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## Log of The United States Schooner *Wave*

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While researching the history of the Second Seminole War in the National Archives, I came across a portion of the original handwritten log of the U.S. Schooner *Wave*. It provides some interesting glimpses of life aboard a U. S. Navy schooner on duty in the Keys, but gives no hint of the suffering of crewmen from heat, malaria, yellow fever, mosquitoes, sand flies, and exhausting expeditions into the Everglades.

*Wave* was a unit of the U.S. Navy's Expedition for the Suppression of Indian Hostilities, Florida, better known as the Mosquito Fleet, under the overall command of Lieutenant John T. McLaughlin, USN. She was a 72-foot schooner-yacht, purchased for naval service in 1838 from her designer and owner, John C. Stevens. Built in 1832 along shoal-draft, center-board-keel, pilot-boat lines, she was armed with two small guns, a long gun, and manned by naval personnel.

The Second Seminole War (1836-1842) was the longest, bloodiest, and most costly of all the Indian wars, and the only one in which the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Revenue Marine (forerunner of the U.S. Coast Guard) played a significant role. By the war's end, the Mosquito Fleet numbered 600 Navy, Marine, and Revenue Marine personnel.

The log covers the period from January to June 1840. At that time, the Mosquito Fleet was using Tea Table Key as a shore base. After a war party destroyed the wreckers' settlement on nearby Indian Key in August, 1840, McLaughlin took over that island and built barracks, storehouses, workshops, and a small hospital there. Because the log was fragile, I was only



John Rodgers from a wood-cut made during the Civil War. Photo credit: Monroe County Library.

allowed to copy it by hand. Because of time constraints, I did not copy it word for word, but did record all the essential information it contained.

Log Book U.S. Schooner *Wave*  
Passed Midshipman John Rodgers Commanding

Jan 11 1840 At Brooklyn Navy Yard  
Jan 13 Underway.

Jan 14 At St. Augustine, met U.S. Schr *Flirt*, underway in company. [*Flirt* was the flagship of the Mosquito Fleet under command of Lt. McLaughlin]

Jan. 23 Lost main mast. It was rotten from too many iron spikes being driven

in for securing the saddle of the main boom. Underway under jury rig.

Jan. 25 Off Cooley's Mill met *Flirt* [Apparently, *Flirt* parted company with *Wave* after she lost her mast. Cooley's Mill was the home of William Cooley whose wife, three children, and the children's tutor had been murdered by the Indians at the start of the war. It later became the site of Fort Lauderdale.]

Jan. 26 Anchored off Key Biscayne, underway with *Flirt*, then anchored again. Jan. 27 Underway. Anchored at Tea

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