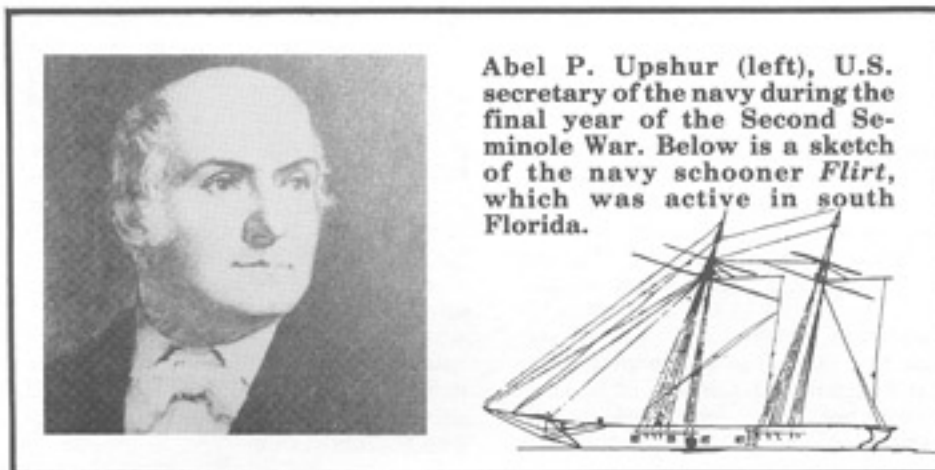


was formally dissolved on August 3, 1842, and Colonel William J. Worth officially announced an end to the war on the fourteenth.

The Second Seminole War was a costly action. Between \$30,000,000 and \$40,000,000 was poured into the six-and-a-half year conflict, and an estimated 1,600 military personnel and volunteers lost their lives. More than two-thirds of these fatalities occurred as a result of disease and accidents. The United States Navy lost twenty-three officers and seamen, and the revenue marines lost seventeen. The Seminole Indians suffered even more so. It cannot be determined how many Indians were killed in battle or died of consequences relating to the war. However, by April 1843, almost ninety percent of the survivors — some 3,824 Indians — had migrated to the western reservation.

The conflict also had a lasting effect on the economics and development of the Florida Territory. Recuperation within the settlements was a slow and tedious process. Moreover, the citizens remained skeptical of those Indians still residing in the peninsula, thus avoiding homesteading too near the reservation. If any positive attribute can be salvaged from such a war, it must be the knowledge obtained by United States forces about a previously unexplored region. In fact, military



Abel P. Upshur (left), U.S. secretary of the navy during the final year of the Second Seminole War. Below is a sketch of the navy schooner *Flirt*, which was active in south Florida.

reconnaissances in south Florida provided valuable data concerning the Everglades, both during and after the war. In 1848, when St. Augustine resident Buckingham Smith compiled an engineering report for the United States government, outlining the advantages of draining the Everglades for agricultural use, navy Commander Levin Powell wrote to Florida's United States Senator J. D. Westcott expressing his "entire conviction of its practicability." Powell wrote that a canal or cut from one of the rivers on south Florida's eastern side would connect Lake Okeechobee with the Atlantic, would open navigation to the interior,

and would effect the desired Everglades drainage. Expounding upon such attributes as the rich soil and tropical climate of the region, Powell expressed his opinion that the results of such a work as this were beyond mere speculation. In conclusion, he stated, the Everglades "would be reclaimed to the use and enjoyment of man." In effect, the Florida War opened new regions for southern expansion, and the subsequent slow but steady increase in population led to statehood in 1845. This goal was reached, in part, by the presence of the United States Navy in south Florida during the war.

# SEMINOLE WAR NAVY & ARMY VESSELS

Compiled by KENNETH J. HUGHES

Throughout the Second Seminole War, United States forces found a demand for both large and small vessels. These were needed for duties ranging from coastal protection to transporting troops and supplies, in addition to providing access into shallow bays, rivers, and especially into the Everglades. The first selected water-borne group was one under the direction of the U.S. Treasury Department, which commanded a fleet of vessels to patrol the United States' coastline to prevent illegal commerce. When the Florida conflict became imminent, the Treasury Department's U.S. Revenue Marines were ordered to blockade the peninsula to prevent trade between Spanish fishermen from Havana and the Seminole Indians. Besides participating in these duties, they, too, were eventually detached from their vessels and attached to the

Everglades expeditionary patrols.

