

# Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal

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OFFICIAL QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE KEY WEST MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NAVAL AIR STATION, KEY WEST IN WORLD WAR ONE

*The following is a Historical data report submitted on March 17, 1919 by Lieutenant Commander N. Mason, the Commanding Officer NAS Key West, to the Director of Naval Aviation. The Naval Air Station, Key West closed on June 15, 1920 and property disposed of The Naval Air would remain inactive until 1939.*

At the time of the entrance of the United States into the war there was but one American Naval Air Station in existence, that at Pensacola.

The Navy had however, for some years been experimenting with various types of aircraft and were in point of fact further advanced in their work than was the army. It is perhaps worthy of note that at the outbreak of the war itself the British Royal Naval Air Service adopted an American type of flying boat for patrol use and that this type with some modifications is in use today both in this country and abroad being generally accepted as the best model obtainable for this particular work. This flying boat - for it is such - is known in England as the "America" type, so-called from the boat of the same name in which a transatlantic flight was contemplated in 1914.

Not only is the land plane a distinctly American invention but in addition this country has the honor of having produced the first hydro-aeroplane, Glen Curtis being responsible for its appearance. It is not unnatural then that our ideas on this phase of aeronautics should be accepted and types of machines developed by us placed in the very front rank.

With the entrance of the United States into the war it became increasingly apparent



*U.S. Naval Air Station, Key West in 1918. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

that recent developments in tactics would make necessary a tremendous expansion in the equipment and personnel of the Naval Air Service.

Plans were immediately drawn which would enable a comprehensive program to be put into effect as expeditiously as possible. Sites were selected and one after another stations started.

One of the locations eventually fixed upon was at Key West, Florida, and the wisdom of the selection has since been apparent. As regards elementary flight training, conditions are ideal. The weather on which so much is necessarily dependent is favorable for flying the whole year through, and the water of the bay is so protected by the surrounding keys that it is practically never too rough for seaplane purposes.

For the purpose of a patrol base the situation is strategic, commanding the navigation water from the tip of the Florida mainland to the coast of Cuba and making possible a survey of vessels bound to and from Mexican ports and Cuba. Its pivotal position is now generally recog-

nized as is proven by the fact that the post-office department has selected it as the chief base for mail distribution to Cuba, the West Indies, the Canal Zone and ultimately South America. Hydro-aeroplanes must certainly be utilized for this work so, the port will perhaps witness an even increased aerial activity after the advent of peace.

The station itself is built upon made land, the property of the F.E.C.R.R.Co., and has nearly three fourths of a mile of water frontage.

The dredging-process was used for the fill and the result is a hard close packed gray surface which when dry has almost the hardness of concrete.

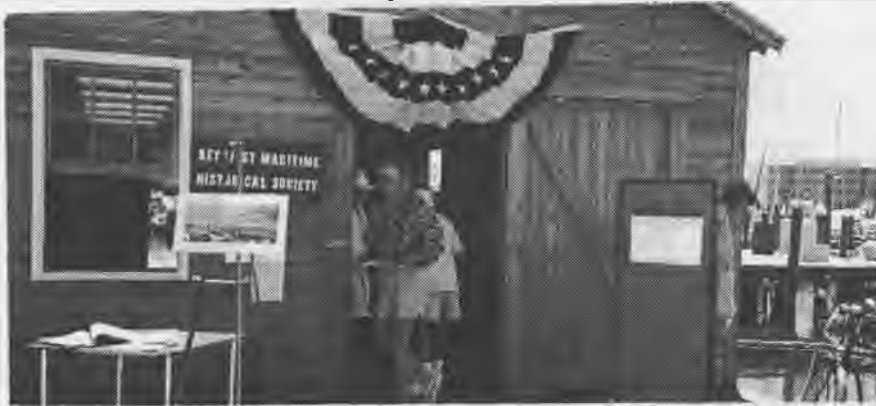
Ground was broken for-the station on July 13th, 1917, and on December 17th, 1917 the first of the Navy personnel reported - Stanley V. Parker Captain U. S. C. G. being in command. At that time one hangar only had been completed the others being in the course of erection, it being February 8th before they were actually

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# Society News

## Lectures, Field Trips and Special Events

By John Viele



President Ed Little at the Turtle Cannery Building during the open house on July 24. Photo credit: John Viele.

May 12: John Viele, Keys historian and author, gave a talk based on his new book, "The Florida Keys, Vol. 2 - True Stories of the Perilous Straits." With accompanying slides, Viele told the little-known maritime history of the Keys and the Straits of Florida from the early 1500s to the end of the Second Seminole War in 1842. In the straits, called one of the most dangerous sea passages in the world, and along the reef, thousands of men and women died in shipwrecks, native attacks, sea battles, and pirate boardings. Viele related several stories from his book including the harrowing voyage by dugout of five Franciscan friars to the Keys in 1697 and the valiant battle of one-armed privateer captain James Wimble, outnumbered four to one, against a Spanish privateer.

June 26: Aboard the catamaran *Spirit*, twenty seven Society members journeyed to the site of the wreck of the sailing ship *North America* located in 14 feet of water on Delta Shoals off Marathon. The wreck is one of several on the Marine Sanctuary's "Shipwreck Trail." A handout told the history of this 1842 wreck and the subsequent salvage operation. Corey Malcom, underwater archaeologist, briefed the group on the wreck site and the location of the various pieces of wreckage they would see. Each snorkeler was provided with a waterproof handout to enable him to identify the various parts of

the wreck. A second snorkel dive was made over the coral heads around Sombrero Key Lighthouse.

July 24: In conjunction with the Harborwalk Fest, the Society hosted an open house and maritime history exhibit at the rebuilt Turtle Cannery Building at the Key West Bight near the foot of Margaret Street. With photographs on loan from Wright Langley, the exhibit told the story of the maritime industries that once flourished at the bight and contributed so much to the economic growth of the city. These included fishing, turtling, sponging, and shrimping. The exhibit was put together largely through the efforts of Society president Ed Little. Jack King and John Viele assisted in the set up and Corey Malcom helped to welcome visitors.

The exhibit was a preview of what the Society expects to become a mini-maritime museum featuring the history of the Key West Bight. Although the bight has been renamed Key West's Historic Seaport there is nothing in the area to tell that history. The Society's board of directors has engaged Mary Perkins to design the museum and will soon begin a fund-raising campaign to get the project underway. This is the biggest project the Society has undertaken to date and we will need all the help we can get to bring it to fruition.

## New Members

Bob Baumann, Keys; Seana Cameron & Lee Starling, Key West; Ben & Carlene Edwards, Big Pine Key; Rita S. Jones, Palm

Coast, FL; Frank & Peggy Kirwin, Key West; Father Tony Mullane, Big Pine Key; Peg & Leon Niemiec Kensington, MD.



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

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# Flight Training NAS Key West 1918

By Harold D. Jobs

*I met Harold Jobs in 1987. He had returned to Key West to celebrate his 90th birthday and his first visit since 1919 to the town where he was stationed during World War One. He was born in Staten Island, NY and a graduate of the Pratt Institute. He enlisted in the Navy in 1917 and was stationed in Pensacola, at the Massachusetts of Technology and then Key West for flight training. The letters he wrote his father about his training and Key West survived. He allowed me to copy some of these letters. Ensign Jobs completed flight training in 1918 and became the 1,966 person to wear the Navy's Wings of Gold. He stayed in Key West as an instructor until he was discharged in 1919. He settled in Boston and worked as an insurance underwriter and investment counselor. He died in June 1988 at the age of 91. Tom Hambright*

## **Saturday, September 7, 1918.**

We are all ready to pull out of Jacksonville, Fla. On the last lap of our long trip. We arrived in Atlanta, Ga. Thursday night at midnight and waited till Friday night for our train. We had a wonderful time there. Two fellows in a "Stutz" picked us up and wanted to know about Tech [Massachusetts Institute of Technology]. As they are waiting to be called for Naval Aviation. We rode around with them all afternoon and saw the whole city and also the district swept by the big fire last year

I certainly wish I could stay in Atlanta as it is a great town and more pretty girls than I have ever seen before.

Our train left at 11 last night and we arrived at Jacksonville at 10, it is 3 now so we saw this town too.

It is sure hot down here and I don't know what it will be when we get to Key West. We met a bunch of boys from Key West and Miami who were in our Company at Tech. They are on their way to Pensacola for flight training.

We should arrive in Key West tomorrow sometime. The boys say it is a wonderful station but the town is a joke, so I see where my good times cease and I lead a very quiet life— and save money. So you will all have to write often or I will die sure. This trip is interesting but I am tired out and will be mighty glad when we get there.

## **Sunday, September 8.**

Hot! Holy Smokes but this is awful. We



*Harold Jobs, on the left, and friends on the porch of the house at 718 Eisenhower Drive. The house was used as Bachelor Officers Quarters during the War. Photo credit: Harold Jobs.*

arrived in Key West this morning at about 10 A.M. We took the Navy truck out to the station and reported and had a medical exam and was passed.

The town is a joke-enough said. I got up at 6 and found out we were on the Keys. You know there is a long railroad built out on the Keys connecting them all together. The Keys are small islands with tropical growth including beautiful palm trees. The water about the Keys is shallow not over 18' deep.

We got our cots—same as at Tech and the barracks are good.

While standing around I met four of the boys I had in my Company at Pensacola. Two of them are Chief and the others 1st Class MM [Motor Machinist] so they have done well. They have the gas work. Everybody likes the station very well and the aviators think it great. We went over to the hangar and saw the Blimp and also met our officers who seem like fine men. We can wear work clothes around and I guess we will have a fairly easy time of it.

The sun is scorching hot but a breeze is blowing. The fellows wear scarcely any clothes so manage to keep cool or rather comfortable.

## **Sunday, September 15.**

This is the first Sunday I have not been in town in many a day but it is useless to put on a hot uniform and go to a dead town where there is absolutely nothing to do. I will probably walk this evening when it is cooler.

I had a very interesting week and the time has passed mighty fast. I will probably repeat myself in my letters as I write

to so many I am unsure as to what I have already told you.

