

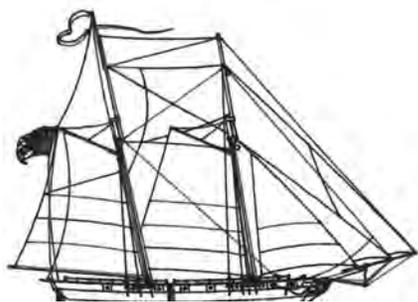
# Florida Keys

## Sea Heritage Journal

VOL. 18 NO. 4

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USS SHARK




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 OFFICIAL QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE KEY WEST MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 

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### FUTURE ADMIRAL COMMANDED SCHOONER IN KEYS DURING SECOND SEMINOLE WAR

by John Viele

One of the strangest chapters in American naval history was written in South Florida and the Keys during the Second Seminole War (1836-1842). Naval officers led sailors, marines, revenue marines, and sometimes soldiers in operations against the Seminole Indians in the Keys and the Everglades. One of these naval officers was Passed Midshipman John Rodgers. (A passed midshipman was one who had passed the examination for lieutenant but was waiting for a vacancy in order to be promoted.)

John Rodgers was the son of Commodore John Rodgers, the Navy's senior officer. (see Sea Heritage Journal Vol. 17, No. 3, Spring 2007 re the Commodore's visit to Key West in 1823). Passed Midshipman Rodgers was 26 years old when he received orders in November 1839 to take command of the schooner **Wave** at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. His orders directed him to prepare her for action against the Seminole Indians in South Florida and the Keys.

**Wave** was a 65-foot, pilot-boat schooner, armed with a single long gun, and manned by a crew of six officers and forty men. Picture if you can, forty-six men trying to find space to sleep on a sixty-



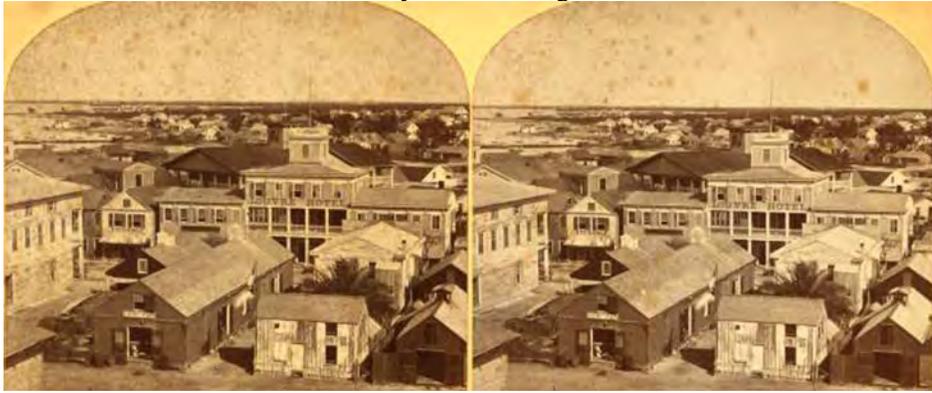
*Commander John Rodgers about 1861. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

five foot boat Obviously pleased with his new command, Rodgers described her with these words, “. . . the graceful swell of her bow,

the beautiful tapering of her run, the rich fullness of her beam, and the delicate roundness of the waist  
(Continued on page 3)

SOCIETY NEWS AND NOTES

By Tom Hambright



*The Hotel on Front Street near Duval Street before the Great Fire of 1886. Photo credit: New York Public Library.*



*The Custom House on Clinton Square before the current red brick Custom House was built in the 1890's. This building is now at 124 Duval Street. Photo credit: New York Public Library.*

The new Internet age has given us more information than we can digest. The problem has become what is real and what is myth. I was asked to prepare a list of web sites for educators so they could find reliable information about Key West with some original and primary documents. Of course the first sites I recommended was our site <http://keywestmaritime.org/> and of course next is the Library site <http://www.keyslibraries.org>. The Library site has a pathfinder on the home page that will take you to all the material we have up and we plan to add much more over the next year. Check out the following.

Google. If you have not used try Google books. Do the advance search for full view only. The last search I did using the exact phrase "Key West" I got 1,906 books,

which are there full text if you have time to do that much reading.

Library of Congress's American Memory site is one of the best American History site in the web <http://www.loc.gov/>.

The Florida Memory site does the same for Florida History, <http://www.floridamemory.com/>.

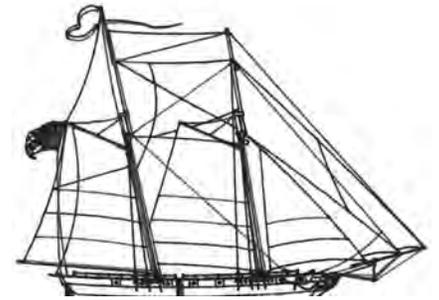
The Florida Historical Society has all the Florida Historical Quarterly on their site in full text, <http://florida-historical-soc.org/>.

The Historical Association of South Florida has their annual journal Tequesta on the site in full text, <http://hmsf.org/>.

These are a few of these are a few of the sites I have found items about Key West. The above stereo views of Key West were found on the New York Public Library site, <http://digitalgallery.nypl.org>

New Members

Ervin and Sandy Higgs, Key West



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

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(Rogers from page 1)

stamped the **Wave** a very Venus.”

When **Wave** was ready for sea on January 13, 1840, Rodgers got underway for Florida. Arriving at St. Augustine eight days later, he reported to Lt. McLaughlin, captain of the 150-ton schooner **Flirt**, and overall commander of naval forces in South Florida and the Keys. The official title of these forces was the Expedition for Suppression of Indian Hostilities, but it soon came to be called the “Mosquito Fleet.” On his way south, McLaughlin had put in at Charleston to pick up canoes and now, at St. Augustine, was loading several flat-bottom boats that he had ordered.

The two schooners got underway in company on a course for the Keys, but on January 23, a severe storm struck, breaking **Wave’s** mainmast at the deck and sending it overboard. Rodgers ordered the long gun fired to signal McLaughlin, but it was not heard, and **Flirt** disappeared over the horizon. After **Wave’s** crewmen had cleared away the wreckage, they unbent the foresail, reinforced the foremast’s standing rigging, and set a squaresail on the foremast. Under this jury rig, **Wave** sailed on and rejoined **Flirt** off Cooley’s Mill (Fort Lauderdale today). After a brief stop at Key Biscayne, the two schooners anchored at Tea Table Key which was to be their base of operations.

Nearby Indian Key, just a mile away, was a small but thriving port for wrecking, fishing, and turtling vessels, and possessed many of the supplies the squadron would need, including large stores of fresh water. When the Seminoles went on the warpath in 1836, the residents of Indian Key, fearful of an attack, had formed a small militia and mounted cannon around the island to protect themselves. Now, having seen no

Indians in the Keys in the past three years, and with naval forces nearby, they had relaxed their guard and disbanded the militia.

Rodgers sent the **Wave’s** carpenters and sailmakers ashore on Tea Table to begin building a new mainmast, using a spar and materials obtained from Indian Key. Six weeks later, her crewmen floated the new mast alongside and, using a sheer leg borrowed from Indian Key, stepped it in place. Examination of the base of the old mainmast showed that iron spikes, driven in to secure the saddle of the main boom, had seriously weakened the mast. Rodgers was held blameless for the accident, and, in fact, was praised by the Secretary of the Navy for his “seamanlike skill and conduct” in bringing his crippled vessel safely to Tea Table Key. Not long after arriving there, Rodgers received notice of his promotion to lieutenant.

