

2018

An Island Fortress: Egmont Key's Fort Dade

Geoffrey Mohlman

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/sunlandtribune>

Recommended Citation

Mohlman, Geoffrey (2018) "An Island Fortress: Egmont Key's Fort Dade," *Sunland Tribune*: Vol. 23 , Article 7.
Available at: <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/sunlandtribune/vol23/iss1/7>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sunland Tribune by an authorized editor of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact scholarcommons@usf.edu.

AN ISLAND FORTRESS: EGMONT KEY'S FORT DADE¹

By GEOFFREY MOHLMAN



Egmont Key Lighthouse, ca. 1862 -Florida State Archives

Egmont Key, located in the mouth of Tampa Bay, has had a long military presence, beginning with the Spanish several centuries ago. Under orders from Don Blas of Barreda, the highest ranking naval officer in Cuba, in April of 1757 Francisco Maria Cell, pilot of the Royal Spanish Fleet, surveyed Tampa Bay, beginning with Egmont Key. Celi labeled the key the "Isla de San Blas y Barreda," but the island was renamed shortly thereafter.² In his logbook, the Spanish navigator wrote:

Midday of the 13th to the 14th, Thursday noon [April 13-14, 1757]. The sky continues clear, the horizons hazy, and the wind favorable. The xebec was anchored in the aforementioned position, and it was

the order of my captain that we remain there until I examine and draw a sketch of the entrances and channels of this bay. At 8:00 A.M., Thursday, I went with the longboat to the isle of *San Blas y Barreda* [Egmont Key], and in the name of God and the Most Holy Mother, began to measure said island of *San Blas*. Starting from the southernmost point, I took the following measurements with a rope marked in Castillian yards...³

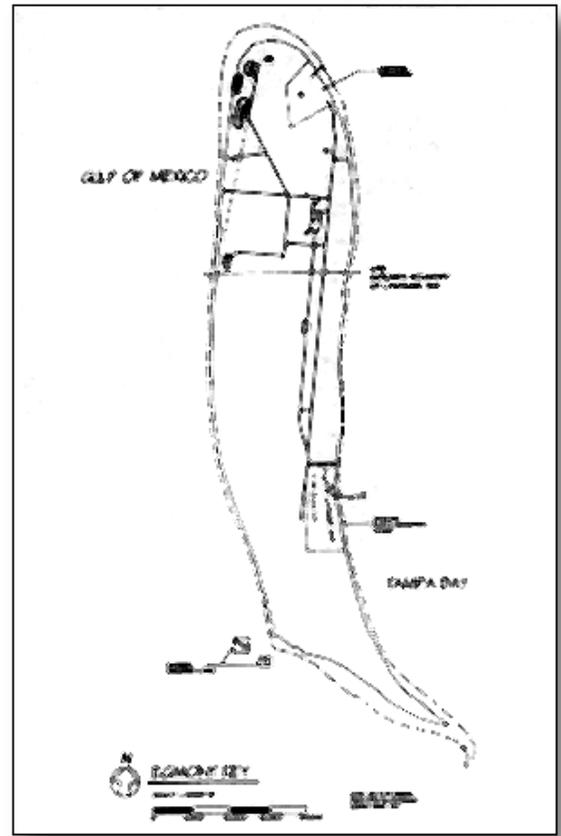
Celi went on to list the twenty measurements taken by rope and a sextant which he finished on April 15.⁴ After exploring the rest of Tampa Bay, Cell

returned to Egmont Key on Friday, May 6, 1757:

Dawn came with the same clear horizons and sky, smooth sea, and fair wind from the WNW. At 5:00 A.M. the following men went in the longboat to the island of *San Blas* (Egmont Key): Don Lino Morillo, Chaplain Don Agustín Fogasa, the accountant, and I [Celi], to erect on the south point of this island the Most Holy Cross, which was consecrated and set upright in this position. (Which was where I began to sketch and to measure for the chart of this great Bay of Tampa, newly called *San Fernando*..) The xebec saluted it with five salvos and dipped the flag at the stern.⁵

Celi left Tampa Bay, never to return, but in 1763, Egmont Key received another visitor, George Gauld. As a British surveyor, Gauld renamed Celi's "Isla de San Blas y Barreda" to Egmont Key, in honor of the Second Earl of Egmont. Despite being christened other names, Gauld's "Egmont Key" weathered the test of time, retaining this name to the present. Bernard Romans, Deputy Surveyor of East Florida, in 1769, referred to Egmont Key as Castor Key, but this name did not stay with the island. Other explorers, both Spanish and British visited Tampa Bay throughout the 18th Century, encountering the key. Even Cuban fishermen settled in the area, catching fish in and around the bay and selling the catch in Cuba.⁶

The Spanish, British, and Cubans were not the only nationalities parading across Egmont Key. When the United States took over Florida in the 19th Century, they also joined the foray. While the Spanish and British had only briefly visited and surveyed Tampa Bay during their respective reigns



1996 Historic Resources Review Board Map of Egmont Key

--Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County Preservation Board

over Florida, the Americans saw the area with a different eye. In 1824, George A. McCall, who accompanied Col. Brooke's forces in the establishment of Fort Brooke, visited the island. In his letters back home, McCall described the key in detail:

We first visited Egmont on the south of the channel. The growth is live-oak, red cedar, and the palmetto or cabbage tree, whose shafts were some of them about forty or fifty feet in height. These trees were sparsely scattered over the island, except near the center, where the live-oak and cedar form quite a "hummock" or thick wood. We found "sign" of deer, though none were seen; but the gray

pelican, several species of gulls, and great numbers of [fish] crows were observed. I was at once struck with the manners and the voice of the crows, which appeared to me to be quite distinct from those our Northern bird, and its size seemed less.⁷

McCall was the first among a long line of U.S. Armed Forces personnel on the island.

Once the military obtained a foothold in Tampa Bay, Egmont Key's importance grew as the area became more settled. By the 1830s, ship traffic increased, creating a need for a lighthouse on Egmont.⁸ Tampa Bay's experience paralleled that of the rest of the state where shipping activity expanded when the United States acquired it in 1821. Yet, the wheels of government tend to turn slowly and Congress finally approved construction of the lighthouse on March 3, 1847. President James K. Polk, on August 24, 1847, set aside fifteen acres of land on the north end of the island as a lighthouse reservation. Less than a year later, in May 1848, Francis A. Gibbons of Baltimore finished constructing the forty-foot tall lighthouse and keeper's dwelling at a cost of \$7,050. In September 1848, the island was devastated by one of the worst hurricanes to strike the west coast of Florida. The maelstrom covered the island in six feet of water, nearly toppling the lighthouse.⁹ John A. Bethell, a survivor of the hurricane, described the impact of the storm on Egmont:

The gale that destroyed everything in its track along the West Coast in 1848, among other things, washed down the lighthouse on Egmont Key. When the lightkeeper, Marvel Edwards, saw that the tide was going to overflow the island and that it was