The United States Navy joined the Florida forces early in 1836. This occurred when the orders for the revenue marines crossed the desk of Navy Secretary Mahlon Dickerson and he altered them to include one naval vessel for coastal patrols in Florida. His foresight opened the door to naval participation in the Florida War. However, during these early months of the conflict, the commander of the West Indies Fleet, Alexander J. Dallas, could not provide any vessels from his inadequate squadron, and could barely muster enough sailors to man army contracted steamboats.

Manpower shortages also forced the U.S. government to hire private contractors and agents to purchase supplies and forage. Private transports

were contracted to deliver this sustenance to the U.S. forces, and private laborers and teams were hired to ascertain that all goods safely reached their destinations. Spoilage was one of Major General Thomas Sidney Jesup's many concerns as he marched his troops into south Florida in 1837 and 1838. His correspondence often reflected associated problems such as the lack of coffee and the condition of beans that were utterly unfit for human consumption. In fact, troops were employed to construct adequate storage sheds to avoid such aggravations. Jesup also complained about inexperienced laborers and teamsters, whose various blunders created delays in the shipment of provisions, which, in turn, delayed the campaign. Frequent winter gales also hampered delivery schedules. Thus, the responsibility of maintaining supply lines

became a bi-partisan effort between government forces and private contractors. More often than not, army and navy personnel worked alongside the contractors to insure a prompt and safe delivery to the front lines.

Contracted steamboats placed under the direction of the quartermaster's department were Jesup's greatest asset in the effort to supply his troops. These vessels could deliver supplies into most inlets and rivers where private, deep-drafted transports could not enter. However, there are a few instances where even these steamers failed to penetrate the coastal perimeters. One incident, in particular, involved an effort by a steamer to reach the major general's forces at Fort Jupiter. When the vessel could not enter the inlet, the army relied upon Mackinaw boats and barges. Meanwhile, the larger transports were detained at Key Biscayne, the only place on the east coast which could facilitate a safe anchorage. Jesup eventually ordered them to be returned to the north and dismissed from service, after their cargo was placed in the depot on Key Biscayne. Subsequently, there was a great

demand for the use of small vessels in south Florida.

During 1836, when navy Lieutenant Levin Powell assisted Colonel Persifer Smith's Charlotte Harbor and Myakka reconnaissances, all personnel relied upon the use of rowboats, skiffs, and small sailing smacks belonging to the Spanish fishermen along the Gulf coast. Powell recognized the need for a more significant mode of transportation. Therefore, in 1837, while preparing for his first Everglades expedition, he was authorized to purchase long plantation canoes and Mackinaw boats. Jesup described the Mackinaw boats as "square boats from Charleston." Lieutenant John McLaughlin brought more of these boats to Florida during the winter of 1838-1839.

The U.S. Navy also relied upon the use of small vessels as an effective means of reconnoitering the coast. Late in 1838, the barges *Emmett* and *Schocco*, commanded by Lieutenant Charles B. Howard, U.S.N., were removed from the schooner *Wave*, and placed amongst the Florida Keys. The coastal surveys obtained during these patrols provided accurate data for

McLaughlin's Map of the South Florida Peninsula. The forces in Florida also relied on lighters, rowboats, service boats, and dinghies to load, unload, and deliver supplies from the contracted transports. A dredge boat was utilized in opening sand bars on the St. Johns River to facilitate steamer traffic, an "Iron boat" delivered supplies to U.S. forces stationed on the Caloosahatchee River, and captured "Indian dugouts" became a valuable means of transportation for the American guerrilla patrols throughout the Pai-hai-okee.

In summary, the use of vessels along this peninsula was as important to the U.S. forces in bringing the war to an end as was the Seminoles' demand for powder, lead, and sustenance in prolonging hostilities. The land forces certainly would have experienced less success if they had waged a war in the southern Florida wilderness without the presence of transports and smaller modes of transportation. And this task would have been especially difficult without the presence of the U.S. Navy and Revenue Marines to assist with these campaigns.

