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STEAMBOAT ACTIVITY IN FLORIDA DURING THE SECOND SEMINOLE INDIAN WAR

by EDWARD A. MUELLER

A significant stimulus to the development of steamboat activity in Florida was the Second Seminole Indian War (1835-1842). The war was a difficult one for the United States to wage. Transportation by water played a key role. The conflict involved a substantial number of steamboats. Because of a lack of roads, they served as logical and logistical answers to military needs. Army facilities located on or near navigable waters, like the St. Johns River and its tributaries, could be supplied by steamboats. With few exceptions steamboats were primarily used for military purposes and usually did not cater to civilians. However, it was realized that there was potential for trade and transportation. Mainly the army was involved in the Indian war; the navy played only a limited role.

Military action against the Seminoles called for bases and forts from which to operate and which could also serve as places of retreat, replenishment, and rest. On the east coast, St. Augustine was a focus of military activity, and there were army posts at Fort Pierce, Fort Lauderdale, and Fort Dallas (Miami), and settlements at New Smyrna and Dunlawtown. In the interior, there were army units at Fort Brooks near Palatka and at Fort Heilman across from Garey's Ferry on Black Creek.¹ Other small settlements and military posts were at Volusia, Spring Garden, Picolata, and Mandarin.

The armed forces, in carrying out their operations against the Indians, explored about 100 miles of the St. Johns River south of (above) Lake Monroe. Bases were established at Fort Lane on Lake Harney, Fort Christmas, and Fort Taylor, the

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1. Garey's Ferry, in the vicinity of present-day Middleburg, is usually listed as Garey's Ferry, but is more correctly "Gary's Ferry." Garey's Ferry is used in this article.

latter about 100 river miles south on the St. Johns from Fort Mellon. Fort Mellon (originally located within the confines of present-day Sanford) was the main destination for steamboats traveling south of the St. Johns. Occasionally a light-draft vessel could get to Fort Lane, but travel further south required canoes, bateaux, or small craft that could be poled or rowed.

Most historical accounts of the Second Seminole War say little about the supply problems and the employment of steamboats for this purpose. Published government records provide few references. While newspapers seldom distinguished between chartered steamers on military business and "civilian" craft, they do offer important information on the role steamboats played in the war. Some contemporary accounts are also important.

In April 1834, the *Florida*, a vessel built in Savannah, began operating on the St. Johns River on a once-a-week basis.² Her upriver destination was Picolata, and from there passengers could journey overland to St. Augustine. The *Florida* continued this schedule through December 1835. As a forecasting of the future of Florida transportation, an engineer, William Parker, four assistant engineers, and fourteen laborers arrived in Jacksonville aboard the *Florida*, on December 23, 1835, to begin a survey for a railroad across the peninsula.³ Five army officers were also aboard, en route via Black Creek to Fort King near Ocala.

On January 11, 1836, the *Florida* passed the *Davenport* on the St. Johns River. The latter, from New York, was transporting fifty soldiers to Fort King. Aboard the *Florida* were Colonel J. H. McIntosh and General Duncan Clinch en route to St. Marys, Georgia, where they hoped to obtain volunteers for the defense against the Indians. On January 22, while the *Florida* was docked at Picolata, Captain Hubbard (or Hebbard) noted an Indian nearby. He fired at him and missed; he later saw three others.⁴

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2. The *Florida* was 104' by 20' by 7' 4" and of 144 tons. Data derived from extracts of newspaper entries contained in the Maritime file of the St. Augustine Historical Society, St. Augustine, Florida (hereinafter referred to as Maritime file).
 3. The railroad, running from Fernandina to Cedar Key, was completed in 1861.
 4. The war had already started on December 28, 1835, with the death of Seminole Indian agent Wiley Thompson at Fort King, and the massacre

On January 29, as the *Florida* sailed into Jacksonville, a company of soldiers on the upper deck were playing martial music. They were the Richmond (Virginia) Blues, a volunteer contingent headed for Picolata. That same day, the *John David Mongin*, Captain William Curry, master, was also in Jacksonville en route to Picolata with some 116 volunteers from Savannah aboard. The vessel had been chartered by citizens of Savannah, and the volunteers were to patrol the river and try to protect the inhabitants living along its banks.

In the meantime, the few available government maritime resources were being called into action. The survey steamer, *Essayons*, under Lieutenant Williams, was on a reconnaissance mission near Talbot Island. On January 3, 1836, responding to new orders, she picked up a flat (barge) and sailed to Amelia Island to await her new military destination.⁵

There were few available government steamers and the army sought to charter vessels rather than trying to buy or build them. Moreover, it was believed that the war would be of short duration and that this would be a more economical plan. Using steamboats would enable communications to reach Florida in less than a week from Washington. Savannah and Charleston were major points of charter for Florida-bound vessels; these ports were the intermediate transfer points for both troops and supplies. St. Augustine and posts on the St. Johns and its environs were the major destinations. Many of the vessels chartered out of Savannah had plied the Savannah River carrying cotton to Augusta.

The *Santee*, a vessel that would see much service during the war, was chartered for \$200 by a group of Charlestonians to carry their German Fusilers and Hamburg Volunteers as well as arms to St. Augustine in January 1836.⁶ Later that year General Winfield Scott evacuated sick soldiers using the *Santee*.⁷

The *George Washington* was chartered for \$1,300 in February 1836, to sail from Savannah to Picolata.⁸ Also in February, the

of Major Francis L. Dade and his command in another part of the territory. See Clarence Edwin Carter, ed., *Territorial Papers of Florida*, 26 vols. (Washington, 1934-1962), XXV, 338.

5. Ibid.

6. Arthur E. Francke, Jr., *Fort Mellon, 1837-42* (Miami, 1977), 57.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

Tugalo, Captain W. D. Wray; the *Tomochichi*, Captain F. Burden; and the *Florida* were in the St. Johns area. All but the *Florida* were under charter. The *Tugalo's* charter was for a trip from Georgia to Jacksonville for \$1,800.⁹ Charter prices usually included the captain, officers, crew, and supplies for the voyage.

On February 26, 1836, General Scott and his retinue passed Jacksonville aboard the *Etiwan*, Captain John Sassard, en route to Picolata. Scott had just been appointed commander of the force against the Indians. In mid-May, the *Etiwan* arrived in St. Augustine from Charleston.¹⁰ The *Cherokee* was on the St. Johns in March, chartered for \$1,800 for a trip from Savannah to Picolata. On May 19, the *Cherokee*, under Captain Fenn Peck, arrived from Black Creek with Major Cooper's battalion of Georgia volunteers.¹¹ The *Florida* was also under charter by the army the next month for \$1,200.¹²

On May 12, the St. Augustine *Florida Herald* reported that three vessels had arrived from Charleston within one week's time: the *John Stoney*, Captain William Curry, via the St. Marys; the *Etiwan*, Captain John Sassard, via the St. Marys; and the *Dolphin*, Captain James Pennoyer. The *John Stoney* had been built in New York in 1830 by the firm of Westervelt and Mackey with the help of C. Bergh.¹³

In late June, the *Florida* was reported as having towed a dredge from Savannah to Amelia where she was to be employed along with several flats.¹⁴ The *Cherokee* made other charter ventures in May. For instance, she had been engaged at a rate of \$192 per day to make a trip between Savannah and Picolata.¹⁵ As part of the "shuttle service" offered by chartered steamboats, the *John Stoney* arrived at St. Augustine from Garey's Ferry in mid-July 1836.

