Spanish-American War Fortifications
St. Johns Bluff, Florida

by

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In the decade after the Civil War the United States military services reverted to near pre-1861 size and returned to peacetime duties. For the Navy this meant showing the flag aboard sailing vessels built for extended cruising. For the Army it meant a return to border patrols and Indian pacification on the western frontier. The recently developed military technologies of steam power, high-powered rifled guns and armored protection were no longer needed. This period of military somnambulism continued until the 1880s before Congress determined to take action to modernize the Navy. But following on the discussions about the offensive potential of the new Navy came the realization that coastal defense was the other side of the nation's military modernization coin.

In the 1820s the nation had embarked upon a coastal defense strategy based upon masonry fortifications, such as forts Pickens and Clinch in Florida, Fort Pulaski in Georgia and Fort Moultrie in South Carolina. The advance of weapons technology during the Civil War found the heavy, rifled guns turning masonry forts into rubble, and both sides resorted to piling earth around the brick walls to make the forts impervious to enemy fire. But peace in 1865 brought a halt to military construction.

In March, 1885, President Grover Cleveland appointed
his Secretary of War, William C. Endicott, to head a board to investigate and make recommendations for the nation's coastal defenses. The Endicott Board was thorough in its investigation and sweeping in its recommendations. It proposed a ring of fortifications around the United States, including the Great Lakes. Concrete gun emplacements partially buried in the earth were the central feature of these defensive works. Armament would be powerful 12-inch rifled mortars or the new 10-inch and 12-inch rifled guns. Underground magazines and posts for fire control would be located nearby. Mines would be planted in the waters protected by the guns to keep enemy ships from running past the batteries. Electric searchlights would be installed to thwart an enemy's night attack. Smaller caliber, rapid firing guns would protect these installations from capture by an enemy shore party. The Endicott Board's new strategy centered upon weapons as opposed to the earlier emphasis upon structures.

The Board's military thinking included anachronistic concepts of war, more in keeping with the age of mercantilism than with the 1880s, when it stated that: "the contributions which could be levied by a hostile fleet upon our sea-ports should be reckoned at hundreds of million." and "the plunder of one of our sea-ports might abundantly reimburse an enemy for the expenses of a war conducted
against us." Yet, surprisingly, contemporary military and civilian strategists accepted this concept of seaboard cities being plundered of their urban wealth. There was a spate of writings about our defenseless coasts published by commercial and governmental presses to inform the public of this danger.\(^3\)

Although the Endicott Board's recommendations were sweeping in scope, neither the administration nor Congress desired to expend the vast sums of money necessary to bring the plan to fruition. Even the Board realized that it was not possible to defend the whole coast, but it listed eleven crucial ports and bays which needed military installations at once, none of which was in Florida. By June 30, 1894, when the original task was completed, new locations to be defended were added, including Pensacola and Key West.\(^4\) The incentive to build coastal defenses increased after the Cuban Revolution against Spain began in 1895. Europeans engaging in combat 90 miles off Florida highlighted the thesis of our defenseless coasts.

The Endicott Board's fundamental concept of coastal defense continued down to World War II. None of the continental installations ever fired guns in combat actions, but similar fortifications on Corregidor in the Philippines admirably withstood repeated attacks and bombardments by
Japanese forces. In 1950 the last harbor defense command was discontinued and the Coast Artillery Corps merged with the Field Artillery into an Artillery branch. Coastal fortifications were outmoded in the new missile age. Today, continental defense relies upon electronic surveillance and weapons systems located beneath the sea, on the earth's surface, in the air, and in outer space.

Jacksonville had a significant role in sustaining the Cuban Revolution. José Alejandro Huau, a naturalized Cuban, was the linchpin of the filibustering activities from Jacksonville. Undoubtedly it was through Huau's efforts that José Martí, the founder of the Cuban Revolutionary Party, who later became the national martyr to its cause, visited the city on eight occasions. The rear of Huau's cigar store was the meeting place for Cubans and their sympathizers during the filibustering years before the Spanish-American War. The two Broward brothers, Napoleon and Montcalm, who, along with George DeCottes, owned the seagoing tug Three Friends, W. A. Bisbee, owner of the Dauntless, and "Dynamite Johnny" O'Brien, who captained both vessels, met in Huau's backroom to plan their gunrunning adventures.

There were 71 filibustering expeditions from the United States between 1895 and 1898, with 23 of these attempts
coming from Jacksonville. Only 27 voyages were successful, and 12 of these were made by the Jacksonville tugs Three Friends, Commodore, and Dauntless. Although the filibusterers enjoyed the support of the American public, the United States government successfully stopped many expeditions. There were 44 unsuccessful attempts: the United States turned back 33; the Spanish stopped 5; the English halted 2; and storms accounted for 4 failures.7

Shortly after the Cuban Revolution broke out, General Valeriano Weyler arrived in Cuba to crush the revolt. He played into the hands of the insurrectos by herding the civil population into reconcentration areas to isolate the rebels. The unhygienic conditions in his camps brought death to thousands, principally women and children. And the Cuban junta in New York played upon "Butcher" Weyler's inhuman actions. In addition, the frenzied coverage of the revolution by New York's rival newspapers, the World and the Journal, produced sympathy and support for the Cubans.

In early 1898, the United States sent the USS Maine to Havana to protect American interests on the island. On February 15, 1898, the Maine mysteriously exploded and sank in port with a loss of 260 sailors. Both nations prepared for war.
February 15, 1898, the sinking of the USS Maine.
[Editor's note: significant dates during the Spanish-American War will be interjected throughout the text so that the chronology of the war may be juxtaposed with the building of the fortifications at St. Johns Bluff.]

Immediately upon receiving information on the explosion, the Spanish Minister of Marine advised Admiral Pasquale Cervera to make ready to attack Key West and to blockade the American coast. Admiral Cervera pointed out his naval inferiority compared to the Americans, the absence of Spanish bases on the western side of the Atlantic, and his lack of logistic support for such an undertaking. Nevertheless, he was ordered to sortie his fleet to a more westerly base in the Cape Verde Islands.  

April 8, 1898, the Spanish fleet steamed west to the Cape Verde Islands.

When the Americans learned of Spain's action, Secretary of War Russell A. Alger later wrote: "The calls made upon the department for immediate rescue from the advancing
Spanish fleet were pathetic in their urgency. Telegrams, letters, and statesmen representing the imperiled localities poured into the War Department. They wanted guns everywhere; mines in all the rivers and harbors on the map. All of this fear occurred in spite of the fact that the North Atlantic Squadron had five battleships, two armored cruisers, and many smaller ships to oppose a Spanish fleet which consisted of four cruisers (the best lacked her two 10-inch guns, and another had a badly fouled underwater hull) and two destroyers!