The Mosquito Fleet at that time consisted of the schooners **Flirt**, **Wave**, and **Otsego**; five twenty-oared, single-masted gun barges; and about sixty dugout canoes and flat-bottom boats ranging in size from ten to forty feet. The Army command in Florida suspected that Cuban fishermen who came to the Keys to fish were supplying arms and ammunition to the Indians. To stop them, McLaughlin established two surveillance barriers. He directed the schooners to patrol along the reef and the barges to patrol along the mainland. He then made plans to penetrate the Everglades in the canoes to locate Indian villages, capture the Indian women and children, and destroy their villages and crops. He reasoned that since previous attempts had penetrated the Everglades from the east coast, there would be a better chance of surprise if his forces entered by way of the rivers on the west coast.

Note: The following information is taken from **Wave’s** original log for the period January 11, 1840 through June 3, 1840. The log was found in the National Archives, and, because it was an original document, had to be copied by hand.

In the first month at Tea Table, Rodgers concentrated on training his crew to handle small arms and canoes. Each day, one or more of the three divisions of the crew was sent ashore to learn the skills they would need to make their way through the Everglades in canoes, and to attack or defend themselves against Seminole warriors. Crewmen remaining on board kept busy with scraping spars, painting, assisting in repairs, scrubbing hammocks and clothes, taking on water from Indian Key, loading supplies, and taking on provisions. Their menu featured salt pork and beef, beans, bread, cheese, sour crout, rice, vinegar, pickles, molasses, and raisins, with a daily ration of whiskey. The only fresh food was an occasional serving of turtle. On Sundays, unless operations precluded it, the crew mustered at quarters for inspection and then attended divine services. The only recreation mentioned in the log was one day’s liberty in Key West in mid April.

Based on the number and severity of the punishments recorded in the log, Lt. Rodgers’ guiding principle must have been: “Spare the lash and you’ll spoil the tar.” In **Wave’s** first four months in the Keys, nine men were triced up to the shrouds and lashed with the cat-of-nine-tails, most of them for being drunk. Navy regulations at the time limited the number of lashes a commanding officer could award to twelve for any single offense. Rodgers either ignored the regulation or got around it by specifying additional offenses.

(Continued on page 4)

(Rogers from page 3)

For example, one sailor got thirty-six lashes in the same day: twelve for being drunk, twelve for insolence, and twelve for quarreling. Another got twenty-four lashes for the single offense of being drunk. (Flogging was finally abolished in the Navy in 1850). Where did the men get the liquor? Rodgers found out that they were getting it from Indian Key. Although he had no authority to do so, Rodgers ordered a marine lieutenant to take a detachment to the grog shop on Indian Key and knock in the head of one whiskey barrel every time there was evidence that the shop had sold liquor to sailors, and to continue, if necessary, until all barrels were destroyed.

During his two years with the Mosquito Fleet, Rodgers either led or was second-in-command of eight expeditions into the Everglades. In April, McLaughlin ordered his forces to rendezvous at Lostman's River on the west coast on April 10 in preparation for an expedition into the Everglades. On the way there, **Otsego** was the first to arrive off Cape Sable. Her captain sent a detachment of twenty-four sailors ashore to reconnoiter the area. Almost immediately, they were attacked by a large war party estimated to consist of from fifty to eighty warriors. The sailors took cover and returned fire. The action continued for two and one-half hours, when fortunately, **Flirt** and **Wave** arrived and sent boats in to reinforce the shore party. Seeing the approaching boats, the Indians withdrew taking their wounded or dead casualties with them. None of the **Otsego's** shore party were injured.

Almost as soon as the Indians departed, a more deadly enemy struck the fleet - malarial fever. So many crewmen were affected, including Lt. McLaughlin, that he

was forced to call the expedition off. With all the sick hands on board, **Flirt** departed for Pensacola. McLaughlin left instructions for Lt. Rodgers, now in command of the remaining forces, to continue exploration and mapping of the west coast of the Everglades.

During the following month, Rodgers examined the islands and rivers along the southwest coast from Cape Sable to Cape Romano. With a barge and a gig, he made a two-day scout up the Shark River. After McLaughlin returned in July, Rodgers accompanied him on a seven day scout up the Miami River in canoes with seventy-two sailors and thirty-four marines. Before setting out, McLaughlin talked to a Negro named John who was being confined by the Army at Fort Dallas on the Miami River. Negro John had been captured by the Indians, escaped, and knew the country well. McLaughlin tried to get him to act as his guide, but the Army would not let him go. After getting as much information from him as possible, McLaughlin led the expedition up the river. When he could go no further, he struck off to the southwest. His report to the Secretary of the Navy described the country they encountered as "one large sheet of water, from one to four feet deep, completely overgrown with saw grass, reaching not infrequently higher than our heads, interspersed with submerged islands & knolls of bushes, covered with red and black mangrove, the cocoa plum, the gum Elni, the Grape vine, the vegetation of which alone appeared above the surface of the water." After three days in the canoes, in temperatures well over 100 degrees, they reached the first dry land, a palmetto island. A fix was obtained using an artificial horizon which showed they were only twenty miles from their

starting point. Nevertheless, this trek convinced McLaughlin that the Glades could be navigated, but that a guide with local knowledge was essential.

McLaughlin made plans for another attempt to cross the Everglades from the west coast. He directed Rodgers to sail to Cape Romano with eighteen canoes, stopping on the way to pick up all able-bodied men at Tea Table Key, with the exception of the very few needed to care for the sick in the little hospital that had been set up there.

A large war party of over one hundred warriors, concealed on nearby Lower Matecumbe Key watched the **Wave** sail away and knew the time had come to launch their attack on Indian Key. Shortly after midnight, over one-hundred warriors beached their canoes on the island and crept ashore. A short while later they were discovered, shots rang out, and the residents ran for their boats or hiding places. The next afternoon, after setting the village on fire, the war party departed Indian Key, leaving it a smoldering ruin with six residents dead. They Indians took with them desperately needed stores of guns, ammunition, provisions, and clothing as well as several of the islanders' boats.

When he received notice of the attack the following evening, Rodgers immediately recalled his marines who were on shore, and got underway from Cape Romano. Because of light and contrary winds, he did not reach Cape Sable until the following morning at which point, he launched the canoes loaded with sixty sailors and marines. After twenty-four hours of hard paddling, Rodgers and the canoes finally reached Indian Key - much too late catch the raiders. As a result of the raid, McLaughlin

cancelled the planned expedition into the Everglades and sent part of his forces to protect the inhabited Keys.

With his little empire destroyed, Jacob Housman, the “Lord of Indian Key” agreed to turn the island over to the Navy for the duration of the war. McLaughlin ordered the hospital and supply depot moved from Tea Table Key and began construction of barracks and other facilities on the island to make it a base for the Mosquito Fleet. In September, leaving Lt. Rodgers in charge, he took the sick personnel and personnel whose enlistments were about to expire aboard **Flirt** and sailed for Philadelphia to obtain crew replacements.