The *Essayons*, Captain Peck, was involved in a rescue mission in mid-July. Sailing out of Black Creek, a Colonel Hallows,

9. *American State Papers*, 38 vols. (Washington, 1832-1861), *Military Affairs*, VII, 996.

10. Maritime file.

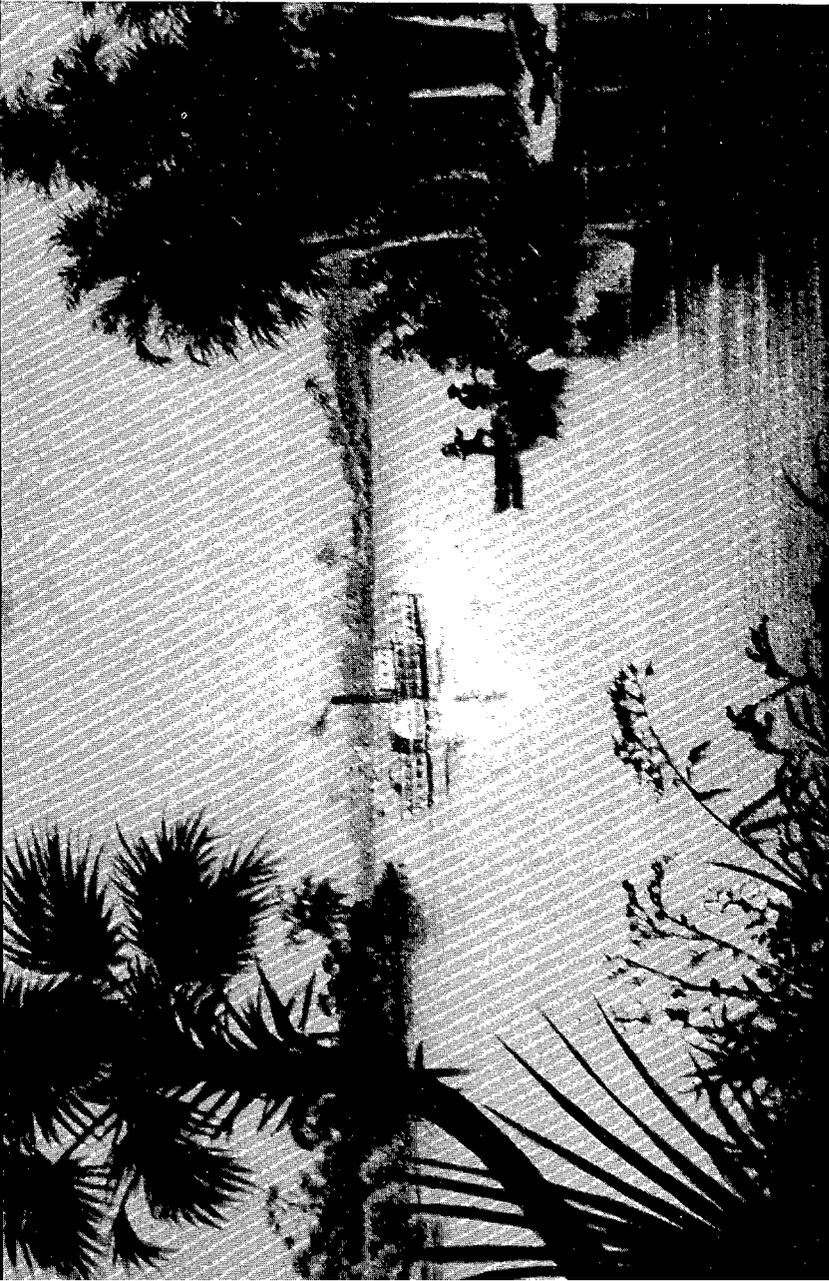
11. Ruby Rahn, *River Highway for Travel—The Savannah* (Savannah, 1969), A6.

12. *American State Papers*, VII, 996-97.

13. The *John Stoney* was 112' 9" by 22' 3" by 6' 7" and of 155 tons. Vessel dimension and tonnage data are derived from records in the National Archives, Washington, D.C., and from contemporary newspapers.

14. Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XXV, 337-38.

15. *American State Papers*, VII, 996.



This vessel is supposedly the *George Washington*, which visited Jacksonville in 1829. Photograph is courtesy of William Dreggors, Jr., DeLand, Florida.

whose plantation had been attacked by the Seminoles, came aboard. He had been wounded in the skull but, along with some of his slaves, had managed to escape in a small boat, crossing Black Creek amidst a shower of shot from the Indians. Later, Captain Peck returned with the *Essayons* to Hallowes's plantation where he loaded on the remaining slaves. The *Essayons* also touched at Picolata, and two weeks later, while en route to Black Creek sailed past Hallowes's plantation, which now was a smoking ruin. Captain Peck was proceeding toward Garey's Ferry and Fort Heilman when he discovered some Indians and fired at them. Shortly afterwards, while at Picolata, the *Essayons* towed a flat across the river to Bayard. It contained Lieutenant Herbert who, with fifteen men and horses, was going from St. Augustine to Garey's Ferry. The following evening the *Essayons* moved five miles further up Black Creek, wooded up, and remained until daylight, before moving towards the mouth of the creek. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Herbert's command, including some wounded, returned to the *Essayons*. Peck and his crew covered their boarding, firing on the Seminoles with six rifles. The Indians retaliated by firing some twenty rounds into the *Essayons*.¹⁶ The *Essayons* had been named after the motto of the United States Corps of Engineers; she was one of the few government steamers in the war. Her career is not well known; she may have been broken up as early as 1839, when, according to one source, "surplus" metal from her had been sold.¹⁷

In the spring of 1836, Captain James Pennoyer was running his *Dolphin* from Charleston to St. Augustine. She made at least one trip per month in March, April, July, October, and November. In November 1836, the *Dolphin* rescued the United States brig *Porpoise* and helped transport seventy-eight wounded and invalids of the Tennessee Brigade from the Garey's Ferry area. The previous month she had made frequent trips between St. Augustine and Garey's Ferry.¹⁸ The *Dolphin* was a copper-fastened two-masted steam schooner that utilized both sails and side-paddle wheels. She traveled between Charleston and St. Augustine until April 1835, then to Norfolk from Charleston, and to Havana, Cuba, in August 1835. The *Dolphin* could carry

16. John Lee Williams, *Territory of Florida* (New York, 1837; facsimile ed., Gainesville, 1962), 248-50.

17. Francke, *Fort Mellon*, 57.

18. Maritime file. The *Dolphin* was 115' by 16' by 7'.

some fifty passengers; she had a low pressure engine and a heavy copper boiler which had been built by James Allaire of New York.

