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

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

The conflict also had a lasting effect on the economics and development of the Florida Territory. Recuperation within the settlements was a slow and tedious process. Moreover, the citizens remained skeptical of those Indians still residing in the peninsula, thus avoiding homesteading too near the reservation. If any positive attribute can be salvaged from such a war, it must be the knowledge obtained by United States forces about a previously unexplored region. In fact, military reconnaissances in south Florida provided valuable data concerning the Everglades, both during and after the war. In 1848, when St. Augustine resident Buckingham Smith compiled an engineering report for the United States government, outlining the advantages of draining the Everglades for agricultural use, navy Commander Levin Powell wrote to Florida’s United States Senator J. D. Westcott expressing his “entire conviction of its practicality.” Powell wrote that a canal or cut from one of the rivers on south Florida’s eastern side would connect Lake Okeechobee with the Atlantic, would open navigation to the interior, and would effect the desired Everglades drainage. Expounding upon such attributes as the rich soil and tropical climate of the region, Powell expressed his opinion that the results of such a work as this were beyond mere speculation. In conclusion, he stated, the Everglades “would be reclaimed to the use and enjoyment of man.” In effect, the Florida War opened new regions for southern expansion, and the subsequent slow but steady increase in population led to statehood in 1845. This goal was reached, in part, by the presence of the United States Navy in south Florida during the war.

SEMINOLE WAR NAVY & ARMY VESSELS
Compiled by KENNETH J. HUGHES

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

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

Manpower shortages also forced the U.S. government to hire private contractors and agents to purchase supplies and forage. Private transports were contracted to deliver this sustenance to the U.S. forces, and private laborers and teams were hired to ascertain that all goods safely reached their destinations. Spoilage was one of Major General Thomas Sidney Jesup’s many concerns as he marched his troops into south Florida in 1837 and 1838. His correspondence often reflected associated problems such as the lack of coffee and the condition of beans that were utterly unfit for human consumption. In fact, troops were employed to construct adequate storage sheds to avoid such aggravations. Jesup also complained about inexperienced laborers and teamsters, whose various blunders created delays in the shipment of provisions, which, in turn, delayed the campaign. Frequent winter gales also hampered delivery schedules. Thus, the responsibility of maintaining supply lines
became a bi-partisan effort between government forces and private contractors. More often than not, army and navy personnel worked alongside the contractors to insure a prompt and safe delivery to the front lines.

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

Jesup eventually ordered them to be returned to the north and dismissed from service, after their cargo was placed in the depot on Key Biscayne. Subsequently, there was a great demand for the use of small vessels in south Florida.

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

The U.S. Navy also relied upon the use of small vessels as an effective means of reconnoitering the coast. Late in 1838, the barges Emmett and Schocco, commanded by Lieutenant Charles B. Howard, U.S.N., were removed from the schooner Wave, and placed amongst the Florida Keys. The coastal surveys obtained during these patrols provided accurate data for McLaughlin's Map of the South Florida Peninsula. The forces in Florida also relied on lighters, rowboats, service boats, and dinghies to load, unload, and deliver supplies from the contracted transports. A dredge boat was utilized in opening sand bars on the St. Johns River to facilitate steamer traffic, an "Iron boat" delivered supplies to U.S. forces stationed on the Caloosahatchee River, and captured "Indian dugouts" became a valuable means of transportation for the American guerrilla patrols throughout the Pai-hai-okee.

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

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### List of Vessels

#### I. NAVAL VESSELS

**A) U.S. FRIGATES**

*Constellation*  
(Captain Alexander J. Dallas), 1835-36.  
*Macedonian*  
(Captain Parker), 1837, 1839.

**B) GN BARGES**

*Benton*  
*Harney*  
*Mayo*  
(Lieut. John Davis, USN, Passed Midshipman Strong B. Thompson, USN), Southeast and southwest Florida, 1839.  
*Pauling*  

**C) SCHOONERS**

*Bahama*  
(Lieut. George M. Bache, USN), sailed lower Keys, 1836.  
*Carolina*  
Decked schooner (owned by Key West Customs House), on Lieut. Powell's southeast Florida expedition, 1836.  
*Firefly*  
*Flirt*  
(Lieut. John McLaughlin, USN), carried six six-pound guns and one twelve-pound gun, 1841-42.  
*Grampus*  
*Hayes*  
Mail schooner, at Indian Key, 1841.  
*Jefferson*  
(Capt. John Jackson, USRM, Lieut. Commandant [Capt.] John Rodgers, USN), revenue service, 1836-41, naval service, 1841-42.  
*Motto*  
(Lieut. Thomas J. Lieb, USN), at New River and Key Biscayne, 1836.  
*Otsego*  
(previously the Caroline), 1838-40.  
*Otsego*  
(previously the David B. Small) (Lieut. James S. Bidde, USN), 1840-41.  
*Perrine*  
Transported Lieut. Levin Powell from Pensacola, 1837.  
*Phoenix*  
(Lieut. Christopher R. P. Rodgers, USN), 1841-42.  
*Star*  
(Passed Midshipman William M. Walker, USN), Florida service 1837-41; shipped interpreter "Primus" to Cedar Keys, 1841.  
*Van Buren*  
(Lieut. John B. Marchand, USN), 1841-42.  
*Wave*  
(Lieut. John McLaughlin, USN, and Lieut. John C. Henry, USN), private vessel purchased by McLaughlin from John C. Stevens; Florida service, 1838-42.