Long before the rest of the nation was gripped in the panic of foreign invasion, Florida was working on its defenses. Governor William D. Bloxham wrote to the Secretary of the Navy John D. Long in November, 1897, requesting a loan of a light one-pounder Hotchkiss rapid-fire gun complete with field and boat mount for the State's Naval Militia. He asked that the gun be sent on a Clyde Line steamship to Jacksonville in care of Lieutenant A. R. Merrill, commanding the 3rd Division. The following month Bloxham made a similar request for the 1st Division in Tampa. Undoubtedly, his concern was due to the proximity of Cuba, and to the fact that most of the filibustering voyages had originated in Florida.

On February 20, 1898, five days after the Maine sank,
Governor Bloxham's administration undoubtedly released one of the earliest set of military orders issued by any state prior to the war when it instructed the Jacksonville Naval Militia as follows:

Lt. A. R. Merrill, Lt. J. H. Bland, Ensigns Miller and Gibbons, with such petty officers and signalmen from the Third Division of Florida Naval Militia, Jacksonville, as may be necessary, are detailed to make a reconnaissance of the Atlantic coast as far as practicable with a view to locating proper sites for signal stations and to secure such other data as may be obtained and be of value from a military standpoint.\(^{12}\)

Upon receipt of these orders Lt. Merrill began his survey at the mouth of the St. Johns River.

War rumors ran rife in Jacksonville, and there was great concern for the safety of the town. Not only had the port been a prime source of supplies for the Cuban rebels, but older citizens remembered that Jacksonville had been occupied four times during the Civil War. Each occupation began with Navy gunboats escorting Army transports up the St. Johns River. Thus, when the Jacksonville District Engineer, Lieutenant Colonel William H. H. Benyaurd, was in town, newspaper reporters kept clamoring to be told about the plans to mine the river to protect the city. Benyaurd
Buker claimed no knowledge of mines being sent to Jacksonville.\textsuperscript{13}

When Brigadier General John M. Wilson, Chief of Engineers, visited the city on March 6, 1898, many suspected he was conducting a military inspection of the mouth of the river. When asked about the city's defenses, the General replied that he had heard more rumors of war in Jacksonville than he had in Washington. Yet he insisted that he was in town to inspect the river's jetties. In fact, his boat trip on the tug \textit{Martha Helen} to the jetties was in the company of R. G. Ross, one of the principal contractors for the jetties. The General said nothing about defending the river.\textsuperscript{14}

Defense continued to be a major topic in Jacksonville. In mid-March the \textit{Times-Union & Citizen} had an intriguing article on mine defense. It reported that an "unnamed prominent citizen" had said that he was prepared to mine the St. Johns River himself. He claimed he knew how, and that he had the cables to do so. Towards the end of the month a group of active citizens appointed ex-Congressman C. M. Cooper and W. W. Cummer to go to Washington, D.C., to impress upon the authorities the importance of protecting the town.\textsuperscript{15}

The demand for military fortifications for Florida,
including the St. Johns River, increased. On April 2, General Wilson telegraphed Colonel Benyaurd to go to Miami to select a site for a temporary battery for the defense of Biscayne Bay. He also mentioned the probability of a temporary battery for the St. Johns. Before the day was over, General Wilson met with the Secretary of War and some citizens from Jacksonville who had come to ask for guns and fortifications for their port. Cooper, Cummer, and Congressman R. W. Davis said that the city would provide the mines and accessories for the support of the battery.

After the two officials agreed to the proposal, C. M. Cooper sent the following telegram: "Washington, D.C. April 2 - J. H. Durkee, Jacksonville, Fla. We have orders for guns and mines - immediately from the Secretary of War. Colonel Benyaurd has been directed to confer with you." On April 6 Cooper and Cummer were back in town with information that two modern rapid-fire 5-inch guns, a secondary battery of other guns, and mines were destined for the St. Johns. 16

It was April 4 before General Wilson telegraphed Colonel Benyaurd about the agreed fortifications for the St. Johns River. By that time Benyaurd was in Miami. Clerk A. Albright wired Benyaurd on the 4th saying: "Chief wires cooperate at once with citizens of Jacksonville in reference to torpedo defense; select site for four modern siege guns
which will be sent you." The next day Albright wired: "Letter of Chief received this evening giving details of battery work ordered immediately on St. Johns and directing prompt cooperation with Durkee and others for submarine work to be done by them under your direction." 17

It is obvious that the citizens of Jacksonville had settled on St. Johns Bluff as the site to defend their port without consulting Colonel Benyaurd. The Colonel received General Wilson's instructions to select a site for the St. Johns on Monday, April 4, in Miami. He wired back that he would look again at Biscayne Bay the next day, and then he would meet with the people of Jacksonville on Thursday, April 7. Yet on Monday, April 4, the Florida Finance Company and Sarah F. Williams, both land owners on St. Johns Bluff, wrote letters to Colonel Benyaurd granting the government the right to construct temporary fortifications on their land in return for an annual rental. The Florida Finance Company wanted $50 rental, and Mrs. Williams asked for $100. She also stated that, if the United States desired permanent occupancy, she would sell her 50 acres for $2,500. There was a third landowner, W. H. Browne, who later wrote to Colonel Benyaurd that: "Whatever price Mr. [Dr. B. H.] Williams [Mrs. Williams's son] is willing to take for his land will, I think, be satisfactory to me." Thus, even before Colonel Benyaurd arrived in Jacksonville,
the citizens had selected the site and obtained the owners' permission to use their land. Thursday, April 7, Benyaurd met with the Jacksonville committee, received the letters, and returned to his headquarters at St. Augustine. 18

The following day Benyaurd telegraphed John Einig in Jacksonville asking to rent his tug Edith, and to have it ready for him the next day at the Main Street wharf. He also telegraphed John M. Cook, Spartanburg, South Carolina, offering him superintendency, with a salary of $125 per month, over the construction of a temporary battery. Work began on the harbor defenses on April 11, 1898, when John Cook led his civilian laborers to St. Johns Bluff to clear away the underbrush. 19

The day after Cook began clearing the bluff, Benyaurd reached an agreement with W. A. MacDuff of Jacksonville to build a landing wharf and four small temporary buildings close by for $531.63. MacDuff was to furnish the labor, a pile drive, a water boat, hoisting engine, 5,000 shingles, and 125 pounds of iron spikes. Even before the wharf was completed Cook began work on the temporary battery. [See the sketch of the bluff by E. B. Thomson, surveyed November, 1898, for the location of the wharf, and temporary battery.] Cook used 10" by 10" timbers in the revetment and magazine, which he covered with a sand embankment partly surfaced with
On April 12, the Florida Central & Peninsula Railroad brought gun carriages from the arsenal at Rock Island, Illinois, into its yard at the foot of Julia Street. There were two 5-inch and two 6-inch rapid-fire carriages, which would have to be modified for the guns scheduled for St. Johns Bluff. A number of people turned out to look at the carriages, and they were amused by some of the inscriptions written on the frames. "This will be no bullfight," was one comment, and another said: "For blood-thirsty Spaniards." The people were relieved after seeing these instruments of war sitting in their town waiting to be installed downriver to protect them from marauding Spaniards.