## List of Vessels

### I. NAVAL VESSELS

#### A) U.S. FRIGATES

##### *Constellation*

(Captain Alexander J. Dallas), 1835-36.

##### *Macedonian*

(Captain Parker), 1837, 1839.

#### B) GUN BARGES

##### *Benton*

(Lieut. John Davis, USN, and Lieut. Thomas T. Sloan, USRM), Southeast Florida, 1839.

##### *Harney*

(Lieut. John Davis, USN, and Lieut. Thomas T. Sloan, USRM), Southeast and southwest Florida, 1839.

##### *Mayo*

(Lieut. John Davis, USN, Passed Midshipman Strong B. Thompson, USN), Southeast and southwest Florida, 1839.

##### *Paulding*

(Lieut. Levin Handy, USN, Lieut. Samuel E. Munn, USN, and Lieut. Thomas T. Sloan, USRM), in southeast Florida and at New River, 1839.

#### C) SCHOONERS

##### *Bahama*

(Lieut. George M. Bache, USN), sailed lower Keys, 1836.

##### *Carolina*

Decked schooner (owned by Key West Customs House), on Lieut. Powell's southeast Florida expedition, 1836.

##### *Firefly*

Long-centerboard, schooner-rigged whaleboat (owned by Stephen Mallory), on Lieut. Powell's southeast Florida expedition 1836.

##### *Flirt*

(Lieut. John McLaughlin, USN), carried six six-pound guns and one twelve-pound gun, 1841-42.

##### *Grampus*

(Lieut. J. Cassin, Lieut. Elisha Peck, USN), 1836-40.

##### *Hayes*

Mail schooner, at Indian Key, 1841.

##### *Jefferson*

(Capt. John Jackson, USRM, Lieut. Commandant [Capt.] John Rodgers, USN), revenue service, 1836-41, naval service, 1841-42.

##### *Motto*

(Lieut. Thomas J. Lieb, USN), at New River and Key Biscayne, 1836.

##### *Otsego*

(previously the *Caroline*), 1838-40.

##### *Otsego*

(previously the *David B. Small*) (Lieut. James S. Biddle, USN), 1840-41.

##### *Perrine*

Transported Lieut. Levin Powell from Pensacola, 1837.

##### *Phoenix*

(Lieut. Christopher R. P. Rodgers, USN), 1841-42.

##### *Star*

(Passed Midshipman William M. Walker, USN), Florida service 1837-41; shipped interpreter "Primus" to Cedar Keys, 1841.

##### *Van Buren*

(Lieut. John B. Marchand, USN), 1841-42.

##### *Wave*

(Lieut. John McLaughlin, USN, and Lieut. John C. Henry, USN), private vessel purchased by McLaughlin from John C. Stevens; Florida service, 1838-42.

#### D) SLOOPS-of-WAR

##### *Boston*

(Commandant Edward B. Babbitt, USN, Capt. Dulaney, USN), Florida service, 1837-39.

##### *Concord*

(Master Commandant Mervine P. Mix, USN), Florida service, 1836-38.

*Erie*  
(Captain Tennick, USN),  
Florida service, 1839.

*Levant*  
(Captain Paulding, USN),  
Florida service, 1839.

*Natchez*  
Florida service, 1836-39.

*Ontario*  
(Commandant Ferrand,  
USN), Florida service, 1837-  
40.

*Panther*  
(Acting Lieut. Edmund T.  
Shubrick, USN), chartered  
from Henry Benners, service  
in south Florida, 1842.

*St. Louis*  
(Master Commandant Law-  
rence Rousseau, USN), Flor-  
ida service, 1835-36; assisted  
in 1836 Charlotte Harbor  
expedition under command  
of Commandant Paine.

*Vandalia*  
(Captain Thomas T. Webb,  
USN, Commander Thomas  
Crabb, USN), Florida ser-  
vice, 1835-38; first naval  
vessel to serve in Florida  
conflict.

*Warren*  
(Commandant Taylor,  
USN), Florida service, 1836-  
39.

#### E) U.S. STEAMERS

*USS Florence*  
Tampa Bay and Withlaco-  
chee River, 1838,

*USS Poinsett*  
(Captain Isaac Mayo, USN),  
Florida service, 1839-40.

