

CHAPTER XIII

THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES
(1861-1865)

Florida withdrew from the Union January 10, 1861, whereupon the Jacksonville Light Infantry offered its services to the governor and was ordered to the mouth of the St. Johns River to garrison a post at that point.^a Soon afterward a company known as the Duval County Cow Boys took up a position on St. Johns Bluff. These posts were maintained until the approach of the Federal squadron under Commodore DuPont in March, 1862.^b

Mayor's Proclamation

Early in March, 1862, rumors reached Jacksonville that a Federal expedition, with a large number of troops, was about to embark for the occupation of this town. The mayor then published this proclamation, for the information of the citizens:^c

TO THE CITIZENS OF JACKSONVILLE.

Fellow Citizens:

In the present trying crisis, much thought and anxious inquiry have been devoted by the City Council, the citizens, and several of our friends from the country, including Gen. S. R. Pyles and Staff, to ascertain and determine what, under all the circumstances, is best to be done, and will best promote the safety, comfort, and happiness of the people.

On yesterday evening, a portion of the City Council held an interview with Gen. Pyles and his Staff, and after full discussion and patient deliberation, it was unanimously determined that inasmuch as all the Confederate troops, arms, and munitions of war upon the St. Johns river and in East and South Florida generally are to be abandoned, it is useless to attempt a defense of the City of Jacksonville, and therefore upon the approach of the enemy it should be surrendered. This having been decided upon as the sound and proper course to be pursued, Col. M. Whit Smith suggested that the Mayor should make it known to the citizens by proclamation and this suggestion being fully concurred in by all present,

I therefore, in conformity thereto, make known to you that all defenses will be immediately withdrawn from the city and the St. Johns river and no military force will be kept on duty, except for Police pur-