In December, Colonel Harney, U.S. Army, obtained permission to use Negro John as a guide, got the loan of sixteen canoes from the Mosquito Fleet, and with ninety soldiers, entered the Everglades in search of Chakaika, the leader of the raid on Indian Key. With Negro John showing the way, Chakaika’s hideout was soon found. Harney’s soldiers killed Chakaika and four of his warriors, captured five more and hung them. When Rodgers heard of Harney’s success, he met with him at Key Biscayne and proposed that they join forces for another expedition. McLaughlin returned a short while later and agreed with Rodgers’ proposal.

On January 31, 1840 ninety sailors, sixty marines, twenty dragoons, and seventy soldiers embarked in canoes at Fort Dallas near the mouth of the Miami River. Led by Colonel Harney and Lt. McLaughlin with Lt. Rodgers, as second-in-command of the naval forces, the expedition moved into the Everglades. With Negro John, and one of the Indians captured by Harney as guides, their objective was the village of Sam Jones (Arpeika), the leader of one of the principal Seminole bands. Most of the men were in small five-man canoes, the remainder in large ten-man canoes. They moved only



*Marines searching for the Seminole in the Everglades. Photo credit: U.S. Marine Corps Museum.*

at night, in single file, and had been cautioned to maintain strict silence. Officers issued commands by whistle signals. After three nights of arduous paddling, they arrived at the camp of Chitto Tustenuggee, one of Sam Jones war chiefs, but the camp was deserted. Search parties spread out and surprised three groups of Indians in canoes. During two days of tracking and chasing, the search parties killed three Indians and captured seven. A marine private making a desperate effort to capture the last Indian was mortally wounded. The other Indians informed the searchers that the Indian who shot the marine was Chia, known among his fellow tribesmen as an expert Everglades guide. Strangely, as happened more than once after an Indian was captured, Chia agreed to act as a guide for the expedition.

After a further fruitless attempt to find Sam Jones, Colonel Harney and his troops left the expedition, but turned the guides over to McLaughlin who decided to continue the scout all the way to the west coast. On the way, their guides led them to chief Prophet’s

camp, but it was deserted. Rodgers, leading a scouting party nearby, surprised an Indian canoe with a woman, two children, and a warrior in it. When the warrior refused to surrender, Rodgers shot and killed him. Continuing on across the Glades and down a river named for Col. Harney, the expedition reached the west coast on January 19. Its members became the first white men to cross the entire width of the Everglades.

When Rodgers’ brother learned of his exploits, he wrote this satirical observation, “. . . some of these mornings he [Lt. Rodgers] will wake up and find himself famous if he don’t look out, he has shot an Indian and given the name of Rodgers to a Floridian river, such an accumulation of glory as will make posterity shut its eyes to look at it . . .”

In mid-March, McLaughlin sailed to the Gulf coast to recruit more personnel for the Mosquito Fleet. Once again Rodgers was left in charge. He organized another expedition, and moving inland with Chia and another captured Seminole as guides, explored

(Continued on page 6)

(Rogers from page 5)

the west coast of the Everglades between Cape Sable and the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River. All the former Seminole settlements visited were deserted and no Indians were found.

McLaughlin soon returned from his Gulf coast voyage with few recruits. He then sailed north to Washington to plead for more ships and men. While he was gone, Rodgers led another expedition of 130 sailors and marines to attack a Seminole village which the guides had told him about. The water in the Glades was too low to float the canoes so they had to be carried or dragged. The men waded through knee-deep, sometimes waist-deep, mud, only to find the village deserted.

When Rodgers was back aboard **Wave** at Indian Key, Charles Howe, postmaster and inspector of customs of the village, asked him to search for his schooner which had failed to return from a turtle hunt after eighteen days. Rodgers searched likely places in Florida Bay and finally found the schooner **Charles and Edward** partially sunk in the mangroves in Barnes Sound. Her two crewmen were missing and there was evidence that Indians had been on board. One year later, it was learned that the two crewmen had been captured and later tortured until they died.

McLaughlin's visit to Washington was successful. The Secretary of the Navy arranged for three revenue cutters and a new schooner to be transferred to the Navy and to the Mosquito Fleet. When the cutters arrived at Indian Key, Rodgers was given command of the revenue cutter **Jefferson**.

In October 1841, McLaughlin designated Rodgers to lead one of five detachments totaling two

hundred sailors and marines on another search for Sam Jones now believed to be encamped at the edge of the Big Cypress Swamp. In canoes, Rodgers' detachment entered the Everglades by way of the Shark River, then moved to link up with an army unit at Chakaika's Island. The joint force reached Prophet's Landing on December 1. McLaughlin then sent Rodgers with 150 men to penetrate the Big Cypress Swamp on a southwest course for a distance of 25 miles. His sailors and marines, wading in waist-deep mud and water, made very slow progress. After five days, and no Indians, they fought their way out of the swamp. Rodgers was gone on this expedition for fifty-six days.

Rodgers set off on his last major effort to track down Seminoles in South Florida on February 13, 1842. McLaughlin's plan was to divide his forces into two columns, one to enter the Everglades from the west, the other to enter from the east, and the two to meet at Lake Okeechobee. Rodgers commanded the eastern group consisting of a detachment from the cutter **Madison**, another detachment from the **Jefferson**, and a detachment of marines. For sixty days, living most of the time in their canoes, the eastern group searched the swamp east of Lake Okeechobee, the lake, the Kissimee River, and Lake Tohopekaliga. They followed every trail, burned every empty camp or village, and laid to waste every cultivated field, but did not find any Indians. Two sailors became so worn down with the struggle that they took a canoe and some provisions and deserted the expedition. They were never heard from again. Rodgers gave his sister Louisa some idea of the hardships the expedition endured in this letter:

I have just returned from a two

months excursion in canoes, to the everglades and a parcel of lakes to the Nd [northward] of them. I was as you may guess, heartily glad of my arrival once more at comparative comfort. Imagine a little flat bottomed canoe 20 feet long 3 ½ wide at its broadest and 1 ¾ feet deep – and think of carrying in this boat 5 men with 30 days provisions for them, bedding, clothes, arms, ammunition, sails, mast, and paddles besides such luxuries as one can contrive to stow away – think too of sleeping in these boats many nights in succession for often there is no dry ground to be found. Picture the crew with beards unshaven, dress neglected & either rags or clothes patched with many colours[sic], or, if not sleeping, wading in the water dragging the boats through the thick grass, or hauling them over a mudbank, or at meal times each man with a piece of meat & bread in one hand and a jack knife in the other and you will have a correct idea of florida boating. . . I have known people three days without food compelled to work violently 10 hours a day in order to reach a supply of provisions. The meat often is not cooked when eaten[sic] yet I do not find that men suffer much in health. As an offset to these inconveniences there is a certain wildness about the life which is not without its charm — and then the possibility of meeting with indians never suffers the excitement wholly[sic] to flag.

Every trail is scrutinized, every footprint inspected, every broken blade of grass examined, every sign noted.

I am convinced it is much easier for a civilized man to become a savage than for the reverse to take place.

Rodgers' comments on the health of his men were quite the opposite of what other expeditions

experienced, probably because this expedition took place in winter and early spring. On another trek through the Everglades, one marine private fell in his tracks and died from exhaustion. Passed Midshipman Preble, who later became a captain and served with distinction in the Civil War, almost had his legs amputated because they became infected and ulcerated from sawgrass cuts. During a spring and summer season, McLaughlin reported, fifteen men died and eighty were on the sick list because of fever and exhaustion.