In mid-April, Colonel Benyaurd reported to General Wilson that Cook had cleared a roadway from the riverbank to the bluff, that MacDuff probably would finish the wharf in a day or so, and that his agent in Jacksonville, J. D. Sinclair, had received the gun carriages and some ammunition. But, until the wharf was finished, these items would have to remain in town. He also reported that he had decided to lay a railroad track from the boat landing up the bluff and use a stationary engine to haul the material to the top. [Thomson's sketch indicates that the tracks from the riverbank went up a ravine, or a man-made cut, to the
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As for the cost of his defense projects, Benyaurd said that neither he nor his assistances had had time to compute carefully the expenses. [It is necessary to realize that the Colonel still had his regular peacetime civil works projects, such as dredging harbors and navigable rivers, throughout the Florida Peninsula in addition to his wartime tasks. He was an extremely busy administrator traveling extensively throughout the state.] However, the Colonel felt that his three military projects of St. Johns Bluff, St. Augustine, and Miami should not exceed between $15 and $25,000. Benyaurd was not the only one running late, on April 14, 1898, General Wilson telegraphed the Colonel officially authorizing him to proceed with the construction of defenses at all three installations. 23

The meeting with Jacksonville citizens on April 15 turned out to be a shock for Colonel Benyaurd. When he asked them for a progress report on the city's mine defense program, all he got were blank stares! The committee was quick to claim, almost in unison, that it was under the impression that the government was providing everything for
the mine field. Benyaurd, well along on his battery construction, knew that without a mine field there would be a terrible weakness in his defenses. He immediately began ordering the necessary material and lining up local support in order to lay the mines.

That same day, Benyaurd ordered 1,800 pounds of dynamite from C. B. Smith of Jacksonville. Smith had to send away to fill such a large order. Most of the other materials the Colonel needed could be had, or manufactured, by the Merrill-Stevens Engineering Company located on East Bay Street in Jacksonville. The two items Benyaurd could not supply locally were the submarine cables and the mine casings. The Colonel talked with Benjamin F. Dillon, the general manager of the Western Union Telegraph Company, to find someone familiar with electric cables. Benyaurd told General Wilson that Dillon had offered to "place at my command his principal cable man and electrician on two days notice." With that assurance, the Colonel ordered two miles of submarine cable.24

When General Wilson learned that the city had done nothing about mining the St. Johns River, he wrote to the Secretary of War and to Congressman R. W. Davis to inform them of this failure. Wilson reminded them that when they met with the citizens of Jacksonville, it was the citizens
who had suggested that they place the mines themselves, and Colonel Benyaurd had been instructed to cooperate with them. 25

Although it had no direct relation to the mine problem of the St. Johns River, a week later Lt. A. R. Merrill received orders from the State to build signal stations along the east coast of Florida beginning at Mt. Cornelia, a 63 foot mound on Fort George Island, at the mouth of the St. Johns River. Then he was to erect stations at Cape Canaveral, Jupiter, and Cape Florida. 26

Five days after the Jacksonville meeting, Benyaurd told John Cook to double his work shifts so that the working day would be from 4 a.m. to 8 p.m., but if that was not possible then he was to work the men 12 hours per day and give each man a day and an eighth pay for each day worked. At that time a common laborer on the project was paid $1.36 per day. The Colonel ended his message saying: "The work must be pushed to completion at earliest possible date." 27

That same day he wrote to General Wilson recommending at least one company of soldiers be assigned to each of his four defensive construction sites. There were two guns at Miami, four at St. Augustine, four at St. Johns Bluff, and six or eight batteries at Tampa. The Colonel suggested that
these troops were necessary, not only for the guns, but to defend the installations from enemy small boat parties bent upon depredations. 28

In the morning of April 22, 1898, the long awaited guns for the bluff arrived from New York state. Two 5-inch breech-loading rifles and two 7-inch breech-loading howitzers. The gun emplacements were nearly ready, but there was no place to store the guns at the bluff. They sat on the railroad siding until they could be shipped downriver. More people came out to look, and left feeling secure. 29

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April 25, 1898, the US declared war.

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On April 27, 1898, General Wilson issued an order to build a permanent emplacement on St. Johns Bluff for two 8-inch breech-loading rifles. Colonel Benyaurd had to revise his plans, prepare the ground, lay out the lines for a new gunpit, extend the railroad track another 1,200 feet, drill for water, and build a house to hold the cement. In the following weeks 700 barrels of cement arrived and were stored. A quantity of shell also was procured and piled near the new site. All of this work was in addition to the
temporary mine casemate Cook was constructing down by the transitory gun emplacements.\textsuperscript{30}

The fortification sketch done by Thomson shows the location and type of weapons proposed by the Board of Engineers for permanent fortifications. None were built, but it had been planned that there would be a battery of four 6-inch guns and a battery of two 16-pounders on the crest of the bluff facing St. Johns Creek. Farther back, near the middle of the military reservation, would have been a battery of eight 12-inch mortars. On the western edge of the reservation would have been a battery of two 16-pounders. The temporary battery, which was built, lay between the two eastern batteries, and it initially housed the two 5-inch rifles and the two 7-inch howitzers. Farther south on the crest facing St. Johns Creek lay the battery of two 8-inch breech-loading rifles. This last battery is the concrete emplacemnt which still stands today.

It is interesting to note that Thomson shows the railroad tracks behind the 8-inch gun emplacemnt; whereas, Francis R. Shunk's sketch in 1904 shows the tracks in front of the gun emplacemnt. Whether the tracks were moved during construction, or the first sketch was done during the planning stage before construction, it is impossible to determine. Surely, if the sketch was made in November, as
indicated, the tracks should have been in place. Unfortunately, there is no written reference to the placement of the tracks in the files to clarify this point.  

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April 29, 1898, Spanish fleet heads for the Caribbean.

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When C. B. Smith reported that he had received 1,800 pounds of dynamite for the bluffs, he asked that it be picked up immediately for he could not be responsible for it longer than a few days. On April 30, 1898, Benyaurd instructed him to keep the dynamite until the St. Johns Bluff installation could receive it. He authorized Smith to hire two "trusty men to be day and night watchmen" until it could be shipped to the site. To speed up mining the river, Benyaurd sent First Lieutenant W. W. Harts to the bluff to design, install, and operate the mine field.

