

on the streets. Is this not war, vindictive, unrelenting war? Have we gotten up to the European standard?

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There must have been some understanding among the incendiaries with regard to the conflagration. At 8 o'clock the flames burst from several buildings in different parts of the city, and at a later hour still more were fired. The wind then rose to a stiff gale and the torch of the incendiary became unnecessary to increase the fire. * * *

* * * The Sixth Connecticut charge it upon the Eighth Maine and the Eighth Maine hurl it back upon the Sixth Connecticut.

Six o'clock p. m. Mouth of the St. Johns—a fierce northeast storm is raging upon the ocean. Gunboats and transports are lying here in safety waiting until it abates. Again we are witnessing a conflagration. Some of the soldiers have gone ashore and found a fine steam sawmill at Mayport Mills, said to belong to a Union man in Maine. Much indignation is expressed on board.

In regard to the burning of the city, Dr. Alfred Walton, medical officer of the Eighth Maine regiment, wrote in his diary:*

Sunday, March 29, 1863: Before we were ready to embark the boys began to set fire to the city and soon we had to hurry up for the smoke was getting rather uncomfortable. On my way down (to the wharf) I ran into St. Johns church and groping through the smoke and fire I took from the altar a large guilt-bound prayer book with the inscription on the cover "St. Johns Episcopal Church, Jacksonville." Farther down on Market Street I entered a building that appeared to be some kind of office (probably the Clerk's office) and from the table or desk I took a manuscript map of the city of Jacksonville. Farther down I saw some negro soldiers setting fires and from their songs and shouting they appeared to be having a good time.

*Dr. Walton returned the prayer book to St. Johns Church in 1866. The manuscript map he returned to the city in 1893.

About six blocks was the area burned over, destroying in the neighborhood of 25 buildings, including the Episcopal Church and the Court House. While reconnoitering from a position on the river, General Finegan saw that Jacksonville was on fire in several places and that the transports were being loaded with troops. He pushed on into the town, arriving just after the departure of the last gunboat, but in time to extinguish the fire in some valuable buildings.