

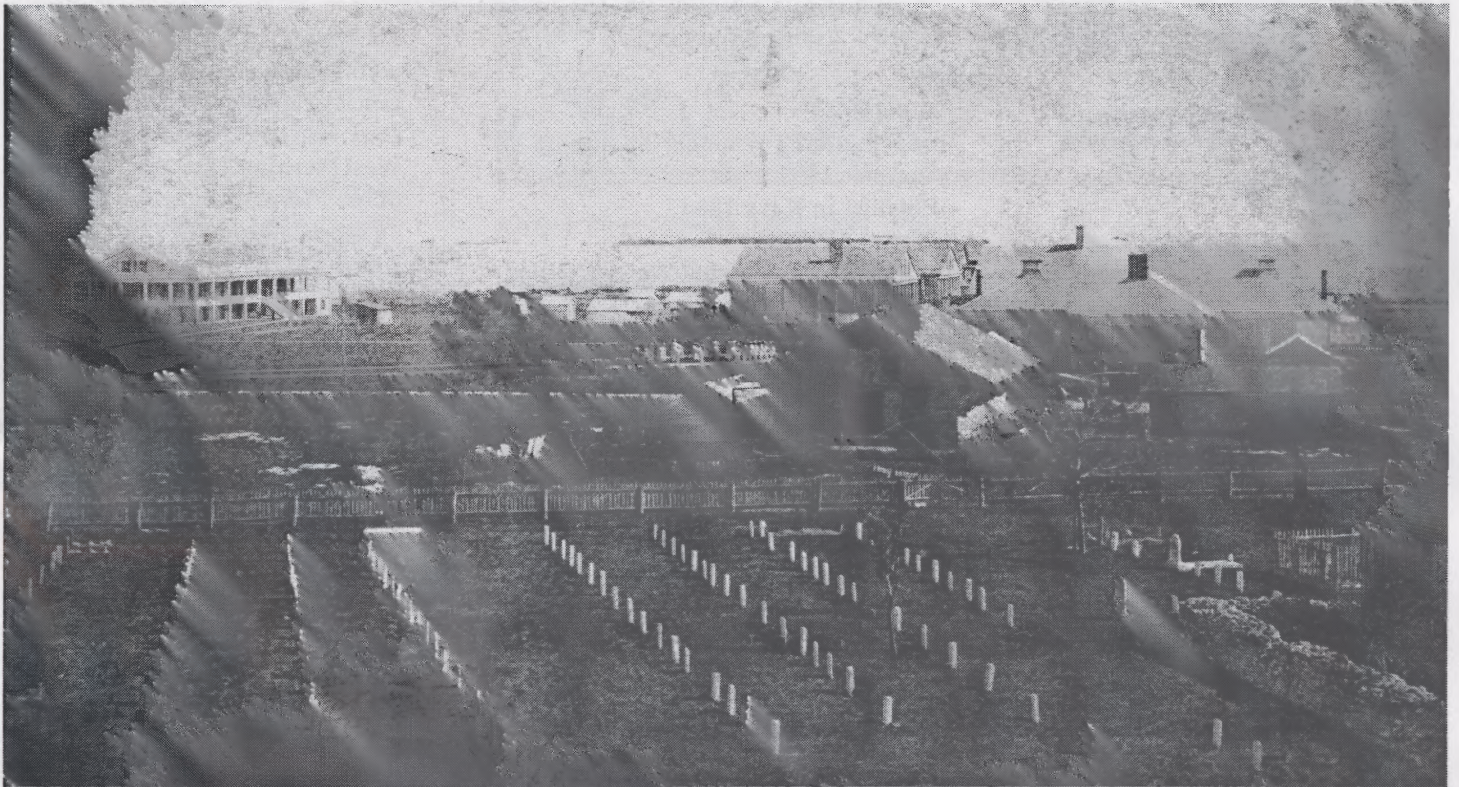
# Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal

VOL. 12, NO. 4

SUMMER 2002

OFFICIAL QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE KEY WEST MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Key West Post Cemetery



*Key West Army Post Cemetery from White Street looking northeast. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

### By Lewis G. & Janeth E. Schmidt

In 1982, as a result of an anticipated visit to Key West, Florida, my wife Janeth and I made plans to visit the grave of her great grandfather's brother, George Smith, who died from typhoid fever at Key West on July 6, 1862, as an 18 year old private serving with the 47th Pennsylvania Regiment during the Civil War. He was buried according to family oral history in the Key West Post Cemetery, which we discovered no longer existed.

Our inability to locate George's grave resulted in an intense five year research project during which we eventually identified 192 unknown dead at Barrancas National Cemetery in Pensacola, FL; and

our publishing a 960 page history of the 47th Pennsylvania Regiment.

The regiment's 19 month service in Florida resulted in our publishing the four volume (six book, 4,559 pages) history of the Civil War in Florida, followed by a history of the regiment's first battle at Pocotaligo, SC. We were now involved in the Civil War in depth for 18 years and felt a need to publish a history of my great grandfather George Buchman's regiment, the 147th Pennsylvania (see: <http://hometown.aol.com/lewschmidt/index.html>).

After visiting Key West in 1982, and examining available records and period newspapers, it was determined that the

military had abandoned the Key West Post Cemetery in 1927. A Jacksonville undertaker was engaged by the government to disinter the 468 burials in the cemetery and arrangements were made to transport them on the US tug Jenkins of the Army Quartermaster Department, to Barrancas National Cemetery at Pensacola, FL. The operation was commanded by Major Tilton of the 13th Regiment of US Coast Artillery, acting as inspector for the 4th Corps area.

While sailing north from Key West to the Florida Panhandle and Pensacola on February 19, 1927, it was planned to stop

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# Society News

By Tom and Lynda Hambright

This is the fourth issue of our twelfth year of publication. Following is an index of the major subjects in these 48 issues. Most of the back issues are for sale at \$2.00 each plus postage. Order from P.O. Box 695, Key West, FL 33041.

In this issue with Lew Schmitt's article we listed his website as our space limitation precludes listing the names of the people in the cemetery and that were later moved to Pensacola.

The World Wide Web has become a major tool for doing historical research. We find many sites that only list what they have, but you still must go there to read the document or see the photograph. We

have found that the following sites have information and/or photographs about the Florida Keys that you can see and download. The Library of Congress is the best site for information and photographs about not only the Keys but our nation's history. The address is [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov). The Florida Photograph Archives site has more than 90,000 images of Florida of which more than 2,000 are of the Keys. The address is <http://fpc.dos.state.fl.us/memory>. The last site is the Truman Library which has extensive information on President Truman with some information about his days in Key West. The address is [www.trumanlibrary.org](http://www.trumanlibrary.org).