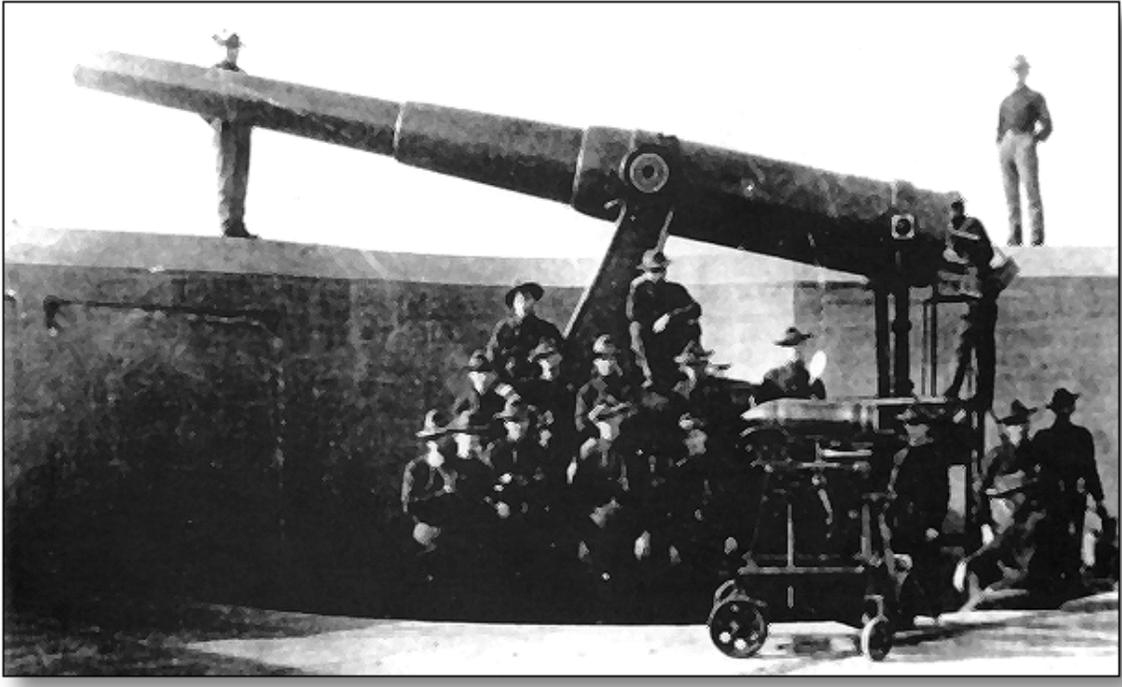
already two feet deep around the dwelling, he placed his family in his boat and waded with it to the middle of the isle and secured it to the palmettos until the gale was over.

The tide rose so high that it went over the window sills of the old brick dwelling that was built at the same time that the lighthouse was, and has been the home for every lightkeeper from that to the present time. The dwelling when first built was of one story with a cellar and cistern underneath. When the new lighthouse was built another story was added to the dwelling.¹⁰

This and subsequent storms in 1848 and 1852 forced Congress, in 1856, to allocate \$16,000 to erect another lighthouse on Egmont.¹¹

Before the construction of the second lighthouse, a soon to be significant Civil War general visited the island, Brevet Colonel Robert E. Lee. In March of 1849, Lee plus three U.S. Army Engineers surveyed the island, along with Mullet Key, suggesting the continued use of Egmont for military purposes:¹²

In a military point of view, this large and spacious bay [Tampa Bay] of greater capacity than any on the coast of Florida, of easy access, and having as much water over the bar of its principal entrance, as Pensacola, is diminished in value, in consequence of the many and width of its entrances which renders it difficult to defend. In itself it has but little trade and commerce, and it would be difficult to state the period, when it would be likely to be of sufficient importance to authorize the



Battery McIntosh and crew on 8-inch disappearing carriage, 1918

-Manatee Co. Historical Society Collection, Manatee Co. Public Library

expenditure necessary for its complete defense. Yet its position intermediate between Cay West and Pensacola, the only points on the Gulf where vessels of a certain draught, could look for safety, added to its advantages as a harbor, may hereafter render it advisable, if not to close it against an enemy's fleet, at least to erect a work on the north end of Egmont island, which in addition to interrupting the passage of the main entrance, would give some protection under its guns to our own vessels, and with the aid of war steamers stationed in the Gulf, secure the advantage of the harbor to ourselves and wrest them from an enemy.

The survey of this part of the coast will correctly establish the relative

position of the islands and channels, now imperfectly known, and show how the defense of the harbor can best be effected. With this view and preparatory to the completion of the surveys, the board have recommended certain islands at the mouth of the harbor reserved for military purposes.¹³

Recommendations such as this one sealed the key's fate, denying private development while securing the future military presence on the island.

During the delay between Congressional funding of the new lighthouse in 1856 and its subsequent construction in 1858, Egmont Key served as a prison camp. Nearing the end of the Third Seminole War (1856-1858), a.k.a. the Billy Bowlegs War, Seminole Indians were imprisoned on the island while awaiting ships to transfer them from Florida

to "Indian Territory" west of the Mississippi.¹⁴ In late July 1857, a military and civilian contingent from Tampa visited the island, selecting a site to build the prison:

Col. Loomis [of Fort Brooke] and several other gentlemen landed. The site for building a house for the accommodation of the Indians above mentioned, was selected, and lumber, to be used in its construction, rafted ashore. Capt. Treska, of the light house, very kindly furnished us with a quantity melons, and, at 2 o'clock, anchor was weighed and we were homeward bound.¹⁵

John Bethell related the Native Americans' experience on Egmont during the war:

During the Seminole War of 1856-7, while mate on one of the Government steamers, the "Texas Ranger," then plying between Tampa and Fort Myers for the purpose of transporting troops and munitions of war, I had a very good opportunity of seeing quite a number of the braves, their squaws and little papooses, captured or surrendered, that were being shipped on our boat as prisoners of war from Fort Myers to Egmont Key, which was their prison until sent West to the reservation. All the prisoners were well guarded while on the boat, and on arrival at Egmont they were turned over to the commandant of the post for safekeeping; and they were safe when once on the island, for no boats were allowed to be kept there and none to land, day or night, under any conditions whatever.

The Indians were very quiet and orderly while prisoners on the boat, but just as soon as they landed and met their relatives all order and quiet was turned into war whoops, weeping, dancing and yelling like wild beasts.¹⁶

A local historian calculated as many as 300 captives were interred on the island. Before the last group of prisoners were sent west in 1858, the government completed the new lighthouse.¹⁷

With nary a minutes rest, the island became entangled in another devastating conflict, the Civil War. Early on the key served as a base for Confederate blockade runners escaping to the Caribbean to either sell Southern made products/raw materials (e.g., cotton and tobacco) or to pick up hard to get luxury items (e.g., coffee and tea) or desperately needed war supplies (e.g., guns).¹⁸ Egmont's occupation by Confederates was short lived. In July 1861 Union Naval forces captured the key and used it as a base of operation for the East Gulf Blockading Squadron, building many structures near the lighthouse. The lighthouse served the Union as a watchtower, locating ships trying to sneak into or out of the harbor. According to Niel E. Hurley, author of *Keepers of Florida Lighthouses: 1820-1939*, George V Richards was the lighthouse keeper from March 7, 1860, to December 30, 1861, during which time he removed the lens and fled the island to prevent further Union use of the apparatus.¹⁹ Other lighthouses throughout Florida experienced the same fate at the Confederates' hands.²⁰ As a prison camp, Confederate prisoners were kept on the key, along with escaped slaves and Union sympathizers. Supposedly, nearly 200 escaped slaves resided on the island in 1863, awaiting transportation to friendlier parts.²¹ In 1864, a cemetery for Union and

Confederate soldiers was established, interring at least 13 men between 1864 and 1865, remaining in use until 1909 when the bodies were removed to national cemeteries in Florida and Georgia.²²