The hectic pace of construction continued. As the temporary gun emplacement neared completion, the four guns were shipped downriver on a barge and mounted. The 5-inch breech-loading rifle weighed 3,660 pounds and fired a 45 pound projectile which could penetrate 2.5 inches of steel at 3,500 yards. The 7-inch breech-loading howitzer weighed
3,710 pounds and fired a 105 pound projectile which could penetrate 2.4 inches of steel at 3,500 yards.³³

When Colonel Benyaurd notified General Wilson that the guns were in place, he stated that no troops had been sent to man the guns. He pointed out that no quarters for troops had been built nor contemplated because he supposed the works would be occupied by troops equipped for the field. He assigned John Cook the responsibility for the battery's security until the troops arrived. However, Cook did not have to guard the guns long, for Benyaurd received orders to dismount his four guns and carriages and send them to Tampa. The guns, shipped on May 18, were destined to be used by the Army Expeditionary Force being readied for the invasion of Cuba.

The guns at St. Johns Bluff were never serviced by troops nor fired during their brief stay at the bluff. This may seem strange in view of the fact that the Army established Camp Cuba Libre in Jacksonville. But what must not be overlooked is the fact that the temporary battery was removed four days before the first soldiers arrived in Jacksonville. And the last troops departed Camp Cuba Libre on December 9, 1898, more than a month before the 8-inch battery was installed.³⁴
Shortly after the temporary battery was dismounted, four light 12-pounder field guns from Jacksonville were brought down to provide some defense for the river. In truth, these guns were a poor substitute. The 12-pounders were muzzle-loading, smoothbore guns first produced just after the Mexican War. They were called Napoleons after Napoleon III. Of course, these guns were outmoded and of no use against armored ships. Nevertheless, they were mounted in the emplacement with their muzzles pointing out from the earthen embankment providing a threatening appearance. Like their predecessors, these guns were not serviced by troops, because the soldiers at Camp Cuba Libre were infantry, nor test-fired by the civilian employees at the bluff.  

Early in May, Colonel Benyaurd requested more money for his mine defense program. Originally he had hoped that the Florida Naval Militia would patrol the mine field. Although the Naval Militia had built a signal station on Mt. Cornelia, it had not been accepted for mine patrol work. Therefore, Benyaurd had to pay for boats and personnel to patrol the mine field.

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May 28, 1898, the US fleet blockaded the Spanish fleet at Santiago, Cuba.  
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Lt. Harts deployed his mines during May. He had received 21 cases of buoyant mines and loaded all of them with a hundred pounds of dynamite per case. True to his word, Dillon sent his two men to supervise laying the submarine cable and connecting it to the mine casemate. The mines were divided into sets of three. Five were placed in the river on either side of the channel. The remaining two sets were loaded, but kept in readiness to be placed across the open channel, if the occasion should demand.

During the mining operations some vessels interfered with the small boats placing the mines. On several occasions the passing ships actually cut the cables. When Harts complained, Colonel Benyaurd telegraphed J. H. Durkee to inform the St. Johns River pilots that they must be more careful. The Colonel did not mince words: "Vessels are violating my published regulations regarding mines by cutting cables and disengaging the system[.]. If not immediately discontinued[,] I will have pilots licenses revoked."36 Benyaurd received no more complaints.

Colonel Benyaurd's navigation regulations hindered normal ship activity because passage to Jacksonville could only take place during daylight. Further, no vessel could come through the jetties late in the day with the
expectation of anchoring at Mayport overnight. Benyaurd's instructions were as follows:

1. No vessel to pass between sunset and 4 a.m.
2. Patrol boats above & below mines to check vessels.
3. Sailing vessels & small boats less than 3' draft are free to cross during the day anywhere.
4. Steamships cross at slow speed in special channel which will be marked.
5. No vessel to anchor inside Mayport without special permission.
6. Vessels are warned, if disregard, liable to be fired upon.  

In the morning of June 10, 1898, J. J. O'Rourke, the electrician from the Western Union office in Jacksonville, his helper, a man named Hogart, and a laborer, Edward Houston, were in the temporary mine casemate on the bluff checking some of the mine plugs [fuzes in present-day terminology]. The casemate was a temporary building 16' by 25' which held the terminals of the submarine cables to the planted mines, and several batteries. In the building with them were Lt. Harts and Bonham, his stenographer. O'Rourke, Hogart, and Houston were at one end of the room while Harts and Bonham were in the center of the casemate. Harts had
his back to O'Rourke as he dictated letters. Hogart asked Houston to fill in for him while he stepped outside for a break. A few minutes later O'Rourke passed Houston a mine plug to hold while he tested it by passing a weak current through it. For some unknown reason, O'Rourke touched the plug with a cable carrying a full current. The explosion blew Houston to pieces, killed O'Rourke instantly, and sent shrapnel into the head and back of Lt. Harts. Neither Bonham nor Hogart were injured, but the wooden building was destroyed.

John Cook sent a man to the telephone station at the mouth of the river to notify Colonel Benyaurd in St. Augustine of the accident while he took Lt. Harts to Jacksonville. Colonel Benyaurd immediately called Major General Fitzhugh Lee, commander of the Seventh Army Corps headquartered at Camp Cuba Libre in Jacksonville to ask that his surgeons meet the tug with Lt. Harts aboard. The Colonel had assumed that Cook would head for the Army installation. However, Cook passed the Army camp and went directly to St. Luke's Hospital where a Dr. Mitchell tended to the Lieutenant.

The Colonel took the first train for Jacksonville and was able to see Harts that evening. Harts was conscious and doing well according to the attending physician. It was
expected that he would fully recover, but there was a piece of the mine plug between his shoulder blades which the surgeons thought best not to remove.

General Lee sent Colonel Maus, his chief surgeon, and Dr. Beckman from the Minnesota regiment to St. Luke's to offer their assistance, but it was apparent that Lt. Harts was being well cared for, and it was decided not to move him.

Mr. Dillon could not understand how it could have happened. O'Rourke was his chief electrician and his principal cable constructor. He had been with the company as an electrician for fifteen years. Dillon just shook his head in disbelief.

The next day Colonel Benyaurd telegraphed General Wilson that he would need a replacement for Lt. Harts. Wilson replied that Lt. R. P. Johnston had been ordered to report to St. Johns Bluff, and that Benyaurd was to employ all the civilian help he needed to keep the work going. 38

Much time was spent repairing the damaged caused by the explosion. Some of the mine instruments were repaired, tested, and returned to use. Others were shipped to the Mine School at Willets Point, New York, for more complete
The 8-inch gun emplacement excavation was completed and the magazine area nearly so when it became difficult to obtain crushed stones for the foundations. At one time Benyaurd asked D. E. Maxwell, general manager of the F.C.& P. Railroad, if the cars of crushed granite from the Georgia Quincy Granite Company could be off-loaded at Trout Creek. This should reduce barge travel considerably. Maxwell complied, which did save substantial time.  