In September 1835 the *Santee* was chartered for \$1,000 for a trip between Savannah and Garey's Ferry.¹⁹ The *Charleston*, starting in late October 1836, under Captains Bonnell and King, made several trips, most of them charters, to Black Creek, St. Augustine, and Volusia. Her activity seems to have continued for about a year.²⁰ In January 1837, the *Charleston* transported South Carolina militia to Florida, and on March 16, 1837, under Captain John Bonnell, she arrived in Savannah with the news that a treaty had been concluded with Chief Jumper and other Seminoles.²¹ In early May, the *Charleston* brought information from Black Creek concerning affairs at Lake Monroe.²² Later that month she made two trips to Volusia.²³ In July 1837, she made a round trip from Black Creek to St. Augustine.²⁴ There were also trips to Garey's Ferry—two in August, two in September, and one in October.²⁵ The *Charleston* had been built in 1836 in Charleston; her original owners were Captain Bonnell and Daniel G. Ioye.

The *James Boatwright* was chartered in October for a trip from Charleston to Garey's Ferry.²⁶ Early the following month, the *Forrester*, Captain J. E. Dillion, en route from Charleston and Savannah, delivered a cargo of some fifty horses to the military in Florida. During General Richard Keith Call's first campaign, he directed the commander at Fort Heilman to forward provisions to the head of Lake George. Accordingly, the *John Stoney* and the *Charleston*, loaded with stores and towing two schooners, were dispatched. They remained a week or so at the south end of Lake George, and when the army returned to Fort Drane the steamers travelled to Black Creek.²⁷

19. *American State Papers*, VII, 995.

20. Data typescript of vessel information compiled by Ruby Rahn, in the possession of the present author (hereinafter referred to as Rahn typescript).

21. *Savannah Georgian*, March 16, 1837.

22. *Daily National Intelligencer*, May 16, 1837, quoting the *Southern Patriot*, May 12, 1837. The *Charleston* was 120' by 24' by 8' 9" and of 205 tons, with one deck, one mast, and a scroll head.

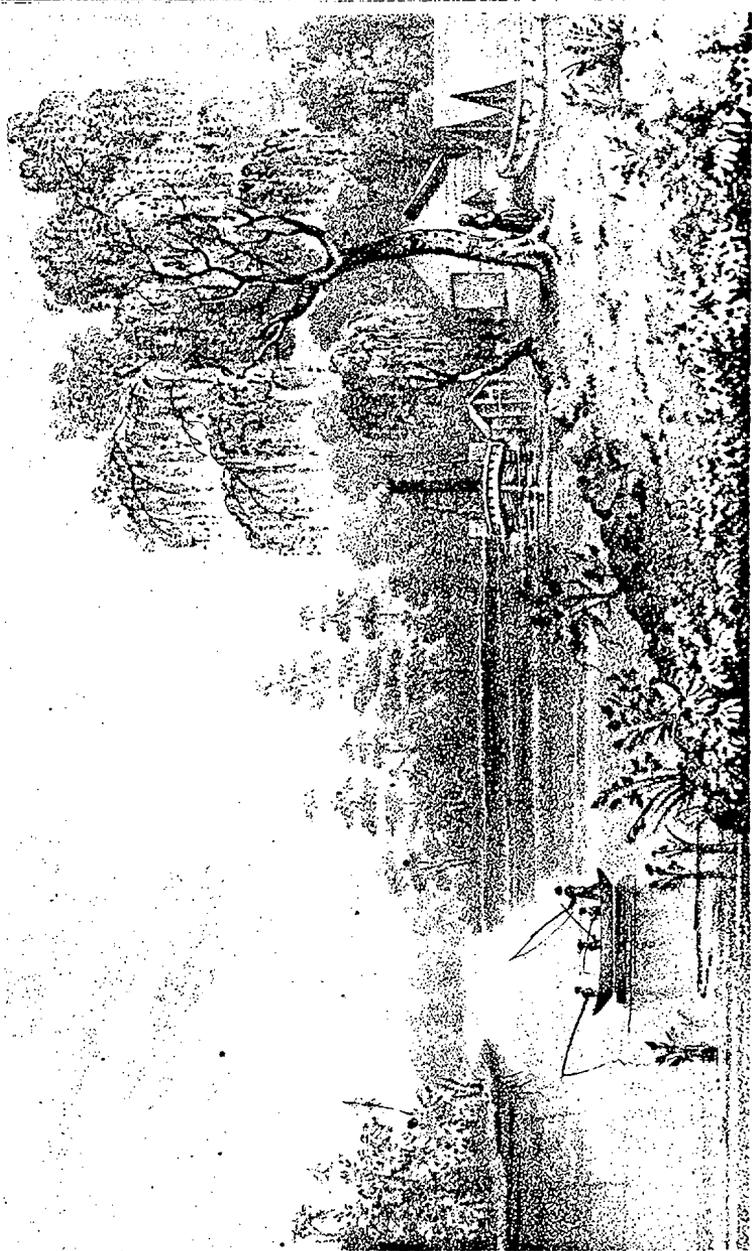
23. Rahn typescript.

24. Maritime file.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*

27. *American State Papers*, VII, 996; Rahn typescript. The *Dolphin* was 115' by



Early sidewheel steamboat at St. Johns River landing. Photograph from *Territory of Florida*, by John Lee Williams.

Descriptions of these early vessels and plans or drawings are relatively scarce. When the *Etiwan* was being sold in late 1836, she was described in a contemporary newspaper: "She is well and substantially built, coppered and copper fastened, her dimensions are 100 feet in length of deck, 18 feet beam and 6 feet 6 inches hold. She has heavy copper boilers, and a splendid low pressure engine of 90 horsepower from the celebrated house of Fawsett, Preston, and Company of Liverpool. Her cabin is mostly fitted up for passengers and amply supplied with furniture, bedding, etc. The bar and cooking utensils are also complete. She is likewise well found in anchors, cables, etc., a square sail and fore and aft awning, a copper riveted leather hose, with copper discharging pipe eminently useful in case of fire. There is also attached to her a Yawl and Quarter Boat, the last being copper fashioned. At the same time will be sold the hands that belong to her, viz., Jack the pilot; Dave, the fireman; Nat, a fireman who can work the engine; Joe and Ben, deck hands."²⁸

An accident in December 1836 at the St. Johns River bar ended the *Dolphin's* career. A report, published first in the *Charleston Mercury*, was quoted in a Tallahassee paper: "On Saturday last, 19th inst., about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the Steam Packet *Dolphin*, Capt. Rudolph, off St. John's Bar, stopped to take a Pilot on board, and in the act of starting the engine the boiler burst, and unfortunately killed fifteen persons. The *Santee* was lying at anchor inside the bar, and saw the explosion take place, whereupon she raised steam and proceeded for the wreck. When within about a half mile of the wreck met a pilot boat off [the] Bar, having on board, Col. Brown, lady, three children and servant, Mrs. Gibbs and son, and Capt. Rudolph; at the same time picked up one of the *Dolphin's* boats, with three men belonging to her and one of the St. John's Pilots. On the arrival of the *Santee* at the wreck, she took off Dr. Martin, U.S.A., and Messrs, Waldron and Donaldson. The small boat of the *Santee* was then sent to a man who had drifted about a mile on a piece of timber, from the wreck, and while getting him on board the boat, another person was discovered about 150 yards from them, with his head just above water, who proved to be

16' by 7', and was built in New York in early 1835. Williams, *Territory of Florida*, 260.