Throughout the war, Egmont Key served as a staging ground for attacks against the city of Tampa, residents in present day Pinellas County, and the burning of blockade runners' ships.²³ In January 1864, the ship *U.S.S. James L. Davis*, was stationed at Egmont Key, performing blockade duty for eight months.²⁴ During its stay, the ship participated in several Union assaults on Tampa and the surrounding country side. Four months into its tour, on May 6, 1864, the *Davis* took part in a joint army-navy invasion of Tampa. Members of the Second Florida Cavalry and the Second United States Colored Infantry along with 54 sailors sacked the town, killing or wounding several Confederates, capturing artillery pieces, mail, and money.²⁵ Unbeknownst to the invasion party, the lighthouse lens was hidden in downtown Tampa. After conquering the town, federal troops discovered the lens, yet failed to find other parts essential to the operation of the beacon.²⁶ The lighthouse was not back in operation until June 2, 1866.²⁷

Despite having the lens, finding a lighthouse keeper loyal to the federal government was a difficult task. William S. Spencer became the keeper on February 28, 1866, but refused to take an oath of allegiance to the United States government; consequently, he was dismissed and replaced by William T Coons on July 11, 1866. Coons held the position for ten years living on the island with his wife and two sons. Between 1866 and 1898, the lightkeeper, his assistant, and their families were the principal residents on the island.²⁸

In May of 1887, Key West was ravaged by yellow fever. Two months later the government established a U.S. Marine Hospital Service on Egmont Key for refugees from the stricken area. This was possible because on November 17, 1882, Egmont Key along with Mullet Key were set aside as U.S. Military reservations. On July 11, 1887, twenty people were reported at the hospital, and by August this number grew to thirty. James Gardener was assistant keeper of the lighthouse from February 20, 1886, until June 28, 1887. He left for another post as the hospital was being erected on Egmont, escaping not a day too soon.²⁹ During that anxious August only one death occurred among the thirty patients, but sadly some hospital personnel contracted yellow fever while attending to the patients.³⁰ On August 18, 1887, Thomas Cassidy became the new assistant keeper, despite the yellow fever cases on the island.³¹ Cities throughout Florida, including Jacksonville and Tampa suffered great losses due to yellow fever. By the winter of 1888, the state was clear of the epidemic, yet the hospital remained in operation until 1901.³²

Ten years after the yellow fever scourge, at the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898, the U.S. Military began erecting forts on Egmont Key and Mullet Key to counteract a possible Spanish invasion.³³ At the turn of the century, the military named the post on Egmont "Fort Dade" in memory of Major Francis L. Dade, killed in battle in December 1835, the beginning of the Second Seminole War.³⁴ Both the north and south ends of Egmont received coastal artillery units, along with Mullet Key, and a thousand tent U.S. Marine Hospital was put into action, serving the wounded troops returning from Cuba and the health needs of men stationed in Tampa.³⁵



North End of the Post Town, 1918

--Manatee Co. Historical Society Collection, Manatee Co. Public Library

While Egmont and Mullet Keys became a beehive of war time activity, Tampa received the brunt of military turmoil. Because of its proximity to Cuba, its port, and the recently constructed rail line, Tampa became the embarkation point for much of the military force heading to Cuba. War was declared on April 24, 1898, and by early May troops began trickling in. By the end of the month a tidal wave of more than 30,000 soldiers flooded the city, encamped across the local landscape including Port Tampa, Tampa Heights, Palmetto Beach, Fort Brooke, De Soto Park, and Lakeland. Even Theodore Roosevelt and his Rough Riders rode through town on their way to the Caribbean island. On June 7 orders came for 16,000 of the troops to ship out for Cuba. Tampa's lack of preparedness for this onslaught - from an inadequate one-track railroad line leading from the city to the port to the inability to load more than two ships at a time at the port (a total of 36 ships had to be loaded) - hampered the invasion force and frustrated construction at the mouth of Tampa Bay.³⁶

The Spanish armada never attacked Tampa, and the war ended shortly after the U.S. invaded Cuba. Despite this, work continued on Egmont. As early as March 1898, nearly a month before war was declared, the military developed plans to fortify the key. By the end of June, the War Department finished construction of two siege gun batteries, made of wood and sand, on the southwest end of the island. The military developed docks and rail lines to facilitate construction. Egmont sprouted into a town during the early days of the 20th century. Between 1899 and 1916 over seventy buildings, predominately wood frame, were constructed at a cost of \$494,427. The early batteries were replaced by more permanent gun emplacements, totaling five in 1906.³⁷

Batteries Burchsted and John Page supplanted the siege guns during the first decade of the new century. Consisting of two six inch caliber 1898 guns and one 1898 three inch caliber gun (added in 1901), the Army utilized Burchsted until the end of World War I. Declared obsolete on the last day of 1919, the six inch guns were left to

rot. Four months later, the three inch guns received the same fate. In 1980, the six inch guns were transferred to Fort DeSoto Park. Next door to battery Burchsted and begun on October 1903, battery John Page was finished in April 1904. Constructed of Portland cement and sand, the battery received its two three inch caliber guns in 1910. Named after Captain John Page, killed in action in 1846, at Palo Alto, Texas, the battery only remained in operation for nine years, deactivated in 1919, and the guns eventually removed in 1923.³⁸

On the northwest end of the key, Battery McIntosh the southernmost of the three northern gun emplacements - begun in October 1898 and finished in April 1900, was furnished with two eight inch caliber 1888-M1 guns. Constructed of Portland cement and sand, the battery lasted until the 1920s when the guns were removed. The government started construction on Battery Mellon, the northernmost battery, in October 1900 and finished in March 1901, but the battery remained silent until 1904 when three inch R.E guns were installed. Mellon remained in operation until 1920 when the military declared the guns unsafe. Sandwich between these two gun emplacements, battery Guy Howard was begun on the northwest end of the island on July 1903, made of Portland cement and sand, and completed on August 1904. The military installed two six inch caliber guns in 1906, and the battery functioned until 1917, when the guns were removed for use on the European front. This battery was named in honor of Major Guy Howard, killed in the Philippines on October 22, 1899.³⁹

As the defenses of the island became larger and more complex, the number of people stationed at Fort Dade increased. By 1899, excluding the gun batteries, the fort contained twelve buildings, including a hospital,

barracks, and officers' quarters. In 1900, Fort Dade's population passed the 150 mark. Most of the people on the island were young white men in their 20s or 30s, but five African American women, four African American men, and ten white females also resided on the key. Reflective of the rest of the country, Egmont is living and eating quarters for blacks and whites were segregated. Children as young as three and personnel in their 50s also called Egmont home. Seventy privates constituted the largest occupation on Egmont, but civilian as well as officers also labored for the government. Fourteen people, the second largest occupation, were listed as having no job. Both women and children filled this category. Carpenters come in third with twelve. Sergeants comprised the fourth largest group, totaling eight. After this, from one to three people made up the remaining professions, ranging from musician to lighthouse keeper. By the 1910s, Egmont's population grew to nearly 300 people, forming a small town with a school, movie theater, tennis courts, hospital, brick paved roads (installed in 1909), electricity, and telephone service.⁴⁰

Besides lighthouse and military personnel, members of the Tampa Bay Pilots Association lived on the island. Prior to the formation of the Pilots Association in 1886, ships entering into the bay stopped at the lighthouse to obtain maps of the harbor, returning the guides on the way out. Before 1912, pilots stayed at the lighthouse keeper's home, waiting for ships to arrive. On February 17, 1912, probably to the relief of the lighthouse keeper, the federal government permitted the Tampa Bay Pilot Association to lease several acres of land on the southeast side of Egmont to maintain a lookout for ships and homes for the pilots. Once spotted, the pilots would sail out to the ship and guide the vessel to the port. On