I have had four flights in the Blimp- 2 joy rides in the engine cockpit and the last 2 were instruction hops in the rear seat. The instruction hops were an hour and a half long. In teaching us to fly the Blimp we take the rudder and after we learn that they let us take the elevators and after you get both down could you go in the pilots seat. Well I am more than pleased with my progress as the first time I took the rudder I was able to hold my course fine so he let me take the elevators too - both on the 1st hop. Yesterday, he made me do a circle and make a figure of "8" with an island as the center well I started and got one loop all right less than a mile across but on the next I forgot about the wind and goodnight I was about 8 miles in diameter but was round so he said I was alright. A Blimp is very hard to steer as the wind has a large area to act on. The rudder is controlled by a foot-bar and you have to keep it in motion all the time or you will veer way around. It is not steering a boat where you can hold her on a course. With a Blimp if you give her right rudder you must immediately check with left rudder or she will swerve to starboard strongly and you would have a job getting her back again. I said I was pleased with my progress, well the reason is that the other 3 have only had the rudder on straight courses while I have had both and have done a - stunts." It is very interesting work but I can readily see how it settles down to hard work on a 5 hour patrol. On our hops we go out over

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(Jobs from page 3)  
the ocean and pick up ships and hover over them. The crew semaphores to us and we "chat" with the flags a while and then shove off to another ship.

I never paid much attention to semaphore before but now I am studying it hard as it is important on this patrol work and is also a great pastime to break the monotony of the long fights. I can send about 12 words and receive 6 or 7 but want to get so I can take 20.

In flying it is so warm that we do not wear a coat only a leather helmet and goggles. Those goggles are made of special unbreakable glass and cost \$10.00. I have a pair ordered.

This station is better in many ways than Pensacola and I am glad I came here as I will get the very best of training and when I get my wings I will have plenty of hours to my credit so I will feel confident of doing any kind of flying.

The chow is very good for Navy chow and we sleep on cots like we used at Bos. Tech. We do not have to get up until time for chow which is 7 A.M. one day and 7:30 the next so we have the pleasure of rolling over for another snooze when the others get up at 5.

I guess I told you about meeting a number of my old Pensacola Company down here in the gas plant all the Gobs [Sailors] are fine fellows and our officers are great.

The sea plane students are all envious of us Blimp men as we have things so much easier than they do. Believe me those boys sure do work.

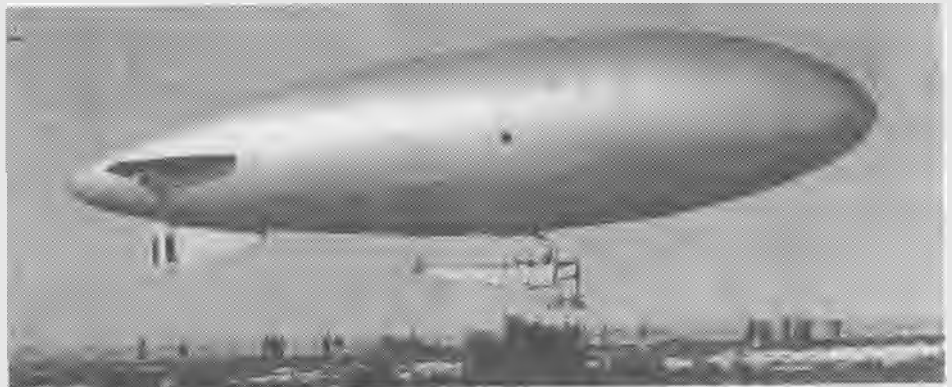
I am sure getting a great coat of tan, all the fellows here are black. I was in swimming one afternoon last week while down at the machine gun range and the water was too warm to enjoy a swim and salt just like brine.

We have had plenty of mosquitoes for the last two or three nights. They are very small but they sure can bite. They will probably go with the next strong wind.

I have written a good many letters since I have been down here as that is about all I have to do evenings. We have some books down here but they are not very good.

#### September 11.

Am having a fine time down here and have had two hops in the Blimp setting in the engine cockpit. I have not been on a patrol yet but expect one in a few days and then we will be out 4 or 5 hours. Today we dropped a dummy bomb on a 175' is-



*The Blimp Harold Jobs used during training. Photo credit: Harold Jobs.*

land and hit it which was quite a satisfaction. We carry live bombs on the patrols but don't talk too much about this patrol work. It is so warm in the air that we do not wear coats but do wear a leather helmet and goggles. I ordered a pair of \$10.00 goggles. They are very special unbreakable glass with celluloid between the glass. We do not have to buy a helmet.

We have classes for half a day and take radio, semaphore, blinkers, gunnery, seamanship and drill. When we are not flying and are in the hangar we have nothing to do. The food is good for Navy chow and I have a bear of an appetite and sleep, I just murder it.

This is certainly a wonderful station and the Gobs are great so it is like one big family. It's good to be back in the Regular Navy again in work you like. It sure is a great life and the flying is fine. You can see the bottom (3 fathoms) very plainly and see stones coral etc. on the bottom. Today we saw a large shark and a school of porpoises. One day they shot a whale so there really is something to do. We carry a wireless sending set to report on the patrol.

There is a rumor around that a new schedule is going into effect so that all the students will have to take calisthenics, more classes, study at night, drill Sunday etc. I hope it doesn't go thru but if it does we are simply out of luck. Our only salvation from this unpleasant grind is to get our stripes so we are just looking forward. It will probably take 8 or 10 weeks but when we do get it we will have a pile of hours to our credit.

The stunts they do with the planes out here are wonderful. The tail spin is one of the best. The machine points straight down and spins around with the tail straight tic. They do these stunts at about 3,000' or more and stop about 1,000' on three spins. The loops are pretty and they do 12 loops with-

out stopping. That is the record most of them do 3 or 4 in a string. They always come out of them and it seems you can let a N-9 go into anything and pull her out if you keep your head.

I do not mind the heat so much now as I did. I do not wear an undershirt and bathe often so keep as comfortable as possible. It surely is a joke to see us drill. We mope along with the guns hanging over our shoulder, out of step, slow cadence and no pep at all. You would never recognize us as the same fellows who 3 months ago had all Boston watching our fine drill.

September 19.

I do not feel like writing tonight as I am tired, sweaty, dirty and nearly dead from the heat and mosquitoes, but I simply must tell you how fortunate I was today. I had my first hop in a seaplane. I was sent over to the beach and met one of the plane instructors who was in my Company at Tech. He asked me if I was busy and although I had drill I said no so he asked me if I wanted a hop. He got a nice machine with a Hispani-Suesi motor pronounced "Spana-Sweezer." These are fine powerful planes. He told me to see that my life belt was on tight so I knew what that meant- he was going to put me thru the stunts. We went up to 4,000 feet and there was nothing new to that except that it take a plane an awful long time to make altitude compared to a balloon. We were in the clouds then when suddenly he tapped me on the shoulder so I gripped the side of the cockpit for all I was worth. Well we dove and turned over and every way. I was not scared but like a fool closed my eyes so I couldn't see what we did. After we got down I found out they call it a "Split" - that is the only name for it.

You do is start to loop and when you get up top of the loop you slip off sideways on one wing and fly off in the opposite direction.

The next was four loops.

The first thing you know is you dive to

gain speed and then you feel the wheel drawn back against your chest and the nose points straight up. Of course you are upside down on the top of the loop but the belt holds you in together with centrifugal force. We did 4 one after another. It's great to look down and see the sky and up and see Key West. The next thing he did was a flipper spiral

In this the plane is 90 degrees from horizontal or the wings are pointing up and down instead of being parallel with the ground you spin around this way all see the earth first in one place and then in another.

In the flipper spiral you use your rudder as elevators and steer with your flippers or elevators.

From this we went into a tail spin where the machine points absolutely straight up and down with the tail up and spins around. This is the best of all.

The sensations can't be described but they are great and I enjoyed it very much. The pilot is mighty good and put me thru them all and I am glad he did. After the first stunt you have perfect confidence and thoroughly enjoy every minute.

Well I have flown in free balloon, kites, blimps, sea plane, so now all I need is a

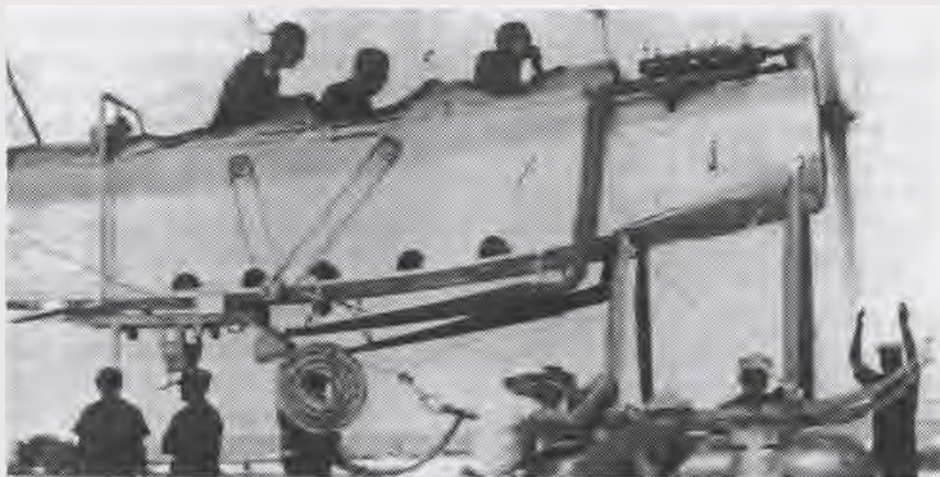
**L.** hop in a flying boat and a land plane. This afternoon I was up with the skipper of the Blimp school on a 2 hour spin. I did fine and I guess he was well pleased as I sure made that old Blimp mind me.

Yesterday I was on a 5 hour patrol and we spent an hour shooting "at" sharks and stingarees. We would fly 200' over shallow water and there were plenty of big brown sharks about 15' long. We had a Colt 45 caliber and had 7 shots apiece. Darned if any of us could hit them but we came close and had good sport.