When Rodgers returned from his two-month trek through the Glades, the war against the Seminoles was almost over. The few Indians left would be allowed to stay in the Everglades and the Mosquito Fleet, with Rodgers in command of the cutter **Jefferson**, was ordered to sail for Norfolk. During a violent squall off Cape Canaveral, **Jefferson** lost her main and fore topmasts. While the cutter was hove to in order to make repairs, the captain of the cutter **Madison**, a friend of Rodgers, changed course to come to her aid. As he was approaching, the **Madison's** captain misjudged the distance and collided with **Jefferson**. After some repairs, both cutters were able to proceed. Rodgers commented to Preble: "I don't mind being dismasted, for that may happen to every one who goes to sea, but to be kicked in the stern by my friend afterwards is too bad."

But Rodgers' trials with the Mosquito Fleet were not over. Two days after arriving in Norfolk, a disgruntled marine lieutenant, Lt. Robert Tansill, preferred charges against Lt. Rodgers. He claimed that Rodgers had practiced cruelty and violated Navy Regulations in ordering an excessive number of lashes as punishment. The charges

specified that Rodgers had ordered five men to receive more than thirty lashes each for their offenses. One of the charges, that a marine had died as a result of a flogging, was dropped when a surgeon at Indian Key testified that the man had died of tuberculosis, not flogging. Rodgers admitted that he had ordered thirty to forty-two lashes for four men. In his defense, he made the following statement:

The men were charged with stealing liquor & the charge can be proved. By the law defining the ration, and making it part of the contract with the men we were obliged to carry the whiskey. We had no place other than the canoes to carry it in; it was exposed; drunkenness endangered in those small boats not only the lives of the offenders but of those who might attempt to succour[sic] them. The men punished had actually capsized two canoes in coming from Indian Key, lost part of their arms, ammunition and provisions, besides putting the lives of several people in jeopardy. The risk was greater because the water was deep and we far from land with canoes laden nearly down to the water's edge. . . It is notorious in the Navy that 12 lashes with the cat will not prevent many sailors from indulging in a vice so dear to their hearts; it was absolutely necessary that the men should be kept sober, we had no place of confinement, we could not dispense with the offenders services, a court martial in the circumstances impossible, by promptness and severity only could the crime be repressed.

The Secretary of the Navy did not agree with Rodgers that the circumstances justified ignoring the regulation. Nevertheless, on the somewhat shaky grounds that Rodgers did not fully understand the regulation and did not violate

it intentionally, he dismissed the charges.

Rodgers went on to have an illustrious naval career. He led exploring expeditions in Chinese waters and the Bering Strait. During the Civil War, he commanded several ironclads and monitors and captured a Confederate ironclad. In 1869, he was promoted to Rear Admiral and ordered to command the Asiatic Fleet. He attempted to secure a treaty with Korea, the "Hermit Kingdom," for humane treatment of shipwrecked seamen but despite a successful attack on some Korean forts, was not able to get a treaty. His final assignment was as president of the U.S. Naval Institute.

#### SOURCES:

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Log of US Schooner *Wave* from January 11, 1840 to May 7, 1840, Midshipman John Rodgers commanding. National Archives. Transcribed from the original by Pam and John Viele.

Viele, John. *The Florida Keys, Volume 2, True Stories of the Perilous Straits*. Sarasota, Florida: Pineapple Press Inc. 1999.

*John Viele has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Key West Maritime Historical Society of the Florida Keys for the past 20 years. He is the author of three books on the history of the Keys published by Pineapple Press of Sarasota: "The Florida Keys – A History of the Pioneers," "The Florida Keys, Vol. 2 – True Stories of the Perilous Straits," and "The Florida Keys, Vol. 3 – The Wreckers."*

# Hackley's Diary

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

Wednesday, July 2. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach returned home and bathed. At 7:30 A.M. barometer 29.62, thermometer 86, wind east southeast 2, clouds 4. The schooner **Dart** came in from Havana at 7 A.M. Gave Peter Crusoe the bill of sale for Daniel to record and also made an inventory of the boy and piano as Matilda's separate property and signed it myself as there is no one specified in the statute by whom the inventory shall be signed. The man who was sick with yellow fever died at the hospital this morning. Hatty, Charley and Annie went on board the ship **James Guthrie** with Mrs. William Chase early in the morning and remained till evening. Matilda and I with Lizzie and the baby went on board about 5 P.M. and took tea and got home about 9. Bought some plantains and bananas.

Thursday, July 3. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach returned home and bathed. At 7:45 A.M. barometer 29.50, thermometer 86, wind east southeast 1, clouds 4. Saw a turtle which someone had turned between the two roads. Got a 16th of a ticket in the grand lottery and a half interest in a 1/8 which Mr. Howe keeps. Paid the 2/16ths \$2.12. Paid Alexander Patterson for a box of soap \$5.00, rice \$6.62, plantains \$1.68, banana \$.87. Received \$20.00 the proctor's fee in the case of James Lowe et al vs. Schooner **William Chestnut** and \$5.00 for bill of sale of Negro boy from Farina to Arnau. A Spaniard named Ramon Peralto stabbed another named Manuel Acosta in the left breast but the blade struck

a rib and glanced making a flesh wound. Dora Chase spent the day and Hatty went off to sleep with her. Captain and Mrs. William Chase spent the evening at our house as did Captain Hoyt and Charles Tift.

Friday, July 4. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach returned and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.54, thermometer 87, calm, clouds 2. Read Household Words. Brought from Robert P. Cambell the Yearbook of Agriculture \$1.50 and Squires Notes on Central America \$2.00. A very nice rain fell about 6 and continued till about 8. Dora Chase who has been spending the day had to sleep with Hatty. The USS **Potomac** fired at sunrise, noon and sunset and got under weigh and proceeded toward the reef but was forced to anchor about a mile from the point. There was a procession and a speech from Mr. Newcomb but the day was so hot I did not go.

Saturday, July 5. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach returned home and bathed. At 7:30 A.M. barometer 29.50, thermometer 86, wind south southeast 3, clouds 2. Bought a number of Harpers Novels from Robert Cambell to read during the hot weather when I cannot study. Received \$45.00 from the clerk of the District Court my fee in the case of the ship **James Guthrie** for filing the petition of L. Crain et al. The **James Guthrie** went to sea about noon with a very light wind and was not out of sight at dark. The schooner **Venice** arrived from New Orleans. She brought the goods which were sent for by the steamer **Vanderbilt** who is seized for debt.

Sunday, July 6. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach returned home and bathed. At 7:30 A.M. barometer 29.47, thermometer 87, wind south 1, clouds 3. Read "The Green Hand". P.M. Siesta.

Monday, July 7. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 7:40 A.M. barometer 29.47, thermometer 87, wind south southwest 2, clouds 3. The steamer **Isabel** got in last night and I received a letter from Sam Butler saying that Pene and family were going to spend the summer north. A letter from Byrd that Lucy had a fine boy on the 26th of June. A letter from Mother and my quarterly salary. Matilda got a letter from Fielding Patterson. I also got a letter from P. Williams informing me that J.P. Smith's claim for bounty land on the ground that the law does not provide for pilots. Senator Stephen Mallory sent me a map of Central America. William F. Phillips sent me a copy of the bond of Andrew J. Priest of Flemington Marion County (P. Masters) for collection. Reenclosed it to him in a letter stating that Marion County is in the Northern District. Answered the Treasures letter. The steamer **Florida** lay at anchor all night outside of the Northwest Bar and got to the wharf about 7 A.M. Charles Tift and children came in her. Ossin B. Hart served me with a copy of the amended answer in the case of the Ogden et al vs. David and Geiger. Captain Benner and Clara Cussans spent the evening with us.