July 1-3, 1898, the American victories at San Juan and El Caney and the destruction of the Spanish fleet took place. August 12, 1898, the peace protocol was signed.

On August 19 Benyaurd lifted his navigation restrictions on the river. He told the Collector of the Port that the "mines will be removed or exploded as soon as Capt Johnston [he had been promoted] returns from Tampa. Meantime the Corps of Engineers will continue to guide ships through channel."  

At the conclusion of hostilities the Chief of Engineers
reported the status of the nation's "Torpedoes for Harbor Defense." In the beginning he had 3,500 mine cases available, "but no search lights, cable, explosives, electric apparatus etc." He "purchased 400 miles of single & multiple cable, 150 tons of high explosives, 1,650 new torpedo cases, 1,500 new compound plugs, 4,500 new circuit closers & regulators, 17 sets of casemate operating apparatus, and 44 search lights." Twenty-eight different harbors had mine fields employing 1,535 mines, with a large number of mines held in reserve to replace those lost by accident or to extend the number of mine fields, if necessary. As of August 1, 1898, the Corps had expended $1,425,000 on its mine activities.41

Captain Johnston deactivated the mine field in the St. Johns River during the first weeks of September by exploding the fifteen mines rather than risk an accidental explosion and injuries by trying to retrieve and disarm the cases, which had been submerged for over three months. The six loaded mines were taken to a shack on an island across the river from the bluff and disarmed. An additional twenty mines had been received but not armed. These were left in open storage alongside the dock. Until all the submerged mines had been exploded Johnston kept up his boat patrol.

Evidently, the Corps had shipped dynamite as well as
mine casings with its first shipment for Johnston still had the 1,800 pounds of dynamite which had been purchased from C. B. Smith of Jacksonville for 21 3/4 cents a pound. Johnston did not want to store this dynamite, so he inquired if Smith would buy it back. Smith was willing, but at 12 cents a pound! Benyaurd said that it would be too expensive to do anything else with it. He recommended selling it back, even at a loss. General Wilson agreed, and Smith bought back his dynamite. 42

Just as Johnston cleared the mine field, he received a searchlight and ancillary material from the Quartermaster Corps. Except for checking out the equipment, Johnston did nothing more than repack it and store it away. Colonel Benyaurd told General Wilson that he had "no use for any supplies for operating electric light plants in my district." 43

When Captain Johnston recovered the cable from the mine field, he had nine reels of single and multiple cable. These cables, weighing about 900 pounds each, were kept submerged in the river, moored alongside the wharf. On October 2, 1898, a severe northeaster struck the region and several of the reels broke loose and were partially buried in the sand. Johnston hired a diver, for two and a half days, at $30 per day, to find the reels and put lines on
them. The next time the Corps' snagboat *Suwannee* came to Jacksonville, she raised the reels and placed them in a small creek near the bluff for safekeeping. 44

Meanwhile, there was still a high priority on completing the 8-inch gun emplacements. In September a rock crusher was rented in Jacksonville to increase the supply of crushed stones for the bluff. Steamers and lighters carried the stone downriver. In November John Cook told Colonel Benyaurd that he would need more money if he was to continue construction on the emplacement. Benyaurd told him that the guns must be mounted, but since the war was over he could not increase the funding for the project. He suggested that Cook might have to lower the height planned for the concrete pit, and that it was not necessary to install all the doors called for in the plans. In other words, he instructed Cook to cut corners, but get the work done as soon as possible.

In spite of his preaching to Cook, Benyaurd had to ask General Wilson for more money. Initially, he had rented the rails to bring material up from the dock to the temporary battery. When the 8-inch guns were authorized, he had to extend the tracks to the new emplacement. In November the owner presented him with a bill for $100 for the use of the rails until January 1, 1899. However, construction of the battery was not complete. The guns were at the foot of the
bluff, and the emplacement could not receive the guns before the rental deadline. Benyaurd asked the owner if he would sell the rails. The man would, for $468.84. Benyaurd reasoned that the expense of taking up and returning the rails was more than half the cost of the rails; therefore, he recommended buying them, and requested an additional $40 to meet this expense. General Wilson approved.45

* * *

December 10, 1898, the peace treaty signed in Paris.

* * *

In January, 1899, the two 8-inch breech-loading rifles, each weighing 32,480 pounds, were mounted at the top of St. Johns Bluff. Each gun fired a 300 pound projectile capable of penetrating 10.6 inches of steel at 3,500 yards. The concrete cover over the magazines had not been finished, nor had sand been placed over the magazines, but the war had ended a month earlier and further work on St. Johns Bluff was suspended.46 Similar to the fate of the earlier guns on the bluff, these guns were never serviced by troops nor test fired by the Corps' civilian employees.

Colonel Benyaurd hired B. J. Starling, at $60 per month, to live on the military reservation as a watchman, to perform minor repairs to the buildings, and to clean and
protect whatever equipment needed such services. When Benyaurd's tour of duty in Florida was over, he was relieved by his former assistant, Captain Charles H. McKinstry, who had been in charge of the fortifications at Key West during the war.

Initially, McKinstry spent a good deal of time studying Benyaurd's correspondence and records to acquaint himself with the situation at St. Johns Bluff. His first concern was for the mines and dynamite on the bluff. He wrote to his assistant, First Lieutenant Edward H. Markham, telling him that, according to the returns, there should be six buoyant mines on the installation. When he asked Markham to find the six mines, he emphasized that "it is suspected that these six mines are loaded." He suggested that Markham check with Starling first.

Before he received Markham's reply, he wrote to Lt. Johnston, now stationed in Newport, R. I., to ask if the six mines were on the island across the river from the bluff, if they were loaded, and, if so, were they loaded with bulk or cartridge dynamite?

Meanwhile, Markham learned from Starling that there were six buoyant mines and 200 pounds of dynamite kept in a crude shack on the island across the river from the
Bluff. Starling also told him that twenty-one buoyant and twenty ground mines had been received during the war. The twenty ground mines never were loaded. All twenty-one of the buoyant mines had been loaded, and the fifteen placed in the water had been exploded. Starling assured Markham that the six reserve mines in the shack were unloaded.

Johnston answered from Newport that Cook had placed the six loaded mines in a small building opposite the bluff before he arrived at the installation. He said that he gave instructions for the dynamite to be removed. He thought that Cook had reported to him that it had been done. He said that there should be 600 pounds of dynamite in the shack. If there was less, then someone had removed the dynamite, or it was still in the mine cases. Johnston recalled that the dynamite had been in one-pound sticks, but that many of the sticks had been broken.

McKinstry, greatly concerned at the discrepancy in the amount of dynamite between Johnston's letter and Markham's report, immediately wrote to John Cook, now living in Rockwell, Florida, to ask him if, of his own knowledge, the six mine cases had been unloaded.

