finally reduced to about 2,500 or 3,000 men, largely negroes, the bulk of which occupied Jacksonville. Afterward, reinforce-ments came, but did not remain long. The Confederate troops began leaving April 14th, for assignment elsewhere, until only one regiment and two battalions of cavalry and three companies of artillery remained in East Florida. General Anderson then changed his headquarters to Lake City, leaving in front of Jacksonville the Second Florida Cavalry and four companies of the Fifth Battalion Florida Cavalry, to oppose the overwhelming force in the strongly fortified posi-tion at Jacksonville.

On the night of May 31-June 1, a force of 2,459 Federal troops left Jacksonville in two columns, to attack Camp Milton. The small Confederate detachment occupying the post at that time was surprised and driven from Cedar Creek and Camp Milton back upon Baldwin. A portion of the works at Camp Milton was burned or otherwise destroyed, but the next day the Confederates advanced, skirmishing with the advance guard of the enemy, and reoccupied Camp Milton.

Overwhelmingly outnumbered, this remnant of Florida cavalry performed miracles. It met and defeated raiding parties, one of which was almost annihilated in the streets of Gainesville by Dickison and his men, aided by citizens of the town; attacked and captured outposts and pickets; threatened the Federal communications on the St. Johns River, and was nearly successful in the attempt to obstruct the navigation of the river below Jacksonville in the vicinity of Yellow Bluff, by placing torpedoes and mines in the channel. That these harassing tactics came near causing the evacuation of Jacksonville by the Federal army is indicated in the following communication from Federal headquarters at Hilton Head to General William Birney, commanding at Jacksonville, dated July 16, 1864, to-wit:

I am instructed by the major-general commanding to inform you that the number of troops now in your command is considerably greater than that section of the department demands in a military point of view. If you cannot properly guard the St. Johns River you must prepare to make St. Augustine your base, keeping Jacksonville and Picolata as advanced posts, if practicable. In case of immediate danger of the St. Johns River being rendered impracticable for navigation by reason of the enemy gaining possession of points along the banks or by reason of their planting a great number of torpedoes in the river, the communication from Jacksonville to St. Augustine must be by ferry across