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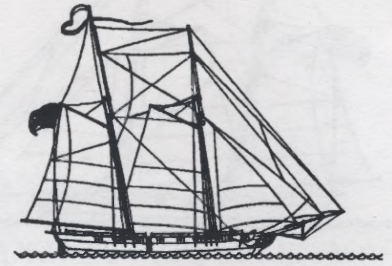
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## New Members

Margaret and Peter Braisted, Summerland Key; Chuck Van Soye, Key West.



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**Editor:** Lynda Hambright

**Production:** Tom Hambright

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

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# The Button Wreck

By Denis B. Trelewicz  
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In the vicinity of the remains of the C.W. Baird (Captain Tom's Wreck) which lies approximately two miles southwest of Carysfort Light Tower are the remnants of a wreck. This site which was found some 30 years ago by Jimmy Longendyke was dubbed by Jimmy as the "Button Wreck" because of a number of uniform buttons that were found admixed with the wreck debris. I have seen seven of the buttons that were recovered. They are heavily eroded, surfaces containing considerable scale which obscured the faces. All but one of the buttons are of a copper alloy, most likely bronze. Two of the buttons have a faint embossing on its faces see sketch on page 15.

The button with the numerals "34" appears to be bronze while the one with the numerals "113" appears to be of pewter. Efforts to determine the identity of the ship are ongoing. As of this date no positive identification has been possible. It seems that the ship may have been of British origin, perhaps a packet boat, that was sailing northward through the Straits of Florida when it ventured too close to shore and struck the reef and bilged.

In conducting archival research on the buttons, it has been determined that the buttons were from uniforms. The button with the numerals "34" is from a British Regiment, the 34th Cumberland of Foot. This unit was one of several that were involved in the invasion and capture of Havana in June of 1762 from the Spanish. When Spain cede Florida to the British in return for the British returning Havana to Spanish rule, the 34th was one of the corps which proceeded to Florida to take possession of the territory. The Regiment landed at Pensacola and was initially stationed in West Florida but was subsequently deployed at a number of locations in the north formerly in territory previously occupied by the French.

The finding of the pewter button with the embossed numerals "113" is somewhat a mystery. The 113th Regiment, also of Foot (Royal Highlanders) according to historical records located in the United Kingdom's Public Records Office indicate that this unit existed during the period of 1761-1763 and was based around Abingdon in Oxfordshire. The Regiment



*British West Florida 1763-1783. Photo credit: The Author.*

was deemed to have become surplus to the requirements following the end of the Seven Years War in early 1763 and War Office correspondence confirms that the unit was disbanded in May of 1763 (W04/72). No evidence has been found to indicate that the 113th of Foot ever left England for foreign service.

One explanation for the button being found here in the Keys is that a soldier originally issued a uniform with the button, subsequently joined a new regiment. We do know the 113th was disbanded in 1763 and it is perhaps reasonable to suspect that some members of this Regiment may have been reassigned to other units of the Army. It is thought that the soldier may have retained his old uniform, or simply kept the button as a souvenir and thus had it in his possession at the time of the shipwreck.

A review of the correspondence of General Thomas Gage, the commander-in-chief of British forces in North America with the Secretaries of State and the War Department and Treasury between 1763 - 1775<sup>1</sup> uncovered some very interesting items about 34th Regiment's activities in North America. In a number of dispatches General Gage comments that recruits arrived from England for the ranks of the 34th and other Regiments to bring them up to strength. Accordingly, it is quite possible soldiers originally from different units may have been incorporated into

the ranks of the 34th when their units were disbanded.

The deployment of the 34th in the years between 1762 to 1769 was such as to suggest that members of its ranks were not stationed in the vicinity of the Florida Keys. In a footnote on page 9 of Cecil Johnson's book, "British West Florida, 1763 - 1783," he mentions that Major Farmer in command of the 34th Regiment is on board the Conquistador July 19, 1763. Johnson states:

"Major Farmer, with the 22nd and 34th Regiments, also under orders from General Keppel<sup>2</sup> (after departing Havana, Cuba) went by way of Jamaica and Pensacola to Mobile, and on October 20, 1763, took possession of that town and Fort Conde."

General Gage in his correspondence notes on various occasions the whereabouts of the 34th Regiment. Keeping track of units dispersed at great distances from the General's headquarters in New York was very difficult and considerable time would elapse before headquarters learned of location and movements of units. In his dispatch of January 1766 to Lord Barrington, the General comments that he has heard "nothing" of the progress of the 34th Regiment's trek up the Mississippi since they left Natchez in the month of August 1775. On March 29th, 1776, he writes Lord Barrington that:

"Major Farmer with the 34th Regiment got to Fort Chartres in Illinois Country the beginning of December

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# Key West 1836

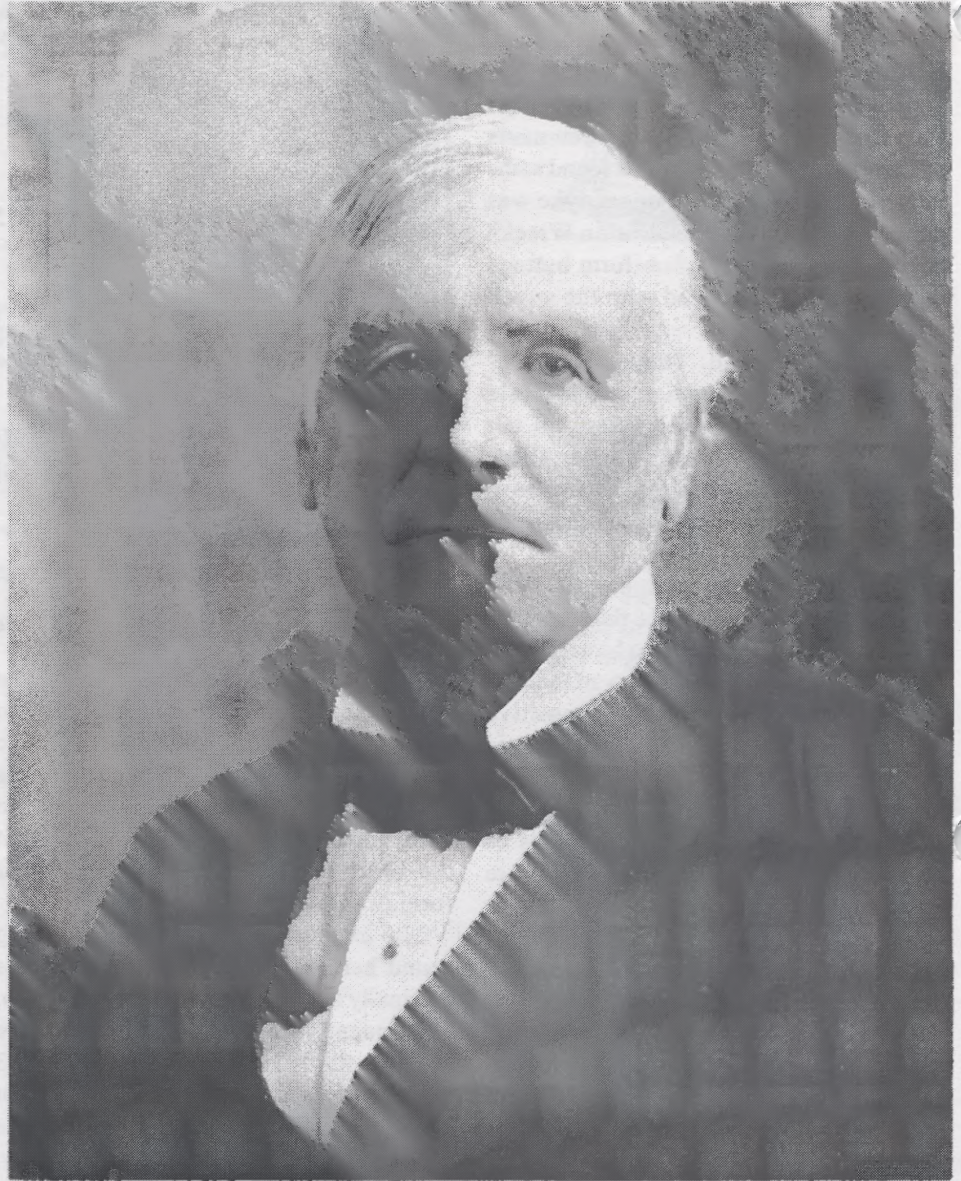
In 1889 Judge William Marvin wrote the following letter to C. B. Pendleton, editor of the Key West newspaper the "Equator-Democrat," describing Key West when he arrived in 1836.