March 8, 1928, for \$3,850 Hillsborough County purchased the 5.5 acres on which the pilots resided, securing the continued presence of the association on Egmont Key.⁴¹

In spite of the picture perfect setting of the key, with two story houses surrounded by green lawns and cooled by the ocean breezes, everything did not go smoothly. Blood-thirsty mosquitoes infested the island, making life miserable for many non-Florida natives. While dodging mosquito air raid attacks, people also fretted over assaults by rattlesnakes. Furthermore, the grinding wheels of the military tested the patience of many. The island did not provide fertile ground for growing food or other necessities, consequently, nearly everything had to be shipped in at great expense, including vegetables, milk, and livestock feed.⁴²

Because of the variety of people and their occupations, not all of whom worked for the Army but were in one way or another impacted by it, they had a differing array of experiences on Egmont. In 1907, the Army and Militia Coast-Defense held joint exercises at Fort Dade and Fort DeSoto. In reviews of the exercises, the men generally received positive critiques, shedding light on conditions in the camps and the work conducted:

During the encampment frequent inspections were made by the district sanitary officer, the militia surgeon, the post surgeon, and by myself [Capt. J.C. Johnson, Coast Artillery Corps, commanding Fort Dade, Fla.]. While it took constant hammering to produce the results obtained, in general these camps were kept the cleanest and most sanitary and were the freest from flies of any I have ever seen.⁴³

First Lieutenant Lewis Turtle of the Coast Artillery Corps at Fort Dade provided a slightly different picture of camp life:

It was most difficult to get any fatigue work out of the militia. They even considered it a great hardship to haul their own meat and ice. In policing up at the end of camp they displayed an utter, absolute, and unqualified lack of discipline, burning up rubbish at places the use of which was specifically prohibited-by both written and repeatedly given verbal orders-for such purposes. This defiance of authority took place in the presence and seemingly with the consent of the militia officers.⁴⁴

Turtle went on to describe military exercises the men performed:

Due to the efforts of Capt. J.C. Johnson, Coast Artillery Corps, some blank ammunition provided for the exercises was expended at a time when a big excursion was at the fort. During this firing the guns and range tower were manned by militiamen whose visiting friends took marked interest in the occurrences at the battery. The militiamen were greatly elated by the chance to show their proficiency. Doubtless they had feared that only the infantry supports would get a chance to show off before their friends. Such exhibits as this tend to greatly increase the interest of the public in artillery work and to give greater esprit de corps to the artillery soldier.⁴⁵

Detailing a very different experience, Mrs. Virgil Braddock was born on the eve of World War I in Egmont's hospital, delivered

by an Army doctor. Despite having electricity on the island beginning in 1911, Mrs. Braddock's father, Merrill Bethel, who was assistant lighthouse keeper on Egmont from 1915 to 1918, still carried kerosene in five-gallon containers up to the top of the lighthouse to fuel the lamp. Other duties included the polishing of the glass and brass on the lamp.⁴⁶ For entertainment, Mrs. Braddock stated:

No television, no radio. One of my parents' main sources of amusement was to fish and hunt shells around the island. They'd put me in one of the wooden boxes the kerosene cans came in, put the box in dad's little boat and go around the island. On weekends, dad would make a little money taking soldiers to town in the boat.⁴⁷

Mrs. Roberta Cole reminisced about her days on the island as a young girl during the early part of the twentieth century when she stated:

The Moore family on the island looked forward to every new day, at Fort Dade. Marion Bates and I agree, as she lived there as a child. We agree that everyone was busy and happy and loved Egmont. There were so many hobbies. The ladies did handwork and shared intricate patterns for needlecraft, and all of the nice little embroideries and so on. I tried as a child to take up the basics, and 25 years later, I finally finished a small afghan. While the daughters collected paper-dolls, the ladies collected recipes.... My education was mostly by osmosis, all the newspapers, magazines and the junior classics. Sunday School was a vital learning experience. We had

Panama hats which we wore everywhere. We'd take the narrow wooden sidewalk where I learned to ride a bicycle on planks this wide. And we would go the length of the engineering property, to connect with the cement sidewalk, a concrete road which took us past sergeants' row to the auditorium and the center of the island.⁴⁸

In 1917, while local families bought victory bonds, men joined the military to fight in Europe, and Tampa's shipbuilding industry boomed, Egmont Key became a training center for National Guard Coast Artillery units. The key's population nearly doubled to 600 due to the artillery units and anti-submarine mine crews stationed at Fort Dade, resulting in the construction of several buildings, including barracks, mess halls, and officers quarters. This buildup occurred in response to fears of possible attacks on Tampa Bay. Despite this, the military began to slowly strip the fort of its guns, removing them to the European front.⁴⁹

After the first World War, the military considered Fort Dade as well as Fort DeSoto, on Mullet Key, obsolete. This resulted from the advancement of technology which allowed battleships to bombard the islands while out of range of the forts' guns. Furthermore, the military viewed mobile artillery as a more viable option than the stationary guns in defense operations. Consequently, by 1920, the population of the island shrank to 294 personnel, ranging in age from one to seventy-six. While young white men were still the majority of residents on the island, nineteen African American men, six African American women, and sixty-two white women also lived there. The Coast Artillery employed the largest number of people, totaling more than 130. As in 1900, "none"

was the second sizable group, with seventy-five people. Small in comparison to the first two, nineteen laborers lived on Egmont, followed by seven people in the medical department and an equal number in Quartermaster Corps. The remaining professions dwindled in size, ranging from cook to mechanic. A year later, on August 31, 1921, the fort was inactivated, with the eventual transfer of all personnel to Key West, except an 18-person care taking unit. On May 25, 1923, the crew was removed; consequently, the lighthouse became the focal point of the island, with Sergeant Fagan serving as the sole caretaker for the entire key.⁵⁰

The ebb and flow of military forces through Fort Dade was typical of other bases in Florida. As the country entered into conflicts, bases were either built or upgraded, readied for any aggressive act and overflowing with fresh recruits and seasoned warriors. The United States Naval Station at Key West and Fort Jefferson on Garden Key, Dry Tortugas shared in Fort Dade's boom and bust experiences. While both predate Fort Dade, they also suffered from becoming obsolete before completion or shortly afterwards. Furthermore, because all three, plus Fort DeSoto, were coastal defense stations, nature took its toll on their physical remains. Yet, despite these similarities, Fort Dade and Fort DeSoto are unique, stemming out of a specific time and historical experience: the United States' conflict with Spain in 1898 and the eventual colonization of parts of the Caribbean and Asia.⁵¹

Even after abandonment, Fort Dade refused to die. Through the 1920s and into the 1930s the Coast Guard utilized Egmont Key as a firing range, providing some excitement for the caretaker several months out of the year. Coast Guardsmen from all over the South

convened on the island to practice shooting their rifles, handguns, and machine guns. Additionally, during these exercises, destroyers practiced target shooting ten miles off of Egmont's coast. During this time, in 1931, the Coast Guard wrestled partial control of the island away from the War Department and spent the next several years attempting to obtain absolute command, especially the former Fort Dade lands. Before the end of the decade, the Treasury Department obtained ownership of much of the key. In November of 1933, the War Department removed the caretaker of Fort Dade, leaving the Coast Guard, the lighthouse keeper, and the pilots in care of the island. By 1937, Egmont Key was rated as the best firing range in the South. Unfortunately, while the country was reeling from economic depression, fires destroyed many of Egmont's buildings and left carcasses of others. Between 1935 and 1936, fire attacked the island four times. In response, the Coast Guard requested and received permission to level to the ground many of those structures remaining on the island, as they presented fire hazards. Compounding the problem, Egmont Key suffered at the hands of hurricanes during this same period, further damaging the already fragile material remains of the island. Consequently, considerable sections of Fort Dade were destroyed before the outbreak of World War II even with continued use by the Coast Guard.⁵²