28. Maritime file.

Colonel Dell of Jacksonville, slightly wounded, much exhausted, and succeeded in saving him. It getting dark, the *Santee* returned inside the bar with [the survivors]. . . . The *Dolphin* sunk in four fathoms of water.²⁹

Among those killed in the accident were a Colonel Brooks and a Lieutenant Alexander MacKay, a daughter of Colonel Brown, engineers Beauy and Eldree, mate Barnabas Luce (from Rochester, Massachusetts), the St. Johns bar pilot Kemory (noted in some accounts as Kimmy), two deck hands, three stewards, and three blacks. The survivors included Captain Rudolph, a stewardess, and four deck hands, one of whom was badly scalded. There were about thirty passengers aboard at the time. Captain James Pennoyer, the owner, valued the *Dolphin* at \$25,000, and noted that he had only \$5,000 insurance. On March 5, 1837, the bodies of two men, the pilot, Captain Kemory, and Lieutenant MacKay, were found on the beach, three or four miles south of the St. Johns bar. MacKay's gold watch was still in his pocket. It was believed that a strong wind blew over part of the *Dolphin's* wreckage which dislodged the two bodies. Lieutenant MacKay was buried at St. Augustine with military honors.³⁰

The *Florida* continued making trips to Florida in 1837, both on sporadic civilian ventures to Jacksonville, and on military assignments, mainly to St. Augustine. In the spring of 1837 the *Florida* ran to Mosquito Inlet (New Smyrna) with General Joseph Hernandez aboard. In May she made at least two voyages to Savannah from St. Augustine and may have also touched along the St. Johns. She was on a military charter from March 16 to August 21 at a rate of \$3,000 per month.³¹

Other steamers seeing service in Florida in 1837, usually on charters for the military, were the *Camden*, *Cherokee*, *Cincinnati*, *Duncan McRae*, *Forrester*, *Free Trade*, *James Adams*, *John McLean*, *Richmond*, and *Santee*. The *Camden's* first owner was F. I. Kerr.³² The *Cincinnati's* original owners were Oliver P. Hilliard, Jordan Brooks, and Jeremiah Smith. In 1837 she made at least two trips

29. *Tallahassee Floridian*, December 13, 1836.

30. *Jacksonville Courier*, March 23, 1837.

31. *American State Papers*, VII, 995.

32. Maritime file. The *Camden* was 113' by 16' 3" by 4' 10" and of 169 gross, 103 net tons, according to vessel enrollment data provided by the National Archives. Summary form courtesy of Forrest Holdcamper.

from Charleston and one from Savannah to St. Augustine, the latter under Captain William Curry.³³ In February 1838, Captain Horace Brooks sailed the *Cincinnati* to St. Augustine from Charleston.³⁴

The *Cherokee* (189 tons), built in Savannah in 1835, was chartered for \$1,125 per trip in August 1837, for travel between Jacksonville and Garey's Ferry.³⁵ The *Duncan McRae* (215 tons) was built in Wilmington, North Carolina, in 1837. In March she was chartered for \$2,500 to transport military horses from Augusta, Georgia, to Garey's Ferry. Another voyage was made for \$2,300, and there were trips in April and May. It was the *Duncan McRae* under Captain S. Philbrick which brought the news to Savannah from Black Creek of the negotiations with Seminole Chief Micanopy.³⁶ The *Free Trade* (195 tons) was built in 1833 in Charleston for G. B. Lamar, who also owned the Iron Steamboat Company. She made three trips— March, April, and May— under Captain Creswell from Black Creek to Savannah. The *John McLean*, built at Charleston in 1837, was chartered for the month of August for \$4,000.³⁷ The *Richmond* (226 tons), built in Baltimore by Gardner and Company, with an engine built by Charles Reeder, was chartered for \$2,400 in March 1837 for the voyage from Augusta to Garey's Ferry.³⁸

In addition to the charters, the *Santee*, *Camden*, and *Cincinnati* were frequently used by the military along the St. Johns. One incident was reported in the *St. Augustine Florida Herald*: "On Monday evening last a quarrel took place between the cook and steward of the *Santee* and a scuffle ensued which resulted in the steward being knocked overboard and drowned. Every effort was undertaken to save him. The cook is in custody."³⁹

The St. Augustine paper also reported on the aftermath of a gale: "At St. Marys we understand that much damage was done . . . the steamboat *Florida* which was lying at the wharf, had her side broken in. An iron steamboat was blown ashore at

33. Ibid. The *Cincinnati* was 12' 1" by 23' 6" by 8' and of 207 tons.

34. Maritime file.

35. Ibid. The *Cherokee* was of 189 tons.

36. *Savannah Georgian*, March 28, 1837.

37. The *John McLean* was 120' by 22' by 7' 4" and of 133 tons, according to vessel enrollment data provided by the National Archives.

38. The *Richmond* was 126' by 26' by 7' 11" and of 226 tons, according to vessel enrollment data provided by the National Archive, and *American State Papers*, VII, 995.

39. *St. Augustine Florida Herald*, June 29, 1837.

Amelia narrows. Another steamboat was blown ashore near Fernandina. . . the steamboat *Charleston* was blown ashore at the mouth of the St. Johns River but was afterward got off without injury.⁴⁰ Captain Nock took over as the new master of the *Florida* in the fall of 1837. In November 1837, the *Florida* made a voyage between Mosquito Inlet and St. Augustine. On December 18, she sailed under command of Captain Electus Backus for Black Creek with 194 recruits, arriving there December 22.⁴¹

In June 1837, the 169-ton *Camden* went aground at the Lake George bar on the St. Johns and had to transfer her troops to the *Essayons*, which had a more shallow draft.⁴² In November, the *Camden* was guarding a dredgeboat which was clearing the "bar" obstructing the head of Lake George.⁴³ In late 1837 the *Santee*, Captain Horace Brooks, and the *John McLean* were sent on an exploring expedition along the upper St. Johns. The *Santee* had heavy bulwarks around her deck and a six-pounder cannon on her bow to be ready in the event of any trouble with the Indians.⁴⁴ The *John Stoney* was often on the river on business for the military. In December 1837, the *Camden*, Captain Mills, and the *James Adams*, Captain Chase, arrived in Savannah from the St. Johns River with news of the surrender of several Seminoles.⁴⁵ The *Ocamulgee* also touched at St. Augustine from Savannah that same month.⁴⁶

The following year, 1838, was an active one for the military in their operations against the elusive Seminoles. As action moved south and west, the St. Johns area decreased in importance. St. Augustine, however, continued to be a principal base of operations. In January 1838, several vessels docked at St. Augustine: *Ocamulgee*, under military charter from Savannah; the steamer *Poinsett*, Captain James Trathen; *Cincinnati*, Captain Horace Brooks; and *Richmond*, Captain W. H. Jones, from Mos-

40. Ibid., August 12, 1837.

41. Electus Backus, "Diary of a Campaign in Florida in 1837-38," *Historical Magazine* (September 1866), 279.

42. Francke, *Fort Mellon*, 52.

43. *Savannah Georgian*, December 12, 1837.