Skaneateles, New York.  
Dec. 6th, 1889.

Dear Mr. Editor,

Through the politeness of the Rev. Mr. Herrick, formerly of Key Nest, now chaplain to the military forces stationed at Fortress Monroe and living there. I came into the possession, several weeks ago, of a number of your paper, dated August 31, 1889. It contains a cleverly written article headed "An Old time house gone," meaning the house in which Captain Cornelius Curtis lived a considerable number of years, and which the writer of the article claims was built by Pardon C. Greene. The house referred to was situated at the North-West corner of Duval and Caroline Streets. I do not know who built it, but I know that Captain Greene never lived in it after 1836. I became an inhabitant of Key West in October of the year. At that time, and from that time on to the day of his death Captain Greene lived in rooms fitted up in his warehouse. I have an indistinct recollection that it was built after 1836, and was first occupied by Wm. R. Hackley, Esqr., a practicing lawyer who sold it to Capt. Curtis about 1844-45

I have no disposition to criticize ungraciously the article referred to. It is true in its main features, and is written in a bright, sprightly, and readable style. But the poetry in the writer's mental make-up, has caused him to describe a miserable, stagnant lagoon composed of rain and ocean water as a "meandering stream" on which the house was built. The lagoon commenced on a swamp not very far from the south-west corner of the Island and continued along nearly parallel with the beach, crossing Whitehead Street near Caroline and entering the ocean near the North of Simonton Street. South of Whitehead Street it "meandered" very little, or none at all, and was full of bushes, thorns, vines, and cacti - a breeding ground for millions of mosquitoes - a horrible place. There it crossed Whitehead Street, it was narrow, so, that, it was easily bridged