For much of the nation, World War II served as a boon to its economy. With the creation of new bases and the subsequent influx of military personnel and their paychecks into local economies, cities such as Tampa were able to pull themselves out of the soup lines of the Great Depression. While war time restrictions limited what people could buy, workers spent what they could and socked away the rest, waiting for better days. On the

eve of World War II, in July 1939, Tampa received notice of the impending construction of MacDill Army Air Field. Millions of dollars were spent and thousands of people were employed constructing the base. By May of 1940, less than a year after the military announced the construction of MacDill, over 1,000 military personnel were stationed at the base even though it was not finished. This number grew to over 25,000 during the height of the war. The military also opened Drew Army Air Field (located at present day Tampa International Airport), further increasing the military presence in the local economy. Paralleling the military increase, Tampa's shipbuilding industry pushed into high gear once the war started, employing nearly 16,000 people in round the clock shifts.⁵³

War seems to bring out the best in Egmont, and during the Second World War, the island experienced a rebirth. The War Department took control of much of the island, clearing roads, refurbishing the few remaining buildings, and erecting new structures during the early days of the conflict. The key became a harbor patrol station, protecting the bay from possible attack with over 150 Coast Guard, Army, and Navy men stationed on the island. The Navy operated the harbor patrol, the Army participated in the Coast Artillery, and the Coast Guard maintained the lighthouse and the radio station. Additionally, any ships entering the bay had to deposit all munitions on the island, picking up the stockpiles on their way out. Military personnel were once again brought to the key for shooting and amphibious warfare practice.⁵⁴ As with previous conflicts, Tampa Bay was never attacked by the enemy during World War II. However, Mullet Key, the former site of Fort DeSoto, became a bombing and shooting range for American planes from MacDill field. Captain John Birdsall, who

was stationed on Egmont during the war, stated that Mullet Key provided much excitement and work for the personnel on Egmont Key:

The Air Force had a skip bomb range on Mullet Key and a bombing range. On Passage Key they had a bombing range and B17's and P40's and that type airplane were flying and strafing, they had a range on Mullet Key also for the P40s. They shot live ammunition and they shot across the main channel. So whenever a ship went by they would put up a red panel on the range and cease firing. Well sometimes they didn't cease firing and it got hazardous. Many times as they shot the target the bullets would ricochet off the water and they had to peel off the left or right hard after they shot the targets or they would run into their ricochets. Many of them did run into their own ricochets and they had liquid cooled engines and it would shoot a hole through their radiators. We would watch them and pretty soon the steam would come out of their engine and the engine would cease and they would circle around out there and land by us and we would rescue the pilots. As soon as the plane stopped it would sink so they'd jump out. So, we would go over and pick the boys up. We made many rescues like that. The old P40's wouldn't float very long. Sometimes they would skid them up on the beach and the Coast Guard personnel and the Navy too, if we could find one of those planes abandoned, they had good clocks in them and all kinds of stuff we would like to get.⁵⁵

As the war drew to a close, so did the revitalization of Egmont. The Coast Guard continued to operate the lighthouse and the pilots still guided ships into the bay, but the once booming Fort Dade deteriorated further. During the 1940s the lighthouse was modernized by removing the pedestal and lantern which housed the kerosene lamp and Fresnel lens, replacing them with "a pair of DCB 35 airport beacons with 200,000 candle power and a nominal range of 28 miles," and reducing the height of the structure to 70 feet. Instead of making the arduous climb up and down the stairs daily to light the old system, after the renovations one of the Coast Guard personnel manning the island went into a shed next to the lighthouse an hour before sundown and flipped a switch, leaving the light to burn until 8 o'clock the next morning. Furthermore, a radio beacon for ships as well as airplanes was placed on the key.⁵⁶ Prior to 1974 ownership of the island was split between the War Department, Hillsborough County, the Coast Guard, and the Treasury Department. On July 10, 1974, Egmont Key was designated a National Wildlife Refuge, with most of the island - except the Coast Guard's holdings on the northern end of the island and the pilots association land on the southeast - transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Four years later, on December 11, 1978, Egmont Key was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.⁵⁷

Despite electrifying the light, the keeper's duties had not changed drastically from the nineteenth century. In 1987, the four member Coast Guard crew served in pairs of two on the island for two weeks each, mowing the grass, changing the bulbs in the DCB 35 airport lights, repairing and painting the buildings, and servicing the radio beacon.⁵⁸ On September 30, 1989, the lighthouse became fully automated, a

process which began throughout the country in the 1960s. Consequently, the Coast Guard transferred the crew that operated the beacon but still maintained ownership of the structure.⁵⁹ In the same year, the State of Florida took over management of the key, making it a state park.⁶⁰

Though never having been attacked, Fort Dade has not fared well with the ravages of time, fire, wind, rain, ocean tides, vandalism, and neglect. Surprisingly little remains of the base and its extensive defensive and garrison structures. With the invasion of foliage and the leveling of nearly every structure, one is hard pressed to imagine what the island looked like during its heyday in the 1910s. The lighthouse station, while suffering early troubles, constitutes the most prominent historical structures on the island. Next, the pilots association five acres dotted with wooden structures on masonry piers comes in a close second. Finally, individual structures from Fort Dade stand as lonely reminders to the areas rich military past.

While totally submerged - the ocean reclaimed them during the 1980s - Batteries Burchsted and John Page on the south end of the island are still visible from the air. In 1995, hurricanes Erin and Opal pelted Battery Guy Howard, resulting in the near collapse of the structure. Currently, the ocean is carrying away the foundation, consequently, the gun emplacement will suffer the same fate as Burchsted and John Page. Of the non-submerged structures, one of the most visible and still highly utilized is the road network established in 1909. A lengthy one mile brick stretch from the lighthouse reservation to the pilots association's land has been extensively weeded by park officials and private citizens, keeping it free from hefty overgrowth. In 1994, a group of Eckered College students and other

volunteers cleared away much of the invasive and destructive vegetation that engulfed Battery Mellon. Where once a jungle like growth was the only thing visible, the battery is now obvious to the naked eye. Battery McIntosh, while suffering from the effects of time, storms, vandals, and vegetation, has survived with rust destroying a substantial amount of the metal construction materials. Much of the rest of the fort has been reduced to masonry piers and a scattering of roof and wall remains. Both the quartermaster store house and the guard house, built in 1910 and 1911 respectively, stand roofless, naked to future troubles.⁶¹

Confronting the continued demise of the island's historic remains and employed by the State of Florida as the manager of Egmont Key, Robert Baker began working on the island in October of 1989. He replaced the Coast Guard personnel, and, currently, Mr. Baker and his wife are the sole full time residents on the island. Even the Pilots Association members do not live on the key permanently, using the homes for weekend getaways or overnight work. Several other park personnel toil along side Mr. Baker, but they reside on the mainland, commuting by boat to work everyday. While the staff of the park operate on a shoestring budget, they are helped by the "Egmont Key Alliance" community support organization. Formed by a group of volunteers in the early 1990s, the alliance has been instrumental in public awareness campaigns educating the people about the fragile ecological and historical presence on the island. Additionally, the alliance has invested hundreds of hours in stabilizing many of the historic remains scattered across the key, battling vegetation, storms, the ocean, and vandalism. At the same time, the group has established and continues to add to an archive of primary and secondary

documents related to the lighthouse and Fort Dade. Future plans for the island include the possible establishment of a museum in a refurbished Guard House.⁶²

ENDNOTES

¹ The research for this paper was conducted as part of the author's duties while employed at the Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County Preservation Board. The funding for the research was provided by the Historic Resources Review Board and resulted in a Hillsborough County landmark proposal. This work would never have seen the light of day were it not for the untiring contributions of Robert Baker, Egmont Key Park Ranger; Richard Johnson, President of Egmont Key Alliance; and Teresa Maio, Historic Sites Specialist for the Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County Preservation Board.