44. Francke, *Fort Mellon*, 54. The *John McLean* was 120' by 22' by 7' 4" and of 133 tons, according to enrollment data provided by the National Archives.

45. Maritime file.

46. Ibid.

quito Inlet. The *Camden* arrived in March from Charleston; and *William Gaston*, Captain King; *Charleston*, Captain Hubbard; and *Poinsett* stopped en route from the Indian River. The *Giraffe*, Captain Swiler, a 337-ton New York-built vessel of 1838 vintage, also docked in May from Charleston. The *Charleston*, Captain Hubbard, sailed a Charleston-Savannah-Garey's Ferry or Black Creek circuit in 1838; between April and November she made at least nine such trips.⁴⁷ In December 1838, *William Gaston* visited St. Augustine, often sailing to and from Savannah, Black Creek, and the St. Johns.⁴⁸ The *Ocamulgee*, an 1836 Charleston-built vessel, was a 265-ton sidewheeler.⁴⁹ The federally-owned *Poinsett* was almost identical in basic dimensions to the *Ocamulgee*. She had been constructed in New York as *New Brighton* but had been sold to the war department before she was documented.⁵⁰

On January 17, 1838, the *Santee*, while proceeding in a thick fog from Savannah to Florida, collided with the *Darien* in St. Catherine's Sound. The *Darien* quickly sank and part of her deck was under water. There was no casualties, and the *Santee* was able to continue. When the sloop *Othello* arrived on the scene, she transferred 169 bales of cotton from the *Darien* which were carried to Savannah.⁵¹ In March 1838, the *Charleston* arrived in St. Augustine from the Indian River. Two weeks later she was listed as having arrived at St. Augustine from Savannah.⁵² In early May, *Forrester*, Captain M. H. Drake, transported three companies of new troops from Garey's Ferry north to Savannah.⁵³

The 113-ton steamboat *John McLean* was lost while on charter to the army. On November 15, 1838, she became stranded on the bar at the entrance to Mosquito Inlet. About sunset the tide and breakers pushed her ashore. The vessel was a total loss although all on board came ashore. The *Santee* several days later rescued the stranded crew and troops and took them to St. Augustine, arriving there on November 18, 1838. Some of the

47. Rahn typescript.

48. Maritime file.

49. Ibid. The *Ocamulgee* was 132' by 25' 10" by 8' 3" and of 265 tons.

50. Ibid. The *Poinsett* was 132' 10" by 22' 2" by 8' 2" and of 250 tons.

51. *Journal of Commerce*, January 11, 1838.

52. Maritime file.

53. Ibid.

ship's machinery was also salvaged and brought to St. Augustine by the *Santee*.

In December 1838, *William Gaston*, Captain John Freeland, was operating between Savannah, New Smyrna, and the St. Johns River area on military assignments. The *Charleston* arrived in St. Augustine on December 11 from Black Creek and Jacksonville and made a return trip two days later.⁵⁴ The *Florida*, Captain Nock, returned to her regular Savannah-St. Johns route around the first of December 1838. The *St. Augustine News*, December 1, reported: "We are grateful to learn that the steamer *Florida* has commenced running from Savannah to Picolata. This is to us a great benefit as the steamboats in governmental control are not allowed to afford any facilities to civilians."⁵⁵

The *Poinsett* and other privately-owned steamboats which were under charter to the military continued to be chartered throughout 1839. These included *Santee*; *William Gaston*; *Thomas Salmond*, Captain Frederick; *Southerner*, Captain A. Chase; *Forrester*, Captain M. H. Drake and Captain E. D. Wambersie; *Ivanhoe*, Captain Bailey; and *Isis*, Captain John Pearson. The 148-ton *Forrester* had been-built at Savannah in 1836; the *Ivanhoe*, 127 tons, was built in Savannah in 1839.

In January 1839, the *Santee*, Captain Josiah Poinsett, carried troops from Black Creek to St. Augustine. She made at least three trips between Key Biscayne, St. Augustine, and Black Creek in March; three voyages in May between Indian River, St. Augustine, and Black Creek; and in July she travelled between St. Augustine and Key Biscayne, Key West, and Tampa.⁵⁶ The *Poinsett*, Captain James Trathen, was in St. Augustine at least seven times during this period, going to and from Black Creek, Key Biscayne, and Savannah. She also made one trip to St. Augustine from Charleston in early March 1839.⁵⁷ In May 1839, *Thomas Salmond*, Captain Frederick, arrived in St. Augustine from Savannah carrying government stores and then continued on to Black Creek. In August she logged a trip from Black Creek to Key Biscayne.

The *William Gaston*, a sidewheeler built in 1837 by James Poyas in Charleston, had one deck, one mast, no galleries, a

54. Ibid.

55. *St. Augustine News*, December 1, 1838.

56. Maritime file.

57. Ibid.

sloop stern, and a manbust figurehead.⁵⁸ Her original owner was Oliver P. Hilliard, and her master was William Curry. The *William Gaston* was in St. Augustine often in 1839, docking there at least eleven times. She also stopped at Black Creek, New Smyrna, Indian River, Key Biscayne, Key West, and Havana.⁵⁹ In late October, under Captain Josiah Poinsett, she arrived in St. Augustine from Key Biscayne carrying army troops and passengers, one of whom was Colonel William Selby Harney. Captain Poinsett then returned to Key Biscayne for fuel and made a harbor entrance at Cape Canaveral because of severe weather.

The *Isis*, Captain Freeland, was built by Brown and Bell in New York and her engine was by James P. Allaire.⁶⁰ She arrived in St. Augustine on February 15, 1839, from Black Creek, and the following month, while en route from Key Biscayne to Black Creek, *Isis*, again touched at St. Augustine. In May of the previous year, the *Isis*, under Captain Craig, had visited Indian River.⁶¹

In January 1839, a St. Augustine paper reported: "*Florida*, Captain Nock, has started regular passage between Savannah and St. Augustine, alternating each week with Picolata. Persons at a distance may now be assured as well as invalids of a residence in our climate and of a speedy transit on their arrival in Savannah in a very comfortable and handsome boat and under the command of a gentlemanly Captain."⁶² Contemporary records indicate this schedule continued at least through March of 1839. Later that year, perhaps during the slack summer months, the *Florida* was lengthened by some eighteen feet and her tonnage was increased approximately twenty-eight tons.

The *Charleston* in 1839, sailing mainly out of Garey's Ferry, was extensively involved with the army. In mid-June she was in Savannah with a company of militia en route to New York. On a second trip that month she had two dragoon companies— 113 men— aboard under Captain Bryant. Captains Love and Hubbard served as masters during the year. At least thirteen trips were made between Savannah and Black Creek in 1839.⁶³ One

58. Ibid. The *William Gaston* was 120' by 18' by 7' and of 161 tons.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid. The *Isis* was 100.3' by 7' and of 120 tons.

61. Ibid.

62. *St. Augustine News*, January 1839.