This climate has knocked me again. I have a cold in my head but have been going to the Doctor and it is nearly all gone. Sweat! Why we are wet all the time and don't try to put our clothes clean

#### **Sunday, September 22.**

Yesterday afternoon I went on patrol. We left at 1:30 and encountered bad weather and "bumpy" air right from the start. We could see rain in several places but we "go" unless it is very bad. After we were out an hour the pilot and I changed seats so I had full control of the ship. I piloted for two hours and a half and was tired out when it was over. I didn't get along very well as there is an awful lot to watch but I got the idea of things and at the end I was doing fairly well and wasn't doing



*A close-up of the cockpits of the Blimp that Harold Jobes flew. Photo credit: Harold Jobes.*

a "Scenic Railway" as I was at the start. Ensign King drove back and I slept most of the way. We were out 5 hours and a half altogether.

When we came in sight of the station we saw a storm was ready to break so we slowly worked our way in but turned around and came back as it looked bad. It was getting dark so there was nothing else to do but take a chance so we headed for the field. When we got within half a mile of the field the storm (rain) hit. We were heavy at the time and all that water on the bag added about 200 pounds more, so we started to sink. Believe me we sure dropped and we were doing all we could to go up and going full speed for the field. I cut loose the water ballast and let it all run out and also let the plug out of the gasoline tanks so we lost about 50 gallons of oil and I also dropped 3 bags of ballast but still we came down. The mechanic used his head and climbed out on the pontoons and jumped when we were 12 feet from the ground. This checked us, so we hit comparatively easy. You see we had a live bomb under the fuselage which we were afraid of. As soon as we hit I jumped out and they dropped the bomb after the detonator had been taken out. It was raining hard and then the wind started. They called out about 100 extra Gobs and we tried to hold her nose into the wind but couldn't. The bar went to the ground and the pontoons were ripped off the landing gear. We worked on her for 45 minutes before we could get her in. We finally got her in the hangar but she swung against the door and ripped a 10' hole in the side. As soon as we got her bagged down we started to deflate and disassemble and we sure hustled too. We had her all down in no time and by that time I realized I was soaked, hungry and

"all in", so the Commander made me go and get on dry clothes. After I fixed up and ate I was weak as a baby so went to bed.

Of all the bad luck this is the worst. Here we will not be able to fly again until the Blimp is fixed and I doubt if they have her ready next week so I am "out of luck." But even so the experience was valuable and I am glad I was there as there was much to learn. No one was hurt and the damages were slight to what they could have been.

My uniform came from Wells Shannon Friday and it looks great. It has the "Regular Navy" buttons on it. The order that the Flying Corps could wear the Regular Navy insignias instead those Reserve things. We are the only branch of the Reserves granted this privilege and we are proud of it. I will not wear my new uniform much down here so will keep it for when I get my commission.

#### **Saturday, September 27.**

I was pleased that you asked some direct questions about the Blimp for in this way I can explain what you do not understand. In landing we heel against the wind and nose her down to about 100' or less of the ground over the spot where we want to land and then drop a 250' drag rope. The Gobs below grab on the rope and although it throws them around they pull us down with our motor shut off. When we get near the ground the Gobs maneuvering lines fastened on the sides of the bag and pull us along. This all sounds simple but it really is no cinch.

You asked if I liked Blimps better than planes. You bet I do as the Blimp is better in many ways. One thing you can ride in the Blimp and look directly over the side while on a plane the wing surfaces

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interfere.

Yesterday morning we were on the new rifle range shooting Springfields and machine guns at 200 yards. As a sharp shooter I'd make a good brick layer as I couldn't hit a thing but did better than some of them.

**Tuesday, October 1.**

Hurray! The Blimp made her first flight this afternoon after her serious idleness and I was glad to see the old baby go up. We worked all day yesterday and last night we were up all night watching inflation and fighting mosquitoes. We thought it was going to be a cinch to stay up and we were full of pep and we did some boxing and we all got beat up more or less, as you know I am no star with the gloves. But by the time morning came I was dead. The mosquitoes! Well you have no idea how bad they are. It was the same as being put in a room full of them and you couldn't keep them away.

We have a cage built of mosquito netting so we would take turns sitting in it and having a few minutes of comfort.

We sent out and got a pint of cream apiece and had a party at 9 P.M. and got sandwiches and coffee at 12 but the cheese was so strong that if we had put a pipe from "it" to the Blimp we would have had plenty of gas. We left the hangar at 6:30 and I laid down to wait for chow and didn't wake up until colors blew at 8, so in other words I missed my breakfast so by the time dinner came I was all in and ate everything in sight including stew.

The rainy season is here so it will interfere with our patrol work but it will not hold up our qualifying as we will take more short hops which will count the same. Our Blimp goes about 40 MPH that is an average of against and with the wind.

**October 4.**

Here is a souvenir of the Blimp that I fly. When it was wrecked in Sept. A large chunk was torn in the side. When we patched it we cutout some fabric and this is part of it. The lower left corner shows a seam where two strips are fastened together.

I had my 1st hop since the wreck this morning and it felt good to get in the air again.

**Thursday, October 1(L)**

Received the goggles ok tonight and am well pleased with them. The amber is fine for afternoon work when the sun is low and shines in your eyes. When you wear clear goggles the sun blinds you so it is hard to watch your gauges.

Here is an idea of what the pilot has to do. The rudder is operated by a bar operated with the feet. The ship cannot be held on a course like a small boat or airplane but keeps veering so you have to keep the rudder moving all the time. The elevators which are used to make her go up and down are operated by a hand wheel on the side of the car - right hand side and is very sensitive. Then there are three pressure gauges in front on the dashboard.

Pressure tube "B" must be kept between 10 & 20 m. m. when flying or about mark so you see you have to watch closely as 10' rise will make it use quite a bit. When the pressure gets to high your value air from separate compartments fore and aft called balloonets. You have valves for this and when the pressure gets low you force air into the balloonets by means of opening dampers and allowing the propeller blast to force the air in. These gauges must be watched as the bag is apt to rip if the pressure gets high and if it gets low the tail gets flabby and as the rudder and elevators are mounted on the tail of the bag they would lose their effect.

**Wednesday, October 16.**

I have been having a great time the last few days. Yesterday I had two hops and they were the best I have ever had. The first one was with a "dizzy" instructor I have never had before. By dizzy I mean that he likes to take chances and does fancy stuff. Of course we really can't stunt with a Blimp but Ensign Cambell took her down to where the warships were anchored and brought her down low and flew in between them and zoomed over them. By that I mean he would dive straight at them and then suddenly nose her up and jump over just clearing the aerial between the mast. I stoop up in the rear seat and semaphored with the sailors and officers. One of the officers signaled for us to do a loop. I replied "We only loop on Sundays." Finally one of the Gobs started to send from the bridge and he shot it at me at about 30 a minutes so I piped down as that was too fast for me. I can talk about 15 and send 20 or more.

After that I took the pilots seat and did better than I have ever done. We landed and changed instructors and this time we went shark hunting. We used a colt revolver 45 caliber and it sure has a kick. We each had 7 shots and I hit a shark on the tail and killed a stingaree. The shark was about 8 feet and the stingaree was at least 5 feet across. This is wonderful sport as we throttle our motor down so we don't move

and go down to about 50 feet.

Today I was up 2 'A hours and took the machine up from the ground for the first time and did fine. I am doing fine Pop and if the weather stays good I will be landing very soon. I have had about 37 hours now so you see had hard it is to qualify. I like it more all the time.

We were supposed to have had gunnery this afternoon but I found out they were going to repair the range so I slept and read as I have sworn off hard work of the kind - let the new fellows just out of Tech do it.

Today while out flying we or rather Ensign Soule who was acting as observer sighted an H boat. They are large planes the body of which is a boat and are driven with a liberty motor. Well this H boat was stalled so we went down to it and I semaphored (as I had changed seats with the instructor). They had engine trouble or "dead stick" and didn't know the direction to Key West. I signaled that it was 310 degrees and told them we would send a boat out for them but they got underway before the boat arrived. As soon as we left them I sent a wireless message to the station for the boat. The plane was drifting out to sea. When things are happening like this I enjoy it - can you blame me?

**Sunday, October 21.**

**We were fortunate last week in getting in quite a number of hours which enabled me to get quite some practice in "taking off." This means flying the Blimp from the ground. Previously the instructor has been taking off and the student taking the controls after getting into the air. This stunt is not hard - the only thing you must be very careful. You have to weight the ship off and watch out in the starting of the engine. Before leaving the ground you test the motor on high and idling speeds. Then we have to get word from the chief in charge that the sky is clear of planes. As soon as this signal is given we "give her the gun" and speed up to 1,400 rpm and raise our hand. That is the signal to go. The Gobs on the car shove forward and up and the way we go up at an angle of about 20 degrees. This doesn't sound much but it really is. A plane can not make a climbing angle like that at no time. We go off nose into the wind and hold the steep angle until we have made sure of clearing everything on the ground so at about 100' we start leveling off and gradually bring her down until we make 500'.**

Yesterday I had two take offs and they

were both good. I might add that after we get up we pull back the gun to 1,100 rpm so that is fast enough for ordinary work. On one of my hops yesterday I got up to 1,110 feet which is the highest I could go without valving gas. I didn't want to do that. The Blimp is not a high flying bird by any means although in order to qualify we must take her up to 3,000 feet and that is the last thing we do.

No doubt I will start making landings next week and that is really the last thing I have to do before qualifying - sound good doesn't it?

Yesterday I flew down low over the Navy ball field and watched the game for a while - O we sure have a great time. Coming in we had a mishap. We dropped our drag rope and it was wound incorrectly so I climbed over the side and kicked it loose as it snarled about 50 feet from the car.