#### F) U.S. ARMY STEAMERS (manned by naval personnel)

*American*  
(Lieut. Stephen Johnston,  
USN), Florida service on  
Gulf coast, 1836-37.

*Lieutenant Izard*  
Previously the *Yalla Busha*  
(Lieut. George M. Bache,  
USN), Gulf coast service;  
sank at the mouth of the  
Withlacochee River, 1836.

*Major Dade*  
Previously the *Southern*  
(Lieut. Neil M. Howison,  
USN), Gulf coast service,  
1836-37.

## II. U.S. REVENUE CUTTERS

*Campbell*  
(Lieut. Napoleon Coste,  
USRM), a small schooner,  
Florida service, 1838.

*Dallas*  
(Captain Farnifold Green,  
USRM), a small schooner,  
Florida service, 1838.

*Dexter*  
(Captain Thomas C.

Rudolph, USRM), Florida  
service, 1836.

*Jackson*  
(Captain Philomon Gate-  
wood, USRM), Florida ser-  
vice, 1836-41; refused by  
Lieut. McLaughlin, USN,  
owing to excessive draft.

*Madison*  
(Captain William A. How-  
ard, USRM), Florida service,  
1838-42.

*Van Buren*  
(Lieut. John B. Marchand,  
USN), Florida service under  
the navy, 1841-42.

*Washington*  
(Captain Ezekiel Jones,  
USRM), Florida service,  
1836.

#### 1st Cutter, 2nd Cutter, 3rd Cutter

Three small revenue vessels  
which provided Florida ser-  
vice to the navy and revenue  
marines. One of these accom-  
panied the barges *Emmett*  
and *Schooco* in the 1838-39  
south Florida coastal recon-  
naissances. Another cap-  
sized while landing Lieut. R.  
Tansill's marines at Indian  
Key in October 1841. The  
*Vandalia* actually carried  
four of these cutters. They  
were twenty-four and twenty-  
five feet in length, averaging  
six-foot beams, and were  
manned by ten to twelve  
oars.

## III. CONTRACTED ARMY VESSELS

### A) BRIGANTINES

*Alexandria*  
Florida service, 1839.

*Columbia*  
(U.S. Transport), Florida  
service, 1838-39.

*Experiment*  
Florida service, 1839.

*General Pickney*  
Florida service, 1839.

*Homer*  
Florida service, 1838.

*Ludwig*  
Florida service, 1839.

*Maria*  
Florida service, 1839.

*Mobile*  
Florida service, 1839.

*Molusca*  
Florida service, 1838-39.

*Orient*  
Florida service, 1839.

*Saratoga*  
Emigrated Indians to the  
west from Tampa Bay via  
New Orleans, 1841.

*Seaflower*  
Shipped marines from south  
Florida to Tampa, 1836.

*Somerset*  
Florida service, 1838.

## B) SCHOONERS

*Agnes*  
(Captain Swazey), Florida  
service 1838.

*Allure*  
Florida service, 1838.

*Caspian*  
(Captain Swazey), St. Augus-  
tine to Fort Pierce, 1838.

*Emeline*  
Florida service, 1838;  
grounded at Indian River  
bar, then purchased for the  
government by Lieut. John  
B. Magruder, First Artillery  
Regiment, for use as a  
lighter.

*Erie*  
Florida service, 1838; this  
may be the navy sloop-of-war  
*Erie*, but it is mentioned in  
the Nathan Jarvis diary  
before the naval sloop was  
commissioned.

*Exit*  
Florida service, 1838.

*Good Hope*  
Florida service, 1838.

*Charles Howe*  
Transported messages of  
Charlotte Harbor massacre  
to Cape Florida, 1839.

*T. F. Hunt*  
Troop transport, Tampa,  
1842.

*Imperial*  
Florida service, 1838.

*Lebanon*  
Transported troops from Key  
Biscayne to St. Augustine,  
1838.

*Lauranna*  
Florida service, 1838.

*Maria Estelle*  
Florida service, 1838.

*Medium*  
(Captain Arthur Magee),  
transported troops between  
St. Augustine and Mosquito  
Inlet, 1837, and from St.  
Augustine to Fort Pierce,  
1838.