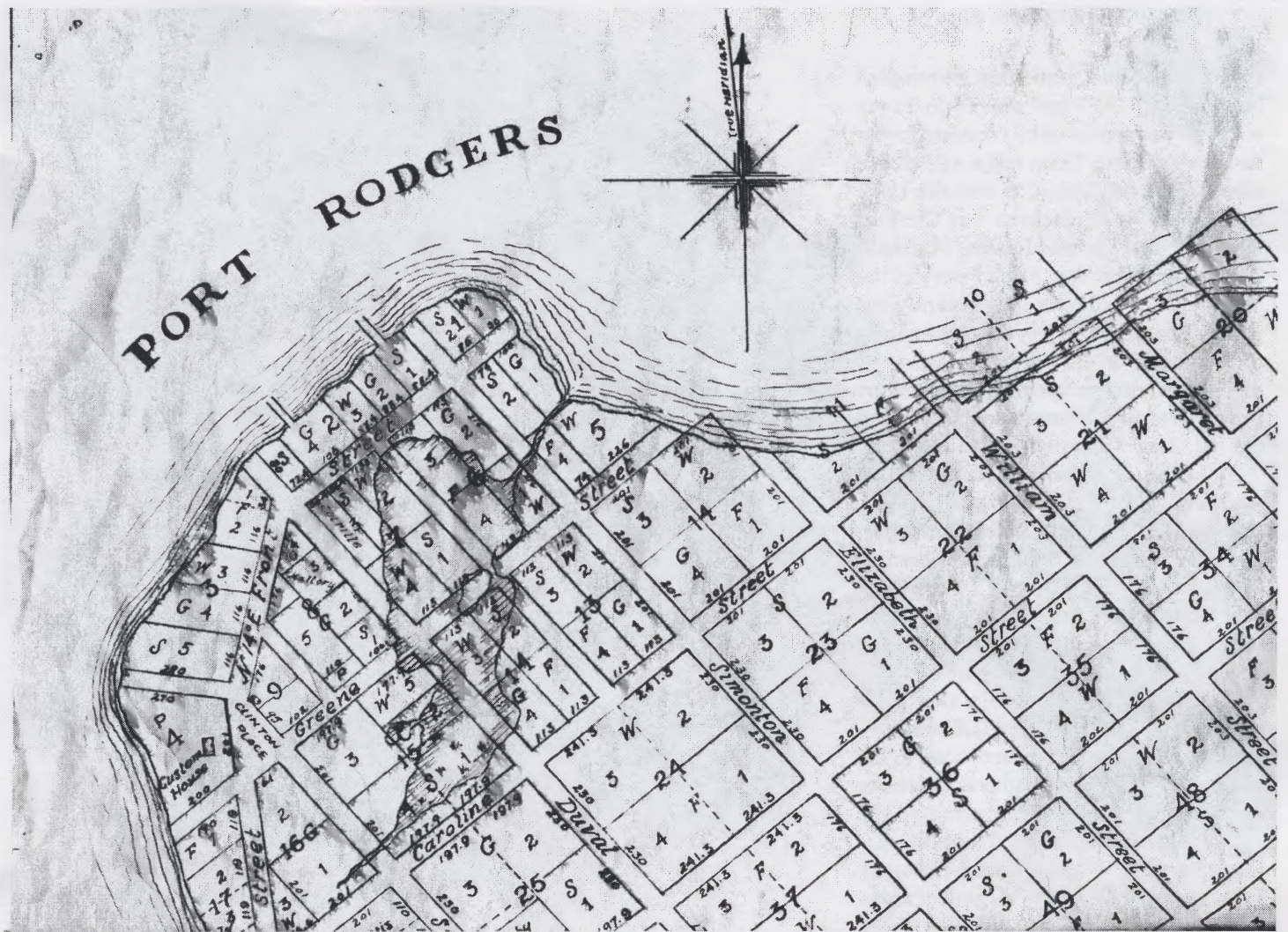


Judge William Marvin. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

by carts and carriages by a few planks. But after crossing this street it spread out into what was called in that day, a pond, which covered, I should think, in 1836 as much as two acres of ground in what is now the heart of the business part of the City, Duval Street crossed this pond in about its center. The depth of water in it varied with the ebb and flow of the tide, but was generally about a foot or fifteen inches deep. A foot bridge made of piles and a few planks commenced within about one hundred feet of Mr. Mallory's house, situated where the Russell House now stands, and extended to within about seventy-five feet of the crossing of Duval and Caroline Streets. I do not think that

this foot bridge was superseded by a wagon road much if any, before 1850. The Curtis house stood on the banks of this pond, or, if poetry "look Katrine." The only street opened through to the South beach in 1836, was Whitehead street, named after John Whitehead proprietor of one fourth of the island. Duval Street, named after Governor Duval of Florida, was cleared up as far out as half way between Eaton and Fleming Streets, ie to where the Roman Catholic Church stands [on Duval Street]. The only house on it, after crossing Caroline street was a house on your right hand side as you faced towards the South beach, occupied, and, I believed owned Captain Watlington.





William Whitehead's 1829 survey of Key West showing the pond in the middle of the island. Photo credit: Monroe County Library

A large part of Eaton Street, named after Major Eaton, U. S. Secretary of War and a personal friend of Col. John Simonton one of the four proprietors of the island, was covered with its original small trees, bushes, vines, cacti & c.

In 1837, the woods were cleared off and the brush burnt on all that part of the island lying between Whitehead Street and the next street east of Simonton Street as far out as Fleming Street. A large part of this work was accomplished in one day by a party of fifty or more U. S. Sailors sent on shore for this purpose by their commanding officers from the U. S. Sloop Concord, and other vessels then lying in the harbor. Professor Coffin, instructor in mathematics to the midshipman who, I relieve, is still living in Washington City, and myself, and some others of the town's people assisted in piling and burning the brush, this work was done, at this time, with a view to take away from the Seminole Indians, who were at war with the

whites on the mainland, the means of concealing themselves in these woods in making their hostile approaches to the town. At a somewhat later period, probably soon after the Indians had broken up the settlement at Indian Key, however ludicrous it may now seem, nevertheless, it is true, that a real panic seized the minds of the people on account of these Indians. They were afraid of being surprised by them at night. To guard against such surprise, the people organized a small picket-force and stationed it at night with guns in hand outside of the town. These sentinels were to keep a bright-lookout and give the alarm if any Indians approached. According to my present recollection, O'Hara, Browne, Weaver, Mallory, Tift, Fontane and others, including myself, did true and loyal service on this interesting occasion. I remember well being out nearly all one beautiful moonlit night-watching every bush which was moved by the wind and fancying that there might be a Seminole behind

it, Beside establishing this local guard, a boat with a good crew on it, cruised around the island every night, for three or four nights in succession. The panic lasted a little less than a week, at the end of which time all of these wise precautions against a fanciful danger ceased. A good thing was done in cutting down and burning up woods. It removed the shelter for the mosquitoes so much farther back from the town.

But I did not take up my pen to write about places but about persons-about the persons I found living in Key West when I first landed there in October 1836, from a little mail schooner which sailed from Charleston

The whole population was then not very far from four hundred souls. James Webb, then about forty-five years old, was the Judge of the Superior Court. He had been appointed, by President dent Adams, from Georgia. He was a good lawyer an impartial

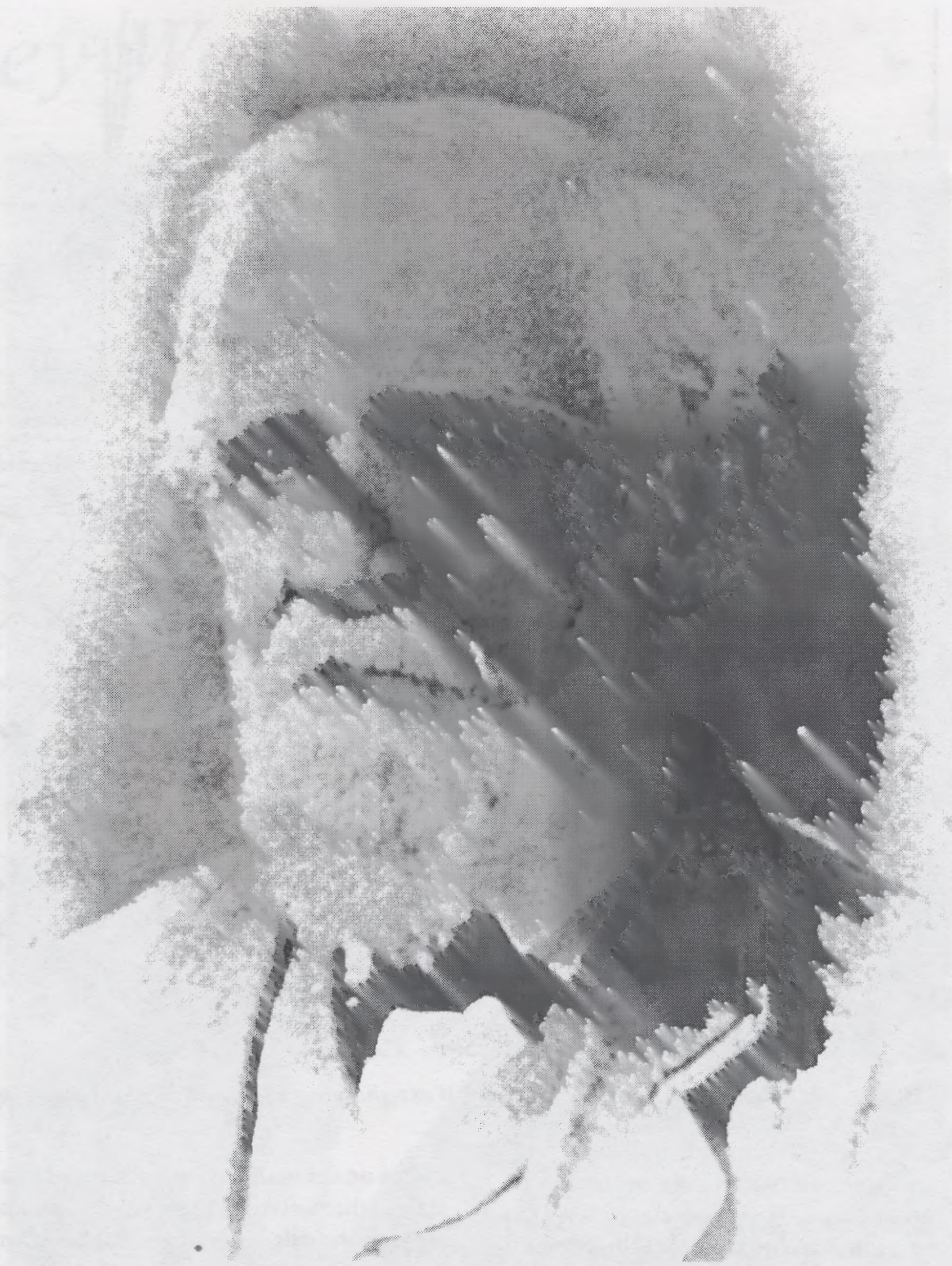
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Judge, and a genial gentlemen. He resigned his office in 1839 and moved to Texas where he was appointed by President Lamar Secretary of State. Texas had not then been admitted to the Union. It was the Lone Star. Alden A. M. Jackson was Clerk of the Court, and Thomas Easton, Marshall. They told, in that day, a good story of the Marshall. He had been only recently appointed, he was calling in Court the names of the jurors, he did not know the sound of a single letter in Spanish, he had come from Tennessee. He came to the name on the list, Jose Ximenes-He called Joseph "Eks-im-I-nes" no person answered one whispered to him to call Joseph "He-ma-nes" which he did. Whereupon Mr. Ximenes answered "here" and walked up to the clerk's desk to be sworn in. "Phoebus! Wat a name!" exclaimed the Marshall.