Tuesday, July 8. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 7:30 A.M. barometer 29.44, thermometer 87, wind south southwest 3, clouds 8. Found a turtle nest with 107 eggs 4 of which broke. The USS **Potomac** went to sea yesterday bound home. Paid Oliver O'Hara for six months rent of house to July 1st. Gave him \$450.00 Treasury warrant and he allowed me \$1.00 paid for lumber and \$.63 for labor for repairing the

front door. Read papers. Very warm all evening.

Wednesday, July 9. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.47, thermometer 87, wind south by west 4, clouds 10. About 10 last night had a nice shower. Read papers. Matilda and I went to Alexander Patterson's after tea.

Thursday, July 10. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 7:45 A.M. barometer 29.55, thermometer 86, wind south southwest 3, clouds 9. Read paper. The steamer **Isabel** got off by 4 P.M. Robert P. Campbell and Jane Randolph and Lt. Cyrus B. Comstock went in her. They are frightened of the yellow fever four men having died in the hospital and Mrs. Allen and Miss Mary Lane are both ill. Wrote Mother and Philip Williams in Washington. A light rain fell in the night.

Friday, July 11. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.50, thermometer 85.5, wind south southwest 3, clouds 7. Read papers. Wrote Byrd Willis and Sam Butler. P.M. Siesta. Felt sore all over as if I had a cold coming. Went to Alexander Patterson's after tea but was hurried home by the threat of rain which commenced shortly after we got home and lasted about one hour attended with considerable wind.

Saturday, July 12. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.48, thermometer 83, wind south ½ or nearly calm, clouds 10. At 6 A.M. a heavy rain fell for about an hour. The steamer **Florida** got off about 7 A.M. Mary Ann Porter, Mrs Susan Randolph and Lt. Watkins and Jas. M. Bracewell went in her. The two sick ladies are very low and a Negro child was taken last night at Russell's. Read Papers. Mrs. Allen

died during the forenoon and was buried at 6 P.M. but the weather was calm and cloudy and intensely hot and I did not go.

Sunday, July 13. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.57, thermometer 85, wind southeast in a squall having been calm all night, clouds 8. The Negro boy has not got yellow fever and Miss Lane is better. Read papers. Mary Lane died at 1 P.M. and was buried about 7 P.M. A schooner from Cienfuegas came in with one dead and one sick on board with yellow fever. The six cases of fever here all have died. The sun set clear for the first time since last Monday. Nearly calm all day.

Monday, July 14. Rose at 4:15 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 7:40 A.M. barometer 29.61, thermometer 85.5, wind south southeast 3, clouds 5. The last week has been the cloudiest spell of weather I ever saw in Key West and the wind southwest made it very disagreeable. Read "Singleton Fontenay RN." In the P.M. heavy squalls all round.

Tuesday, July 15. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.61, thermometer 85, wind southeast 1, clouds 7. Read. A slight rain in the forenoon.

Wednesday, July 16. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.55, thermometer 84.5, wind east northeast 2, clouds 4. A nice shower about 7 A.M. Saw a duck in the Lighthouse pond as I returned. Reading. P.M. Siesta.

Thursday, July 17. Rose at 4 and went to the market and after my returned took a short walk on the beach but was induced to turn back to avoid a squall which came up as I got home but little rain fell. Bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.58,

thermometer 82.5, (thermometer at home at 6 was 79), wind east northeast 3, clouds 7. Read the "Old Dominion" by James. P.M. Siesta. Read "Old Dominion."

Friday, July 18. Was awakened at 4 by a thunder squall and did not walk as it rained all morning. Bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.63, thermometer 83, wind northeast 1, clouds 10 and still raining. The lightning struck William Wall's house and ran down the conductor until near the ground when it left it and penetrating the wall of the basement and entered the dining room and broke the leg of a safe, injured the dining table and out through the opposite wall. Finished the "Old Dominion," James gives a pretty good account of the Southampton insurrection, I was in Norfolk at the time.

Saturday, July 19. Rose at 3:35 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 7:45 A.M. barometer 29.60, thermometer 85.5, wind west southeast 1, clouds 2. Read Household Words. P.M. Siesta.

Sunday, July 20. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 7:30 A.M. barometer 29.60.2, thermometer 85.5, wind east southeast 1, clouds 4. Went up home about 10 and remained the rest of the day. William Randolph dined and Major William Fraser came in after tea.

Monday, July 21. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 7:40 A.M. barometer 29.61, thermometer 86.5, wind northeast 11, clouds 4. Read Household Words and drew up a replication in the case of Ogden et al vs. Geiger and Davis. There are several cases of fever.

Tuesday, July 22. Raining at 4 so I could not walk. Bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.58, thermometer 85,  
(Continued on page 10)

(Hackley from page 9)  
wind east southeast 1, clouds 7. The steamer **Isabel** came in about 10 last night. I got a circular from the Solicitor of the Treasury and Matilda one from R. Copeland. Mrs. Clark is very sick but it is not certain that it is yellow fever. Two men at Pilchers are better. Charles Howe's boy is sick. Answered the circular from the Solicitor of the Treasury and read papers.

Wednesday, July 23. When I woke at 4 there were heavy squalls rising and did not go to walk. At 5 some rain. Bathed. At 7:45 A.M. barometer 29.53, thermometer 84, wind south southeast 2, clouds 5. Yesterday the ship **Alabama** of New York from Havana came in with the yellow fever on board and one dead man who was buried on shore. Read papers. Heavy squall all day all around and about 5 a heavy one struck us and rained for about an hour, there was considerable rain and the old awning was spilt. Thermometer at the house 80 all evening.

Thursday, July 24. Rose at 4:20 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 7:45 A.M. barometer 29.55, thermometer 84, wind south 2, clouds 5. One man died at Pilcher's with the fever last night and Major William Fraser was taken sick, the sick are doing well. Made a copy of the replication in Ogden vs. Geiger and served in on Ossin B. Hart, Esquire and gave the original to Peter Crusoe at his house he not being at his office. Julia Tift pulled a cup of gruel over and was burned from her neck to her feet on the left side. I told them to cover her with flour and sent over Car. Veg. Wrote to Shafer to send me one of Wheeler and Wilson's \$100.00 sewing machine and to get me two books of homeopathic practice and some vials of globules in place of those most used in my box. Paid

Walbreg balance on his bill \$18.81 and gave him some of Matilda's hair to have made into a guard chain.

Friday, July 25. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.62, thermometer 86, wind east northeast 3, clouds 4. Major William Fraser's symptoms are favorable The family of Murphy, father, mother and four children, are very sick and it is thought some will die. Wrote to Mother. Went up to see Dr. Pettingill and he filled my front teeth with an amalgam and pulled out a jaw tooth which was too far gone to fill. It is one which has been ulcerated for about two years. The steamer **Isabel** got in about 4 P.M. and carried away her fore topmast in trying to get alongside her wharf. Captain and Mrs. Cornelius Curtis, Wallberg, Josephine Ximinez and Franklin Phillips went in her.

