

USS SHARK

Florida Keys

Sea Heritage Journal

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Autobiography of Stephen Moreno Whalton

This is the Autobiography of Stephen Moreno Whalton and a narration of events during my early childhood, and the years that followed, all written in response to requests from members of my family and some of my friends.

I was born on the 29th day of May in the year of 1872, in a small two-story house which was located on Duval Street on the lot, where Pepe's Coffee Shop stands now {202 Duval Street}. I think the building where I first saw the light, was moved to the rear of the lot, and still remains, back of the coffee shop. When I was still a baby, my father moved his family into our new house, which he had built on the corner of Duval Street and the Rocky Road, which was later named Division Street and later still, Truman Avenue. The first outstanding event of my life, which I have never forgotten occurred in 1875 when I was just 3 years old. My mother had a white servant, or maid, this maid had a cousin, who was about twelve or thirteen years old, who use to visit her quite often. On this particular day the cousin was at our home, and our servant, discovered that she needed some potatoes, so she told her cousin to



Lorena and Stephen M. Whalton. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

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SOCIETY NEWS AND NOTES

By John Viele



Master Sergeant Jeff Burns. Photo credit: John Viele.

In January, the library auditorium was packed as Master Sergeant Jeff Burns, US Army, Green Beret, Combat Diver, described the facilities and training program at the US Army Special Forces Underwater Operations School on Fleming Key.

In March, Corey Malcom, Director of Archaeology and Curator, Mel Fisher Maritime Museum, gave Society members a personal tour of La Plata del Mar, a new exhibit of the silver of the 1622 galleons at the museum.

Again in March, Matt Strahan, meteorologist in charge of the National Weather Service Office, reviewed the tracks and effects of past hurricanes that have threatened or struck the Keys and discussed

the criteria and need for evacuation.

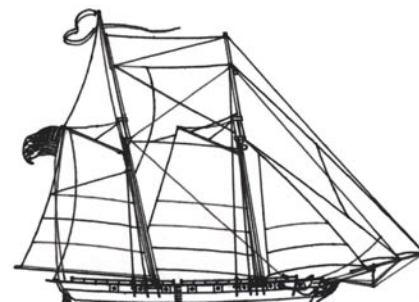
The Society's annual meeting of the general members was held at the end of Matt Strahan's talk. Committee chairmen reviewed activities of their committees for the past year. The following members were elected to serve three-year terms as directors: Don Lowe, Lynda Hambright, Julie McEnroe, George Craig, and Corey Malcom. In addition, the following new members were appointed to fill vacancies on the board: Frans Boetes and David Harrison Wright.

In May, marine artist and newly-elected board member David Harrison Wright, an "Admiral" in the Texas Navy described how that naval force helped Texas to win its freedom from Mexico in 1836.

New Members

Andrew Dulcey, Key West; Chesapeake Applied Technology, Key West; Shirley Freeman & Harvey Server, Key West; Jane

Gladson, Key West; Captain Herb Poole, Summerland Key; William N. Roberts, Lagrange, GA; J. Worth, Key West.



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Editor: Lynda Hambright
Production: Tom Hambright

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

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Hackley's Diary

William Hackley practiced law in Key West from 1829 to 1857. He kept a diary for part of the time he was in Key West. Here is the diary for part of October and November 1855.

Wednesday, October 10. Rose at 4:30. Shot 1 Teal, 1 Shoveler Duck and 1 Sora. Returned and bathed. At 9 a.m. barometer 29.53, thermometer 84, wind northeast 3, clouds 4. Paid Captain Welch for 1 child's carriage \$5.50, for eylet press \$3.50, 2 boxes eylets \$.75, freight on flour and candles \$1.50, 1 tin pudding boiler \$1.25 and freight on carriage \$1.58. At 4 p.m. barometer 29.46, thermometer 88, wind northeast 2, clouds 2. At 8 p.m. a heavy rain squall came up and blew fresh. The steamer **Isabel** got in about 5. Wrote to Mother.

Thursday, October 11. Rose at 4:30 and went to the market but was too late all the turtle was sold and there was no fishing boats at the wharf. Returned and bathed. At 10:15 a.m. barometer 29.47, wind east northeast 3, clouds 4. Read papers. At 5 p.m. attended the funeral of Captain Joseph Ximenez who died last night from disease of the heart. He has been confined to his room for several weeks. He was residing on the Key when I came here.

Friday, October 12. Rose at 4:30 and went to Sickmann's Pond and sat till after sunrise, saw nothing to shoot. Returned and bathed. At 9:45 a.m. barometer 29.37.5, thermometer 80, wind east southeast 3, clouds 10. The clouds are very thick and bad looking, the wind is not high and is variable. The Cutter **Florida** came in last night from Charleston. At 4 p.m. barometer 29.31, thermometer 80.5, wind north 3, clouds 6. Rained several times during the day and

night.

Saturday, October 13. Rose at 4 and went out to Sickmann's Pond and sat till after sunrise and home by way of Linn's Pond and Army Barracks, saw nothing. Returned and bathed. At 8:40 a.m. barometer 29.42, thermometer 79, (at 4 a.m. home thermometer 76), wind east 5, clouds 2, weather pleasant. Paid for 4 kegs Hazards gunpowder \$4.25. After dinner fixing for an expedition to Cape Florida in the Cutter on Monday. Found my things much out of order. Went around to Mary Ann Porter's with Matilda after tea.

Sunday, October 14. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach. Bought 8 mullet for \$.25 on the Fort Wharf. Returned and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.49, thermometer 79, (at 4:30, 75), wind northeast 4, clouds 1.

Monday, October 15. Rose at 4:30 and down to the wharf and took my things onboard the cutter and got off about 6 and beat up the reef to a fresh breeze from the north northeast and some seas which made me somewhat seasick and went into Bayo Honda about 4:30 p.m. Went into the lagoon with a castnet to try and get some mullet without success. Felix Senac, Daniel Davis and I make the party.

Tuesday, October 16. Got underway about 6 and beat up inside of Key Vacas and came to anchor inside of Old Matacumbe about 5 p.m. and went on shore with guns. Senac killed 5 marlin snips. I had my rifle to try her at a mark.

