday afternoon paid Phillip Fontane \$7.75 being my proportion of the expenses of the ball. Matilda and I went to Alexander Patterson's after tea.

Wednesday, January 31. Rose at 6:40 and bathed. At 9 barometer 29.43, thermometer 74, wind east, weather cloudy with frequent rain squalls during the night with heavy thunder and lightning and heavy rain.

Thursday, February 1. Rose about 6:40 neither walked or bathed. Last night the wind was very fresh from north northwest and stormy weather. My throat tickled so that I put on a wet bandage before I could sleep and at midnight awoke with a recurrence of the cough and had to re-wet the throat bandage and put on a chest bandage before I could arrest the cough then I succeeded and I slept until morning. Read Law Register. P.M. Read Putman's Magazine. After tea went to Alexander Patterson's where Matilda assisted the girls in dressing for the ball giving at the District Court Rooms by the officers of the *Princeton*. Matilda did not wish to go of which I was glad.

Friday, February 2. Rose at 6:40 walked round by Porter's Spring and Fort. The *Pampero* came in last night and brought 30 men for the *H.M. Hays*. The Bark *Milton* went to sea yesterday leaving the mate in the hospital as a witness against Abram Phillips. Yesterday evening attended the funeral of Mrs. Maloney and walked around by the Fort. The *Hays* was towed to sea by the *Pampero* in the afternoon. When I went up at 4 stopped in at Mrs. Cornelius Curtis' where Matilda and the children were spending the day. Walked up to the Barracks and took tea and sat till 9 at Mrs. Porter's. James Filor and wife came in during the evening.

Saturday, February 3. Rose at 6:15 and walked by Simonton Road and Fort. Wrote to S.F. Butler by the *Pampero* which left at 9. William C. Dennis went in her. Walked round by the Fort with Matilda, the children being out and went to the meeting of the choir.

Sunday, February 4. Rose at 6:15 and walked round by Simonton Road and went to the Fort. The work is proceeding rapidly. Went home about having a severe attack of dyspepsia. After dinner walked round the part of Key West nearest to Stock Island and home in 2 hours and 40 minutes and was pretty tired when I got back to bed before 8 the weather being cold.

**In Memory of  
Robert Elliott, Jr.  
and  
Colin Jameson**

KWMHS lost one our hardest workers and a member of the Board of Directors when Rear Admiral Robert Elliott, Jr. died in Maryland, on February 1, 2000. In addition to all his other accomplishments in the military and other organizations Bob has been a member of the KWMHS Board of Directors for ten years. He had also served as vice president and was chairman of the membership committee at the time of his death. In addition he was a frequent contributor to the Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal. He will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

KWMHS lost another long time supporter with the death of Colin Jameson in January 2000. Colin was a nationally published author and had written numerous articles about Key West. In 1964 he was one of the founders, editors and frequent contributor to the Martello magazine published by the Key West Art and Historical Society. This was the first historic journal devoted to Key West. Colin allowed the Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal to reprint a number of these articles including his detailed study on Commodore Porter and the first Key West Naval Station.

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# Revenue Cutter Florida

*The following orders were sent to the Revenue Cutter Florida by the Secretary of the Treasury.*

Treasury Department  
May 7th 1829

Sir:

The president having directed that the Revenue Cutter *Florida* shall resume her former station at Key West. You will when ready for sea repair to that place and from thence proceed as often as circumstances will permit to examine all the Islands, Bays and Inlets on the West Coast of Cape Florida as far as the East end of Rose Islands. And if at any place during your cruises you shall find any vessel or vessels engaged in illicit trade or unprovided with such documents as required by law. You will seize such vessel or vessels and send them in charge of an officer to the nearest port for adjudication.

All vessels are frequently wrecked on the Florida Keys you are to consider it a part of your duty if requested by the Master or Supercargo to assist in preserving their cargoes but if the vessel and cargo shall have been abandoned by the crew you will after taking on board as much of the cargo as the cutter can contain ship the residue on board of any American vessel, the captain signing an obligation to deliver it at such port as you shall designate. For your further information on the subject I have to call your attention to the enclosed copy of an act entitled an "act concerning wrecks on the Coast of Florida passed on the 3rd of March 1825.

There being reason to apprehend that great waste is committed on the public lands in East and West Florida by cutting and carrying away the most valuable part of the timber you will consider it to be your duty provided the fact can be ascertained by information derived from individuals of respectability to pursue such measures as are authorized by the Act of Congress passed on the first of March 1827 of which the enclosed is an extract. You will also receive herewith the copy of a letter addressed to the Collectors of St. Augustine and Pensacola of the 23rd of April 1823 on the subject in question as neither Thompsons, nor indeed any part of the mainland can furnish supplies of any kind it will be advisable to take six months provisions with you. And when

these are nearly consumed you must proceed to Mobile and apply to the Collector who will be instructed to furnish on your estimate the funds required to supplies and to pay the crew for which you are subsequently to account to him as also on your arrival at Mobile, for the money advanced to you by the Collector at Philadelphia.