*Morgan*  
Florida service, 1838.

*Motion*  
Florida service, 1838.

*Oscar*  
Transported troops between  
St. Augustine and Mosquito  
Inlet, 1837.

*Peru*  
Florida service, 1838.

*Pilot*  
Florida service, 1839, trans-  
ported cattle.

*Polly*  
Florida service, 1838.

- Randolph*  
Florida service, 1838.
- Rodney*  
Florida service, 1839.
- Stephen & Francis*  
Florida service, 1838.
- Swallow*  
Delivered supplies to navy vessels at Key West, 1841.
- Undaunted*  
Florida service, 1838.
- C) **SHIPS**
- Artic*  
Transported army supplies to Florida, 1836.
- Rosalind*  
Emigrated Indians from Tampa Bay to the West via New Orleans, 1842.
- D) **SLOOPs**
- Ada*  
Florida service, 1838-39.
- Aid*  
Florida service, 1839.
- Jane*  
Sailed soldiers from Tampa Bay to Sanibel Island and to Charlotte Harbor, where they discovered massacre, 1839.
- Juventa*  
Florida service, 1839, mail sloop and transport.
- E) **STEAMERS**
- Adams*  
Transported supplies and soldiers on the Caloosahatchee River to Fort Harvie and vicinity, 1841.
- Alabama*  
At New River and Key Biscayne, 1838.
- Alert*  
Florida service, 1838.
- Asia*  
Florida service, 1838.
- Camden*  
On the St. Johns River, 1837.
- Chamois*  
Supplied posts on the Suwannee River, 1838-39.
- Charleston*  
Florida service, 1838-39; transported troops to Key Biscayne, February 1838.
- Cincinnati*  
Contracted supply steamer on the St. Johns River, 1842.
- Comet*  
Authorized to propel barges on the St. Johns River, 1837-38.
- DeRussett*  
Transported soldiers from Tampa Bay to Fort Simmons on the Caloosahatchee River, 1841.
- Essayon*  
Florida service, 1837-39; on the St. Johns River, 1837.

- Florida*  
Florida service, 1836-39; transported Major General Edmund P. Gaines and part of Fourth Infantry Regiment from Louisiana to Florida, 1836; transported troops between St. Augustine and Mosquito Inlet, 1837.
- Forester*  
Employed on the St. Johns River, 1837-38.
- Francis*  
Florida service, 1838.
- William Gaston*  
(Captain Abraham King), shipped supplies from Fort Pierce to Gilbert's Bar (present-day Stuart), 1838; south Florida coastal patrols, 1841.
- Isis*  
Employed at Black Creek on the St. Johns and at New River, 1837-38; washed aground at Punta Rassa, 1841 (regarded as a good seaboat).
- Izard*  
Florida, 1839 (not to be confused with the *Lieutenant Izard*, which sank in 1836).
- Jon*  
Florida service, 1839.
- Marion*  
Florida service, 1838-39; supplied posts on the Suwannee River.
- John McLean*  
Florida service, 1837-38; grounded and lost on reef while transporting Fourth Artillery troops to Smyrna in November 1838; previously had served on the St. Johns and at New River.
- Muskogee*  
Florida service, 1838; reached to within five miles of Fort Jupiter by way of Hobe Sound.
- Okeechobee*  
Florida service, 1838-39.
- F. N. Page*  
Florida service, 1838.
- Richmond*  
Transported First Artillery between St. Augustine and New Smyrna, 1837.
- Santee*  
On the St. Johns River, 1837; on the Caloosahatchee, 1838; at New River; transported survivors of the Perrine family from south Florida to St. Augustine, 1840.
- Sattorlee*  
Florida service, 1838.

*Tallapoosa*  
Florida service, 1839.

*Tomochichi*  
Florida service 1838.

#### IV. UNIDENTIFIED VESSELS

- Blackhawk*  
Florida service, 1836, (shuttled naval expedition).
- Batteaux*  
(Passed Midshipman Henry Waddell), Florida service with navy at Indian Key, August 1839.
- Fairy*  
Small craft which accompanied the steamer *Major Dade* on a Gulf coast expedition, 1836.
- S. S. Mills*  
Mail packet to St. Augustine, 1837.

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