63. Rahn typescript.

St. Augustine newspaper reported: "The steamer *Florida* runs once a week from Savannah to Picolata . . . and returns touching at the intervening places of Brunswick, St. Marys, Jacksonville, and Black Creek. This boat gets high credit for . . . comfort and expedition."⁶⁴ The *Cincinnati*, Captain William Curry, touched at St. Augustine twice in August, once from the St. Johns and once from Biscayne Bay. She also put in at Black Creek. In December, the *Cincinnati*, Captain Smith, touched at St. Augustine en route to Savannah from Black Creek.⁶⁵

A problem of steamboats in sparsely populated areas, especially those chartered to the military, was "wooding up" (finding wood for fuel). In peacetime, civilians residing along the river sold wood fuel, and the boats loaded the logs as needed. Under wartime conditions fuel was scarce; many civilians had fled and the rest tried to keep under cover. Some soldiers at Fort Heilman tried to solve this problem while also earning some extra income. A court martial in June 1839 at Heilman revealed that men were cutting and hauling wood, selling it to the chartered steamboats, usually at a price less than the prevailing one, and pocketing the proceeds. The government-owned *Essayons* once brought a small quantity of wood paid for with quartermaster's draught. The court ruled that the fuel was necessary and cleared the men, ruling that there had been no improprieties since the work had occurred on off-duty time. Officials in Washington disagreed with the court's findings but did not order any further proceedings. The secretary of war was directed to forbid this activity in the future.⁶⁶

The *Forrester* was on army duty at least twice in June 1839. In mid-June she transported dragoons of Company K under Lieutenant Darling from Garey's Ferry to Savannah, and from there to New York. A week later, *Forrester*, Captain M. H. Drake, took a company of dragoons, sixty-two men under Lieutenant Saunders, from Garey's Ferry to Savannah where they were to proceed on to New York.⁶⁷

64. *St. Augustine Herald*, April 4, 1839.

65. Rahn typescript.

66. *Ibid.* See also Frank White, Jr., ed., "Macomb's Mission to the Seminoles: John T. Sprague's Journal Kept During April and May, 1839," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXXV (October 1956), 130-93.

67. Summary of court martial document dated November 1839, Colonel Gates, president, formerly in the possession of Dr. Mark Boyd, Tallahassee, Florida.

The following extract from an 1839 Florida paper provides information about one week's traffic between Savannah and Jacksonville: Arrived in Jacksonville from Savannah-October 7, *Forrester*, Wambersie; October 9, *Florida*, Nock; October 11, *Cincinnati*, Smith; October 12, *Ivanhoe*, Bailey. Departed Jacksonville for Savannah-October 8, *Forrester*, Wambersie; October 10, *Florida*, Nock.⁶⁸

In the fall of 1839, a group of St. Augustine citizens and Charleston merchants planned to run the *Southerner* regularly between the two communities. They felt that the few vessels sailing between the two ports would not be as satisfactory as a regularly-scheduled steamboat. A newspaper advertised, "Direct communication between St. Augustine and Charleston by steamboat once a week. Stops at Savannah as passengers offer. New and superior steamer *Southerner* having been purchased . . . for the purpose of running her regular. Invalids, visitors and the general public are notified she will commence trips October 15th regularly and continuously without stop through the year. Leaves Charleston, Tuesday 9 a.m. after the Wilmington boat arrives. Leaves St. Augustine Friday, 9 a.m. This is a new boat and for speed and safety as well as comfort in all her appointments will not be surpassed by any boat in the South and having been purchased expressly for this route, travelers may rely on permanence and punctuality of arrival."⁶⁹ Most steamboat advertisements stressed permanence and punctuality, yet nothing seemed more subject to change.

The passenger ticket on the *Southerner* from St. Augustine to Charleston was \$15.00 for adults, \$10.00 for servants, and \$7.50 for children under the age of ten. The *Southerner* had been completed in 1839 at Charleston, made her first run in late April 1839, and apparently was not in operation the rest of the summer.⁷⁰ Beginning in October 1839, Captain Budd ran her regularly until April 1840. There is record of at least one trip in December 1840, and a voyage to the Mobile (Alabama) area in November 1841 by Captain Wambersie.⁷¹

Competition to the *Southerner* came with the launching of the *Charles Downing* in St. Augustine, probably the first steamer

68. Rahn, *River Highway*, 12.

69. *East Florida Advocate*, Jacksonville, October 12, 1839.

70. *St. Augustine News*, August 17, 1839.

71. The *Southerner* was 120' by 20' 9" by 7' 7" and of 178 tons.

ever built in East Florida. In November 1838, it was reported that the keel of a small steamboat had been laid in "North City and a portion of the ribs are already in place." Two weeks later it was indicated that this vessel was named the *Mechanic*. Nothing further was reported on the *Mechanic*, however, and it is probable that she became the *Charles Downing*. It was also noted in November 1838, that "Captain Whiteman of Jacksonville contemplates building a vessel (there) of 120 tons. It is a matter of surprise that the effort was not made before, when all the advantages of location and facility of obtaining materials are considered."⁷²

On November 16, 1839, as the *Charles Downing* was being launched she became stuck on the ways.⁷³ Fortunately the *Poinsett* had just arrived and helped pull her off. Two months earlier the *Poinsett*, Commander Isaac Mayo, had helped get the *William Gaston*, Captain Poinsett, "off the beach" near Fort Lauderdale. Commander Mayo reported "[I] do believe but for our assistance she would have been lost."⁷⁴

The *Charles Downing*, under Captains Dent and Houston, began service from St. Augustine to Savannah in February 1840, and maintained regular service throughout that year. Several trips were also made to the St. Johns area. She may not have run for a period in the summer of 1840, but was operating again on a regular basis the remainder of 1840, and in 1841 until mid-September. Then she evidently was chartered by the military as the destinations changed to places such as "Southern Posts" and New Smyrna. She was back on the Savannah-St. Augustine route toward the end of 1841 and early 1842. On occasion she also went to Palatka and New Smyrna.⁷⁵ Captains for some of the voyages during this latter period were Pitcher, Allen, and Hitchcock.⁷⁶ The *Florida* was removed from her St.

72. Maritime file.

73. *St. Augustine News*, November 3, 17, 1838. The *Charles Downing* was 96' by 18' by 7' and of 112 tons. She was built by Henry Wharton and her first skipper was Captain James Dent. Charles Downing was a prominent territorial legislator who had emigrated to Florida from Virginia in 1826. He served as a registrar for the land office for several years and as a member of the Florida Legislative Council and as a delegate to Congress for the territory of Florida.

74. Maritime file.

75. *Ibid.*

76. *Ibid.*

Johns service in July 1840 for repairs, and it was announced that she would not resume regular trips until the fall. The *Charles Downing*, Captain Dent, took her place in the interim.⁷⁷

St. Augustine was served regularly in 1840, many of the vessels bringing in building supplies as the community experienced a period of prosperity. Army-chartered steamboats – *William Gaston*, Captain Poinsett; *Cincinnati*, Captain Smith; *St. Matthews*, Captain Frederick; *Santee*; and the *DeRosset*, Captain H. Lightburn– touched at St. Augustine from Garey's Ferry, Key Biscayne, Tampa, and “posts south.”⁷⁸

The *DeRosset* was an iron steamboat, built in sections in England by John Laird, then taken apart and shipped to Baltimore for reassembly by Langley B. Culley, a shipbuilder. He was assisted by Watchman and Bratt who operated the Vulcan Iron Works. The boilers were also built in Baltimore, probably at the Vulcan Iron Works. The *DeRosset* was built for G. B. Lamar of Savannah.