Wednesday, October 17. By 5 a.m. Daniel Davis and I went on shore to walk down to the west end of Matacumbe to shoot birds and sent the boat back for Felix Senac to go and examine the Black

Mangrove swamp which is the object of the expedition. Davis and I killed 10 small snipe and saw the tracks of a deer. Got off on board about 8 and underway for Cape Sable and anchored in seven-foot of water abreast of the lower opening about half past 5. Got on shore about 6 p.m. and walked a short distance on the prairie. William Randolph had Senator Stephen Mallory's Sharps rifle and William Hinson, the pilot, had my rifle. William bounded a buck and a doe out of the grass within 50 yards of him and fired as they ran off, Hinson also fired at them at a distance of about 200 yards, also without success. Went on board.

Thursday, October 18. Got on shore about 5. William Hinson and I go to the eastward and hunt deer. Felix Senac and Daniel Davis to the west for ducks. I walked up to the head of the plain at least 12 miles and saw but one deer at which I could not get a shot. Saw but few tracks and several Bear tracks. Also saw several English Snipes and Sora. Killed an alligator on the open plain where there was about six inches of water. Saw the east end of the base line of the county survey on my return to the boat. Found William Hinson who had walked only about four miles and saw but the one deer I referred to. About 1 p.m. Senca and Davis came in with 28 Teal and a quantity of Matin Snipe and two White Iris. They found the ducks scarce. We eat some Pilot bread and Davis and I went to the same duck ponds and found but few and Davis killed one on the ponds among a dense black mangrove hammock about 2 ½ miles to the west of the landing and at this time the whole

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(Hackley from page 3)

swamp has about one foot of water nearly fresh all over it. There are no ducks but teal now in the ponds it being to early for the others to come south but Davis says that he has seen the ponds full of Mallards and other large ducks. Got out of the swamp about 6 p.m. very much fatigued having walked at least 30 miles in the day. Ate a hearty supper of bird stew and slept on deck under a mosquitos bar it being the first time a bar has been necessary the mosquitos are very thick on the plain and not many in the swamp.

Friday, October 19. Went on shore about 6. Daniel Davis and I to the same ponds down the plain while Felix Senac and William Hinson were to go in where we were yesterday and stake the ponds nearest the beach. I felt well and free from soreness except my heels which are a little tender. Found the ducks scarce and I killed four teals, Davis 2. When we got to the beach and found Hinson who had killed a number of birds with shot from my rifle, he says that she shoots finely. Senac killed ten ducks. We got on board about 11:30 a.m. and got underway for home nearly calm but a squall rising drove us over near to Knight's Key before dark. About seven anchored about three miles from Knight Key in the bay.

Saturday, October 20. Got underway about 5:30 a.m. with light air from the northeast. Saw Sandy Key from deck and the Cape. Came out at Bayo Honda and came down the reef and got home about 12 midnight, having taken all my things to the office. Found all well. We brought 17 brace of ducks with us but they are small, rather strong. Took a three brace home. The steamer **Vanderbilt** was at Tifts wharf having got in today.

Sunday, October 21. Rose about

6 and took a good bath which I wanted much. At 8:45 a.m. barometer 29.52, thermometer 87.5, wind east southeast 3, clouds 3. Overhauled cloths and gear and oiled my guns. John P. Smith is captain of the steamer **Vanderbilt** and was in my office for some time as were William Pinckney and Fernando Moreno. Had the ducks cleaned and put in a solution of Chloride of Soda to soak before cooking which had the desired effect and the stew into which they were made was said by Matilda and the children to be excellent. I ate my usual fare of ochra soup and vegetables, not tasting any flesh I fell very well and think the trip has been refreshing. At 2 p.m. barometer 29.50, thermometer 89.5, wind east southeast variable and light, clouds 6. Wrote up my journal since the 14th.

Monday, October 22. Rose at 4:30 went down town and found that the steamer **Isabel** had got in about 2:30 a.m. Got a letter from Mother and my papers. Mrs Julius Tift & children, Mrs. Felix Senca and child and some others came in the **Isabel**. John Sevalle sent me a leg of mutton. At 8:20 a.m. barometer 29.56, thermometer 85, wind southeast 1, clouds 5. Some rain about sunrise. Weather very hot and oppressive. Read a little in the papers.

Tuesday, October 23. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach. Returned and bathed. At 8:45 a.m. barometer 29.57, thermometer 86.5, wind calm, clouds 6. Bought of Charles Howe one pair of walking shoes for \$1.25. Sent my big gun by John Smith to have a piece cut off the barrels that is now 46 inch barrels and I will have 10 inches cut off. At 3 p.m. barometer 29.47, thermometer 88, wind variable, clouds 8. Commenced raining about 4 p.m. and rained all night.

Wednesday, October 24. The steamer **Vanderbilt** got off at 6 a.m. At 9:30 a.m. barometer 29.48, thermometer 84, wind south southeast 1, clouds 8. Hired a Negro woman of William C. Dennis at \$12.00 per month and she came about midday. Got up 18 bags of Patent Office reports including the Agricultural of which five copies were directed to J. Martin. Took a copy for myself. Bought a large box from Charles Howe for \$.50 and hinges and hasp for same for \$.62. Cut a dome in the top and filled it for the Guinea Pigs and put them in it and locked them up. Sweated profusely while at work. About 4 p.m. the wind came from the northwest attended with rain squalls till late which prevented my going to a party at Captain Israel Vogdes to which I was invited to meet several Army Officers who are here holding a Court Martial for the trial of Privates. Set the alarm for midnight to see the eclipse of the moon but the sky was so thickly overcast that the moon was not visible.

Thursday, October 25. Rose at 4 and went to Mead's Pond and sat for about 15 minutes during which time I saw six men pass with guns and I left and sat at the Lighthouse Pond until after sunrise. Returned home and bathed. At 9 a.m. barometer 29.59, thermometer 78.3, wind northeast 4, clouds 9. Felix Senac killed eight teals yesterday morning near the Hospital and heard a duck quack this morning on the Lighthouse Pond. I heard three guns fired. Seantor Stephen Mallory killed 25 ducks, 21 at one shot with both barrels. Walked to the Lighthouse with Matilda and Mary Ann Porter's Charlotte who is nine years old today and has a few children to play with.

Friday, October 26. Went to market and got some beef which

is very fine. At 8:15 a.m. barometer 29.55.2, thermometer 76, wind north northeast 3, clouds 7. Read papers.