² Charles W. Arnade, "The Tampa Bay Area from the Aborigines to the Spanish," *Tampa Bay History* 1 (1) (Spring/Summer 1979), 12-13; Charles Arnade, "Three Early Spanish Tampa Bay Maps," *Tequesta* 25 (1965), 86; Roger Grange, "An Archaeological Survey of Egmont Key National Wildlife Refuge, Hillsborough County, Florida," (Manuscript on file Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County Preservation Board, 1977), 13; Jack D. L. Homes, "Spanish interest in Tampa Bay during the 18th Century," *Tampa Bay, History*, 5 (1) Spring/Summer 1983), 5; John W. Stafford, "Egmont Key: Sentinel of Tampa Bay," *Tampa Bay History!*, 2 (1) (1980), 15; John D. Ware, "A View Of Cell's Journal of Surveys and Chart of 1757," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 47 (1) (July 1969), 9, 1243, 22.

³ John D. Ware, in his article "Tampa Bay in 1757: Francisco Maria Cell's Journal and Logbook, Part I," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 50 (2) (October 1971), 169 translated and reprinted Cell's experience on the island.

⁴ Stafford, 15; Ware (1968), 13. John Ware notes that Celi's measurements accurately described the island as it was in the mid-1960s, over two hundred years later. See Ware, (1968), 13, footnote 26.

⁵ John D. Ware, "Tampa Bay in 1757: Francisco maria Celi's Journal and Logbook, Part II," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 50 (3) (January 1972), 272.

⁶ Arnade (1979), 13-15; James W. Covington, *The Story of Southwestern Florida*, (New York, 1957), I, 66; Jack D. L. Holmes, "Two Spanish Expeditions to Southwest Florida, 1783-1793," *Tequesta* 25 (1965), 101-107; Holmes (1983), 6; Kevin M. McCarthy, *Florida's Lighthouses* (Gainesville, FL, 1990), 93; Bernard Romans, *A Concise Natural History of East and West Florida* (Gainesville, FL, 1962), LXXVIII-LXXXII. A reprint of the 1775 book in Floridaiana Facsimile and reprint Series; Stafford (1980), 15, 20; William Thurston, "Egmont Key, Fort Dade Site," National Register of Historic Places inventory nomination Form (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1976), 4.

⁷ Major General George A. McCall, *Letters From the Frontiers*. A Facsimile Reproduction of the 1868 Edition. (Gainesville, FL, 1974), 130-131.

⁸ Karl Grismer, *Tampa: A History of the City of Tampa and the Tampa Bay Region of Florida* (St. Petersburg, FL, 1950), 90.

⁹ John A. Bethell, *History of Pinellas Peninsula*, (St. Petersburg, FL, 1914), 46-47; Kent Chelrain, "Egmont Lighthouse 6th Brightest, First Built," *The Islander*, May 12, 1977, p. 27; *A Compilation of Historical Data: Egmont Key, United States Lighthouse Service, Fort Dade, Coast Guard Light Station Egmont Key* (Manuscript on file State Library of Florida, Tallahassee, Florida, n.d.), 11, 13; "Contract to Build Egmont Key Light, Florida, 1847: (Egmont Key file, Coast Guard Historian Office, Washington, D.C.); Grismer, 114; Francis Ross Holland, *Fr. America's Lighthouses: Their Illustrated History Since 1716* (Brattleboro, Vermont, 1972), 141, 216; Stafford, 18.

¹⁰ Bethell, 46-47.

¹¹ Chetlain, 26; *A Compilation of Historical Data: Egmont Key, United States Lighthouse Service, Fort Dade, Coast Guard Light Station Egmont Key* (Manuscript on file State Library of Florida, Tallahassee, Florida, n.d.), 11, 13; Grismer, 113; Holland, 131; Stafford, 18.

¹² Alicia Addeo and Bart Moore, "Crossbows to Bombers: "The Military History of Mullet Key," *Tampa Bay History* 12 (1) (1990), 4; Karl A. Bickel, "Robert E. Lee in Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 27 (1) (July 1948), 65; Grange, 14; McCarthy, 93; "Report of the Board of Engineers on the Defence of the Coast of Florida, 1848 and 1849," NARS, Records of the War Department, Office of the Chief of Engineers, Report of the Board of Engineers

on the Defence of the Coast of the Coast of Florida, from Bulky No. 131 Copy on file, St. Petersburg Museum of History, St. Petersburg, Florida, John Blocker Collection, Box 6, Folder 5.

¹³ "Report of the Board of Engineers on the Defence of the Coast of Florida, 1848 and 1849," 128-129.

¹⁴ Covington, 129; McCarthy, 94.

¹⁵ "A Trip to Egmont Key," *Tampa Florida Peninsular*, August 1, 1857, page 2, column 4.

¹⁶ Bethell, 49.

¹⁷ "Egmont Key," *Tampa Florida Peninsular*; May 8, 1858 reprinted in *Sunland Tribune* 17 (November 1992), 101; Stafford, 22.

¹⁸ Addeo and Moore, 4; Covington, 142; McCarthy, 94.

¹⁹ Dave Capra, "The Confederate States Lighthouse Bureau: A Portrait in Blue and Gray," *The Keeper's Log* 8 (2) (Winter 1992): 8; Niel E. Hurley, *Keepers of Florida Lighthouses; 1820-1939*, (U.S.A., 1990), 61. Hurley lists Rickard's name first by Richards and then by Rickard because the name was spelled differently between several Sources. I have chosen the Rickard's spelling to remain consistent with Dave Capra's spelling of the name.

²⁰ Rodney E. Dillon, Jr., " 'A Gang of Priates': Confederate Lighthouse Raids in Southeast Florida, 1864," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 67 (4) (April 1989), 441-457.

²¹ Addeo and Moore, 4-5; Canter Brown, Jr., "Tampa's James McKay and the Frustration of Confederate Cattle-Supply Operations in South Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 70 (April 1992), 418; Covington, 142-144; George E. Buker, *Blockaders, Refugees, & Contrabands: Civil War on Florida's Gulf Coast, 1861-1865* (Tuscaloosa, AL, 1993), 32-33, 72, 129; Grismer, 140; McCarthy, 94; Ronald N. Prouty, "War Comes to Tampa Bay: The Civil War Diary of Robert Watson," *Tampa Bay History* 10 (2) (Fall/Winter 1988), 36; Stafford, 22 United States War Department, *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*, Series I, Volume 17 (Washington: Government Printing Press, 1903), 84-87, 309, 33, 397-399, 593. Hereinafter cited as ORN; June Hurley Young, *Florida's Pinellas Peninsula* (St. Petersburg, FL, 1984), 28.

²² Stafford, 22; Claude Pierce, Assistant Surgeon of the Marine Hospital Service Tampa Bay Quarantine Station on Mullet Key, Fla., letter dated May 29, 1902, to the Surgeon at Fort Dade on Egmont Key. Manuscript on file St. Petersburg Museum of History, St. Petersburg, Florida John Blocker Collection, Box 6, Folder 9. Copy from The National Archives Records of the War Department, Office of the Adjutant, Washington, D.C. General, Medical History Posts, Volume 898, P. 95.