Saturday, July 26. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 7:30 A.M. barometer 29.64, thermometer 85, wind east northeast 4, clouds 10. There being a heavy squall to the south a corner of which is now passing over the island. Mrs Clark is much better. Major William Fraser is about the same. Drew up a claim for duties on behalf of the United States in the case of Anthony Pent and the brigantine **Royal Sailor** of Portland, from Cadenas laden with molasses and read the same in Court. Major William Fraser had black vomit about noon. Ruby Senac spent the day and night at my house the Major being at her father's.

Sunday, July 27. When I woke at 4 there was every appearance of rain and as I did not want to get wet lay down again. Bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.66, thermometer 84.5, wind east northeast 1, clouds 10. There has been clouds over the town since Friday and there has at intervals considerable rain fallen. When I last

heard Major William Fraser was dying. The Sloop of War **Cyane** came in yesterday forenoon and letters ordering her to Boston and she sailed this morning. Major William D. Fraser died about 10 o'clock this morning and buried in Mrs. Asa F. Tift's grave (she having been moved north) at 6 P.M. I walked out to the grave. The other sick are all doing well.

Monday, July 28. Rose at 4 and walked to the Fort wharf where finding the tide high turned back and walked up to the quarters. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.69, thermometer 85.5, wind east northeast 2, clouds 5. The sick as far as I can learn are all doing well and no new cases since Major William Fraser's. Yesterday wrote a letter to the Solicitor of the Treasury informing him that I had filed a claim for duties in the case of the brig **Royal Sailor**. Read papers. After tea went to Alexander Patterson's and sent over to William Walls for Hatty and Charlotte who had been spending the day with Mrs. Myers this being her 24th birthday.

Tuesday, July 29. Rose at 4 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 7:30 A.M. barometer 29.70, thermometer 85.5, wind northeast 1, clouds 4. At 10 went up to the Engineer Office and Felix Senac and John Baldwin took an inventory of Major William Fraser's things sealed up in a package his loose letters and papers and his keys and sealed them with my seal ring and wrote out names on the envelopes. There were a number of books and some old papers which Senac will repacked in the boxes they came in and fastened up. His clothes we left out to be sunned and if packed up the months would soon destroy them.

Wednesday, July 30. Rose at 4 and waked on the beach, returned

home and bathed. At 7:30 A.M. barometer 29.66, thermometer 85, wind northeast 2, clouds 4. Went to the dentist and had one tooth filled with gold. The filling he put in on Saturday (an amalgam of Kadnium) came out last night and he put a wedge between the teeth so as to open them up if possible to prevent further filing so that he could get at the place to put in a gold plug. When I went home I found cook (Black Matilda) was sick with some fever and pains in the head, back and limbs. Sent for Dr. S.F. Jones who said he thought that she might have a sever spell and that I had better have her moved so after dinner I went to Alexander Patterson's and borrowed his horse and carriage and taking Annie with me drove up to the Salt Ponds and told William Dennis that Matilda (Black) was sick and that I wished he would have her moved. He came down as soon after me as he could and had her moved to Old Nancy Vincent's. Paul staying with her. Matilda has the sick headache and was quite sick till bedtime.

Thursday, July 31. Rose at 5 having overslept myself. Bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.62, thermometer 86, wind east southeast 2, clouds 8. The woman is better this morning the fever has left her and but little pain remaining. Went round to the dentists and had my front tooth filled. Read Household Words. My mouth is now in tolerable order. Paid for pulling one tooth and filling two with gold \$7.00. Went to Alexander Patterson's after tea with Matilda. Hatty has a bad cold.

Friday, August 1. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.62.5, thermometer 86, wind east southeast 3, clouds 2. Matilda (Black) is better this morning. Oriana came to work at least for a few days, we want her in

place of Matilda. Hortense Lattine and Sarah and Aletta Patterson spent the day with us this being Aletta's eighteenth birthday. The bark **Thomas Carbin** came in from Cienfuegas having her steward and mate very ill with yellow fever and anchored at quarantine. Dr. Davis' brother Alden is quite sick he having gone to work too soon has a relapse and Davis' brother-in law was taken in the forenoon and has a high fever.

Saturday, August 2. Rose at 4:30 having attend the alarm. Walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.62, thermometer 87, wind east southeast 2, clouds 2. Read the Law Register and Household Words. A Negro child of Felix Senac four days old died this P.M.

Sunday, August 3. Rose at 4:45 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.56, thermometer 87, wind calm, clouds 8. Took Dan with me and made him bathe in the sea. Last night about 9 P.M. the **Guatamala** a very small steamboat to run on the coast of Central America came in seven days from New York. About 3 A.M. a squall from northwest passed over with considerable thunder and lightning and some rain but we did not have the main part of the squall. Matilda (Black) is much better and she went up to the Salt Ponds this morning. Davis and Alexander are both better this morning though nor out of danger. The **Guatamala** went out about noon and moved quick. She is 220 tons a new and pretty boat. In the afternoon the wind was from the northwest in squalls.

Monday, August 4. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 7:40 A.M. barometer 29.55, wind west southwest 1, clouds 4. Davis is very low, Alexander is better. A 7 A.M.

the high pressure double engine steamboat **Cauca** from Charleston four day for Texas came in. William Pinkney went over to Nassau in the schooner **Wye** yesterday evening. Went up to Justice Court and stopped at home till after dinner. The suit of Bulter vs. American Cameron was tried and judgement for the defendant. The steamer **Cauca** is bound for St. Marta, New Grenada to run on the Magdalena River. P.M. Siesta and reading.

Tuesday, August 5. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.47, thermometer 86, wind south 2, clouds 7. Dug a turtles nest with 123 eggs. Bought a Spaniel dog about 10 months old from one of the crew of the brig **Susan Soult** for which I gave \$5.00, he is large now and promises to be a large dog. About 8 P.M. a heavy squall of wind with but little rain from the south southwest passed over.

Wednesday, August 6. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 7:40 A.M. barometer 29.51, thermometer 85, wind south southwest 3, clouds 7. A good breeze all night after the squall. Saw several Robin Snipe on the beach and heard some Yellowlegs in the ponds. A heavy squall with thunder passed west at 10 P.M.

Thursday, August 7. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 A.M. barometer 29.52, thermometer 86, wind south southwest 3, clouds 7. I took my dog with me and sent him into the water, he brought sticks to the land but has not been caught anything but he is young enough to learn. Daniel Davis lost his horse last night and his mule is very sick this morning and will probably die cannot find out what is the matter. The steamboat **Cauca** went to sea.

# USCG Mohawk at War

*The USCG Mohawk that is now part of the Truman Annex waterfront is a veteran of the Battle of Atlantic during World War Two. Following is an after action report of her encounter with a U-Boat in August 1942. The Grand Lady is open for visiting at the end of Southard Street on Truman Annex. If you have some spare time and want to part of living history the Mohawk needs volunteers for Quarterdeck Watches.*

29 August, 1942

From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. **Mohawk** C.G.  
To: Commander in Chief, United States Atlantic Fleet.

Via: 1. Commander Greenland Patrol.  
2. Commander Task Force TWENTY-FOUR.

Subject: Action report 27-28 August, 1942, Report of Escort Convoy.

Reference: (a) U.S. Navy Regulations, Articles 712 and 874 (6).  
(b) Cinclant Confidential Letter 7CL-42 as amended by Cinclant Letter 01230, 6 June, 1942.

Inclosures: (A) Form "Anti Submarine Action by Surface Ship."

(B) Sketch of Opening Phase of Attack.

(C) Chart tracing of **MOHAWK's** courses.