The crew of the cutter exclusive of the officers is not to exceed fifteen men, a cook, a steward and two boys, and when paid each man must sign a receipt opposite to name of a pay roll certified to be correct by the captain and his officers. It will also be proper that a copy of your journal verified in the like manner should be forwarded to this office at the end of every month if opportunities should offer.

It is also proper to apprise you that without the previous approbation of this Department no alterations can be made in the cutter, nor any expenses incurred for objects other than ordinary supplies except in the loss of spars, sails, anchors and cables. It is also to be undertook that unless authorized as above stated must not be absent from her cruising grounds on any pretence except driven there from by stress of weather or for the purpose of procuring supplies at Mobile.

As the withdrawing of the Naval force from Key West will deprive the Collector of the means of enforcing obedience to the laws. You are to consider that place ahead grounds by frequently resorting to it and offering the Collector all the assistance in your power particularly in conveying supplies to the lighthouse and light boat under his superintendence. You will also consider it a part of your to visit these lighthouses occasionally for the purpose of ascertaining their wants of any.

I will only further observe that it is expected that you will strictly conform to the fore going instructions and in order to facilitate the adjustment of your accounts you will take receipts for all payments made by you to serve as vouchers.

I am very respectfully  
your obt. Servant

P.S. If you can not readily procure seaman at Mobile you are at liberty to go to New Orleans for them. You may also employ a pilot.

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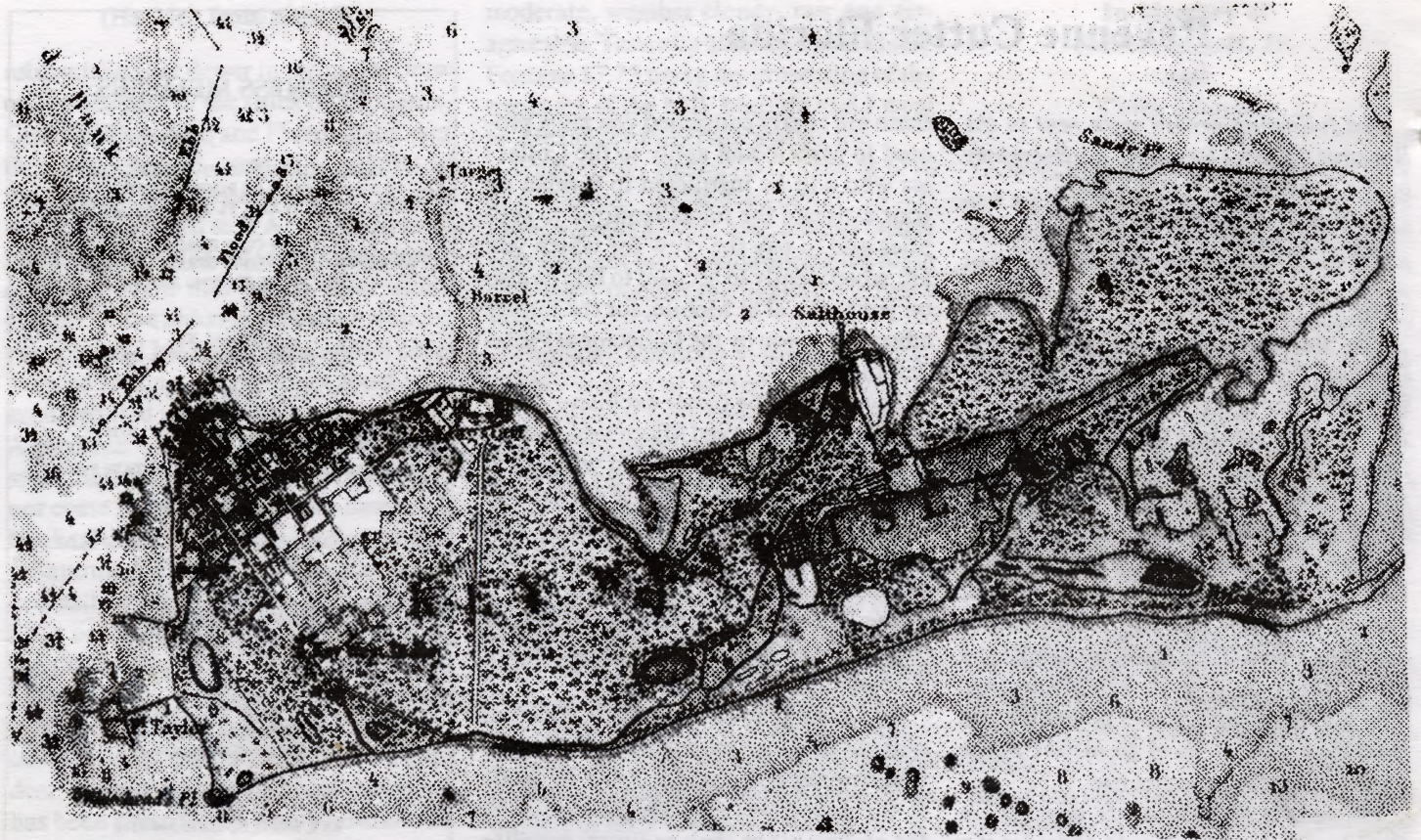
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A sketch of Key West circa 1850's. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

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