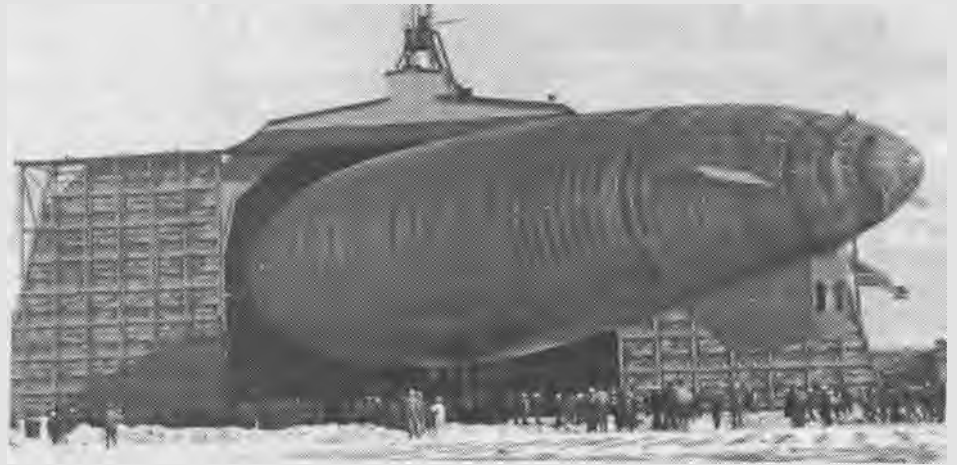
With good weather I should qualify in another week or two more at the most. Then I will have to wait probably a couple more weeks for my commission and my designation as a "Naval Aviator" and wings. You see now I am only a student Aviator. My designation will make me a Naval Aviator and will also designate where I am to fly but no doubt it will be Key West I'm doomed here I guess.

Tomorrow morning we start eating in the new mess hall for the students only. We have been eating Gobs chow all along but now it will probably be better. We are all going to chip in \$1.00 a week for extras such as ice cream and fruit. They say the officers chow is the best going - wonderful and I am mighty anxious to get a whack at it.

The Influenza is not so bad down here. They go at it hard when a fellow reports feeling bad so they have lost only one or two. Some of our boys have had it and run up a high fever but that was all. They hold everyone coming in the detention camp and take no chances. It surely must be terrible up north and I am glad I am where I am.

This morning they read off three General Court Martial sentences. A General Court is the highest - Naval court. One boy got 1 year for stealing and a dishonorable discharge after he gets out. Another got 2 years and dishonorable discharge for sleeping on his watch. Another got 10 years and dishonorable discharge for assaulting a Key West **girl**. Some examples for the rest of them isn't it.

I certainly hope we have good flying weather next week as I want to finish my qualifying and get it over with.



*The Blimp being moved to the hangar. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

Can you tie a bowline one handed and make a long splice etc. Well if you can't you had better get busy as I will show you up when I get home as I am a shark on knots and that sort of thing.

Wednesday, October 30.

This has been a great week for flying as we have had perfect weather and I have been up about 2 hours every day. I must say that on Monday after being sick a week I felt a bit out of trim but I soon overcame that.

Today I started practicing making landings and it was great sport. I had two hops with different instructors and made 5 practice landings on the first hop and 4 on the second. When we make these practice landings we bring the ship down just as we were going to land but keep her 200' from the ground instead of bringing her down to about 50' as you do in a real landing - when you drop the drag rope. I did good work and tomorrow I will make real landings.

There was quite a commotion last night. One of the Ensigns (that no one likes) and a student had to land as they ran out of gasoline. It was dark and they drifted out to sea and were lost. They looked for them all night and this morning they found them way out to sea with their plane ready to sink.

There has been a new order put thru that all men on this side who are actively engaged in Submarine Patrol work for 3 months rate a gold chevron on their arm - same as the men on the other side. The idea is that we are not here because we want to be here as all of us prefer foreign service but as the government considers this patrol important they grant us the same decoration as the foreign pilots. I will rate mine in November.

**I am going to buy my leather puttees and insignias this Saturday night as they may be out of them when I need them. The puttees cost \$18.00 but the worst is the hat insignia which costs \$7.00 and all there is to it is a hat band with gold crossed anchors and a gold eagle but it is all hand made.**

**We are expecting a new bag for our other Blimp. They are shipping us the one from Hampton Roads which has been to Akron being repaired. It will be fine when we have 2 Blimps as then we will be in the air all the time and that's my idea of life.**

**November 8.**

Suppose you are happy as a two year old over the good news yesterday afternoon at about 4 the report came in that the war was over and Germany had surrendered. • This was confirmed by the officers and the station went wild. They put up the new fog siren and started it roaring (like the one on Sandy Hook). When the news broke out the star fliers (Ensigns) grabbed planes and went up stunting. Well Pop I have been seeing flying for nearly a year now but never anything like last night. We have some wonderful fliers. They went down over Key West and stunted flying down low over the street going straight for houses and suddenly zooming over barely missing them. The big Key West Wireless Station has a high 3 mast aerial. Well they even flew between the masts.

After that they came up top the station as it was getting dark. They did loops about 400' (dangerously low). One of them dove down in front of the Y to within 25 feet of the ground and zoomed up barely missing the barracks. One flew straight down on the Blimp hangar in a flipper spiral  
(Continued on page 15)

## Civil War Days in Key West

By Lewis G. Schmidt

PART 5 (December 19, 1862 thru February 1863)

(47th Pennsylvania returns to Key West)

The 47th Pennsylvania disembarked at noon on Friday, December 19, 1862, and immediately marched to its quarters. The 1st Battalion at Key West with Companies I and C to Fort Taylor under command of Maj. Gausler; E and B under the command of Capt. Rhoads to the "old US barracks"; and A and G under the command of Capt. Graeffe to the "new US barracks" at Camp Brannan. Companies A and G were also reported at the "Lighthouse Barracks" or "Lighthouse Key", which was where the new barracks were located.

A correspondent of the New York Herald reported that when the steamship arrived in the port with the famous old 47th Pennsylvania on board to relieve Col. Morgan's 90th New York Regiment, and they heard that Col. Good would take over command of the whole post, that he and the ship's storekeeper threw their hats up in the air in happiness. "It was good news to hear that someone was coming to relieve Col. Morgan, but for it to be our old friends Col. Good and his regiment from St. John's and Pocatigo, was almost too good to believe, but it was true." He reported that during his long stay at Key West he had never seen everyone so happy, the citizens following the regiment to its camp with cheers and greetings, and the ladies waving their handkerchiefs. "All this a sign that the 47th was very welcome."

Col. Good was assigned the command of all the forces in and around Key West, as the 47th Pennsylvania relieved the 90th New York and Col. Joseph Morgan, "who will proceed to Hilton Head and report to the General commanding". Some reports indicated the 90th New York's Colonel and his Quartermaster were to be arrested on charges of disloyal practices, lodged against them by Mr. Walter C. Maloney. Wharton wrote: "His actions have been severely criticized by the people, but, as it is in bad taste to say anything against ones superiors, I merely mention, judging from the expressions of the citizens, they were very glad of the return of the 47th Pennsylvania Volunteers."

Mr. Maloney would continue to be a thorn in the military's side, even for many years after the war was over, and was ap-

parently upset on this occasion by Col. Morgan's sympathy for the Blacks, and by the Colonel disarming and disbanding a company of volunteers formed from Key West Citizens. Col. Morgan had declared the slaves employed at Forts Taylor and Jefferson to be free of their masters in the summer of 1862, and when McFarland of the Engineering Department protested, most of the slaves walked off the construction site. The Colonel offered to compel them to return if McFarland paid them, but the engineer refused and many problems and difficulties arose as a result. At a later date, Col. Morgan would become further embroiled with the citizens of Key West when he attempted to enforce a Department of the South order to remove from the island all persons who refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Union.

There was very little improvement at Key West during the period of the 47th Pennsylvania's absence. But one area that the 90th New York did improve, was the "beautification of the home of deceased soldiers", known as the Key West Post Cemetery and which had been located at what is now Peary Court, near the intersection of White St. and Palm Ave. And with ample reason, since Yellow Fever claimed at least 78 of their members, who died and were buried in the cemetery during the six months that the 47th Pennsylvania was in South Carolina. Even without improvements, the 90th New York would have effected a considerable expansion of the facility, which brought them into conflict with property claimed by Mr. Maloney. There were a total of at least 99 additions to the cemetery from all units during this period of the 47th's absence; not including unmarked burials, or civilian or naval deaths whose burials were made in the public cemetery at Francis and Angela Sts.

General Order #26 specified the following hours of service and roll call at Camp Brannan: Reveille at day break; police immediately after reveille; call for drill 5:30 AM; recall 7; breakfast call 7:15; surgeon's call 7:45; guard mounting 9; call for drill 10; recall 11; dinner 12; Sergeants call 1 PM; call for drill 3:30; recall 5; dress parade 5:30; tattoo 9; and taps 9:30. Certainly hope the omission for supper was a clerical oversight.

On Wednesday, December 24, in the "afternoon four negroes, the property of citizens of this Key, were discovered on board



Colonel Tilghman Good. Photo credit: the Author.

the steamer [*Cosmopolitan* preparing to take the 90th New York to Hilton Head], stowed away by some of the Ninetieth [sic] Regiment. Colonel Patterson, our active and efficient Mayor, instituted a search, and on discovering the darkeys, had them brought ashore and locked up."

"One of them, the property of Mr. Randolph, had been for some time past acting as servant for Col. Morgan, and was taken on board the steamer with the intention of taking him from the island, but this "d" would not answer, he was brought ashore with the rest. When Col. Morgan heard of it, he sent an order to the Provost Marshal to restore the man at once, or rather to take him from the custody of the civil authority; but the Provost Marshal sent him word that his authority on this island was no longer recognized...A great improvement in the government of Key West is already visible."

The 47th Pennsylvania's Henry Hornbeck had no work at the quartermaster's office on Christmas Day and "went to the Wharf and witnessed the departure of the 90th N.Y. S. Vols... John Lawall, Frank Good & few others then took a walk about Key West...Our Christmas dinner was a 'Pot Pie' ...After dinner Peter Bernd & myself went out to the beach and collected a lot of Curiosities in the shape of sea shells...After supper Frank Good, P. Berndt, Win Steckel & myself went to Catholic church, it was a grand sight the church being decorated with Spruce and with Cocoanut leaves, and a great number of Lights burning. After church went to barracks and retired. The day here is celebrated like the 4th of July in the North, firing Squibs &c. This is a great week for the Negroes, they having dances and enjoying themselves all day long. This af-

ternoon out on the beach the Nigger Gemmari' & ladies had dancing until dark, to be again resumed tomorrow....Retired at 10 o'clock."