Saturday, October 27. Rose at 4:50 and sat till near sunrise at Mead's Pond and saw several Teal at which I fired but they were too far for my number 6 shot to hit them. On my way home by the beach Linn told me that there was a wild goose in one of the small ponds. I went after it and got within 20 feet of it on the edge of the pond and shot it in the head. I found that one of its feet had been shot nearly off with a few hours, two days at most as the wound was fresh not suppunated at all. Killed four Tringal. At 8:40 a.m. barometer 29.60, thermometer 78, wind east northeast 3, clouds 2. Yesterday bought a lamp of Robert P. Campbell for \$6.00 which has a button just at the top of the flame which faces it and causes the unconsumed vapor to come in contact with oxygen and consumed given a very brilliant light. Read papers. Walked to the Fort with the children.

Sunday, October 28. Rose at 4:15 and walked on the beach. Returned home and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.54, thermometer 78, wind northeast 3, clouds 1. Saw three ducks flying at the Fort wharf. Read papers.

Monday, October 29. Rose at 4. On my way to the duck pond saw a Raccoon on the dead tree by the hole of water to the left side of Simonton's Road. He jumped as soon as he saw me but a dog that had treed him made him take the tree again and I fired both barrels and killed him though could not find him till I returned where he was lying dead within a few feet of the spot where I loaded my gun. Killed a Mallard duck in Mead's Pond, the only one I saw. Returned home bathed and skinned the conn, which was very fat. Wind east northeast 3, clouds 9. At 9:20 a.m. barometer 29.56, thermometer 80. Went to a party at Major William H. Chase's with Matilda and remained till after 12.

Tuesday, October 30. Rose about 4 and went down to the wharf and got my things on board of the Cutter and got off about 7 a.m. John P. Baldwin, C. Johnson and self for Cape Sable. Nearly calm but as soon as we drifted outside the Fort got some wind and beat up to Loggerhead Key where we anchored about dark.

Wednesday, October 31. Got underway about 5 and beat up to Bayo Honda where we went inside and by Pigeon Key into the bay. Nearly calm but got over nearly to Sandy Key by dark when we anchored in 10 feet of water.

Thursday, November 1. Got underway about 5 and over to the Cape with a light wind and came too abreast of the Cape about 9. John P. Baldwin, William Randolph, I and three men went to the duck ponds and found a number of ducks and a great many Coots. Killed in all 23 Coots and three ducks. There were so many persons tampering in the water that I did not get a good shot the whole day and went through all the ponds and one prairie the same way. Johnson went out on the plain after deer and saw nine in one gang but they were startled by our shooting in the swamp and he could not get a shot. After he saw two others close to him but snapped at them twice. He was worn out by the walk and could not help the men. I saw one doe as we were coming out of the swamp.

Friday, November 2. Hinson and I with rifles (I with Mallory's) walked over to the Palm Cape but saw nothing not even a duck. Jim and Joe went to the duck ponds and got two ducks and four Coots. Jim snapped at a doe within 15 yards. John Baldwin went after snipe with my gun and killed a number.

Saturday, November 3. Got underway at 5 a.m. for Sandy Key where we anchored about 8 a.m. and after breakfast six guns went on there and brought off 210 birds of all sorts. I fired both barrels into a flock of small snipe and picked up 39. After dinner went on there by myself and killed four large Marlins Snipe. After tea played Euchre. Johnson asleep, he is getting to old for such exposure. About 9 Jim who had been out looking for Mullet came aboard and told me that there was a number of birds on the point. I went off with him and Robert and creeping up fired six barrels but were cursed by the grass and killed but a few of what proved to be ducks. I walked down to the point and fired both barrels and picked up 29 ducks of several species. Jim left for the other end of the Key and Robert and I remained and fired four times more into birds. The night was so dark that I could not see my gun or where I was pointing could I have seen I might have killed hundreds. When we got on board at 12 we had 53 ducks, 22 large Marlin and 20 Bwoitches. Clean them and lying two together by the heads and hung them across the spar filling in pretty well there being 52 braces.

Sunday, November 4. Sent the boat ashore to look for the wounded and they brought off four ducks and four Marlin. Making in all 62 ducks, 28 Coots, 51 Marlin and about 300 other birds killed on the trip. Got underway about 7 and ran down with a fair wind and got into Key West about 6 p.m. I took 11 ducks and 10 large snipe. Sent Alexander Patterson four ducks and two snipe and sent Charles Tift a brace each. Bathed and got supper feeling well, a pleasant trip.

Monday, November 5. Rose at 5 and bathed. After breakfast

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overhauled my things but did not write. John Smith sent me by the schooner **Florida**, which arrived on the first, his dog Dash. He is I think Newfoundland and pointer and a good yard dog and he has been trained on game. John calls him setter, he is a pretty dog and good with the children. P.M. siesta. Wind east southeast and very hot.

Tuesday, November 6. Rose at 4:15 and went to market. Got some beef and took it home and untied Dash and walked round by the beach when finding the tide high returned home through the Simonton Road. Wrote up my journal since the 29th. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.42, thermometer 83, wind east southeast 3, clouds 5. Cleaned my gun thoroughly which took me all the morning. Senator Stephen Mallory directing books. William Cooly helping him. (Cooly came down in the **Florida**). The steamer **Northern Light** came in about 1:30 a.m. Took back to Bowne and Curry a lamp which I borrowed and took with me to the Cape to fire hunt with but did not answer. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.38, thermometer 85, wind southeast 2, clouds 2. The steamer **Isabel** came in about 11 a.m. Hatty had some children to tea. Got a letter from the Solicitor of the Treasury.

Wednesday, November 7. Rose at 5 and walked to the woods leading to the Salt Pond. Returned home and bathed. At 9 a.m. barometer 29.45, thermometer 84, wind southeast 2, clouds 2. The first volume of Railroad Explorations came via the steamer **Isabel**. Walburg brought a silver watch, Hunters MK 50004 J from J. Olorenshaw & Company, Southampton S/W London which I requested him to bring for me which he ask \$50.00. Julius Tift sent for a silver watch by him and bought the

fellow to mine except that Tift's is plain, engine turned.