The only lawyers, at that time, at the bar, were, Adam Cordon and Wm. R. Hackley. Mr. Chandler had, a short time before, resigned the office of U.S. Attorney and moved away I had succeeded to his place. Wm. A. Whitehead was Collector of the port, Adam Cordon, deputy, and S.R. Mallory, inspector. The principal commission merchants were fielding A. Browne, originally from Virginia, Pardon C. Greene, from Rhode Islands, Oliver O'Hara, from South Carolina, Charles Wells, his partner, from New York, and Wm. A. Shaw. George E. Weaver and Phillip J. Fontane were grocers and ship-chandlers. Amos and Asa Tift kept a dry-goods store-Alexander Paterson was an auctioneer, and kept a store located near a coconut tree at the foot of Whitehead Street.. William W. Wall kept a little store, had been married a short time before to Miss Mabritty and lived in a small house on Whitehead Street a little beyond Jackson Square, farthest house out in that Street. Lewis Breaker, the father of Mrs. Filer, was a Justice of the Peace. John Geiger was pilot-captain of a wrecking vessel, a man of a decided character and a sort of Commodore among his conferees.

Charles Johnson and Harris Watlington, both bright intelligent men, were pilots and wreckers. I am not quite certain whether Wm. Curry was living in Key West at the time I am writing if or not, I am inclined to think he came there at a somewhat .later period. He was at one time Clerk in Mr. Wall's store. At a still later period he formed a partnership with George



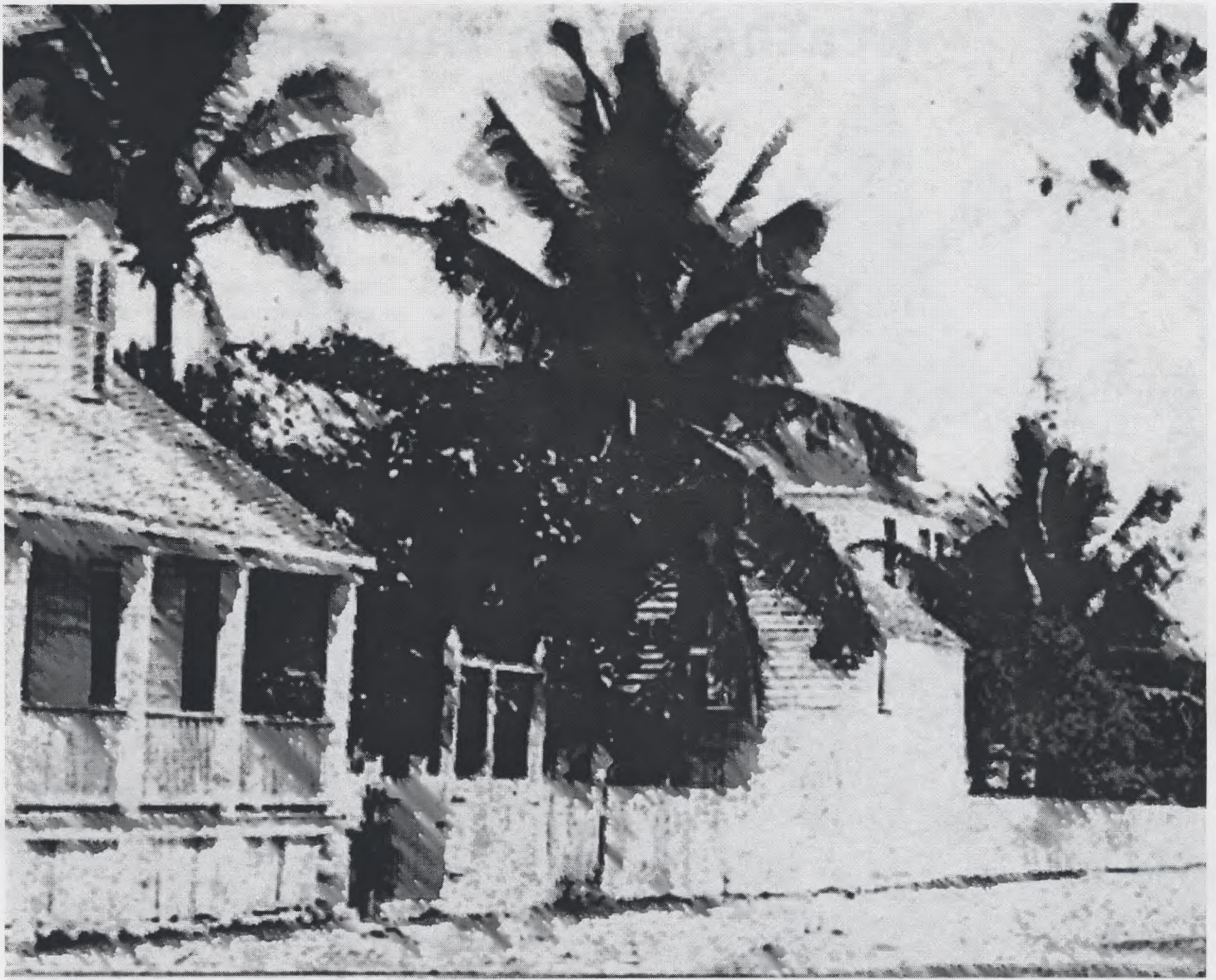
*Capt. Francis B. Watlington. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