Two days later, Henry Hornbeck joined his "Mess near the office with the clerks & employees in this office, having two Niggers to do our Cooking, have very good meals. This evening the Band Serenaded the different Companies. Went to Methodist Church where the Free Masons met, and heard an address on Free Masonry by Capt. J. Gobin...After meeting was over went to the house with Luther Mennig, and we were Serenaded by Some Members of Co B and E, very good Music. Remained at the house all night. I lodge in Camp but Mess in town."

On December 31, the ship *Sagamore's* Surgeon Scofield "Went ashore at 9 AM with Mr King in the gig. Went to Shafers, Pitchers, Moffatt & Simpsons. Sat for an ambrotype. Took dinner at the Russell House at 2 PM. Fresh pork & mince pie. Tried to get a horse and buggy for a ride but did not succeed."

Col. Good recognized the legality of the elections that had been held at Key West and directed that civil authority be restored on January 1, 1863. The military authority would retain control over arrivals and departures from the island of Key West, and over the sale of spirituous liquors.

On New Years eve, "Many vessels in Port. Weather warm & fine." The 47th Pennsylvania was mustered for pay. "At 9 o'clock the Band Serenaded us at the Barracks. We also had a 'String Band', composed of Niggers, playing all evening. At 12 o'clock a party consisting of Win Hertz, James Knerr, George Henry, Henry Reiss, Wm Steckel, Julius Lascon, James Geidner, Henry Getter & Myself [Henry Hornbeck] visited the Captains & Lieuts of our Comp & Comp A, being together in the New Barracks at the Light House, and wished them a Happy New Year and fired a salute, we were all called in and got something to drink, we then went out towards the beach and visited Old Sandy [Cornish], a great Union Nigger, and roused him up, and gave him a salute, didn't get to bed until 3 o'clock."

Records of the Key West Post Cemetery indicated there were at least 131 burials in 1862; 89 members of the 90th New York; 18 members of the 47th Pennsylvania (the disparity between the regiment's 23 deaths and 18 relates to bodies that were shipped home or unidentified in the Post Cemetery); 16 members of the 91st New York; and 8

others. In 1863, the total number of known burials in the Key West Post Cemetery would be ten, a stark contrast with the previous year's total of 131

The average daily temperature at Key West in January 1863 was 69 degrees, as the West Martello Tower was completed except for cisterns, magazines, tower stairs and general interior work. The Martello Tower's masonry and concrete gun platforms were set.

The Black population of the United States looked forward to improved circumstances on January 1, 1863, as President Lincoln formally issued the Emancipation Proclamation. It would not be until later in the month that the news would reach Key West, and even later before it arrived at the Tortugas.

With approval from the military, civilian officials resumed control of municipal functions at Key West.

In the quartermaster's office, the 47th Pennsylvania's Henry Hornbeck "kept busy all day, on account of many Steamers lying in Port, waiting to Coal. After Supper took a walk about the city with Frank Good & Wm Steckel, heard music in a side Street, went there and found the 'Nigger Band' playing at the Postmasters residence, the Postmaster then called all the Soldiers in, and gave us each a glass of wine, he is a very patriotic Man, and very generous. I believe his name is Mr Albury."

January 15 was a typical day in the port of Key West, and the following brief accounts are an example of harbor activities during the Civil War as numerous captured blockade runners were brought to Key West for adjudication the courts that had been established there for that purpose.

"This Morning the Gunboat 'Tahoma' arrived having in tow a prize smack laden with cotton. Gunboat 'San Jacinto' also came into harbor this morning...the quartermaster returned this afternoon, he having gone with a party to the wreck of the 'Spar-kling Sea' a distance of about 120 Miles, on the Florida Coast, near Carysfort Reef, with a view of saving the horses and Cargo, it having been abandoned by the Crew and a detachment of N.Y. Vols...Very windy."

The *Sagamore* arrived with the *Swan*, "We brought sixty six soldiers, the same soldiers we had before to Key West where we arrived at 5-1/2 PM. Found the *San Jacinto* in port, also the *Tahoma* & *Merrimack*. Sent soldiers ashore in boats."

The USS *San Jacinto* was also in port to provision and coal, having arrived in the

morning. The ship had previously left Key West temporarily, with yellow fever on board. The USS *San Jacinto* was at Key West, having just arrived.

The USS *Tahoma* was also at Key West, bringing in the rebel sloop *Silas Henry* that she had captured in Tampa Bay on the 8th. The sloop carried 50 bales of cotton. This was the 10th prize captured since Adm. Bailey took over command of the squadron; the *Good Luck*, *Alicia*, *Avenger*, *Julia*, *Courier*, *Kate*, *Dove*, *By George*, *Carmita* and *Silas Henry*.

At Key West were the *Tahoma* (coaling); *Magnolia* and *Penguin* (repairing); *Beauregard* (condemned); *St. Lawrence*, *Eugenie* and *Dale*. The *Ariel* was cruising between Knight's Key and Indian Key; and the *Gem of the Sea* was cruising off Indian River, Jupiter Inlet and Cape Canaveral. The *Huntsville* had been sent to Havana, and the *Sagamore* was scheduled to leave for Indian River and the *J.L. Davis* with supplies for the squadron on the 16th.

Problems aboard the *J.L. Davis* and a poor reputation for reliability among the rest of the squadron, resulted in a change of command before it left Key West.

The USS *Octorara* captured the English sloop *Brave* in the North West Providence Channel "with a cargo of 110 sacks of salt and 3 bales of sponge", and was sent to Key West for adjudication. The master of the *Brave* had been captured the previous May.

It was "windy" on the 16th, and the *Sagamore* "Did not go the wharf to coal. [Surgeon Scofield] Went ashore at sundown & staid til 9 PM. Called at Capt Richardsons and went to Prof Loves magic performance. Tickets \$1.00. Select parlor magic. Billiards &c kept executive away from ship until 9-1/2 PM. Fruits &c overload the stomach."

January 18 was a happy day for Lt. "Levis" Stuber of the 47th Pennsylvania. He was married at Key West to Mary Ellen Archer, by Rev. R.J. McCook. Henry Hornbeck also mentioned the wedding which took place in the evening. On the 21st, "After Supper Mennig & myself...went to Lieut Stubers and the String Band Serenaded him, we were called in and introduced to his wife, and drank to their health & happiness then left.

Official news of the Emancipation Proclamation arrived at Key West on January 24, as Musician Wharton wrote about "a

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(Civil War from page 9)

high time the lads and lasses of the dark hue had of it. In the morning the male portion had a procession, with music (furnished by themselves) and banners flying; conspicuous was the stars and stripes. By the way, a conk, that is a resident of the key hailing from Nassau, N.P., whose ancestors were tories, and fled from Charleston to Nassau during the Revolutionary War, threw a stone at the procession as it was passing by, and came very near hitting the flag we are fighting for, when a stalwart son of Lehigh County, asked the fellow if he had thrown that stone to insult the flag, when he received an answer something like 'my own business' for which he received a stunner from 'the shoulder' that sent him reeling to the ground, from which he had to be carried by his friends, teaching him a lesson not to meddle with the emblem of Liberty when the 47th boys are about."

"In the afternoon, the party of blacks had a gay and happy time at the Baragoon, a short distance below Fort Taylor, on the beach. Four large tables were set, and to say they groaned under the weight of good things, substantial and dainty, would be telling literally the truth. The refreshments were not dealt out grudgingly, but everyone had their fill, of which more than one officer and many soldiers can bear witness to. Mr. Curtis, a rich shipmaster, addressed them in a neat speech, welcomed them as citizens, since the President in his wisdom had made them so, and hoped they would keep as good a character for honesty and truth as they had when they were in bondage. Sandy [Cornish], the aristocratic farmer of the race, was called on and made a speech of the day. The day's festivities concluded with music and dancing-the latter accomplishment being done up in a much better style by 'ye ladies colored' than the 'divine creatures' of that little island could do."

On January 29, Maj. Gen. D. Hunter, Headquarters Department of the South at Hilton Head, Port Royal, S.C., issued an order to Col. Good as commander of the District of Key West: "You will immediately send to this Post the families (white) of all persons who have Husbands, Sons or Brothers, in Rebel employment, and all other persons who have at any time declined taking the Oath of Allegiance, or who have uttered a single disloyal word, in order that they may be placed within the Rebel lines."

It took time for the order to reach Key West, and before Col. Good could or would act upon it, he was relieved by Col. Morgan of the 90th New York Regiment, and with the six companies of the 47th stationed at Key West and Fort Taylor, he was ordered to Hilton Head, sailing on February 9.

This fortuitous circumstance and the manner in which Col. Good delayed implementing the order, endeared him to the citizens of Key West. While the 47th was gone, Col. Morgan set about enforcing the order, which involved about 600 citizens; and it was reported that 16 officers of the 90th New York resigned in consequence and had their swords taken from them. Some of the citizens were forced to attempt to sell their property in anticipation of the relocation, breaking up their homes and family ties and otherwise prepare for the resettlement. "Forcible resistance was threatened". Instead of blaming Gen. Hunter and the Federal Government for the order, the people's displeasure fell upon Col. Morgan, for whom they had already developed an intense dislike. One of the more outspoken citizens was Mr. Maloney, whose son Walter C. Maloney was away fighting for the Confederacy.

Col. Good apparently argued the citizen's case while at Hilton Head and had the order officially rescinded on February 22, and he and the six companies of the 47th Pennsylvania were sent back to Key West on February 27 with instructions to suspend the order if he saw fit. The circumstances did prompt some of the younger Confederate sympathizers to slip the patrol boats in the harbor at Key West and sail to Tampa to enlist in the Rebel Army.