1. **MOHAWK** departed Sidney, Nova Scotia, as junior escort for Sydney-Greenland Convoy No. 6 at 1420 Zone plus three, 25 August, 1942. Convoy organization was in two groups. Group One consisted of the U.S.A.T. **CHATHAM** and USCG **MOJAVE**, departing from group at Sydney outer buoy proceeding on



*The Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk tied up alongside the Coast Guard Barkentine Bear at Pier B of the Key West Naval Station in May 1940. Photo credit: USCG Mohawk Museum.*

same route at higher speed. Group Two consisted of the USCG **ALGONQUIN** and **MOHAWK** as escorts, with **LARAMIE**, SS **BISCAYA**, SS **ARLYN**, SS **ALCOA GUARD** and USS **HARJURAND** in convoy. Speed of advance 7 to 7.5 knots dependent on

USS **HARJURAND**, a coal burner.

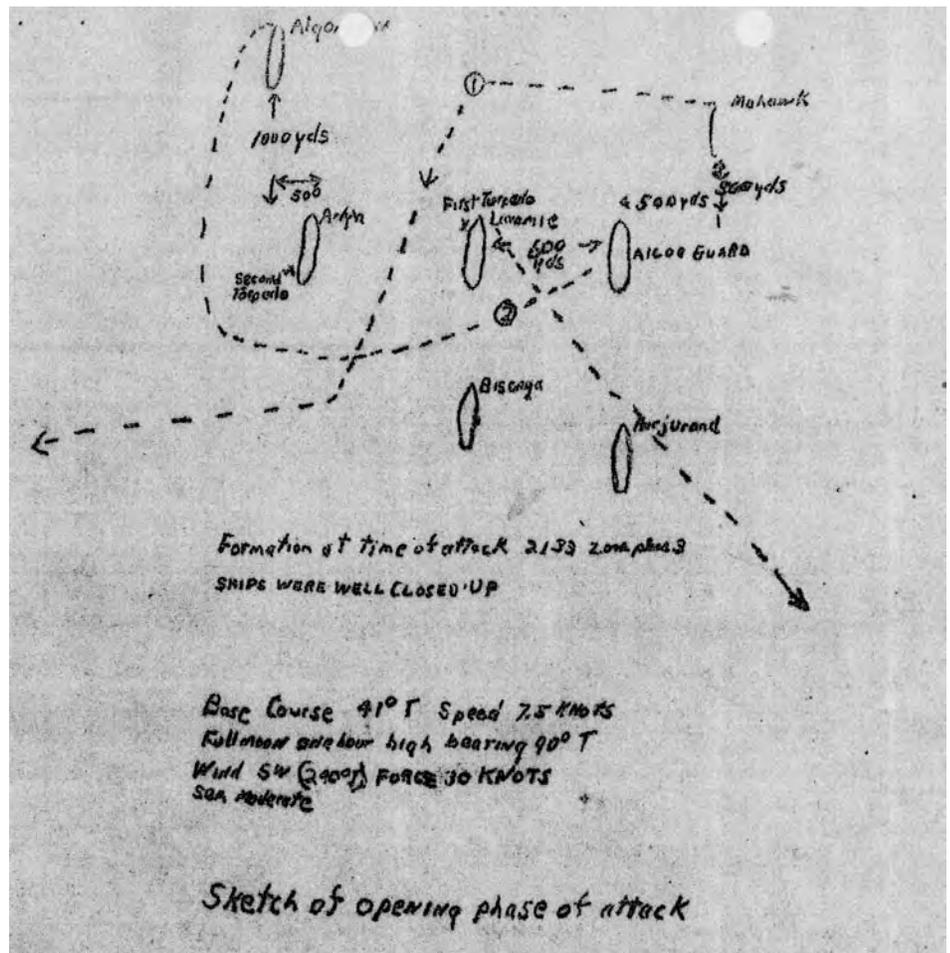
2. At 0900 received radio that U.S.A.T. **CHATHAM** had been mined or torpedoed near the north end of Belle Isle Straits. At 1600 passed **MOJAVE** and a Corvette loaded with **CHATHAM** survivors south bound.

3. Prior to attack, convoy was proceeding on base course  $41^{\circ}$  T at speed of 7.5 knots. Convoy was steering straight courses, escorts covering roving station especially since attack on **CHATHAM**.

4. The moon rose at  $2028$  bearing roughly  $90^{\circ}$  T. At  $2030$  passed through oil slick at north end of Belle Isle Straits, believed to have been from the U.S.A.T. **CHATHAM**. At  $2058$  heard alarm signal on steam whistle sounded by either **LARAMIE** or **ALGONQUIN**. Observed **ALGONQUIN** to be proceeding aft along left flank of convoy. In accordance with plan, **MOHAWK** stood across to take station vacated by **ALGONQUIN**. All hands were at General Quarters. Shortly after arriving on station, observed **ALGONQUIN** returning to station so **MOHAWK** returned to right flank and took up former station. After noting that **ALGONQUIN** had reduced speed to about convoy speed, secured from General Quarters at  $2030$ , assuming condition II M.

5. Personnel in CPO quarters, port side of mess deck, and in fireroom, claim they heard a marked hissing or whining sound that appeared to pass under ship. While it was not reported to bridge nor was sound picked up by QC operator, the following facts seem to verify that at least an unusual sound, not an explosion, was heard close aboard: (a) Personnel in CPO quarters and on mess deck proceeded and arrived topside before alarm for General Quarters was sounded or any explosions heard (b) Fireroom personnel were so positive of impending action that the Water Tender on watch ordered large tips in all burners and had nearly completed the change when first explosion was heard.

6. Heard torpedo explosion and observed faint white glow in vicinity of **LARAMIE**'s port bow at  $2133$  followed in about five



*Sketch of Opening Phase of Attack.*

seconds by second explosion and faint white glow which appeared to be just slightly abaft first glow and might be either on **LARAMIE** or **SS ARRLYN**. Sounded general quarters and proceeded at full speed for station on left flank of convoy. Heard third torpedo explosion at  $2134$  off port bow but was unable to fix position of explosion. While proceeding toward station observed **LARAMIE** sending up two white rockets broad on her port bow and headed in general direction of rockets. At  $2138$  observed **ALGONQUIN**, who had proceeded aft on left flank of convoy, making depth charge attack on starboard quarter of **LARAMIE**. Changed course to left and passed at  $100$  yards from **LARAMIE** port side about parallel to her. Observed that she was down by head and

listing to port, but though odor of fuel oil was strong there were no fires or any signs of her abandoning ship. Did not see **SS ARLYN** but was not certain she had been hit hence proceeded down moon in an attempt both to sight submarine on surface and to locate ships up moon. Convoy seemed to have scattered as only ships sighted were **ALGONQUIN** proceeding roughly southeast and **LARAMIE** proceeding southwest. Since had no information that anyone had positive sound contact, other than DC attack by **ALGONQUIN** which might have been an embarrassing attack, proceeded to southwest conducting sound search until  $2200$  when it appeared that **MOHAWK** was coming close to line of fire of **LARAMIE** who seemed to be firing both illuminating and

(Continued on page 14)

(Mohawk from page 13)

common 3" and 5" projectiles both to northwest and southeast. One other vessel, possibly the **ALGONQUIN**, appeared to be firing star shells. Situation seemed confused. **MOHAWK** fired two star shells down moon. Light beam given off was too narrow to be effective so after carefully searching down narrow beam of each star flare with negative results, ceased firing and proceeded to southeast across **LARAMIE** stern to extend area of sound search and to locate other ships of convoy. At 2230 sighted red flares bearing about 320°T, distance about five miles. At 2232 sighted **ALGONQUIN** and two ships standing to southeast between Cape Norman and Belle Isle. Decided that safety of **LARAMIE** was paramount to proceeding in opposite direction to investigate red flares. At this time, sinking of SS **ARLYN** was still unknown and if flares were from life boats they were within five miles of shore. Also, fact that submarine had remained in vicinity after sinking of **CHATHAM** in morning gave rise to belief that if **LARAMIE** was left unescorted submarine might attempt to finish her off while **MOHAWK** was engaged in hunting survivors. At 2259 received first positive information that SS **ARLYN** had been torpedoed. So changed course to westward until ran on oil slick of **LARAMIE** and then ran down oil slick overhauling **LARAMIE** at 2350.