Thursday, November 8. Rose at 4 and went to the market and took beef home and walked on the beach. Returned home and bath. At 8:40 a.m. barometer 29.41, thermometer 84.5, wind south 2, clouds 5. At 4 p.m. barometer 29.36.5, thermometer 88, wind south 1, clouds 3. Wrote to the Solicitor of the Treasury and read papers.

Friday, November 9. Rose at 4:45 walked by the Fort and beach and home by Simonton's Road. Returned home and bathed. At 8:15 a.m. barometer 29.40, thermometer 82.5, wind south southwest 2, clouds 4.

Saturday, November 10. Rained heavily during the night and I thought that it would be to wet to walk so that I lay till 5:30 when I bathed. At 9:00 a.m. barometer 29.40, thermometer 80.5, wind north northeast 2, clouds 9. The **Florida** got off at 12 and Senator Stephen Mallory went in her by way of Pensacola. Wrote to Mother and sent her a Treasury Warrant for \$50.00. Wrote to P. Williams in Washington, D.C. and sent him Charles M. Johnson's claim for bounty lands. The steamer **Isabel** came in about 4 p.m. Captain Israel Vogdes went in her.

Sunday, November 11. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach. Returned home and bathed. At 8:35 a.m. barometer 29.36, thermometer 82, wind variable and light with a light shower at 8, clouds 4. At 4 p.m. barometer 29.31.5, thermometer 84.5, wind west southwest 1, clouds 3.

Monday, November 12. Rose at 4:30 and went round by the duck ponds and barracks. Saw nothing, very calm all night. Returned home and bathed. At 8:15 a.m. barometer 29.38, thermometer 81.5, wind north northeast 1, clouds 2. Read

papers and Law magazine.

Tuesday, November 13. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach and returned home and bathed. At 8:15 a.m. barometer 29.52, thermometer 82, wind north northeast 1.5, clouds 2. Read papers and Law magazine.

Wednesday, November 14. Rose at 4:30 and went up to the Salt Pond Plain and through the ponds on the plain by Long Road to Linn's Pond and by Flag and Mead's Ponds then home. I saw nothing to shoot. Returned home and bathed. At 8:15 a.m. barometer 29.60, thermometer 82, wind northeast 2, clouds 2. A little rain fell last night about 10 p.m. Read papers and Law magazine, p.m. siesta and Putnam's magazine.

Thursday, November 15. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8:10 a.m. barometer 29.57, thermometer 82, wind northeast 4, clouds 1. Read papers and Law magazine.

Friday, November 16. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.51, thermometer 80, wind east southeast 4, clouds 3. Several rain squalls yesterday from 5 to 9 p.m. Prepared a bill to regulate Pilotage at Key West adopting a number of the sections of the Pensacola bill of January 1855, which occupied me all the morning. Abram Phillips term of imprisonment expired today and the brig **Mystic** being in port bound to New York he shipped on board of her and sailed in the afternoon. Walked to the Fort with Matilda and the children.

Saturday, November 17. Raining at my usual hour for rising and I lay until daylight when I bathed. At 8:15 a.m. barometer 29.49, thermometer 81, wind northeast 3, clouds 2. Read paper and Law magazine.

Sunday, November 18. Woke at 4 found it was raining and continued

drizzling at intervals all morning, bathed. At 8:20 a.m. barometer 29.47.5, thermometer 82, wind northeast 3, clouds 6. Read Putnam's magazine. Rain at intervals. At 4 p.m. barometer 29.42, thermometer 81.5, wind northeast 4, clouds 8. Heavy thunder in the Gulf.

Monday, November 19. Woke at 4 but so much rain has fallen that it is too wet to walk so I lay until broad daylight and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.47, thermometer 80, wind northeast 3, clouds 4. Read Law magazine.

Tuesday, November 20. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach. Returned home and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.47.5, thermometer 80, wind northeast 3, clouds 5. Several Soldiers were put in jail by the magistrates for rioting, they threatened to burn the town down. A large patrol was sent out. Read the Law magazine.

Wednesday, November 21. Rose at 5 and walked on beach, returned home and bathed. At 8:40 a.m. barometer 29.50, thermometer 82, wind northeast 2, clouds 5. The steamer **Vanderbilt** came in last night. John Smith brought my gun, she is very convenient and he says shoots as well as any gun can. She cost \$8.00 but he will take no pay from me. The steamer **Isabel** got in about 2:30 p.m. Robert P. Campbell, Jane Randolph and Mary Fontane came in her. She had a very rough passage.

Thursday, November 22. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8:15 a.m. barometer 29.53, thermometer 81.5, Wind northeast 1, clouds 3. Read Law magazine.

Friday, November 23. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.57, thermometer 80, wind northeast 4, clouds 4. Wrote P. Williams in Washington

enclosing claim of Shubeal Brown for Bounty Land. Brown worked at Cedar Key for about three months during the winter of 1840-41 under the command of the U.S. Quartermaster. Wrote to editor of Knickerbocker magazine asking for a certificate of membership in the C.A. Union. Read papers.

Saturday, November 24. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.57, thermometer 80, wind northeast 3, clouds 8. The steamer **Star of the West** got in last evening about 7, coaled and got off before morning. The steamer **Vanderbilt** got off at 8:15 a.m. James Filor went in her to Tallahassee. Yesterday evening paid D. Williams for vegetables since 20th of September, \$11.13. Read papers.

Sunday, November 25. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.60, thermometer 78.5, wind northeast 2, clouds 2. The steamer **Isabel** came in from Havana about 4 p.m. and got off about 5. Hatty wrote her grand mother by this mail.

Monday, November 26. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.55, thermometer 80, wind northeast 1, clouds 6. Read papers. Got a box of Homeopathic Medicines that Robert P. Campbell brought out for me. Cost was \$14.00. Took a treatment of Nux V. for my eyes and changed in the evening to Euphasia.

Tuesday, November 27. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach returned home and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.52, thermometer 81, wind north northeast 2, clouds 8. Read papers and Law magazine.