Bowne in the business of buying and selling goods, and made money. But few people had come from the Bahamas before 1836. Among the first to come were Mr. Curry's family, Mr. Kemp, John Brannan, Mr. Albright and the Lowe's.

Among the young men about town are to be named Amos and Asa Tift, Stephen R. Mallory, Joseph B. Browns, John P. Baldwin and Lieutenant Alvord, U.S.A. Afterwards Paymaster General of the Army. I do not know that these young fellows ever "painted the town red" for they were well behaved and orderly set of young gentlemen, but they, some of them were known to be very often in the streets in the small hours of the morning serenading some one or more of the young ladies

of the town. Among these young ladies were Miss Ximenes, Miss Whalton Miss Baker and at a very little later period, say in 1837-8 Miss Mary and her sister Miss Nona Martinelli. Nothing pleased Mallory better than to take his flute and get one or two friends and Roberts, a colored man, with his fiddle, to join him and go out, in the beautiful moonlight nights and serenade some lady or ladies. Among the married ladies was Mrs. Wm. A. Whitehead, Mrs. Adam Gordon, Mrs. Randolph, sister of Fielding A. Browne, Mrs. George E. Weaver, Mrs. Ximenes, Mrs. Patterson Mrs. Watlington, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Whalton, and Mrs. Mallory. I mention Mrs. Mallory last, because she is the last to be forgotten, not because she was the mother





*The home of Capt. Francis Watlington "The Oldest House" as it looked in April 1865. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

of our U. S. Senator and Secretary. of the Confederate Navy, but because she was interested where she could do good and she did it. Left a widow in early womanhood, she bravely fought the battle of life alone, and supported herself by her labor in respectable independence. She kept the principal boarding house in town. She was intelligent, possessed of ready Irish wit, was kind, generous, charitable, sympathetic, and considerate of the wants of the sick and poor. She nursed the writer through an attack of yellow fever, and was always as good to him as his own mother could have been, Requiescat in peace. Messrs. Howe, Bethel, Douglas, Curtis, Ferguson, Maloney, Filer, Moreno, Senac, Charles and Julius Tift, Clapp, Herrick, Hicks all came to Key West after 1836. Mr. Howe was living at that time at Indian Key, if I remember rightly. He was

Inspector of the Customs there. Mr. Maloney lived at Indian Key in 1837-8.

O'Hara told me a good story of Dr. Waterhouse, a learned physician who lived in Key West in 1834-5, and Mr. Chandler, the U.S. District Attorney, which admirably illustrates the ready wit of Dr. Waterhouse. They were at a dinner with O'Hara and others. The dinner over, the gentlemen were sitting around the table telling stories and smoking their cigars. After several good stories had been told Chandler called on Dr. Waterhouse for a story. The Doctor begged to be excused. He had no story to tell Chandler insisted, and the Doctor played off. Chandler insisted in his demand for a story. At last the Doctor told his story as follows: "Once on a time a fox being pursued by hounds ran into a church for shelter, and ran up and hid himself in the belfry. In doing so

he caused the bell to ring. The bell-man heard bell ringing and went to the church to find out the cause going into the belfry he discovered the fox, took him by the hind legs and threw him out of the church. The hounds seized him. The poor fox in his dying agonies looked up to the bell, and said to it, as I now say to you, Mr. Chandler, "If it had not been for your long tongue and empty head, I would have escaped", Chandler subsided.

But, I must stop, however pleasant it may be to me to write about the dear old friends of a half century's standing, I am, nevertheless, admonished that it may not be equally pleasant to your readers to read what I write; and so I quit, with an Adios.

I Am, very respectfully yours,

Wm. Marvin



# Leather from the Sea



*The shark skinning station in Key West Harbor built over the remains of the Lighthouse Tender Wisteria. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

*The following article appeared in "The Literary Digest" for January 14, 1928.*

The use of the skin of large fishes for leather suggested in an article quoted several years ago in these columns, and familiar for some time on a small scale, at any rate in the case of the shark, has now actually reached the stage of production on a considerable scale, we are told by Hamilton M. Wright in "Popular Mechanics" (Chicago, February), at least two fishing stations near the Florida coast being devoted to this industry. Says Mr. Wright:

"If a buyer had been told a few years ago that inexhaustible supplies of the finest leather were to be had from the sea, requiring no pasturage, superintendence, or other financial outlays, he would have considered his informant an idle dreamer.

"Wholesale leather dealers, however, are now obtaining marine leather from man's traditional enemy, the shark, and the sawfish, a huge member of the ray family and closely allied to the sharks, has recently been added to the list of commercial leather producers. It yields a leather pronounced quite as valuable, commercially, as that of the shark. Shark leather, owing to its peculiar fabric and crossweave, has far greater strength than most other animal leathers. When treated and tanned, it becomes very soft and pliable, yet tough, and shows great resistance to stretching. Made into shoes, it is as nearly indestructible as any material which can be manufactured into comfortable footwear. It is also finding use for upholstery and luggage covering.

"Many sharks yield leather of beauti-

ful hue. The leather of the dreaded leopard shark, with its exquisite markings, can be used in the most ornamental upholsteries, and is so tough as to be practically indestructible.

"The abundance of sharks in many parts of the tropical oceans, the ease and economy with which they can be captured, as well as the proximity of the shark-fishing stations to ports from which the hides can be exported without reshipment to the great leather centers, are attracting many to the possibilities of shark leather as a world-wide industry. That shark leather presents the basis of a big industry not possible in the case of many other marine animals is pointed out. The other creatures of the sea, such as the walrus, a mammal, yield valuable pelts, their quest is often attended by numerous difficulties



and dangers.