February was a relatively healthy month at Key West, and there was only one known burial in the Key West Post Cemetery, a member of the 30th Massachusetts. One man would die at the Marine Hospital.

On February 3, Musician Wharton of the 47th Pennsylvania wrote: "The 90th N.Y. S. Vols., Col. Morgan, returned to Key West to relieve our regiment. We were not all surprised at being relieved; had expected it, and were all exceedingly glad that we were to make our exit from that barren spot of creation, but that a regiment who are at daggers points with the citizens should be sent back to see to the welfare of Unionists, Conks, and the colored people, took all aback, and caused no little grumbling on the outside of the 47th Regiment...Col. Morgan's return was a great thing for the

colored population of Key West. He is looked on by them as the greatest man of the age (always excepting Mr. Lineum), and the extravagant behavior exhibited by them on his arrival, exceeded anything I have yet seen. One old fellow, Sandy [Cornish], I thought would go out of his senses."

The next day the 90th New York Regiment disembarked from the *Mantanzas* to relieve the six companies of the 47th Pennsylvania who were stationed at Key West and Fort Taylor, so that they could proceed to Beaufort, S.C. It was expected they would leave on Saturday, and the 4 companies at Fort Jefferson were expected to join them later.

On February 7, Col. Good and the six Companies of the 47th, A, B, C, E, G and I, which were stationed at Key West and Fort Taylor, sailed on board the steamer *Mantanzas* for Hilton Head. "The vessel was a good iron steamer, the Captain a jolly Dane, and his officers and crew very clever and gentlemanly...Ere an hour had passed, Key West was lost to our vision, and I can say with the rest of the boys, I hope forever", wrote Musician Wharton. The return was under orders of Gen. Hunter and the Department of the South, as the ship steamed out of the harbor in fair weather past the warship *St. Lawrence* and proceeded to Hilton Head. The voyage was not much different from the others, except for the "bad accommodations and filth, even worse than we ever had... more seasickness this time than on any of our previous voyages." As many men as possible attempted to remain on deck to avoid the "squamousness peculiar to sea voyages".

Col. Morgan wasted no time issuing, among others, the following orders: "The municipal authorities can only be recognized by sufferance... strict sanitary regulations [should] be enforced... [all waste] must be put in barrels, or boxes, and placed upon the sidewalk, in front of their respective dwellings, every Saturday morning, before sunrise, commencing on Saturday the 14th inst., for the purpose of being taken away in carts... All stores, shops and other places of business, except Drug Stores, within the limits of the city shall be closed at eight o'clock P.M., and no place of business will be allowed open on the Sabbath, after the hour of eight A.M., excepting Drug Stores and Barber Shops...The assemblage of persons upon the street corners will not be allowed... the guard will arrest all soldiers or sailors found in the street after 'tattoo'." Dispensing of intoxi-

eating liquors was severely restricted, except when authorized by the surgeon.

Any citizens found on the streets after 10:30 PM were to be reported and escorted to their residences. The military would control all arrivals and departures from the island, and passes were needed to pass the "Guard Ships" in the harbor. Those departures by way of the "Channel adjacent to the United States Barracks...must stop at the Bath House and show their passes to the guard stationed there." Any boat failing to adhere to these regulations was to be fired upon. Permanent sentries were to be established throughout the city.

Col. Morgan resumed command at Key West, and hoped for the cooperation of all loyal persons. "To the sympathizers with Rebellion, no leniency or favor will be shown... the disguised Traitor... merits the detestation of all loyal hearts." General Order #67, returning municipal authority to the citizens on January 1, 1863, was revoked. The acting mayor was charged with the supervision of sanitary regulations, and no garbage was to be allowed to accumulate. The garbage was to be placed in barrels or boxes prior to sunrise on Saturdays, and it would be taken away in carts.

At Key West on February 12, an order that would have far reaching consequences for the 47th Pennsylvania and the citizens of Key West, General Order #9, was issued by Col. Morgan. "All white persons, residing within the limits of this command, having husbands, sons or brothers in rebel employment, or who have at any time declined taking the Oath of Allegiance to the United States Government, are hereby required to report in person to these Headquarters, on or before Tuesday the 17th inst., and register their names."

The order was the beginning of what would culminate in the attempted deportation of some of the citizens of Key West. This was already taking place in northern Florida. At the same time the steamer *Boston*, sailing from St. Augustine and Fernandina, was "transporting the Rebel population, male and female, from our lines to the Rebels", arriving at Hilton Head on February 2nd. General Order #10 was issued at the US Barracks by the Military Headquarters of the Island of Key West. The notice was apparently printed by the local newspaper's printing presses: "New Era' Job Printing Office, Print."

"In accordance with instructions received from Head Quarters, Dept. of the South, the families of all persons (white) residing

within the limits of this command, who have husbands, brothers or sons in Rebel employment, will hold themselves in readiness to embark on board of the first available Transport for Hilton Head, S. C., with a view of being placed within the rebel lines."

"The heads of such families will report in person to these Head Quarters without delay. Due notice will be given as to the transport and time of sailing."

"By command of Jos. S. Morgan, Col. 90th Regt. N.Y. Vols., commanding post; W.T. Woolley, 1st Lt. & Post Adj."

It was the opinion of Sgt. Henry Crydenwise of the 90th New York that the order originated with Gen. Hunter, and it would result in a week of extreme turmoil for Henry and the citizens of Key West. "This order embraced most of the people on the island for of course most of their friends are South. Among those included were very many who had nursed our sick when suffering with the yellow fever, some union men, old women and little innocent children who certainly could not be held responsible for the conduct of others. Ah! Yes and my dear good friends who have been all that earthly friends could be were included. By almost everyone both soldiers & citizens it was regarded as a most inhuman thing, a base outrage on humanity."

The following prize vessels were in the Key West harbor: steamers *Adila*, *Pearl* and *Virginia*; schooners *Alicia*, *By George*, *Agnes*, *Francis*, *Trier*, *Isabell*, *Courier*, *Dart*, *Theresa*, *Commit*, *Lilly*, *Adventure*, *Cavmita*, *Diana*, *Rising Dawn*, *Two Sisters*, *Hermosa*, *Kate*, *Maria* and *Margaret*; sloops *WE. Chester*, *Flying Fish*, *Good Luck*, *Brockenbough*, *Avenger*, *Julia*, *Ellen*, *Silas Henry*, *Brave*, and *Boat Prize*. Also in the harbor were the US steamers *Santiago (de Cuba?)*, *R.R. Cuyler*, *Magnolia*, *Sagamore*, *Monongahela* and *Rhode Island*; US ship *Guard*, a US survey steamer; US frigate *St. Lawrence*; US guard schooner *Eugenie*; US schooner *Beauregard*; and US ordnance ship *Dale*.

On February 25, Key West was seething with unrest, both in the military and the civilian population, as Col. Morgan was attempting to implement his order requiring the families with members associated with the Confederate cause to be relocated in South Carolina's Lowcountry.

Col. Morgan addressed the following missive to Dr. D. W. Whitehurst of Key West: "Agreeable to enclosed orders, yourself and family will embark on board of the U.S. Steam Transport '*Illinois*' now ly-

ing at the Quarter Masters Wharf, Friday at 10 o'clock on February 27th 1863, en route to Hilton Head, S.C. Lieut. Sheppard 90th Regt. N.Y. Vols, will accompany you to Hilton Head, and on his arrival, will report to the Commanding Officer at that Post."

Sgt. Henry Crydenwise of the 90th New York described the incident when he wrote of the previous week "Never do I wish to pass through another week of such anxiety and mental anguish. No language or power of mine can portray the scenes through which I have passed... For the past week we have been almost bordering on insurrection. About twelve of our officers sent in their resignations, and the men generally said they never would enforce the regulations. Those officers who sent in their resignations are under arrest. They will probably suffer for it but still I honor them for the sacrifice."

"I never came down here to war with women and children. Well such was the general indignation among all classes that the Colonel has made every exception to the order which he could and very many who are included in the order will not go at present...Our officers may some of them be dismissed from the service in disgrace (but that would be honorable under the circumstances) we may suffer by fighting against this inhuman order but I have from the first and no power on earth shall prevent me from fighting everything of the kind. I believe our Colonel has narrowed it down to about fifteen families and these are to go tomorrow [Thursday, February 26] but whether Hunter will send another still more strict or not I cannot say... Am I a man? or am I but a fool or machine to execute the will of some ambitious power?"

Returning from the South Carolina Lowcountry, the ship carrying the 47th Pennsylvania "passed a Light house at 7:30 A.M. At Noon Key West Lighthouse in sight. Steamer *Illinois* passed close by us at noon. Arrived at the wharf at Key West at about 1 o'clock" on February 27. That portion of the 47th Pennsylvania which had spent three weeks in South Carolina arrived back at Key West at 1 PM, after a 68 hour voyage.

As the 47th Pennsylvania arrived, "the Band playing 'Bully for us' it took everybody by surprise especially on account of the Citizens having been ordered off the island by Col Morgan 90th N.Y. Regt we just arrived in time to countermand so in-

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was hoisted from almost every house one place in particular had 14 Flags hoisted and the Spanish Consul raised the flags of all Nations across the street, with the American Flag in the Centre. Some families have everything packed up & were to leave in the Steamer 'City of Bath' this afternoon. I saw some of the inhabitants actually Cry for Joy."

On May 10, 1861, President Lincoln had issued a proclamation authorizing "the commander of the forces of the United States on the Florida coast to permit no person to exercise any office or authority upon the island of Key West, the Tortugas, and Santa Rosa which may be inconsistent with the laws and Constitution of the United States, authorizing him at the same time, if he shall find it necessary, to suspend the writ of habeas corpus, and to remove from the vicinity of the United States fortresses all dangerous or suspected persons."

This order would form the basis for deportations and attempted deportations throughout the coastal areas of Florida.

When Col. Good and the 47th arrived and relieved Col. Morgan, it was said that pursuant to General Order #10, a boat was ready in the harbor to take some of the Southern families north to the Lowcountry of South Carolina.