²³ Buker, 65-68; Brown, Jr., 424; Covington, 144-145; "Federal Raid on Tampa Bay, October, 1863," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 4 (3) (January 1926), 130-139; Grismer, 140-145; United States War Department, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C. 1885), ser. 1, vol. XIV, 110-112; Young, 29.

²⁴ David J. Coles, "Unpretending Service: The James I. Davis, the *Tahoma*, and the East Gulf Blockading Squadron," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 71 (1) (July 1992), 50; ORN, 694-696.

²⁵ Addeo and Moore, 5; Kyle S. VanLandingham, "The Union Occupation of Tampa May 6-7, 1864," *Sunland Tribune* 19 (November 1993), 11-12.

²⁶ Coles, 52-54; Covington, 145.

²⁷ National Archives and Records Service, Records of the Lighthouse Service (Record Group 26), "Clipping File" for Egmont Key Lighthouse, Egmont Key, Florida, page 1. A copy of this can be found in the Egmont Key Alliance's records, Lighthouse Box 1, File 2. Hereinafter National Archives and Records Service will be cited as NARS and Egmont Key Alliance will be cited as EKA.

²⁸ Hurley, 61.

²⁹ Addeo and Moore, 6; Eirlys Barker, " 'A Sneaky, Cowardly Enemy': Tampa's Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1887-88," *Tampa Bay History* 8 (2) (Fall/Winter 1986), 6-7; Hurley, 63; Frank B. Sarles, "Historic Site report on Fort DeSoto Park, Pinellas County, Florida, 1960," p. H-12. National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, National Park Service, Virginia. Manuscript on file Heritage Village - Pinellas County Historical Museum, Largo, Florida; United States War Department, Quartermaster-General's Office, *Military Posts and Reservations in the United States and Alaska and of National Cemeteries* (Washington:

Government Printing Office, 1904), 112. A partial copy on file EKA, Fort Dade Box 1.

³⁰ Barker, 6-7.

³¹ Hurley, 63.

³² Bruce Ed. McCall, "Coastal Defenses of Tampa Bay, April 3rd, 1996," (Sarasota, FL: Bruce Ed. McCall, 1996), 15. Manuscript on file EKA, Fort Dade Box 1, File 23.

³³ Grismer, 206-211; McCall, 1-2, 9; McCarthy, 95; Gary Mormino and Anthony Pizzo, *Tampa: The Treasure City* (Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1983), 120-128.

³⁴ Frank Laumer, "This was Fort Dade," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 47 (July 1966), 11; McCall, 1; Stafford, 23; United States War Department, Quartermaster-General's Office, *General Orders and Circulars, Adjutant Generals Office, 1900* (Washington, 1901), 4. A partial copy on file EKA, Fort Dade Box 1, File 14. For a detailed history of the military development of Egmont Key consult Bruce McCall's "Coastal Defenses of Tampa Bay."

³⁵ Addeo and Moore, 9; Covington, 200; Pierce, 94; Stafford, 23. For detailed information about the development of Mullet Key's Fort DeSoto, consult Alicia Addeo, "Fort De Soto: A Photographic Essay," *Tampa Bay History* 14 (2) (1992); Alicia Addeo and Bart Moore, "Crossbows to Bombers: The Military History of Mullet Key," *Tampa Bay History* 12 (1) (1990); Frank B. Sarles, "Historic Site Report on Fort DeSoto Park, Pinellas County, Florida, 1960," National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, National Park Service, Virginia. Manuscript on file Heritage Village - Pinellas County Historical Museum, Largo, Florida.

³⁶ Covington, 200-201; Grismer, 206-211; McCall, 2; Mormino and Pizzo, 120-128.

³⁷ McCall, 1-2, 9-10; Sarles, page 12, footnote 14; Report of Completed Works, Seacoast Fortifications, Form 7, Battery Charles Mellon. Hereinafter Report of Completed Works cited as RCW. RCW, Form 1, Battery Guy Howard; RCW, Form 7, Battery Guy Howard; RCW, Form 7, Battery McIntosh; RCW, Form t, Battery McIntosh; RCW, Form 1, Battery Burchsted; RCW, Form 7, Battery Burchsted; RCW, Form t, Battery John Page; RCW, Form 7, Battery John Page. Copies of RCW on file EKA, Fort Dade Box 1, File 13. Stafford, 23-24; United States War Department, *A Letter from the Secretary of War*

Transmitting Results of Preliminary Examinations and Surveys of Sites for Military Posts, (Washington, 1902), 192. A partial copy on file EKA, Fort Dade Box 1, File 14.

³⁸ McCall, 12, 22-24; RCW, Form 1, Battery Burchsted; RCW, Form 7, Battery Burchsted; RCW, Form 1, Battery John Page; RCW, Form 7 Battery John Page.

³⁹ McCall, 12, 23; RCW, Form 1, Battery Guy Howard; RCW, Form 7, Battery Guy Howard; RCW, Form 7, Battery McIntosh; RCW, Form 1, Battery McIntosh; RCW, Form 7, Battery Charles Mellon.

⁴⁰ Addeo and Moore, 10-11; John H. Baxley, "1900 Census - United States." (Baxley transcribed from microfilm Fort Dade listings from the United States Bureau of the Census, *Population Schedules of the Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900.*) On file, EKA, Fort Dade Box1, File 17. "Building No. 1... Hospital," EKA, Fort Dade Box 1, File 2; Betty Kolman, "Follow the Brick Roads on Egmont Key and Find an Island's History," *St. Petersburg Times*, November 29, 1982: p. 113; Roberta Cole, "Egmont Key," March 19, 1986. p. 9, Transcript of a talk given at the Membership Meeting of the Manatee County Historical Society. Manuscript on File, Eaton Room, Manatee County Public Library; "Construction Completion Reports, including photographs, maps, and descriptions of buildings and facilities on Fort Dade, Florida (ca. 1905-1935)." Manuscript on File EKA, Fort Dade Box 1, File 1. McCall, 1-2, 940; McCarthy, 95; Betty Jean Miller, "They were Stationed in Paradise," *St. Petersburg Times*, August 29, 1994: p. 1, 5; No Author (n.d.), 13; Stafford, 23-26; For a detailed description of the various buildings that existed on Egmont Key consult "Fort Dade, Egmont Key: Houses and Structures." Manuscript on File, Eaton Room, Manatee County Public Library. Also consult EKA, Fort Dade Box 1, File 2 and File 13 for detailed drawings, photographs, and/or descriptions of buildings on Fort Dade.

⁴¹ Cole, 5-6; S. D. Emlick, Acting Secretary of War, to The Commandant, U. S. Coast Guard, concerning property on Egmont Key. Letter on file, NARS, Record Group 26, Entry 283, File 131, Box 114. Copy on file EKA, Lighthouse Box, File 12; Hillsborough County Clerk of the Circuit Court, Deed Book 810, page 435-437; United States Army Judge Advocate General, *United States Military Reservations National Cemeteries and Military Parks, Title Jurisdiction, Etc.*, (Washington, 1916), 58; McCall, 15; Capt. John D. Ware, "Notes on

Egmont Key/Mullet Key, Tampa Bay Pilots and Piloting, Charles M. Moore," (Manuscript on File Manatee County Public Library, Eaton Room, 1967), 9.

⁴² Cole, 14; McCall, 3; Carolyne Norwood, "Growing Up on Egmont Key was Paradise," *The Islander* April 24, 1986: Section 2, page 1; Stafford, 24-26.