"The walrus, which yields a valuable pelt, is generally found in arctic and antarctic waters, remote from lines of travel and therefore reached at considerable expense. While the aggregate yield of walrus pelts amounts to considerable value, the supply comes in slowly from scattered stations. Walrus are not taken in sufficient numbers in any one location to render their hunting commercially attractive, and the catch is usually limited to certain seasons of the year. This condition is true of whales, porpoises, and many other forms of marine life which, though existing in large numbers, are normally so thinly distributed as to be unattractive to a large industry. Sharks, however, are often found localized in vast numbers where the food supply is abundant and where their depletion through fishing is made up by other sharks attracted by the presence of food."

Several years ago, Mr. Wright tells us, a shark-tanning station was established on Big Pine Key, one of the larger islands in the chain which extend from the southern tip of the Florida peninsula. Another station has recently been started in the vicinity of Key West. In order to see at first hand this strange industry, the writer and a companion made an entire circuit of the Florida Keys, and watched the shark fishermen at work. He goes on:

"The annual catch of edible fishes in this region reaches many millions of pounds. It is no unusual thing in the Florida Keys for sharks to cause a fisherman who uses handlines to abandon his anchorage for the day, so vicious and persistent is their attack on the fishes which he and his men are pulling in. Altho the sawfish will seldom rob fish-lines, it is scarcely less detested by fishermen.

"All sharks and sawfishes large enough for commercial leather are caught in gill nets. Hand fishing or spearing would be too slow. The capture of a big shark with a heavy line is strenuous and often dangerous. A big shark can tow an ordinary-sized launch for several hours. It could easily pull a man from a wharf or moored launch, while, if an attempt is made to snub the line and bring it up short, the shark will bring its weight against the rope and break the heaviest sash cord as tho it were a piece of cotton thread. Gill nets, therefore, furnish the only expeditious means of commercial shark-fishing. They are enormous affairs, several hun-



*A large shark being loaded on one of the boats. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

dred yards in length, twenty feet or so in depth, buoyed up at the top with cypress plugs and weighted at the bottom with lead.

"When a shark is caught he raises a fearful commotion in the net. He lifts the leaden slugs from the bottom as he surges forward and pulls the cypress buoys beneath the water. The net of heavy cord slips neatly behind his gill crevices, restricting his breathing. When hauled to the surface the sharks are almost invariably dead, having drowned themselves in their frantic efforts to escape. As the meshes of the net are of similar size, there is considerable uniformity in the size of the sharks which are brought to the surface when the nets are hauled up in early morning. Sharks prowl around most ac-

tively at night and usually follow the tide. Fishermen are well aware of this habit. As many as three hundred big sharks have been taken in a single night at Big Pine, but there is no record of any man having been attacked by sharks in these regions.

"The sawfishes, which are more lethargic than the sharks, are found alive in the nets. They are hauled to the surface by a block-and-tackle on the fish boat and are then clubbed to death. Their long, flat snouts are sawed off, and the huge bodies, weighing from 600 to 1,900 pounds, and from thirteen to twenty feet long, are hoisted upon the big, wide fishing-boats, the nets are raised from the water and also hoisted aboard, and the launch sets out for the

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A large sawfish being loaded on a boat. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

(Shark from page 9)

skinning station.

"Arrived there, the nets-the fishermen's first care-are raised to the docks and spread on racks to dry and also for the repairs which are necessary in the capture of such powerful and savage fish. Then the great bodies are hoisted to the dock by winches.

"The skin of both sharks and sawfishes is then rapidly flayed from the body. The operation requires only a couple of minutes by expert hands and the hide is placed, inside out, over a cylindrically shaped table and all adhering flesh is carefully removed. It is then salted and set out in the sun to dry for twenty-four hours, when it is removed to the shed to await export to the North, where the final touch in finishing is applied. When salted and dried, the flesh of the shark is of the consistency of dried codfish and almost pure white

in color. The oil, it may be observed, is almost entirely confined to the liver, and is not apparent in the flesh. The head, when boiled, yields a large amount of glue, while from the pancreatic gland a rich content of insulin of value in the treatment of diabetes may be taken. The enormous bones of the jaws, when stripped of flesh and cured, make trophies for which good prices are paid, while walking-sticks can be made of the backbones.

"The ordinary run of sharks taken in the Florida Keys yields a pelt much smaller than that of a grown steer, thirty-six to forty inches each way being a fair average. The enormous head and great tail, which add immensely to its size, do not figure in the cutting of leather, which is taken from the larger circumference of the body. The sawfish, being characterized by great girth, yields a larger pelt than the shark."

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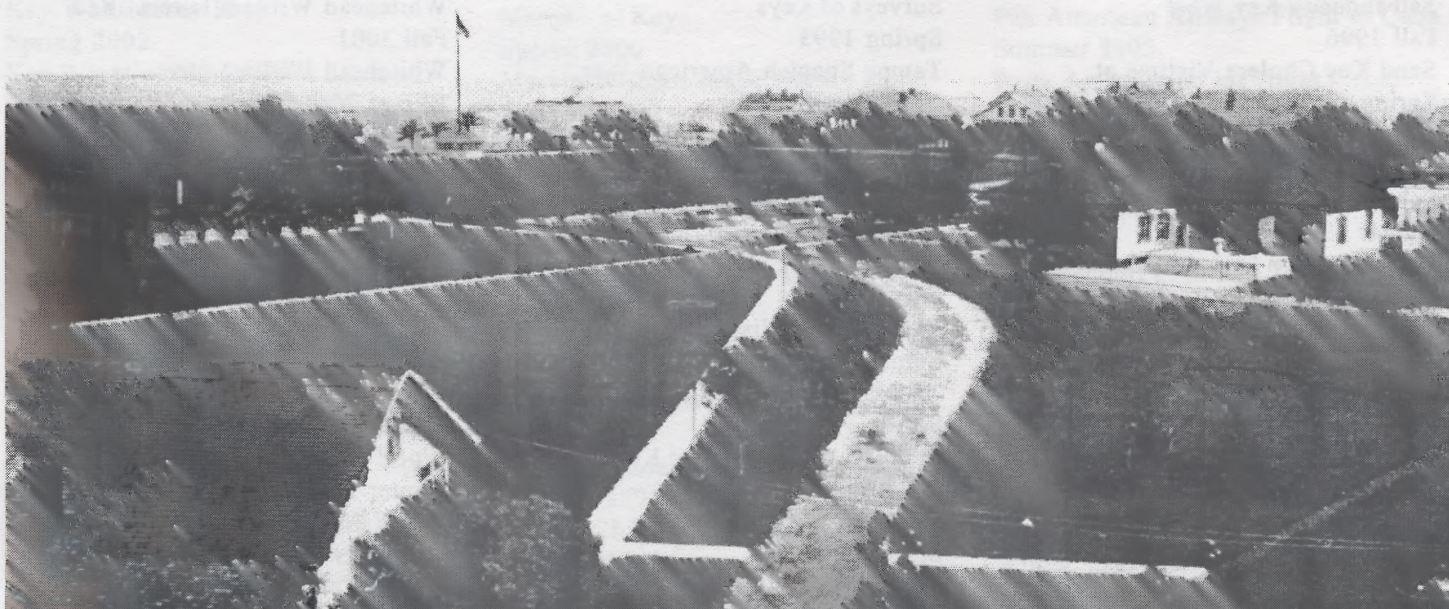
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*The Amry Barrack and Parade Grounds. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

(Cemetery from page 1)  
 at Tampa and load twenty bodies disinterred at Fort Dade, according to contemporary newspaper reports. Unfortunately, at this point in our investigation, all evidence concerning the eventual location of the bodies was missing. The Tampa newspapers recorded a storm at sea during the time period of the voyage and we speculated that the tug may have been in trouble somewhere along the Florida west coast and may have been lost at sea.