Musician Wharton wrote: "An order for all to remove, who had a relative in the Rebel Army, had been promulgated, and by 4 o'clock they would have embarked, each with only fifty pounds of baggage, on board a steamer bound for Hilton Head, where they would have been sent under a flag of truce to the Rebel lines, unless ordered differently by the commander of the 10th Army Corps. Our arrival stopped the banishment of 730 souls, and until treason is proved against them, here they are likely to remain, happy in their homes, endeared to them by old associations and family ties."

Many families, including the family of Mr. Fernando J. Moreno, had already arranged for their baggage to be loaded; and Rev. W.J. McCook, a Methodist Minister, had boarded ship for the trip. Col. Good immediately suspended the order, and by 4 PM, Rev. McCook with his family and possessions, was headed back to his home, informing all whom he met that the order was rescinded.

Sgt. Crydenwise of the 90th New York wrote: "The deliverance which the 47th

Reg't brought to us...I do not care for any little inconvenience it may subject me to" (Henry lost his nice quarters because of the 47th's return as he was reduced from Sgt. Major to Orderly Sgt.) "Thank God the cloud has passed."

"The people here are mostly rather poor and get their living by fishing, gathering sponges, keeping little groceries &c. For many years this has been their home, in fact many of them were born here. True the majority of them are rather ignorant and simple minded, but a more quiet inoffensive people I never saw. Now when you consider that four or five hundred of these people were to be sent away among strangers, into a colder climate (and you know here they have nothing but the thinnest summer clothing) and most of these who were to go were women and children you can realize something of the suffering."

In speaking of the scheming of Col. Morgan and some of the officers of the 90th New York, Henry Crydenwise wrote: "One of the schemes was that order trying to drive the people away from the island... [some of the] officers are so opposed to him [Col. Morgan] that many of them have tried to get him to resign and so he has put about twenty two or three under arrest. How it will end I cannot tell."

Henry later summarized the situation when he wrote "Key West was never out of the Union. When the war broke out the commander of this post caused all to take the oath of allegiance and in doing that our government pledged itself to protect them in their every right. There is no real difference between this place and New York." He was of the opinion that persons with sympathy for both sides of the war lived in every community, and at Key West there was a fort and numerous military personnel and no danger to the Union. All military news was "old" news and of no value to the South. He and most of the soldiers and citizens felt it was conspiracy between Col. Morgan and a few of the citizens.

Mr. Charles R. Roberts, nephew of Capt. Rhoads, wrote sixty years after the war: "nearly six hundred citizens, including some staunch Union men, were already on the steamer ready to embark. William H. Cash supplied the people with food. Meanwhile the Union men of Key West, led by US District Attorney Feynton, sent a protest to Washington." In writing of Col. Good's arrival he recorded "and as the steamer on which he arrived came to the dock, he landed with drawn sword and said 'I am in coin-

mand here. You people gather up your baggage and go back to your homes' ."

Pvt. Pretz wrote "The people of Key West were overjoyed at our return. They threw open their houses and treated us to as much as we wanted of anything they had, free of charge."

Musician Wharton wrote that "much joy was manifested by the inhabitants on our arrival. Flags streamed across the streets-on one cord alone I counted sixteen of different nations, the most conspicuous was a large American Flag, having on it the inscription 'Welcome 47th'. Houses were opened and good things of this earth, wherewith to comfort the inner man were plentifully distributed among the men of the different companies." There is little doubt that the inhabitants of Key West had a very high regard for the 47th Pennsylvania at this time.

Emily Holder at the Tortugas was told that the people at Key West "were almost crazy in their excitement. They took the soldiers knapsacks as they marched up the street and would have carried the men on their shoulders in their joy over Morgan's defeat."

Col. Good became the hero of Key West, the citizens of whom presented him with a ceremonial sword as a token of appreciation on Saturday, July 25, 1863. The circumstances had prompted some of the younger Confederate sympathizers to slip the patrol boats in the harbor and sail to Tampa to enlist in the Rebel Army. Col. Morgan was later dismissed from the service on April 19, 1864, but the disability was removed by the War Department on October 13, 1864, and on this occasion in Key West he seemed to be a victim of circumstances. Although, on at least one occasion, Sgt. Crydenwise of the 90th New York was critical of his commander as he wrote "Colonel Morgan is an ambitious low minded man", when complaining about his failure to be promoted and the manner in which promotions were made within the regiment.

*Lewis G. Schmidt is a resident of Allentown, PA. Since he retired in 1979 from Bell Telephone Company of Pennsylvania, he has been able to pursue his study of history. He has published 'the Civil War in Florida A Military History' a four volume set (six books, 4,559 pages, 19,433 endnotes). He also published "Civil War History of the 47th Regiment of Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers" and a study of the Military Cemetery Key West.*

(NAS from page 1)

completed.

For both officers and men however, the most vitally important feature of the station proper was the "beach". This consists of the hangars and the concrete surface in front of them. At the time of the opening of the station this concrete work was still in process of construction and it was therefore necessary to put the machines in the water with the aid of derricks. Refueling was done at barge anchored out several hundred yards from the beach, in itself a considerable task, as seaplanes are not as easily maneuvered as might be imagined. All this resulted in delay and loss of flying time but officers and men went at their tasks with such interest and enthusiasm that a very creditable record was made in spite of the many handicaps. As has been stated the first Navy personnel arrived on the station December 17th, 1917. The first student flight officers arrived from Massachusetts Inst. of Tech. January 8th. After the long grind of the difficult ground school course it was with delight that they hailed the opportunity to break away from the more or less academic seclusion of the school life and enjoy the freedom of the open air. It was a leap from a study of theory in the cold and wintry North to the practical flying itself - in the Sunny South. As might be expected they brought unbounded enthusiasm with them and were ready and willing to turn a hand to any task that would lead to a furtherance of their one great desire - to learn to fly. The whole station - its total personnel was then about one hundred would turn out when a new plane arrived on the station and willing volunteers soon had it uncrated, set up and flying the same day.

At the same time lighter-than-air operations were also under way the Dirigible hangar having been completed on December 17th, 1917. Dirigible A 243 was set up and flown on May 17th 1918. Ensign Bradford being in charge, while the first Kite Balloon ascension was made on July 18, 1918. The Navy's largest dirigible, the C-1 assigned to this station arrived January 15, after a record breaking trip from Rockaway, N.Y. Actual flight instruction began on December 22, 1917 with three Curtiss N-9 machines in operation - flight officers transferred to this station from Bayshore being in charge of this work. During the first month (January) a total of six hundred seventy five (675) hours flying time was



*A Blimp over NAS, Key West in 1918. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.*

secured. Three months later the time was two thousand twenty (2020) hours, At the half year mark (August) the time was three thousand four hundred sixty (3460) hours. Flight operations were carried on every day except Sunday from dawn till dark and the station's high record was made on the concluding week of the war when one thousand one hundred sixty two (1162) hours were recorded-for that week alone.

The original station personnel was about one hundred (100) men and seven flight officers. As more and more buildings were completed enabling the housing of more men and the operation of more machines, the personnel increased until the maximum of nine hundred eighty nine (989) men and forty five (45) officers was reached the date the armistice was signed. The maximum number of cadets under instruction at any one time was one hundred fifty six (156). The total number of men trained at the station at the present writing February 21st is about seven hundred (700), two hundred (200) of whom have been trained since the signing of the armistice.

This station has had, it is believed, the best record in proportion to its equipment of any Naval Air Station. In addition the quality of the pilots turned out has been, the station believes, proportionately high. This has been largely due to the high quality of the officer personnel in charge, and to the spirit of the men. We have been most fortunate in having had in Captain Parker, Lieut. Gould, and Lieut. Commander Mason, commanding officers of the highest type, both as men and as executives.

The policy was early adopted of retaining the most promising men from the cadets under instruction as flight instructors Those men being under observation for a

matter of three months were picked from a consideration of officer material, flying ability and general interest and enthusiasm for instruction work, In this way the station had as officers in charge of this work, men who were not only capable, but interested in their work. With this interest the enlisted men became imbued and the result was top-notch efficiency. It is a very general impression that the fact that this station has from the first been a strong advocate of "stunting" has had considerable to do with the high type of pilots developed. Unquestionably more stunting has been done at this station than at any other Naval Air Station, and the confidence developed by this means has been an invaluable asset in every pilots Instructors at this station are constantly doing stunts formerly considered impossible in Seaplanes, and are in point of fact able to do anything that army training planes can do.

Every type of machine on the station has been put through stunts, including the various flying boats. So far as known no other station has attempted to institute a series of tests to determine how to right these machines when "out of control" - it having been thought for a long time that a spin in these boats meant a certain crash.

Building operations have been continually going on since the opening of the station and although the three huge new H Boat hangars have been in use since the first of January 1919 they are just now nearing actual completion. The construction officer figures the total building cost of the station to date as \$1,032,000. The buildings consisting of seven (7) hangars, four (4) of them-for training planes, to which latter the carpenter shops are attached, one

(Continued on page 14)



R-9 type seaplanes on the ramp at NAS, Key West. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

(NAS from page 13)

dirigible hangar capable of housing two (2) dirigibles and one (1) kite balloon, - barracks including officers and student officers quarters, two mesa halls, machine shop, dope and paint whop, hydrogen generating plant and storage tank, oil reclaimed, dispensary, beach tower and boat houses. The running expenses of course are enormous, gasoline alone for example coating some \$12,000 per month while an average of a plane a week is totally wrecked.

While the assigned station compliment has been fifty four (54) seaplanes, there have rarely been over thirty (30) in operation until very recently. This was due to lack of hangar space and equipment, it having-been necessary while war conditions prevailed to keep the patrol machines (averaging about eight R-9's) on the beach outside the training hangars. The training squadrons operated with an average of eleven (11) machines in place of the assigned eighteen, N-9' s, Aeromarines, F and H Boats and R's all having been used. At the present writing the instruction work has been practically completed and in the future more and more attention will be devoted to maneuvers with the fleet and general tactics in an effort to perfect co-operation between the airplane arm and surface and sub-surface crafts Considerable work has already been done along such lines-and the value of the seaplane convincingly demonstrated in submarine work, where radio operation and spotting bombs have played a part. Competent pilots with patrol experience both here and abroad have acted as pilots and in closing it may be

said that during hostilities seaplanes or patrol from this station sighted two hostile submarines which might have been destroyed but for the fact that the type of plane in use at the time did not permit the carrying of bombs. Sixteen bomb-carrying flying-boats are, however, now set up and it is expected shortly to increase this number to twenty four.