Cook replied that he knew the six mines had been unloaded. But he had other disturbing news for McKinstry.
He told of a foreign mine which had been picked up in the river off the bluff over a year earlier. Cook told where he had placed it for safekeeping, and said that he had forgotten all about it until he received McKinstry's letter.

McKinstry told Charles Sperry, his overseer at Mayport, to examine all of the mines and, if they were not loaded, to take the cases back to the bluff. Then he should burn the dynamite in the shanty. Also, he sent Cook's letter referring to the foreign mine and instructed Sperry to find it, examine it, and describe it to him.

From Sperry's report, McKinstry concluded that "the mine in question is undoubtedly one of our own and has drifted from somewhere up the coast." He told Sperry not to take off the cap, but to explode a pound of dynamite at the mine's lowering ring. Then, if there were any remains, dispose of them in some place where they would not obstruct navigation. McKinstry's last words were: "Remember this is dangerous - take precautions."

A week later Sperry wrote: "I exploded the torpedo today by an electric current through its own fuses. Nothing was found of the torpedo afterwards, except about a square foot of its shell." This ended McKinstry's mine scare.
Captain McKinstry's other major task was to dismount and ship the remaining weapons from St. Johns Bluff. On September 28, 1899, the Quartermaster, Department of the Gulf, Atlanta, informed him that it had awarded E. Winchenback of Jacksonville a contract to remove the ordnance from the bluff. The four 12-pounders were to be sent to the Augusta Arsenal, Augusta, Georgia. The two 8-inch guns were to be sent to Fort McRae, near Pensacola, Florida. The mine cables were to be sent to the cable storage tank at Tampa.48

The sketch of the military reservation submitted by Shunk shows the railroad line running past the temporary battery. To the north of the track, as it turns behind the temporary battery, are delineated six buildings, which are not otherwise described. But earlier, on July 25, 1899, McKinstry had asked Charles Sperry to "please make a rough sketch of building[s] used for storage & number of them." And in the Engineer files for September, 1899, there is a graph paper showing the same buildings, in the same order of position and shape as Shunk's sketch, which has a legend by each building. The northernmost building was 22' X 12' and titled "kitchen." The next was 50' X 12' with the legend: "Stables where wheelbarrows, iron pipes and barrels belonging to National Defense property are stored." This was followed by a 16' X 12' "Empty dwelling house." Then a 30' X
12' building which was the "Watchman's dwelling house." Next was an 18' X 12' "National Defense store house." The last building was in the shape of a cross. The main frame was 81' X 17' and was the "Torpedo store house containing all of the submarine mining material." The eastern crossarm was the smaller of the two additions, being only 5' X 5', and used as the "Storage battery room containing carboys electrolyte." The other addition was 14' X 12' with the legend: "Ordnance store room containing parts of 15" gun carriages and elevating mechanisms for two 8" BLR [breech-loading rifles]."49

The remainder of the correspondence during McKinstry's and his successors' tours of duty concerning St. Johns Bluff illustrate the decline in activity and the gradual decay of the temporary wartime buildings. In January, 1900, McKinstry allowed Starling to use parts from a shed, which had blown down, to make a veranda for his home on the military reservation. McKinstry also ordered 1,500 feet of ceiling from Henry Clark of Jacksonville to be sent to Starling. Then he arranged with John Gavagan of Mayport to supply the nails. Finally, he told Starling that he could hire a laborer (at $1.50 per day) for two days to help him make his home more livable.50

In July, Major John G. D. Knight, president of the
Board for Revision of Existing Torpedo System, wrote to find out why five of the circuit regulator plugs turned in from St. Johns Bluff for repairs had peculiar corrosion on the metal. This was unique among all of the plugs received from various stations throughout the country. McKinstry suggested that those plugs may have been in the building destroyed by the explosion in 1898. He speculated that possibly some acid or other chemical had splashed on them.51

Two months later Starling reported that three pilings at the northeast corner of the dock had been carried away. He said that there was no specific cause for this, except decay from worms.52

That same month S. E. Sams, an African-American, was stopped by Starling as he crossed the military reservation. Sams told Starling that, although he lived in Jacksonville, he had owned land south and west of St. Johns Bluff for eighteen years. He had always used this path [probably it was the footpath delineated in Thomson's sketch] because it was the easiest way to get to his property. When Sams asked for permission to use this path, he was told that he would have to make his request in writing. On September 21, Sams's letter began its journey up the military chain of command.
F. W. Bruce, the overseer at Mayport, endorsed Sams's letter with his approval saying that along the riverbank the military reservation was flanked by marshes on both sides which made it difficult for landowners south of the bluff to reach their property.

Captain McKinstry concurred and added that, as the government did not own the land, he doubted if he could keep Sams and others from using that path.

General Wilson approved Sams's request while suggesting that he cross the land lying between Shipyard Creek and a north-south line 2,000 feet west of the bluff proper.

Eventually, October 15, 1900, Secretary of War Elihu Root wrote to Sams: "I have to advise you that so far as this Department is concerned, there is no objection to your crossing [at the place mentioned by Wilson]."  

A year later Captain Herbert Deakyne, McKinstry's successor, granted Starling permission to tear down two small buildings near the shore and to use that material for an addition to his house. Gradually, the temporary wooden structures at St. Johns Bluff were destroyed. Only the massive concrete gunpit for the two 8-inch guns remained.
Contrary to the brief existence of the temporary structures, land tenure for the military reservation was a complicated and long term procedure. On March 31, 1898, a joint resolution of Congress set aside Section 355 of the Revised Statues so that temporary fortifications could be constructed by the government, upon written consent of the owners. A week later, Colonel Benyaurd received the owners' permission to build temporary fortifications on St. Johns Bluff. However, Benyaurd realized that the concrete gun emplacement was a permanent fortification which did not fall under the joint resolution of 1898.55

Because of his concern over the changed nature of the fortifications on the bluff, the Colonel wrote to the U.S. Surveyor General, Tallahassee, Florida, on November 26, 1898, asking for survey notes of the site. He also wrote to W. H. Browne requesting proof of his title to land on the bluff.56

Benyaurd proposed to the Chief of Engineers that the military reservation should include all of section 43 and portions of sections 27 and 44 of Township 1 South, Range 28 E, in Duval county, which totaled 103 acres. He noted that Sarah F. Williams of Waycross, Georgia, claimed sections 27, 28, 43, and 44, which she agreed to sell to the government for $2,500 or $50 per acre. The Florida Finance Company claimed sections 43 and 44, and would accept $25 per acre.
Whereas, W. H. Browne claimed section 27 and demanded at least $150 per acre. In Benyaard's opinion, all of this land could be purchased for between $50 and $75 per acre.\(^{57}\)

Browne submitted a sketch of his title. He added that he would be willing to take the same price that Mr. Williams wanted for his land. He continued: "I do not wish to appear in the light of asking a large price for land already occupied by the government." He then offered to sell a better site for a fort than that of section 27. As Browne expressed it: "The hills and woods back of the present location made it very easy for us to take it from the Confederates during the Civil War and in my judgment would require a very large force to protect it from the south, from which direction it has three times been taken."\(^{58}\)

The land tenure problem had not been solved when Captain McKinstry assumed command of the St. Johns Bluff project. McKinstry assigned Assistant Engineer J. W. Sackett to the task of determining both ownership and an appropriate price for the land in question.