Wednesday, November 28. Rose at 4:30 and got as far as the Hospital when it commenced raining lightly

and I returned and walked for some time on the piazza then filled the bath and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.33, thermometer 80, wind south southwest 4, clouds 6. At 11 a.m. barometer 29.30.5, thermometer 81, wind south southwest 5, clouds 6. Bought a pair of Leghorn fowls from Captain Joseph Packer. He says that his son raised them and that the hen sits but seldom but is a constant layer. Packer is out in the schooner **Britten Cook** and has submarine armor and divers with him. He will salt Kingfish and get coral until the winter is over when he goes somewhere, where he will not say but I suppose on the Spanish Main. At 1:30 p.m. barometer 29.25, thermometer 82, wind south southwest 6, clouds 8. At 5 p.m. barometer 29.21. At 9 p.m. barometer 29.23, wind northwest.

Thursday, November 29. Rose at 4:50 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.34.5, thermometer 72.5, wind northwest 2, clouds 2. The wind got to the northwest yesterday about 6 p.m. with a light rain and moderate wind. I slept in the house there being too much wind in the piazza. Read papers. Dr. L. Engle dined with us. P.M. walked.

Friday, November 30. Rose at 4:30 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8:45 a.m. barometer 29.36, thermometer 71, wind northeast 2, clouds 7. Last night at 12 an alarm of fire was given which proved to be a house in Conch town occupied by Alexander Saunders, it was consumed with all the furniture in a few minutes and I stopped but a short time, nearly calm. Finished my newspapers. The ship **Lavnia** which has been ashore on Loo Key since the 21st came in. Davis' Windmill pump in full play onboard.

The Spanish Influenza

During World War One the Spanish influenza, the name given to the pandemic of an acute influenza, that was spear world wide by the movement of people caused by the war. Key West being large military training base was not spared the effect of the epidemic. Following is the 1918 report of the Monroe County Health Officer, Dr. W.W. Warren, to the Florida State Health Officer.

Dr Warren report on the influenza was correct but he was lacking in his report of on tuberculosis that was an infectious disease spear by person-to-person transmission. During the late 1800s and early 1900s, it was considered the most widespread human infection and until the discovery of antibiotics in the 1940's it was an incurable and deadly disease. Tuberculosis, or consumption as was commonly called, was the leading cause of death in Key West until World War Two.

Report of Dr. William R. Warren,
District Health Officer.

Key West, Florida, February
10th, 1919.

Dr. W.H. Cox, State Health
Officer, Jacksonville, Florida.

Dear Dr. Cox:

I have the honor to submit the following report of the District Health Officer, for the islands of the Key West Extension, for the year 1918.

During the past year Monroe County has been fortunate in having a few cases of communicable disease within it boundaries, but for the invasion of influenza, the



Dr. W.W. Warren speaking at the dedication of the Hurricane Monument in Islamorada on November 14, 1937. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

morbidity and mortality rates would have been remarkably low.

The increase of the population of Key West by the addition of men in different branches of the United States Service, together with the families of the men stationed here required watchfulness on the part of the health authorities and necessity for vigilance was warmly appreciated by the Government, State and Municipal officers. As a result, those in a position to know, are fully aware of the improvement in both sanitary and moral conditions.

The Navy Department under the supervision of Admiral Fletcher, Commandant of the Seventh Naval District, ably assisted by his District Sanitation Officer, Doctor G.M. Guiteras, have been alert in sanitary matters and their efforts and cooperation have been productive of results that are very evident.

Systematic inspection of the entire city, with a view of

eliminating the sources of disease and nuisances, was inaugurated and has been continued. The cooperation of the State and City was requested and was given. The City council passed ordinances requiring screening of all water containers and cess pools, the daily collection of garbage, and provided penalties for violation of the ordinances.

Oiling of cisterns and other water containers, holding mosquito larvae, was regularly and systematically carried on by squads of men, which materially abated the mosquito nuisance.

The vigilance so exercised is probably responsible for the fact that there have been no fatalities among the enlisted men stationed here, from communicable diseases, other than influenza.

Influenza first made its appearance among the Navy personnel at the Training Station and in the United States Marine Hospital.



Headquarters of the Naval Air Station in 1918. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

The disease was brought to the Training Station by recruits from the North and the cases at the Marine Hospital were taken from passing merchant ships, the disease having been contracted in north Atlantic ports.

Of the first twenty deaths occurring in Monroe County, fourteen were among men in the service of the United States Government and six were civilians.

There were seventy-nine deaths from influenza in Monroe County during the year 1918. Of this number forty-four were civilians and thirty-five were in the United States Government Service. Sixty-nine died in the month of October, nine died in November and one died in December.

It is estimated that twenty per cent of the entire population of Monroe County had influenza during October, November and December.

Typhoid Fever:-Nine Cases were

reported during the past year and there were no deaths.

Scarlet Fever:-Two cases reported, no deaths.

Small pox:-No cases reported.

Malaria:-Three cases were reported and one death as a complication. All of the cases were imported.

Measles:-There were about fifty cases reported during the year, and there were no deaths.

German Measles, Whooping Cough and Mumps were reported in mild form, with no fatalities.

Diphtheria:-Eight cases were reported during the year with no deaths.

Leprosy:-There are nine cases of Leprosy on the island of Key West, under the supervision of the State and City Health Authorities. There was one death from Leprosy during the past year.

Acute Poliomyelitis:-One case of this disease was taken from a

U.S. Patrol boat and immediately isolated at the Marine Hospital, the patient recovered.

Tuberculosis:-There were forty-seven deaths from tuberculosis during the past year. It seems almost unbelievable that fifteen per cent of deaths here should be caused by a preventable and curable disease. In a city that boasts of a climate unsurpassed, where sunshine is a daily visitor, where all can spend their hours of recreation and rest in the open, something should be done by the City and State to educate the people and prevent such an economic loss.

I take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the aid and cooperation rendered me by the State Health Officer and his assistants during the past year.

Respectfully submitted,
(Signed): W.R. Warren,
District Health Officer.