**DIGEST OF HISTORY OF NAVAL AIR STATION KEY WEST, Fla.**

**CONSTRUCTION** Started July 13, 1917. Completed February 8, 1916 (Original contract. Total cost including subsequent contracts -\$1,032,000.

The buildings consisting of seven hangars, four of them for training planes, to which latter the carpenter shops are attached, one dirigible hangar capable of housing two dirigibles and one kite balloon - barracks including officers and student officers quarters, two mess halls, machine shop, dope and paint shop, hydrogen generating plant and storage tank, oil reclaimer dispensary, beach tower and boat houses.

**COMMISSION** December 17, 1917.

**COMPLEMENT** December 17, 1917 100 men, 7 officers, 38 planes. November 11, 1918 989 men, 45 officers, 54 planes.

**PURPOSE** Training and patrol. Training began December 22, 1917. 1st students arrived January 8, 1918 Total students given elementary training - 700 (500 trained up to signing of Nrmistice). Record time for week - 1162 hours of elementary training. Maximum at one time - 156.

Patrol began May 17, 1918 in diri-

gibles. 1st Kite Balloon ascension - July 18, 1918. Average number of seaplanes available for patrol - 8 R-9 type. Two enemy craft sighted by planes which were not carrying bombs. 1st largest dirigible C-1 arrived from Rockaway January 15, 1919.

**COMMANDYNG OFFICERS**

Stanley V. Parker - Capt.

Lieut. Gould

Lt. Comdr. Mason.

**OPERATING EXPENSES.** The running expenses of course are enormous, gasoline alone for example costing some \$12,000 per month while an average of a plane a week is totally wrecked.

**EDUCATION PROGRAM SPONSORS \$100 OR MORE**

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- DAN & VIRGINIA PROBERT
- JAMES & JUDITH ROBERTS
- FRED & MARILYN SALINERO
- ED SWIFT

(Jobs from page 7)

and honestly he didn't miss that roof by 20 feet.

A flipper spiral means to fly down in circles (or a spiral) with the machine on the edge. We all held our breath and when we get a thrill down here it is a darned narrow escape. When he went to land a big H boat zoomed over the barracks and just missed the crowd of us and a freight car. We thought they would crash but they landed OK. All of them were doing such wonderful stunts it was sport watching them.

All the students and most of the Gobs were given liberty so I went to town. When I got to the main street there I saw everyone going wild. All the enlisted men were marching single file with hands on the shoulder of the one in front. The cadets were leading and circling all around. We would go in front of trolleys and then thru the car. No one tried to stop us. It was great sport. We (the students) quit soon but the others kept it up. One man in a big auto was held up while the sailors stood in front of his lights shining their shoes and reading papers. He got sore and started to go ahead and nearly hit a sailor so the Gobs reached in and hauled him part way out of the car and one Gob landed an awful wallop on his jaw. After that they marched in the theater up on the stage and broke up the show. Not a cop was in sight I guess they were wise.

Key West never saw a day like that.

I haven't been up since a week ago yesterday due to the wind. Gosh of all the hard luck I ever saw this is the worst but I must be patient. I guess this is the end of my hopes of ever getting to France but thank goodness the war is over.

As I have already told you I only need 2 or 3 more flying days to qualify and I am mighty anxious to get thru.

I just came back from the rifle range. I am getting pretty good with the machine gun. We shoot at little red toy balloons. We shoot bursts of 5 and have 20 shots. You hold the trigger until you shoot 5 shots and then release. I got 2 of the balloons at 250 yards.

Sunday, February 2, 1919.

Pop here is a little dope on our new ship and as its confidential take good care of this letter.

Volume 180,000 cubic feet.

Length 192 feet 4 inches.

Width of envelope 43 feet.

Height over all 58 1/2 feet.

Maximum speed 59 miles per hour.

Fuel consumption at cruising speed 20 gallons/hour

Front cockpit - coxswain (and assistant) steers and operates bombs.

Second cockpit - pilot (and assistant) captain of ship, navigator, altitude, wheel, valves etc.

Third cockpit - mechanic (and assistant) operates fuel system, starts motors etc.

Fourth cockpit - radio operator (and assistant) operates radio and all signals.

This just gives you some idea of the size and organization of the crew. All the seats are so large that two men can sit comfortably side by side. You are protected from the wind by large wind shields so you ride in perfect comfort. You see the two motors are rigged one on each side of the car so you get no propeller blast. If it is a good day tomorrow I will have my first hop and get on to the working of the bus. They say it is not so much sport flying the new ship because she is so long that you can not zoom her like old 236 but when it comes to comfort and long flights C-1 shines.

Pop I brought a dandy Kodak camera the other night. It is a 1A Jr. Autographic and I am hoping to get some more good pictures for my collection if the machine proves a good one. I have a roll of film being developed now and am waiting to see how my first attempts will turn out.

I drew \$198.00 when I got back and this includes my back flight money. So once more I have \$200.00 dollars in the bank. I want to have at least \$300.00 when I start for home as I want to have a real trip back this time. If I can I want to go to Cuba as I said but if I can't do that I will come home by some longer route as to see the country.

Next Sunday I am planning on going on a fishing trip. About 10 of us will go in a big boat and as the fish are biting we should have good fun. They catch some pretty big fish down here and fisherman come from the north to Long Key Fishing camp just for the sport so I want to have at least one try at it and besides it will help pass a dreary weekend.

We had one Lieutenant (JG) here for instruction on Blimp but he couldn't fly so we got rid of him. Now we have a Kite man from across taking instruction.

While I was away it was decided that we rate the gold service chevron V for our submarine patrol work so when I come home I will be wearing one of them on my sleeve so I can say I had real service even tho I didn't get across.

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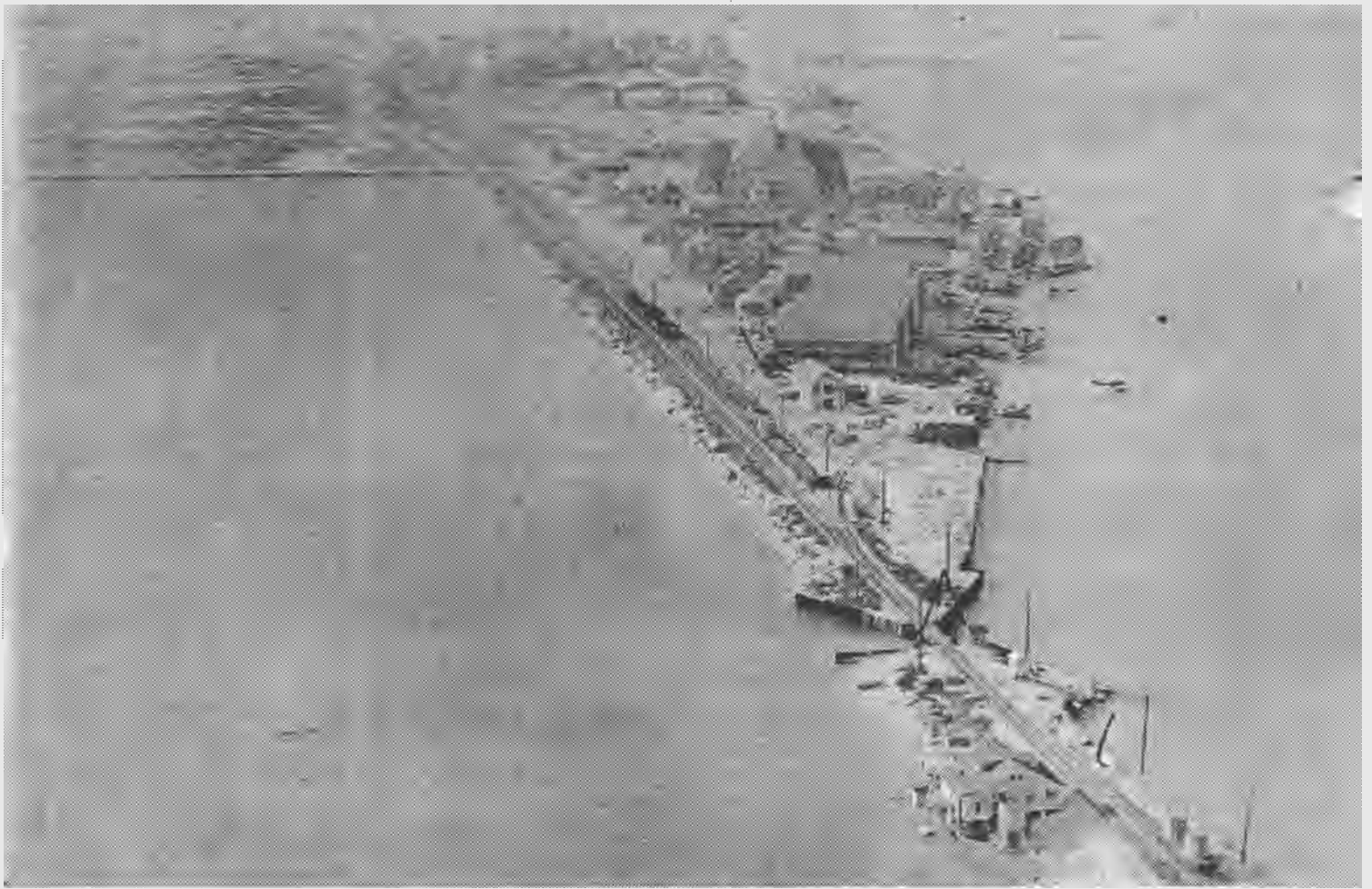
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*Naval Air Station, Key West on December 4, 1918. The photo was taken over Garrison Bight looking northwest. Photo credit: Monroe County Library. —*

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