⁴³ United States War Department, Office of the Chief of Staff, *Extracts from Reports and Militia Officers on the Joint Army and Militia Coast-Defense Exercises During the Year-1907* (Washington, 1908), 227. A partial copy on file EKA, Fort Dade Box 1, File N.

⁴⁴ United States War Department, Office of the Chief of Staff, (1908), 233.

⁴⁵ United States War Department, Office of the Chief of Staff, (1908), 233.

⁴⁶ Dick Bothwell, "Egmont Offspring Returns Home," *St. Petersburg Times*, November 25, 1963; Stafford, 24.

⁴⁷ Bothwell.

⁴⁸ Cole, 9-10.

⁴⁹ Grismer, 245; McCall, 7, 10, 12; Mormino and Pizzo, 150-151; Stafford, 26.

⁵⁰ Addeo and Moore, 13; John H. Baxley, "Fourteenth Census of the United States (1920 Census)." (Baxley transcribed from microfilm Fort Dade listings from the United States Bureau of the Census, *Population Schedules of the Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920.*) On file, EKA, Fort Dade Box 1, File 17. "Forts Dade and Desoto Formally Abandoned Now," May 23, 1923, newspaper clipping on file, Manatee County Public Library, Eaton Room, Egmont Key, General file; McCall, 6; McCarthy, 95; Sarles, 27-28; Stafford, 26-27.

⁵¹ Ida W. Barron and J. P. Schuck, "Fort Zachary Taylor," National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1970); George T Morrison, John Wesley Phillips, and Richard A. Rasp, "Fort Jefferson National Monument," National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service,

1974); Sarles; Thurston; Sharon L. Wells, "United States Naval Station," National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1982).

⁵² Captain John Birdsall. interview by Janet Mathews. May 29, 1976. p. 2, (Transcription of interview on file, EKA, Lighthouse Box I, File 10), 4; "Egmont Key," *Coast Guard Magazine* 10 (June 1937), 17; Letter from USCG Commander, Section Base 21 to Commandant (via Gulf Division), "Small arms target range equipment; request for," dated 29 June, 1928, (NARS, Record Group 26, Entry 283, File 131, Box 114. Copy on file EKA, Lighthouse Box I, File 14); letter from Commandant to USCG Commander, Section Base 21, (Via Commander, Gulf Division), "Small arms target range equipment, request for," dated 7 July 1928, (NARS, Record Group 26, Entry 283, File 131, Box 114. Copy on file EKA, Lighthouse Box I, File 14); Letter from L. C. Covell Commandant to USCG Commander Jacksonville Division, "Egmont Key, Florida, reduction of fire hazards," dated 15 August, 1936, (NARS Record Group 26, Entry 283, File 131, Box 114. CODV on file EKA Lighthouse Box 1 File 14); Letter from Cecil M. Gabbett, USCG Commander Jacksonville Division to Commandant, "Reduction of fire hazard at Egmont Key," dated 12 August 1936, (NARS Record Group 26, Entry 283, File 131, Box 114. Copy on file EKA, Lighthouse Box 1, File 14); Royston Markham, "Whole Coast Guard Fleet Practices at Egmont Key Range," *The Independent*, March 25, 1931; McCall, 7, 123-14, 25; Letter from Edward L. McLean, Rifle Range Keeper, to USCG Commander, Jacksonville Division, "Duties of caretaker regarding the Coast Guard Rifle Range," dated 24 August 1934, (NARS, Record Group 26, Entry 283, File 131, Box 114. Copy on file EKA, Lighthouse Box 1, File 14); C. B. Robbins, The Assistant Secretary of War, granting permission of the Treasury Department to construct a firing range on Egmont Key, dated 14 September 1928, (NARS, Record Group 26, Entry 283, File 131, Box 114. Copy on file EKA, Lighthouse Box 1 File 14) Stafford, 26-27.

⁵³ Grismer, 178-281; McCall, 19-20; Gary R. Mormino, "From Hell Hole to the Good Life," in Richard Bernard's and Bradley Rice's *Sunbelt Cities: Politics and Growth Since World War II*, (Austin, TX, 1983), 140141; Gary Mormino, "GI Joe Meets Jim Crow: Racial Violence and Reform in World War II Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 73 (1) (July 1994), 31; Lewis N. Wynne, "Still They Sall:

Shipbuilding in Tampa During World War II," *Sunland Tribune* 16 (November 1990).

⁵⁴ Birdsall, 2-4; McCall, 7-8, 19-20; Stafford, 27; John J. Sullivan, "One a Day in Tampa Bay: B-26 Bomber Training at MacDill Air Base during World War II," *Tampa Bay History* 11 (1) (Spring/Summer 1989), 41-45; Thurston, 5.

⁵⁵ Birdsall, 5-6.

⁵⁶ McCarthy, 95; No Author (n.d.), 13; Preston, p. t-G.

⁵⁷ Hampton Dunn, "Egmont Key Lighthouse is 126 Years Old," *Tampa Tribune* August 11, 1974, Accent Florida section; House of Representatives Bill 5282, 93rd Congress, First Session, March 7, 1973, copy on file St. Petersburg Museum of History, St. Petersburg, Florida, John Blocker Collection, Box 6, folder 9; "Egmont Key Bill Signed by Nixon," *Tampa Tribune* July 11, 1974; "House Votes to Establish Egmont Key as U. S. Park," *Tampa Tribune* February 2, 1974; McCall, 15; McCarthy, 95; Jack Nease, "Vote Seen on Egmont Key Bill," *Tampa Tribune* June 20, 1974; Nease, "Egmont Preserve Sent to President," *Tampa Tribune* June 29, 1974: p. t-B; "Newest National Register Entries: Archaeological Sites, Klutho Home, Egmont Key," *Archives and History News* 8 (4) (February-March 1979); "Senate Votes Egmont Key Preservation," *Tampa Tribune*, June 21, 1974; Stafford, 27; Thurston, S.

⁵⁸ Judy Hill, "Let It Shine," *Tampa Tribune*, August 18, 1987: p. 1F, 2E

⁵⁹ Dewire, 16; Hill, p. 1F; Nanette Holland, "Few Changes Planned for Historic Island Until Early Next Year," *Tampa Tribune*, October 11, 1989; Doug Reardon, "Key's Ruins are Foundation for Beauty," *Tampa Tibune*, November 27, 1992.

⁶⁰ Reardon.

⁶¹ Kathleen Beeman, "Gun Battery Among Opal's Victims," *Tampa Tribune*, October 7, 1995: p. 1 - Florida/Metro, p. 3 - Florida/Metro; Judy Hill, "A Brush With History," *Tampa Tribune*, February 12, 1994; McCall, 24-28; Stafford, 27-28.

⁶² Maria Douglas, "Egmont Key," *Bradenton Herald*, May 11, 1991: p. B-1; Judy Hill, "Egmont's Key Man," *Tampa Tribune*, July 30, 1990: p. 1-F, 3-F; Judy Hill, "A Brush With History," *Tampa Tribune*,

February 12, 1994; Nanette Holland, "Few Changes Planned for Historic Island Until Early next year," *Tampa Tribune*, October 11, 1989; Nanette Holland, "Groups Seeks Revival of Egmont Key," *Tampa Tribune*, October 16, 1993; Sue Landry, "The Mysterious Shrinking Island," *St. Petersburg Times* December 24, 1991; Sue Landry, "Island Tours to Offer Step Into the Past," *St. Petersburg Times*, October 12, 1993; Doug Reardon, "Key's Ruins are Foundation for Beauty," *Tampa Tribune*. November 27, 1992.