7. On making contact with **LARAMIE** she advised she had echo bearing 165°T, distant 2000 yards. **MOHAVIK** ran down bearing without obtaining sound contact. In best estimated position dropped four depth charges from stern racks as an embarrassing attack. Three

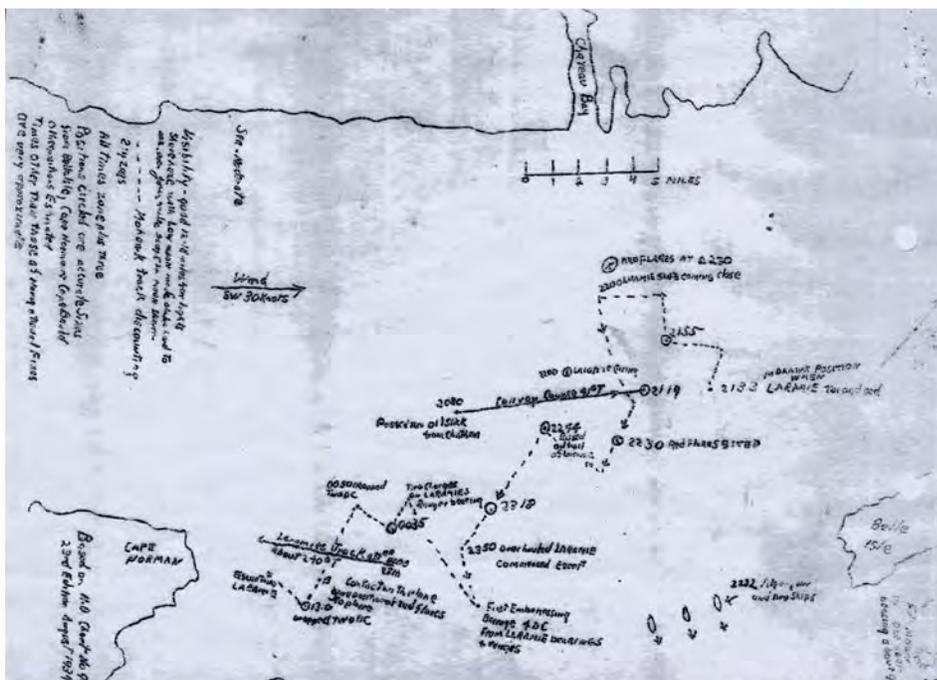


Chart tracing of **MOHAWK**'s courses.

failed to explode due to being set deeper than depth of water.

8. At 0030 **LARAMIE** reported echo bearing 32°T 5000 yards. **MOHAWK** ran down bearing without obtaining sound contact and dropped two charges from stern racks set for 100 feet as an embarrassing attack.

9. At 0040 **LARAMIE** reported echo bearing 300°T distant 3000 yards. **MOHAWK** again ran down bearing without obtaining sound contact, dropping two charges set for 100 feet at best estimated position as an embarrassing attack.

10. At 0050 **LARAMIE** reported echo bearing 145°T distant 2000 yards. **MOHAWK** ran down bearing without obtaining sound contact, dropping two 300 lb changes set for 100 feet at best estimated position as an embarrassing attack.

11. At 0100 made visual contact with Navy Patrol Plane. Asked them to look for possible **ARLYN** survivors five miles southeast Chateau Bay.

12. Continued escorting **LARAMIE** until relieved at 2330,

29 August, 1942 off Cape Ray in Cabot Straits by USS **BRISTOL**. Then proceeded for Sydney, N.S. in accordance with orders from CTF24.

13. During the entire action no sound contact with submarine was made by **MOHAWK**. Sound gear was working on echo ranging constantly. Operators were getting ranges up to 1100 yards on surface ships before and after attack.

14. Bridge controlled radio telephone contact with other escort vessels would have materially reduced

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existing confusion. **MOHAWK** is equipped with ARMY VHF radio telephone, operating on 116 and 125 megacycles, but no other unit in convoy was so equipped.

15. When contact report released by **MOHAWK**, all transmitters were found to be inoperative. Repairs were effected in about ten minutes. Investigation revealed possibility that transmitters had been inoperative since receiving severe depth charge shock ten days previously. Radio silence had prevented routine tests of equipment. Necessity for careful inspections of transmitters when observing radio silence for long periods is indicated.

16. No machinery disarrangement or failure of power was noted. This is first time that charges set for 100 feet have been dropped without at least partial loss of power. New locks on circuit breakers and overspeed trips on generator turbines were completed by ship's force just prior to departure of S-G 6. Due to electrically driven lubricating oil pumps, loss of electrical power causes immediate stoppage of main engine on this class vessel.

17. Under actual action conditions encountered, the abortion per-pertrated in cutting down bow bulwark of this class vessel, during last conversion, was a serious handicap. Bow bulwark was cut down to increase effective depression angle of forward 3" 50 calibre gun. Net effect of present shovel nosed bow is that, even in moderate sea and breeze, whenever vessel is headed within 50° of wind the cut—off bow plus remaining bulwarks aft of bow create a wind tunnel effect that focuses all spray on forward gun and bridge personnel. Forward gun was completely useless when heading into wind for it was continually

drenched with spray, blinding gun crew and fogging sights. Conditions on bridge were much the same. Glasses were soaked and fogged every minute or so and visibility ahead seriously decreased. Under conditions existing night of 27th with former bow but little light spray would have been taken aboard. It is strongly recommended that bow be rebuilt to original shape and height during the next availability of this vessel and that in addition, light weight spray shield be furnished for forward 3" 50 calibre gun.

18. Conduct of all personnel was excellent.

19. The handling of torpedo damages on **LARAMIE** is worthy of comment. No fire of any kind was observed in spite of her being fully laden when hit. Between 2140 when first observed and 2350 when **MOHAWK** took up escort, she had completely established normal trim and was back on an even keel. During that time she brought her guns into action. No lights other than gun fire were visible at any time from a distance during entire action.

19. Inasmuch as the Executive Officer is the only trained sound officer attached and was in charge of sound room during action, no report from Executive Officer as required by reference (a) is submitted.

R.T. ALEXANDER.

Copy to:

Commandant, Coast Guard,  
advance copy direct.

Advance copy to Cominch.

Advance copy to AtFleet, Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer,  
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*Sunset Key (Tank Island), Christmas Tree Island (Wisteria Island) and Fleming Key in the 1980's. Photo credit: Dale McDonald Collection Monroe County Library.*

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