The *St. Matthews*, Captain Frederick, made a May 1841 trip from Charleston to Tampa, touching also at St. Augustine.⁷⁹ In February and March 1841, the *Cincinnati*, Captains Frederick and Smith, touched at St. Augustine at least three times while going between ports such as Black Creek, “southern posts,” Key Biscayne, and Jacksonville.⁸⁰ In May 1840, *William Gaston* arrived at St. Augustine with Lieutenant Colonel William Selby Harney aboard. He had been recuperating from “excessive fatigues, hardships and privations incident to the arduous duties entailed [during his service in Florida] by visiting Cuba.”⁸¹

In 1840 *William Gaston* was on a regular schedule from Black Creek to “southern posts” touching at St. Augustine en route. There were three trips in January, one in February, one in March, three in April, two in May, one in July, one to Savannah in October 1840, and four in November and December.⁸² From January to June 1841, under Captain Barden, *William Gaston* was sailing between Savannah and points south, frequently touching at St. Augustine. Two trips were made in January, two

77. *Jacksonville Courier*, July 20, 1840.

78. Maritime file. The *DeRosset* was of 186 tons.

79. *Ibid.*

80. *Ibid.*

81. *Ibid.*

82. *Ibid.*

in February, three in March, and two each in April, May, and June.⁸³

In August, under Captain Gomez, *William Gaston* made two round trips between St. Augustine and points south. One voyage, under Captain Griffin was between South Florida, St. Augustine, and Savannah in September, and another trip under Captain Henry was made the following month. In November a voyage was made to Fort Pierce from St. Augustine and two from St. Augustine to southern posts; in December, two trips were recorded between St. Augustine and southern points.⁸⁴ On one of the May voyages Pinckney Simms, a fireman, fell overboard and was drowned.

In mid-August 1840, the *Forrester*, Captain Wray, made a trip to St. Augustine from Savannah and returned there a few days later.⁸⁵ In October 1840, the *Charleston* arrived in St. Augustine from Savannah with military personnel aboard.⁸⁶ In December 1840, on at least two occasions, she docked in Savannah with a small cargo of Sea Island cotton.⁸⁷ In October 1840, the *General Clinch*, Captain Horace Brooks, stopped first at St. Augustine with troops from Savannah, and then continued on to Palatka. In February 1841, the *General Clinch* made a round trip between Palatka, St. Augustine, and Savannah.⁸⁸ In June, July, and August 1840, the *Santee* made at least seven trips between Black Creek, St. Augustine, and southern posts.⁸⁹ In January, February, and March 1841, the *Charleston* made her monthly journeys to Florida from Savannah, usually returning with Sea Island cotton.⁹⁰ In November 1841, the *DeRosset*, Captain H. Lightburn, sailed from Black Creek to Tampa.⁹¹

Hazard, Florida, located at the mouth of the St. Johns River, was described in March 1841, as a "rapidly progressing town . . . It does bid fair . . . to hold a conspicuous place in East Florida." Local citizens petitioned the federal government to have the customs house moved from Jacksonville to their own community

83. Ibid.

84. *St. Augustine Herald and Southern Democrat*, May 22, 1840.

85. Maritime file.

86. Ibid.

87. Rahn typescript.

88. Maritime file. The *General Clinch* was 131' by 24' by 8' 8" and of 256 tons.

89. Ibid.

90. Rahn typescript.

91. Maritime file.

so that vessels could file the necessary papers and proceed directly to Palatka without further delay. The residents of Hazard claimed that "Jacksonville has no *back country* to contribute to her support and real estate [there] is rapidly decreasing in value."⁹² Their request to have the customs house moved was denied, but that did not deter the determined citizens of Hazard. They wanted to try again to move the customs house and persuaded some people in Palatka and Black Creek to support them. This request went forth in February 1842, but it was again turned down. Still undeterred they mobilized for a third attempt. A petition was sent to Congress asking not only for the customs house but also for a fort at the river mouth and a military hospital. Nothing, however, came of any of these requests.⁹³

Throughout 1841 *Charles Downing* traveled frequently between Savannah and St. Augustine, probably on civilian business. On April 9, she was in St. Augustine, her flags at half mast, because of the death of President William Henry Harrison. In March a new government steamer was in service. A Baltimore newspaper noted: "The United States steamer *Col. Harney*, built in this place, under the supervision of Captain D. S. Miles, Assistant Quarter Master, left yesterday for Pilatka [*sic*]. East Florida, via Norfolk, Charleston, and Savannah. The *Colonel H.* has been detained some days in consequence of the state of the weather; but the captain determined to proceed yesterday, notwithstanding this threatening appearance. This boat is commanded by Captain John Pearson, and crew consists of 1 mate, 2 engineers, 3 firemen, 1 cook and 5 deckhands; and from the powers which she exhibited when tried in our bay, it is supposed she will reach her destination, including stoppages, in 5 1/2 or 6 days. Captain D. S. Miles is a passenger on board for Florida."⁹⁴ The *Col. Harney* was *Col. William S. Harney*, built by Langley B. Culley for the quartermaster corps. Her paddlewheel engines had been manufactured by Amos and Charles Reeder who had an iron works adjacent to Watchman and Bratt's in Baltimore. The army planned to use the *Harney* to help protect Florida's live oak timber preserves.

92. Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XXV, 279-81.

93. *Ibid.*, 429.

94. *Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, March 20, 1841. The *Colonel William S. Harney* was of 250 tons.

In early September 1841, *Forrester*, Captain Clark, arrived in St. Augustine from Savannah, returning there a few days later. A similar trip was made in early November.⁹⁵ The *Cincinnati*, Captain Smith; *Isis*, Captain Hart; *Forrester*, Captain George Clark; *DeRosset*, Captain H. Lightburn; and *Richmond*, Captain W. C. Mendell, also made occasional charter trips for the military during this period. On July 18, 1841, the *Cincinnati* touched at St. Augustine while en route from Palatka. Three days later she revisited St. Augustine on a return voyage from Jacksonville.⁹⁶

In the spring of 1841, *DeRosset*, Captain Lightburn, sailed from Tampa to Savannah, touching at St. Augustine; in mid-November 1841, a reverse trip was made. In May 1842, *DeRosset* traveled from Tampa to Savannah via St. Augustine.⁹⁷ The *Charles Downing* was on army charter around September, mainly on a voyage from Savannah to southern army posts via St. Augustine. The *Isis* visited St. Augustine on September 9, 1841, en route from Savannah to Tampa. In November 1841, during a bad storm, she put in at Punta Rasa and was driven ashore in the vicinity of an army camp, but was able to get "off without damage but with much labor."⁹⁸ In November, the *Southerner* stopped at St. Augustine en route between Mobile and Charleston. This was apparently her last contact with St. Augustine.⁹⁹