Barrancas National Cemetery had no records or knowledge of the bodies being reburied in that cemetery, and had no record of George Smith. The cemetery was unaware that such a group burial had ever taken place.

While conducting our investigation in Key West, we had discovered a microfilm of the Key West New Era newspaper of September 13, 1862, in which 41 soldiers were identified as dying from yellow fever over a period of twenty days, from August 23 through September 11, 1862. Using this list to examine the files at Barrancas National Cemetery, several men on the list were identified as being buried at Barrancas. We concluded that if one of the Key West military deaths was identified at Barrancas, then all were buried there, having arrived together aboard the tug Jenkins.

We spent several days reviewing the records and walking and mapping the cemetery at Barrancas to attempt to develop a burial plan for the 488 bodies. A

pattern of small numbers on the back of some tombstones was noted and a plan made of these burials. Time had confused their relationship as the cemetery was filled with more recent burials, and rows between the original sections were filled with these later burials.

The National Archives was contacted and arrangements made for a special microfilm of the Key West Post Cemetery records to be created. Using this record and other information that had been collected, it was possible to identify 192 of the men from the Key West Post Cemetery as being buried in a group of 228 unknown graves at Barrancas National Cemetery. They were identified using the sequence of numbers on the back of the burial markers. We could not prove which man was buried in which specific grave, only that these 192 men were buried in a specific group of 228 graves. This was before we became involved with personal computers, and as a result, we had 1,000 file cards spread all over the floors of our residence.

The 228 unknown graves associated with this relocation are Section 17, graves 175 through 316; Section 18, graves 317 through 370; Section 20, grave 436; and Section 24, graves 371 through 375, 379 through 398, 403 through 408.

Additional information uncovered in the National Archives told a sad story of incompetence on the part of those in charge of the relocation, and their subsequent reprimand by the Inspector General.

Unfortunately, among other problems associated with the disinterment and relocation, the tug had left Key West with 64 unidentified bodies. When it arrived at Barrancas National Cemetery, there were at least 228 unidentified bodies on board, and another 26 that were lost to the records. Copies of our report and the records we gathered were donated to Barrancas National Cemetery and Monroe County Library in Key West, and to other interested archives and agencies.

*The full report is available at the Monroe County Library and on the Web at: <http://hometown.aol.com/lewschmidt/keywestpostcemeteryrelocation.html>.*

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(Button from page 1)

(1765) being eight months from his leaving Mobile and about five from his departure from New Orleans.”

Fort Chartres is on the Mississippi River on the Illinois side of the river, approximately 30 miles south of what is now St. Louis, Missouri.

In a September 1768 dispatch the General notes to Lord Hillsborough that five companies of the 34th Regiment are to be in Philadelphia. Further, he says in another letter to Lord Hillsborough:

“The former garrison of the 34th Regiment left Fort Chartres on the 15th of September (1768) and arrived at Philadelphia on the 23rd of December (1768).”

On July 22nd, 1769 General Gage informs Lord Hillsborough that:

“Transports should be provided forthwith to transport the 9th and the 34th Regiments to Ireland.”

Then in his communication No. 35, dated September 9th, 1769, General Gage confirms that the 34th Regiment did embark Philadelphia and sailed to Ireland.

It is indeed-unfortunate that the historical record often times is not complete and that on many occasions not accurate and containing ambiguous information. In the case of the 34th, according to S.A. Eastwood, Museum Curator of the Regimental Museum of the Border Regiments citing to me in a letter dated 8 February 2002,

“The records of the 34th in the eighteenth century are generally very poor as the Regiment lost many of its records in 1795.”

He further mentions that his search of records for the period did not turn-up anything of detail about the loss of a transport carrying men of this Regiment on south Florida waters.

What I found really interesting is that according to Mr. Eastwood, “numbered buttons do not appear to have been taken into service until 1767”, consequently, suggesting that the buttons found on the wreck site probably date to a period after 1767. If this is the case, just why would a button be produced and issued for a unit which was disbanded in 1763? The 113th of Foot does show up again in War Office records as being formed in 1794 under Colonel Archibald Mac Donnell. However,

a year later the unit was in “Mutiny” and disbanded in 1795 with its men transferred to other units. The 34th Regiment shows up again in records as being in North America in 1780 at Saratoga, New York.

Just how the uniform buttons recovered by Jimmy Longendyke years ago found there way on board the vessel that wrecked on Carysfort Reef will no doubt remain a mystery. Not enough remains of the wreck to provide clues to suggest something about the vessel. The only ship that I have come across which may be that of the “Button Wreck” is that of a British parquet boat, *Anna Thersea*, which was sailing from Pensacola to Falmouth in England. The *Anna Thersea* was reported by Lloyds to have wrecked near Cape Florida in July 1768. (The area comprising Cape Florida included what we now call Carysfort Reef.)

Mr. Eastwood also commented that the type of button which I have sketched bearing the numerals “34” fits with “our” Regiment. According to Curator Eastwood, the 34th Regiment was a silver-laced regiment. Officers’ buttons being silver and those of the soldiers made of pewter. He believes that the possibility that officers’ buttons may have been silver-plated over the bronze.

Accordingly, all of this leaves open to imagination and speculation to contrive a theory of how the buttons found there way on the “Button Wreck” site.

1. Clarence Edwin Carter, “The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage with the Secretaries of State, 1763-1775, Volume One and Two,” Yale University Press, 1931
2. Major General William Keppel, com-

*Denis B. Trelewicz is a resident of Key Largo and for the last nine years has worked with Chuck Hayes documenting wreck sites in the Upper Keys for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. He was named an "Environmental Hero" by former Vice President Al Gore. Denis is a retired Major, USAF Reserve.*

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*Duval and Front Streets looking south before the fire of 1886. Photo credit: Florida State Archives.*

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