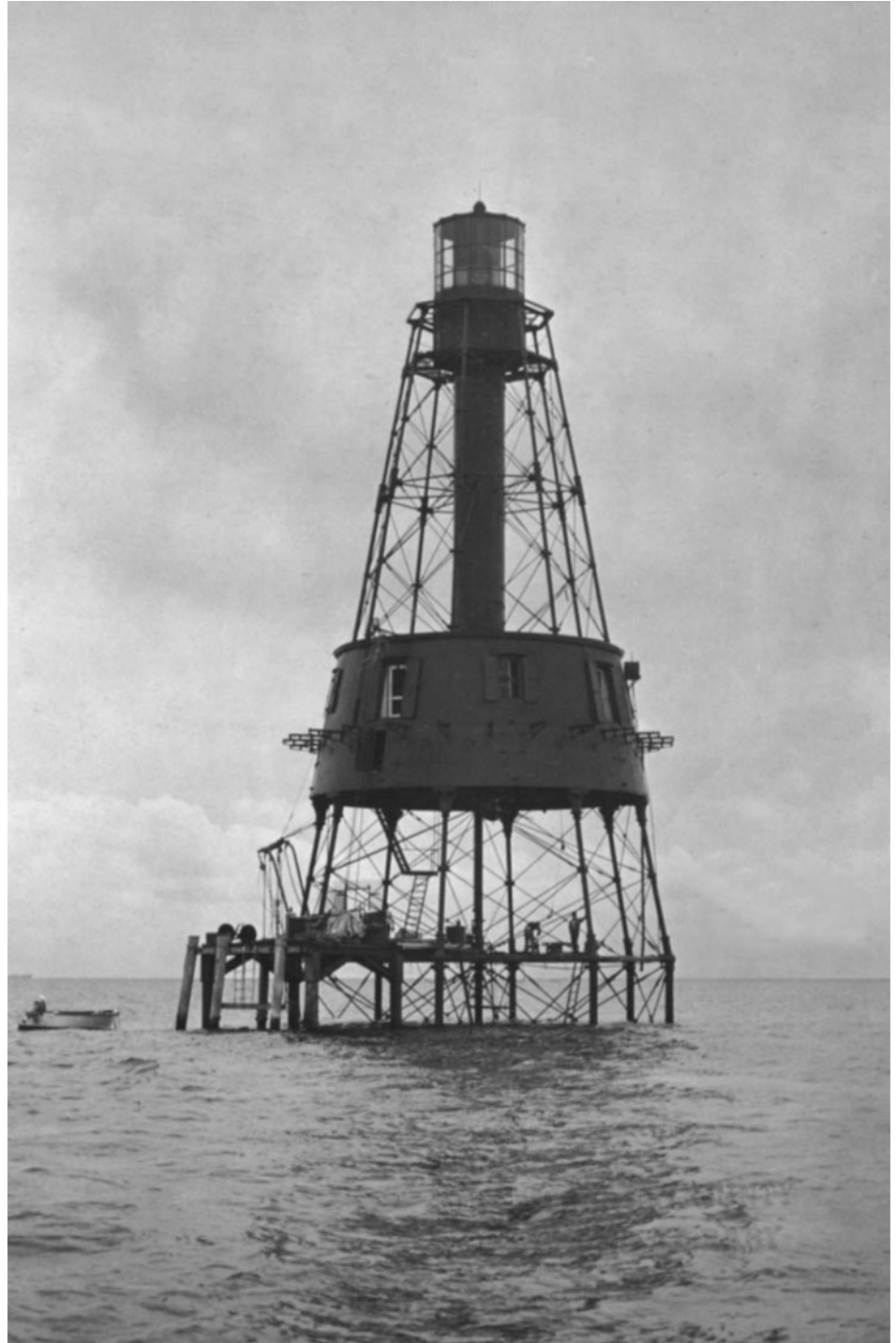
The Carysfort Floating Light

Extracted from a talk by Commander A. E. Carlson U.S. Coast Guard, to the Florida Historical Association, date unknown. (Contributed by John Viele)

The next light established in the Florida area was that at Carysfort Reef. This light is doubly interesting from a historical point of view; first because it was established originally as a Floating Lighthouse, and secondly, when it was established as a permanent light, was built on an entirely new principle and one to be followed in the building of all succeeding reef lights.

It should be remembered that Lt. Ramage pointed out that Carysfort Reef, or Carysford, as it was commonly written in early correspondence, was a particularly treacherous shoal 27 miles almost due south of Cape Florida. He recommended the use of Floating Lighthouses, in fact he was of the opinion that the nature of the bottom and the characteristic state of the sea would not permit the building of a permanent structure. Incidentally, this name seems to be a contraction of Carey's Ford, the significance of which I am not able to report.

Acting according to instructions, Jonathon Thompson, District Lighthouse Superintendent and collector of Customs of New York, entered into a contract with Issac Webb and John Allen of New York for the construction of a 220-ton lightship [named the **Florida**], built of white oak, with five-foot lanterns for \$18,500. I mention these items since they have some significance to succeeding events. The date of the contract was September, 1824 and it was to be delivered on station



The Carysfort Lighthouse. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

in June of the following year. Isaac Webb was the progenitor of the famous family of naval architects, a name still to be reckoned with in the world of shipbuilders.

Captain John Whalton was appointed keeper of Carysfort

Floating Light by President John Quincy Adams in late 1825 and thus began a career that was to end in tragedy. He arrived in Key West to assume command only to find his new command already involved in disaster. On her maiden

voyage from New York, she had run aground 50 miles north of Cape Florida where she was eagerly pounced on by the wreckers. She was brought into Key West in August, 1825, and sold as salvage to the very contractors that had built her. All of the stores placed aboard in New York were either lost or sold, so the collector of customs at Key West had to re-oufit her at new and considerable expense. The ship itself had survived the stranding with little injury and was soon ready for duty.

Considering the opportunities at Key West for seafaring men, it is not surprising that Col. Pinkney [collector of customs] should have difficulty finding men to man the vessel. He finally shipped six men and a mate and the vessel assumed her station in April, 1826. Thus began an episode in lighthouse history fraught with danger, contention, frustration, and disaster.

In 1826, the light vessel was still in the experimental stage, the first such vessel in the United States was placed in commission at Craney Island off Norfolk just six years before. The duty was isolated, dreary and dangerous. It still is [the last lightship was decommissioned in 1985]. Men were hard to get, the pay hardly enough to induce men to leave a comfortable life ashore. The original ration was 25 cents per day per man – later increased to 28 cents. Water was always a problem at Carysfort; the nearest land [where water could be had] was forty miles away. When the rains failed, they [the crew] bought water from the wreckers at 50 cents a cask. Delivery of provisions was sporadic and when it arrived it was high priced. The quality of the manpower was such that disciplinary problems were frequent and difficult. Mr. Pinkney reported

that one seaman, fed up with it all, broke the alarm bell and had to be placed in irons; an incident which led to a rumor of mutiny which Mr. Pinkney indignantly denied. The mate said, "Raise my pay (\$350 per year or I quit."