There was considerable maritime activity at St. Augustine in 1842, the last year of the Indian war, as chartered army steamers were frequent callers. The *Cincinnati* touched there twice in January while sailing round trip from Palatka to New Smyrna. Later that month *Cincinnati* called again while on a voyage between Palatka and Tampa. Captain Chase, in command of *Forrester*, arrived from Savannah in February 1842, and departed a few days later on the return trip.¹⁰⁰ The *William Gaston* continued her semi-regular St. Augustine-southern posts voyages through March. Also in March, *William Gaston* went to Savannah from St. Augustine, and then in April several times to and from

95. Maritime file.

96. Ibid.

97. Ibid.

98. Ibid. See also, Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XXV, 386.

99. Maritime file.

100. Ibid.

Palatka. In October the *William Gaston* made a trip to Tampa from St. Augustine.¹⁰¹

The *William Gaston*, Captain Henry; *Cincinnati*, Captain Smith; and *Charles Downing*, Captain Pitcher, were sailing in January 1842, serving Savannah, Palatka, Tampa, and the southern posts. The *Richmond*, Captain Mendell, and *Forrester*, Captain Chase, were active also in February, as was the government steamer, *Col. William S. Harney*. In March and April *James Adams*, Captain Hart, sailed from Tampa to Palatka and returned. The *DeRosset*, Captain Lightburn, made a stopover in St. Augustine in May on her way to Savannah from Tampa. The *Charleston*, Captain Barden, arrived in St. Augustine in early April 1842, from Key West, and departed the following day for Savannah.¹⁰²

In 1842 *Charleston* was on a busy schedule between Charleston, Savannah, and Darien, with an occasional trip to Augusta on the Savannah River. However, she sailed under Captain Barden to Black Creek in late April and mid-May, and at the end of May she was in Palatka. In mid-June the *Charleston* returned to Savannah from Palatka, St. Marys, and Darien, with three bales of Sea Island cotton and 319 bales of upland cotton. At the end of August and again in September she made trips to Palatka for the quartermaster corps.¹⁰³ The *Charleston*, Captain Smith, traveled from Palatka to Tampa, touching St. Augustine on November 13.¹⁰⁴

In June the *Charles Downing* was libelled by the United States marshal, and thirty-four shares of her stock were sold publicly at auction in July. Her captain, James Dent, was one of the complainants. The results are unknown, but in July, *Charles Downing*, under a new master, Lyman Southwick, a local schooner captain at St. Augustine, made a passage to Havana. Southwick also made another trip to Cuba in September with the *Charles Downing*.¹⁰⁵ On December 7, 1842, *Charles Downing* sailed from St. Augustine for the last time; her destination was Charleston.¹⁰⁶ In late August the *Cincinnati*, Captain Smith, arrived from Fort Pierce in St. Augustine with two companies of

101. Ibid.

102. Ibid.

103. Rahn typescript.

104. Maritime file.

105. *St. Augustine News*, June 25, July 16, September 17, 1842.

106. Maritime file.

the Eighth Infantry and a friendly Indian guide and his family aboard.¹⁰⁷

During the summer of 1842, with the war winding down, the utilization of steamboats by the military declined. There was increasing use for civilian purposes, however, by the end of the year. For instance, the *St. Matthews* was placed on a once-a-week schedule between Savannah and Palatka, touching at the usual intermediate points of Darien, Brunswick, St. Mary's, Jacksonville, Garey's Ferry, and Picolata.¹⁰⁸ The *St. Matthews* was built in 1836 at New York by Brown and Bell. She was initially owned by a Charleston consortium of captains and merchants, and after 1842, by a similar consortium located in Savannah. Several Jacksonville citizens were occasionally listed as owners.¹⁰⁹

The *Florida* continued to run on the St. Johns route until late 1840, when she began traveling between Savannah and Augusta and other points in Georgia and South Carolina. She was also occasionally in Florida. On May 17, 1842, she was stranded at North Edisto, South Carolina, and was lost.

A few steamboats continued to visit Florida after the Seminole War. The *Cincinnati* was sailing from Savannah to the St. Johns in the early 1840s but was finally abandoned in 1848. The *Ocamulgee*, *William Gaston*, and *St. Matthews* also travelled on the Savannah and St. Johns rivers after 1842. The *Ocamulgee* was lost in Georgia waters in early 1850; the *St. Matthews* was stranded at Darien, Georgia, on December 6, 1851, and was lost; and the *William Gaston* was abandoned in 1858.

The records reveal the disposition of many of the vessels which once sailed in Florida waters: The *Camden* was sold abroad in 1839. The *Charles Downing* whose name had been officially changed to *Calhoun* on July 26, 1849, burned on June 22, 1855, at Wilmington, North Carolina, with no loss of life. The *Charleston* was captured as a Confederate steamer on July 11, 1863, and was redocumented on August 29, likely having been sold to northern interests. She was abandoned by 1876. The *Cherokee* was abandoned in 1844, after many voyages on the Savannah River between Savannah and Augusta. The *Col. William S. Har-*

107. *St. Augustine News*, August 27, 1842.

108. *Ibid.*, November 12, 1842.

109. Maritime file. The *St. Matthews* was 120' by 22' 2" by 7' and of 174 tons, according to vessel enrollment data furnished by the National Archives.

ney first served on coastal patrols in Florida waters. Then, in 1845, she was converted into a tug-type vessel and was stationed permanently at the Pensacola Navy Yard. The *DeRosset* was sold to the United States Quartermaster Corps on July 27, 1846. Her name was changed to *Liberty* on October 11, 1850, and her rig was changed to that of a barge on May 6, 1863. The *Duncan McRae* exploded at Johnson Landing, Georgia, June 8, 1841, with three lives lost. During the Civil War the *Etiwan* was captured as a Confederate steamer and was used by the United States Quartermaster Corps. On April 3, 1867, she was re-documented the *St. Helena* and was abandoned in 1894.

The *Forrester* was abandoned in 1842, and *Free Trade* in 1839. The *General Clinch* became a Confederate vessel in 1861, and was sunk at Charleston in 1864. The *Giraffe* was lost in 1847. The *Isis* burned January 5, 1842, at Tampa, with no lives lost. The *Ivanhoe* was stranded on December 23, 1850. The *James Adams* was abandoned in 1842. Supposedly the *John David Mongin* was abandoned in 1836, although according to another report she exploded at her Augusta, Georgia, dock in 1836. The *John Stoney* was abandoned in 1840. The United States steamer *Poinsett* was sold out of service and became the *Duncan C. Pell* in June 1845 and was abandoned in 1850. The *Richmond* was abandoned in 1853. The *Santee* was sold to foreigners in 1850. The *Southerner* was sold to foreign investors in 1844. The *Thomas Salmond* had her tonnage changed to 208 tons around 1851 and she was abandoned by 1861.

When the Second Seminole Indian War ended in 1842, it was recognized that the government's need to transport troops and supplies into the disaffected areas had greatly stimulated steamboat activity on Florida's navigable waterways. The records reveal that government-chartered steamboats successfully engaged in reconnaissance and rescue missions, as well as providing supplies for an increased military and civilian population. While many of the steamboats constructed during this period were lost or abandoned shortly after the war ended in 1842, enough survived and were returned to civilian service to provide mute testimony to the impact of the Indian wars on the development of steamboat activity in Florida.