Sackett's reply included a tracing from a map of the United States Land Survey showing part of Township 1 south, Range 28, east. The assistant engineer noted that Sarah F. Williams claimed all of sections 43 and 44, marked Z. H.\(^{57}\)
Kingsley on the map, and lot 1, section 27, and lot 1, section 28, marked John Sammis on the map. The Florida Finance Company claimed sections 43 and 44, based upon a tax title. William H. Browne claimed lot 1, section 27, and lot 1, section 28. Sackett ended his nine page letter of the history of the land by saying: "It is recommended that this land be acquired by condemnation proceedings for the reasons that the price demanded is, in my opinion, excessive, and that a clear title cannot be secured otherwise." 59

In mid-November, 1900, Dr. B. H. Williams, the son of Sarah F. Williams, visited Captain McKinstry to inform him that he was the Attorney in Fact for his mother's land. He inquired as to when the government was going to pay the back rent owed his mother, and he requested permission to visit the site for a personal observation of the installation at the bluff.

McKinstry immediately wrote to his Assistant Engineer F. W. Bruce, in Mayport, to inform him that Dr. Williams would visit soon. He asked Bruce to prepare an introduction for Williams so that Starling would give him the freedom to go wherever the doctor desired on the bluff. McKinstry said: "You will recognize Dr. B. H. Williams by the fact that his right eye is a glass one." 60
McKinstry then told General Wilson that he knew nothing about any rentals for the land at the bluff. He had looked back into Benyaurd's records and found the letters from the Florida Finance Company and from Sarah Williams, but he could not find Benyaurd's reply. Maybe the Colonel had not answered because he had not known who was the true owner. McKinstry suggested that no payment be made until the U.S. District Attorney, who had recently taken steps to condemn the land, determined the owners and the rent due. When General Wilson agreed with him, McKinstry wrote to Dr. Williams to say that the Corps would not pay rent until the land ownership question had been settled. 61

On April 25, 1901, the Circuit Court of the U.S., 5th Judicial Circuit, Southern District of Florida, reached its decision in the condemnation of the land at St. Johns Bluff. The United States received 117.7 acres on St. Johns Bluff upon which it could erect forts and coast defenses. The jury assigned the land a value of $15,000. Three months later Captain Thomas H. Rees paid the money to E. O. Locke, clerk of the court, to be paid to Sarah F. Williams and William F. Browne for their property. 62

The legal description of the property began at "Station Battery", a point noted on Shunk's sketch of the military Reservation, close by the 8-inch gun emplacement. Station
Buker 42

Battery was a 2" galvanized iron pipe, 4' long, and driven 3' 2" into the ground. From Station Battery the lighthouse at Mayport bears N 81° 11' 57" E, 19,480.5'; Station Gilbert, at Pilot Town, bears N 69° 52' 29" E, 18,282.7'. From Station Battery run S 32° 17' 14" E, 893.1'; thence N 88° 58' E, 268.7' to the point of beginning, at the SE corner of lot 1, section 27, Township 1 S, Range 28 E, which is marked by a 2" galvanized iron pipe 5' long, driven 3' 6" into the ground. From there run S 88° 58' W, 3,593.9' to a point which is the corner of section 28 and 33, on the SE side of section 44, all of Township 1 S, Range 28 E, which is marked by a 4" iron pipe 5' long, driven 3' into the ground, and over the original stake marking this corner. From here run N 1,360' to the margin of the St. Johns River; thence along the margin N 76° E, 703.6'; thence N 62° E, 694'; thence N 56° E, 770' to a 2" galvanized iron pipe 5' long, driven 4' into the ground. From here run S 35° 45' E, 2,187.2'; thence S 40° 30' E, 587.4' to the iron pipe previously described as the point of beginning. All courses and bearings refer to true meridian. The declination of the magnetic needle in September, 1899, when this survey was made, was 1° 29' E. 63

Although the government acquired the land, there was no further military development of the site. Military "taps" for the St. Johns Bluff fortifications sounded at the War
Department Board of Review meeting at 10:30, Tuesday, August 3, 1915, at the War Department, when the board recommended: "St. Johns River. - As the channel leading to Jacksonville is tortuous, it would appear that the city would be subject to naval raids by small cruisers and destroyers only, and such attacks could be prevented by siege guns, reinforced by field guns, located at Dames Point. No fixed armament is recommended for this point." With this decision the government no longer needed the St. Johns Bluff military reservation. On March 4, 1923, Congress authorized the sale of St. Johns Bluff.

On June 1, 1925, Arthur Tilman Williams entered into a contract with the government to purchase the St. Johns Bluff military reservation for $53,839.38. Williams was president of the Florida Realty Investment Corporation. He does not appear to have been related to the Williams family of Waycross, Georgia. He was born in Palatka, Florida, on August 16, 1857, to Marcellus A. Williams and Emma Wrightman Williams. His father had been a surveyor, and young Arthur had accompanied him on many of his treks throughout Florida, which probably directed his interest towards real estate.

On September 9, 1925, Williams brought other investors in to share in the ownership of the military reservation through the following division:
When Arthur Williams died in 1932, his shares were divided with his wife receiving 8/81th and his two children, Arthur Tilman Williams, Jr., and Emma Rochelle Porter sharing 16/81th. It was September 2, 1932, before Arthur Williams's estate received the deed from the government.  

On August 1, 1939, the Williams family deeded their share of the land to Everett Mizell. On August 18, 1943, the military reservation was acquired by the St. Johns Bluff - Fort Caroline, Inc., organization. On December 18, 1944, this company platted the reservation under the title of the St. Johns Bluff Estates. The present owner of the concrete emplacement is the estate of V. A. Stevens, which acquired lots 33 and 34 of the St. Johns Bluff Estates from Jack Johnson on March 18, 1977.