Worse than that, the ship began to fall apart. Mr. Pinkney's letters record repair after repair in matters of caulking and general shoring up of the vessel. Each time the Superintendent reported that the vessel was in good repair and could confidently be expected to stay on station for an indefinite length of time, only to report a few months later that he needed another thousand or two to keep the vessel afloat.

That was the end of the lightship **Florida**. A second contract was let to Webb and Allen for a new lightship, this time of 225 tons and built of live oak. She was finished in November 1830 and assumed station shortly thereafter, with Captain Whalton still in command and with his family, a large one, on board. This, incidentally was not an uncommon practice agreed to by the authorities apparently on the theory that such an arrangement made keepers easier to keep. About this time, it was common to ship Negroes as crew members; a practice followed at some of the shore stations also. The status of these colored folk is not too clear; the extant correspondence deals with the problems of slaves on these stations, but never quite makes it clear whether official eyes are open or closed to this condition, and so it went. Records indicate that Carysfort Floating Light was conscientiously kept and served its purpose in Whalton's time. It wasn't until later that reports were circulated that intimated that Carysfort was in league with the wreckers and that its light conveniently dimmed or

doused to the ruin of shipping. Carysfort sometimes had the report of being a bad light according to many a master. LCDR David Porter for one, but it was never proved that the keepers were derelict in their duty as to completely betray their trust. Certainly not in the case of Captain Whalton, and it was with some personal grief that William Whitehead wrote to Mr. Pleasonton in June 1837, "A few hours since, the tender to the Light Ship **Florida** lying at Carysfort Reef arrived at this port in charge of three of her crew, who brought the melancholy intelligence that Captain Whalton and one of his men, on yesterday morning, while engaged in wooding on Key Largo-six miles distant from the ship- were shot by the Indians; a party of six having secreted themselves behind some casks near the shore whence they deliberately perpetrated the murderous act. Two other men who were with Captain Whalton escaped, slightly wounded, with the boat." He continues, "Captain Whalton has left his family in very distressed circumstances, and I should be pleased to have authority given to continue the pay to his widow for a limited time"

Captain Whalton was succeeded by the keeper of the Sand Key light. This action had an interesting sidelight in that Captain Watlington tried for some time to convince his superiors that he was entitled to draw pay for keeping Sand Key light as well as the lightship. He not only tried, but he succeeded, and knowing a good thing when he saw it, he was much put out when a new keeper was appointed to Carysfort - so much so that he claimed and indemnity due him. That he never got.

The lighthouse at Carysfort Reef was completed in 1853.

(Whalton from page 1)

go to the grocery store and buy them for her, this store was a red painted building on the corner of Duval and Petronia Streets, just 2 blocks below our home and was kept by a Chinaman, whose name I never knew, but we use to speak of him as the red Chinaman, because his store was painted red. This girl cousin took me with her for the outing, I never knew if she carried me, she got lost, but I do know that I was worn out before I got back home, of course, my family and the servant were very much alarmed, when this girl and I didn't return home at a reasonable time, so they started to search for us and found us at about 4 p.m. on the Rocky Road, just below the North Beach. The one thing that has always stood out in my mind, was this girl holding me in her arms and telling me that she would throw me into the vat that was right rear the slaughterhouse, on the upper end of the North Beach, because I was tired and started to cry, this vat was used in connection with the slaughterhouse for some purpose, unknown to me.

The next event that I have never forgotten was the hurricane of 1876, we had an excellent well in our yard, a natural spring, this well was about 12-feet deep and 19 feet in diameter, we had an extended deck on the well, and one of the doors to our kitchen opened on this deck, we used the water from this well for all purposes; during the hurricane, that day, my father went out to get a bucket of water from the well, and while drawing the water, the rope on the draw bucket caught one of his fingers on which he wore a ring with a large amethyst setting, the ring was pulled from his finger, and fell into the well where it remained until the day after the hurricane; our

servant put a ladder in the well and standing on the rung, just above the water, with a stick, she recovered the ring.

Another event in my life that I have never forgotten happened when I was about seven years old, at that time there were a very few houses on the Southeast side of our Truman Avenue, most of that part of the Island was a wilderness, my grandfather and my father raised quite a number of horses in the woods of Key West, and my grandfather gave me a horse and my father had him broken to harness and saddle, this was a stallion, and somewhat mean. The only time that I was put on his back, was on a Sunday morning, when one of my father's hired men put me on him without a saddle, as soon as he got out of the yard, he started to run, and I was too small to stop him, there was a man coming up the street who stood with his arms open, but when my horse got near this man, he made a quick turn to go by him, and landed me on a flint rock, striking my head. I recovered from that accident in about six weeks, but I never had a chance to get even with that horse, as my father sold him before I became old enough to handle him. This was the end of the events of my early childhood, which have remained fresh in my memory down through the years, due of course, to the fact, that they made a great impression on my mind at the time of happening.

Education

At the age of seven, I started in a little private school conducted by an Aunt of mine, my father's sister, and after she closed her school, I attended a school conducted by a cousin of mine, for awhile, and then a school conducted by Mr. Robert Pent. From there, I entered Mr. William J. Cappick's school that was the last private school that I attended.

At the age of twelve I entered the Public school, where I remained for two years, and completed the 10th grade, that was in 1886, the year of our big fire, which destroyed the lower part of Key West.

That fire was said to have originated in a coffee shop on Duval Street just to the left of the San Carlos Hall. That fire seemed to jump from, first, one side, and then the other of Duval Street and finally got over on to Simonton Street. Nearly every building on Duval and Simonton Streets, from the 500 block to the downtown water front was destroyed. After the fire was extinguished you could stand on the Duval Street in front of where the San Carlos Hall stands now, and see the Wm. Curry's Sons Property at the foot of Simonton Street. That fire could not have occurred at a worse time for us. Key West, at that time, owned but one steam fire engine, and it happened, that this engine was out of order, and could not be used, hence, our fire department, which was much smaller and less efficient, than our department of today, were surely handicapped, having only ladders, hooks and buckets, with which to fight the fire. Speaking of our volunteer fire department, I was told at an early age, that it was organized by Mr. William Dorsett, who came here with his family, from Nassau, he was a ship carpenter, and he built a sail boat for my father, the **Cleo** and one for Mr. Eugene O. Locke, the **Eola**. As a matter of fact, we had no small powerboats here at that time. Mr. Dorsett was the first chief of the fire department, and my father the second.

