

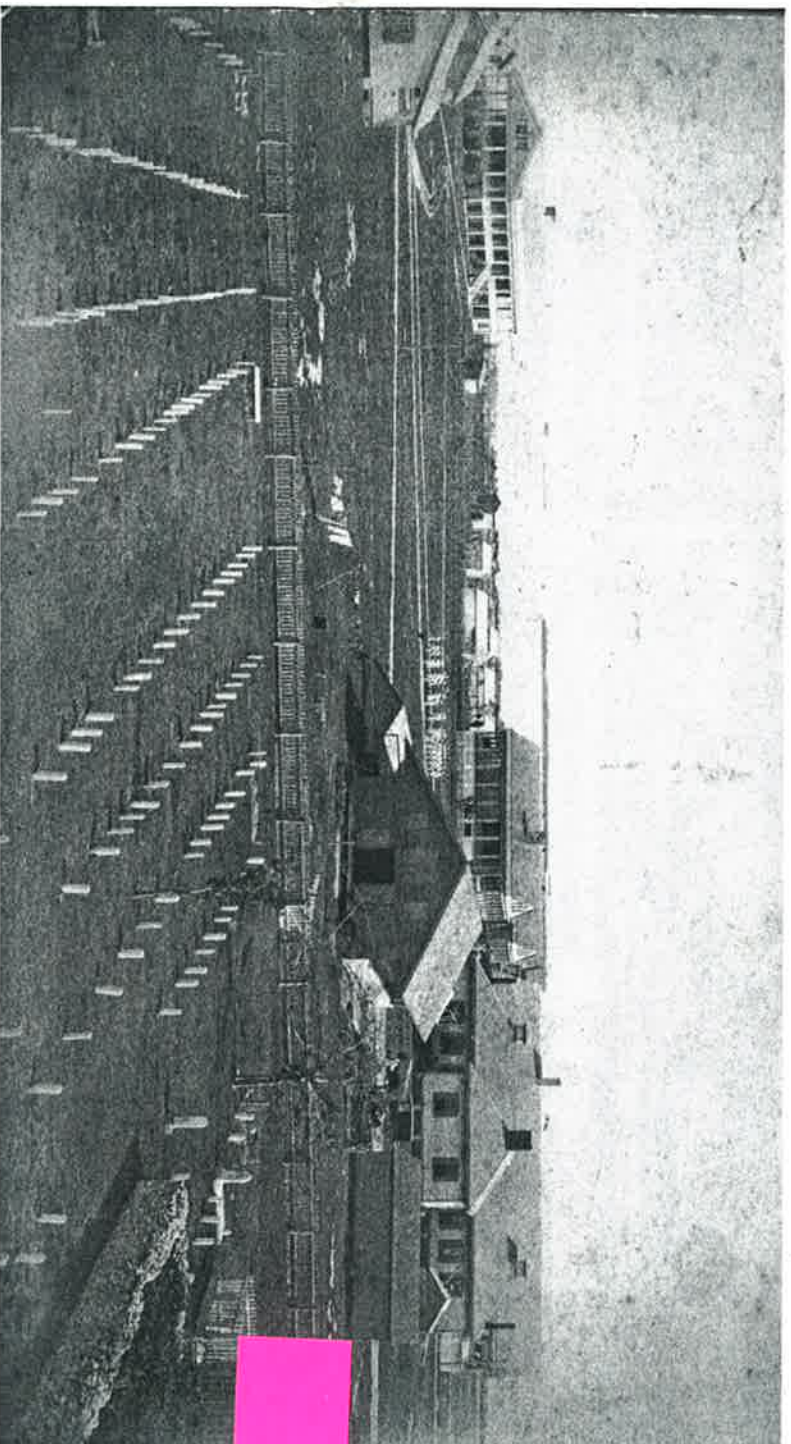
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Key West Post Cemetery



Key West Army Post Cemetery from White Street looking northeast. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

By Lewis G. & Janeth E. Schmidt

In 1982, as a result of an anticipated visit to Key West, Florida, my wife Janeth and I made plans to visit the grave of her great grandfather's brother, George Smith, who died from typhoid fever at Key West on July 6, 1862, as an 18 year old private serving with the 47th Pennsylvania Regiment during the Civil War. He was buried according to family oral history in the Key West Post Cemetery, which we discovered no longer existed.

Our inability to locate George's grave resulted in an intense five year research project during which we eventually identified 192 unknown dead at Barrancas National Cemetery in Pensacola, FL, and

our publishing a 960 page history of the 47th Pennsylvania Regiment.

The regiment's 19 month service in Florida resulted in our publishing the four volume (six book, 4,559 pages) history of the Civil War in Florida, followed by a history of the regiment's first battle at Pocotaligo, SC. We were now involved in the Civil War in depth for 18 years and felt a need to publish a history of my great grandfather George Buchman's regiment, the 147th Pennsylvania (see: <http://hometown.aol.com/lewsmith/index.html>).

After visiting Key West in 1982, and examining available records and period newspapers, it was determined that the

military had abandoned the Key West Post Cemetery in 1927. A Jacksonville undertaker was engaged by the government to disinter the 468 burials in the cemetery and arrangements were made to transport them on the US tug Jenkins of the Army Quartermaster Department, to Barrancas National Cemetery at Pensacola, FL. The operation was commanded by Major Tilton of the 13th Regiment of US Coast Artillery, acting as inspector for the 4th Corps area.

While sailing north from Key West to the Florida Panhandle and Pensacola on February 19, 1927, it was planned to stop

(Continued on page 14)