At the present time the concrete gun emplacement is overgrown with underbrush and trees. The view of the river is completely obscured. There are several paths leading to the crest of the bluff, and from this vantage it is possible to catch glimpses of the water. Some of the walls of the site have graffiti on them, and some trash, principally in
empty beer cans and food wrappings, litter the grounds. There are no doors in the emplacement, and the concrete structure shows signs of wear. However, there does not appear to be any serious structural damage to the gunpit or the magazine rooms. Today this gun emplacement is a concrete monument to the desire of the citizens of Jacksonville to defend themselves during the hysteria caused by the Spanish-American War, and to the Endicott Board's concept of coastal defense.
NOTES


2. Ibid. 28:2, 6.


14. Ibid., 7 Mar 1898.

15. Ibid., 14 Mar 1898.

16. Ibid., 4, 5, 6 Apr 1898; Wilson to Benyaurd, 2 Apr 1898, RG 77, Entry 103:25409, National Archives, Washington, DC (hereafter cited as NA).

17. Albright to Benyaurd, 4, 5 Apr 1898, Atlanta Federal Archives & Record Center, East Point, GA (hereafter cited as EP).

18. Benyaurd to Wilson, 4, 7 Apr 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163,
Box 1, EP; Florida Finance Co to Benyaurd and Sarah F. Williams to Benyaurd, 4 Apr 1898, RG 77, Entry 103:25409, NA; Browne to Benyaurd, 13 May 1899, RG 77, Entry 1170, Box 1, EP.

19. Benyaurd to Cook and to Einig, 8 Apr 1898; Benyaurd to Wilson, 12 Apr 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP.

20. Benyaurd to Wilson, 27 May 1898, RG 77, Entry 103:25409, NA; Operations Report for June 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP; RG 77, Fortifications File, Drawer 191, Sheet 2, NA.

21. TU, 22 Apr 1898.

22. Benyaurd to Wilson, 15 Apr 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1; Benyaurd to Wilson, 14 Apr 1899, RG 77, Entry 1170, Box 1, EP.

23. Benyaurd to Wilson, 15 Apr 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP; Wilson to Benyaurd, 14 Apr 1898, RG 77, Entry 103:25409, NA.

24. Benyaurd to Wilson, 21 Apr 1898, RG 77, Entry 103:25409, NA; Benyaurd to Smith, 30 Apr 1898, and Benyaurd to Wilson, 10 May 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP.
25. Wilson to Alger and Davis, 20 Apr 1898, RG 77, Entry 103:25409, NA.

26. TU, 24 Apr 1898.

27. Benyaurd to Cook, 20 Apr 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP.

28. Benyaurd to Wilson, ibid.

29. TU, 22 Apr 1898.

30. Report of Operations for May 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP.

31. RG 77, Fortifications File, Drawer 191, Sheet 2, 4-4, NA.

32. Benyaurd to Harts, 29 Apr 1898; Benyaurd to Smith, 30 Apr 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP.

34. Benyaurd to Wilson, 7 May 1898, 10 Jun 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP; For a brief history of Camp Cuba Libre see Davis, *History*, 210-13.


36. Benyaurd to Wilson, 7 May, 15 Jun, 4 Nov, 1898; Benyaurd to Harts, 30 May 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP.

37. Benyaurd to Wilson, 30 Apr 1899, Ibid.

38. Benyaurd to Wilson, 10 & 11 Jun 1898; Wilson to Benyaurd, 12 Jun 1898, RG 77, Entry 103:27107, NA.

39. Benyaurd to Maxwell, 1 Jul 1898; Maxwell to Benyaurd, 5 Jul 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP.

40. Benyaurd to Collector, Port of Jacksonville, 19 Aug 1898, Ibid.

41. Wilson to Alger, 15 Aug 1898, RG 77, Entry 103:27109, NA.
42. Benyaurd to Wilson, 24 Sep, 19 Oct, 4 Nov 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP.

43. Benyaurd to Wilson, 19 Oct 1898, Ibid.

44. Benyaurd to Wilson, 11 Mar 1899, RG 77, Entry 103:29220, NA.

45. Benyaurd to Wilson, 24 Sep 1898; Benyaurd to Cook, 12 Nov 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP.


47. Benyaurd to Wilson, 16 Feb, 11 May, 1899; McKinstry to Markham, 12 Jun; to Johnston, 13 Jun; to Cook, 24 Jun; to Sperry, 6 & 12 Jul; to Wilson, 6 Jul 1899, RG 77, Entry 1164, Box 1a; Sperry to McKinstry, 20 Jul; Johnston to McKinstry, 21 Jun; Markham to McKinstry 15 Jun 1899, RG 77, Entry 1170, Box 1, EP.

48. McKinstry to Sperry, 28 Sep; to Commanding Officer, Augusta Arsenal, 28 Sep; to Capt. C. A. F. Flagler, Montgomery, AL, 28 Sep 1899, RG 77, Entry 1164, Box 1a, EP; _AR_, 1899, 1:889.

49. RG 77, Entry 1170, Box 1, Folder Sep 1899.
50. McKinstry to Starling, 2 Jan 1900, RG 77, Entry 1164, Box 1a, EP.

51. McKinstry to Knight, 4 Jul 1900, ibid.

52. Starling to McKinstry, 19 Sep 1899, RG 77, Entry 1170, Box 2, EP.

53. Bruce to McKinstry, 5 Oct 1900, ibid.

54. Deakyne to Starling, 31 Oct 1901, RG 77, Entry 1164, Box 1a, EP.

55. SR 129, 31 Mar 1898, 55th Cong., 2d sess.

56. Benyaurd to U.S. Surveyor General, Tallahassee, and Browne, 26 Nov 1898, RG 77, Entry 1163, Box 1, EP.

57. Benyaurd to Wilson, 9 Jan 1899, RG 77, Entry 1164, Box 1a, EP.

58. Browne to Benyaurd, 13 May 1899, RG 77, Entry 1170, Box 1, EP.

60. McKinstry to Bruce, 24 Nov 1900, RG 77, Entry 1164, Box 1a, EP.

61. McKinstry to Wilson, 4 Dec 1900; McKinstry to Williams, 17 Dec 1900, ibid.


63. Deed Book 10:712.

64. RG 77, Entry 103:24824, NA.


68. Ibid.; Deed Book 1002:321-23; Deed Book 4380:246; Duval County Plat Book 18:50.
George E. Buker  
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Jacksonville, Florida, 32210  
(904) 771-0249  
26 October 1989  

Colonel Bruce A. Malson, Corps of Engineers  
District Engineer  
Jacksonville District, Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 4070  
Jacksonville, Florida 32232-0019  

Dear Colonel Malson:  

Enclosed is my historical study "Spanish-American War Fortifications, St. Johns Bluff, Florida" which I researched for the National Parks Service last winter. One of the reasons that I received the contract for this study was my past association with the Jacksonville District while writing the District's history and conducting the Oral History interviews of the District Engineers from Colonel Wisdom through Colonel Myers. I hope you enjoy it.  

Sincerely,  

Signature deleted  

George E. Buker