In 1886, my father was chief clerk in Mr. A. F. Tift's office, Mr. Tift was the Agent for the Mallory S. S. Line, a line of steamships that ran between New York and Galveston, Texas, stopping at Key West both



A.F. Tift's building on Mallory Docks. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

ways. Among the early ships of this line, operating in 1870's, were the S. S. State of Texas and the S. S. Rio Grande, later on the San Marcos, and Guadalupe, the Alamo and Lampacas, Comal, Nueces and C. H. Mallory.

In June of 1886 I left here with my mother, sisters, and my little brother Joe, for a visit with my aunt,

my mother's sister, Mrs. M. H. McClusky, who lived in Glenwood, Iowa. We left Key West on the S S Alamo, for New York, from there, we went to Jersey City, N. J. where we spent a week, with some friends, then left by rail, for our destination, where we remained until August 1886, we were then joined by my father, he came out West to

accompany us home. In September of 1887, I entered the East Florida Seminary, the State Military school, located in Gainesville, Florida, returning home in June of 1888, expecting to go back to school in September of that year, but due to an epidemic of yellow

(Continued on page 14)



The 1884 map of Key West with the area of the Great Fire of 1886 in black. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

(Whalton from page 13)

fever, occurring in Gainesville that summer the East Florida Seminary did not open until January of 1889, so as the school term, was so short, I remained at home until September of 1889, when I went back to school, returning home in June of 1890, and back to school in September of 1890, graduating in May of 1891, and returning home in June. In looking back over these years I spent at the East Florida Seminary, I feel quite proud of the record I maintained during my stay there. In my second year, I received three promotions, I was first promoted to Corporal and assigned to Company A and about three months later I was promoted to Sergeant of Field Music and put in charge of our Drum and Bugle Corps, this position I held just a short while when there was a Commission Officer vacancy, occurred and I was again promoted, this time to 2nd Lieutenant and assigned to Company B. We had three Companies, A. B. and C. When I returned to school in September of 1890, I was promoted to the rank of Captain and commanded

Company B. During my first year at the East Florida Seminary, our Commandant was a retired Army Captain, Captain Chas. H. Curtis, a fine old gentleman. During my last two years, our Commandant was a Naval Lieutenant, Charles S. Ripley, who was also a fine man, and one whom I came to know quite well. While attending the East Florida Seminary, having come from a family of bookkeepers and accountants, I decided to pursue a commercial course, comprising bookkeeping, accounting, banking etc., so that I would be prepared to earn a living, in the event that I were not able to get the profession that I wanted, which was that of a Medical Doctor. My father, for some reason or other, never known to me, didn't seem to want me to study medicine, although I always felt that I would be a good Doctor. The evening that I returned home from school, my father told me that he had arranged with his friend Mr. George B. Patterson, for me to go into his office and read law for a while, and then go away to a good law school to finish.

None of that appealed to me, as

I had no inclination nor desire to be a lawyer, so I told my father that I didn't care to study law, and as he would not agree to my becoming a Doctor, I didn't get a profession.

In 1893 I worked a part time job in the office of the Southern Express Company with my cousin Mason S. Moreno, who was the Agent of the Company at that time, and in the same year, when Grover Cleveland was elected President of the U. S. for the second time Mr. Moreno was appointed Post Master, and during the four years that he was in the Post Office, I conducted the

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Express Office. At the expiration of Mr. Moreno's term of office, as Post Master, he returned to the Express Office, and resumed the position of Agent, and I remained with the Company as Cashier. In those days, there were several Express Companies operating in this Country, among which, there was the Adams Express of which, the Southern Express, was considered the Southern division, the American Express, the Pacific, and Wells Fargo. I worked very hard during the years that I was with the Express Company. The express all came here by water, via the Plant Steam Ship Company who operated the steamers Mascotte and Olivette from Port Tampa to Key West and Havana, Cuba. What really made the express work harder, was the fact, that sometimes the steamers would meet a low tide when coming over the Northwest Bar, and would have to wait for a high tide which always made them arrive late, which naturally caused us to work late at night, after working all day. This delay in the arrival of the ships occurred only during the winter months.

"The Key West Citizen" of March 8, 1965.

Stephen M. Whalton, 92, died early this morning at Monroe General Hospital after a long illness.

He was born in Key West May 29, 1872, son of Joseph and Susan Barker Whalton. He graduated from Key West schools and attended the East Florida Seminary at Gainesville, a Military Institute and forerunner of the present

University of Florida. He graduated in 1895 with the rank of Colonel and was considered one of the oldest alumni of the university of Florida.

He was married on February 21, 1898 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church to the former Lorena Bethel. They recently celebrated their 67th wedding anniversary at St. Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Church.

Of this marriage are two children, Mary (Mrs. C.W.) Halbrook and S.F. Whalton, both of this city, four grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren, all of whom survive him.

Whalton's first job after college was as an agent for the Southern Express Co., a forerunner of the present day Railway Express Agencies. He was associated with his father at the J.C. Whalton Furniture Emporium for many years and then was head bookkeeper at the Florida National Bank for 18 years.

Whalton was for many years a leading musician in Key West as leader of the Key West Light guard Band, playing the cornet. He will also be remembered by the older residents as leader of the orchestra that played Sunday afternoon concerts at the La Brisa Pavilion for many years.

He was a charter member of the original Council of the Knights of Columbus here and was made an honorary life member of the present council three years ago.

He purchased his present home at 1419 Truman Ave. and resided there up to the time of his death.

His body will lie in state at the Lopez Funeral Home. Rosary service will be conducted by the Rev. Rodney T. Kissinger, S.J., at 8:30 p.m., Tuesday at the funeral home and Requiem Mass at St. Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Church Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. burial will be in the family plot in the City Cemetery.

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Key West from the west about 1945. Photo credit: Wilhelmina Harvey Collection Monroe County Library.

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