**D) SLOOPS-of-WAR**

*Boston*  
*Concord*  
(Master Commandant Mer-vine P. Mix, USN), Florida service, 1836-38.
Erie
(Captain Tennick, USN),
Florida service, 1839.

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

Natchez
Florida service, 1836-39.

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

Panther

St. Louis
(Master Commandant Lawrence Rousseau, USN), Florida service, 1835-36; assisted in 1836 Charlotte Harbor expedition under command of Commandant Paine.

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

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

E) U.S. STEAMERS
USS Florence
Tampa Bay and Withlacoochee River, 1838,

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

F) U.S. ARMY STEAMERS (manned by naval personnel)
American
(Lieut. Stephen Johnston, USN), Florida service on Gulf coast, 1836-37.

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

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

III. CONTRACTED ARMY VESSELS
A) BRIGANTINES
Alexandria
Florida service, 1839.

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

Experiment
Florida service, 1839.

General Pickney
Florida service, 1839.

Homie
Florida service, 1839.

Ludwig
Florida service, 1839.

Maria
Florida service, 1839.

Mobile
Florida service, 1839.

Moulusca
Florida service, 1838-39.

Orient
Florida service, 1839.

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

Seafower
Shipped marines from south Florida to Tampa, 1836.

Somerset
Florida service, 1838.

B) Schooners
Agnes
(Captain Swazey), Florida service, 1838.

Allure
Florida service, 1838.

Caspian
(Captain Swazey), St. Augustine to Fort Pierce, 1838.

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

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

Exit
Florida service, 1838.

Good Hope
Florida service, 1838.

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

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

Imperial
Florida service, 1838.

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

Lauranna
Florida service, 1838.

Maria Estelle
Florida service, 1838.

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

Morgan
Florida service, 1838.

Motion
Florida service, 1838.

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

Peru
Florida service, 1838.

Pilot
Florida service, 1839, transported cattle.

Polly
Florida service, 1838.
Florida service, 1836-39; transported Major General
Edmund P. Gaines and part
of Fourth Infantry Regiment
from Louisiana to Florida,
1836; transported troops
between St. Augustine and
Mosquito Inlet, 1837.

William Gaston
(Captain Abraham King),
shipped supplies from Fort
Pierce to Gilbert’s Bar
(present-day Stuart), 1838;
south Florida coastal
patrols, 1841.

Isis
Employed at Black Creek
on the St. Johns and at New
River, 1837-38; washed
aground at Punta Rassa,
1841 (regarded as a good
seasboat).

Izard
Florida, 1839 (not to be
confused with the Lieutenant
Izard, which sank in 1836).

Jon
Florida service, 1839.

Marion
Florida service, 1838-39;
supplied posts on the Suwan-
nee River.

John McLean
Florida service, 1837-38;
grounded and lost on reef
while transporting Fourth
Artillery troops to Smyrna
in November 1838; previously
had served on the St. Johns
and at New River.

Muskoge
Florida service, 1838;
reached to within five miles
of Fort Jupiter by way of
Hobe Sound.

Okeechobee
Florida service, 1838-39.

F. N. Page
Florida service, 1838.

Richmond
Transported First Artillery
between St. Augustine and
New Smyrna, 1837.

Santee
On the St. Johns River, 1837;
on the Caloosahatchee, 1838;
at New River; transported
survivors of the Perrine family
from south Florida to St.
Augustine, 1840.

Satterlee
Florida service, 1838.

Tallahassee
Florida service, 1839.

Tomochichi
Florida service, 1838.

IV. UNIDENTIFIED VESSELS

Blackhawk
Florida service, 1836,
(shuttled naval expedition).

Batteaux
(Passed Midshipman Henry
Waddell), Florida service
with navy at Indian Key,
August 1839.

Fairy
Small craft which accompanied
the steamers Major Dade
on a Gulf coast expedition,
1836.

S. S. Mills
Mail packet to St. Augustine,
1837.

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