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Florence Margaret Martus (1868-1943) Savannah's Waving Girl

Lisa M. Summerlin

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FLORENCE MARGARET HARTUS

1868-1943

SAVANNAH'S WAVING GIRL

I hope this is a worthy
representation of your life.

Lisa Margaret Summerlin

November 20, 1989

Dr. Roger Warlick

History 300

Scanned 2011 from The Savannah Biographies Volume 17

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It is a crisp, cool morning along the strand, or riverfront, as the area facing the Savannah River is now known. The trees, arrayed in their brightest fall gowns, dance ever so softly in the wind. A sail passes. A couple strolls. There is a feeling of tranquility in the air. But, suddenly, the calm is broken as a young girl rushes past us if with a purpose. She crosses the cobblestoned street to Morrell Park and breathlessly stops in front of a statue that faces the river. It is a magnificent bronze of another young girl with a handsome dog by her side whose faraway gaze and outstretched gesture of welcome are forever frozen in time. She looks down and reads the inscription on the front of the monument: Florence Hartus 1869*-1943 Savannah's Waving Girl. A perplexed look crosses her face and her eyes seem to ask, Who are you, Florence Hartus?

The girl in the statue is Florence Margaret¹ Martus who for forty-four years kept a vigil of the Savannah River, welcoming the ships to the port and saving them safely out to sea. She humbly dedicated most of her life to this simple cause. This is her story.

Florence's father, John Henry² Martus, came to the United States from Baden, Germany when he was fourteen and joined the army.³ He met and soon married Rosanna Cecelia Decker of Philadelphia.⁴ As John Martus' military career flourished, so too, did his family. Annie Martus was the first child born to John and Cecelia in Delaware about 1846, followed by Charles F. on April 27, 1853 in Rhode Island, Rosanna J. in either Maine or Minnesota about 1858 and George F. on May 31, 1861 in Washington, D.C.⁵

After the Civil War ended in 1865, John Martus was assigned to Fort Pulaski* as Ordnance Sergeant.⁶ This carried dual responsibility. Sergeant Martus was in charge of the goods or ordnances of the fort as well as being in charge of the men installed at the fort during its reconstruction. After 1872 when no further military use was made of the fort, John Martus served in a

caretaker capacity.⁷

Sergeant Martus accepted his duty and in 1866 settled his wife and four children into the former quarters of the engineer officers.⁸ These quarters were located immediately outside the fort on the north side of the island. Today, all that is left of the quarters is the foundation of the chimney and the cistern which housed the fresh water supply for the fort.⁹

Life on Cockspur Island was one of contradictions for the Martus family. On their left they were surrounded by the tranquility and beauty of the lush vegetation and greenery acting as sentinels, peacefully guarding the mouth of the Savannah River. On their right stood the ruins of the once "invincible" Fort Pulaski that had been humbled by the ravages of the Civil War, but that was now proudly reconstructing in preparation for redemption of honor through renewed military use.

It was during these years on Cockspur Island that two more children were born into the Martus family: Mary Alberta on August 15, 1866¹⁰ and Florence Margaret on Friday, August 7, 1868.¹¹

Soon after their births John and Cecelia

had the girls baptized into the Catholic faith. Mary was christened September 21, 1866 at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Savannah with her brother Charles Francis and her sister Anne as sponsors.¹² Florence was christened on November 2, 1868 also at the Cathedral with Thomas E. Cairns and Mary McCarthy as sponsors.¹³

But as daughters were born, a son was taken away. On September 23, 1876 in only his twenty-third year Charles died of bilious fever.¹⁴ The family lovingly inscribed the words "From his beloved Father and Mother and Brother and Sisters" on his tombstone.¹⁵

Hard times again befell the Martus family, for in 1881 a great storm and tidal wave struck. In fear for their lives Florence and her family were forced to leave their home and take refuge inside Fort Pulaski. As the water rose in the parade grounds inside the fort, they climbed the spiral stairway in the southeast tower of the old fortification for shelter against the raging hurricane.¹⁶ This same southeastern section that once crumbled under the union assault in the War Between the States,¹⁷ now proved invincible and

saved the Martus family from drowning.¹⁸

In 1856 Florence and her family left Cockspur which had been their home for twenty years and moved to 97 Duffey Street in nearby Savannah.¹⁹ It was here that the Martus family lost their patriarch. John Henry Martus died on August 13, 1866 of stomach cancer²⁰ and was laid to rest near his son Charles in the family plot. His tombstone proudly displayed membership in the Grand Army of the Republic, Hancock Post #3 which was a veterans organization.

After John Martus' death Florence and her family returned to the river life. They moved to Eloba Island as Florence's brother George was appointed by the government as keeper of the lights at Eloba²² due to his service as lighthouse keeper of the South Channel Lighthouse on Cockspur Island.²³

By 1890 only Florence, her brother, George, and mother, Rosanna, lived on Eloba Island. The oldest sister, Annie E. Martus, had married Whitney H. Milward on November 14, 1872.²⁴ Another sister, Mary A. Martus, married Thomas Brennan on July 9, 1890.²⁵ It is unclear what became of Rosanna J. Martus. The Chatham County census of 1880 lists Rosanna as the twenty-one year old daughter of John

and Rosanna Martus.²⁶ After that year no information was found on her.

Florence, her brother, and her mother lived a simple, yet full life on Elba Island. Captain George as keeper of the lights in the lower flats of the Savannah River tended the range lights or beacons which marked the channels of the river. This system of range lights to aid navigation was used in conjunction with the Cocksbur Lighthouse whose location ushered ships into the then-used South Channel of the Savannah River.²⁷ Modern technology has doomed the classic lighthouse, although many, such as the Cocksbur Lighthouse that George Martus tended, proudly stand today.²⁸

Mrs. Martus and Florence made the cottage at Elba a home for the three. The white two-story cottage with a columned front porch faced the Savannah River. Dense tropical foliage surrounded the house and a water well stood behind it.²⁹ The cottage closely resembles the restored cottages surrounding the Tybee Lighthouse now home to the Tybee Island Historical Society.

Even though Elba Island seemed a virtual paradise with its lush setting and peaceful

atmosphere, it was a lonely place for a young girl. There were no telephone lines at the cottage³⁰ and, as they had all left home, there were no sisters with which to share one's girlish dreams and deepest secrets.

Florence filled her days with household chores. But her one passion was to wave a greeting to the passing ships off the Savannah River. This fascination with the river craft began as a young child at Cockspur Island. From the stone pier on the north shore of Cockspur young Florence could see vessels from all over the world entering and leaving the mouth of the Savannah River.³¹

One contemporary of Ms. Martus' who claims that the Martus family and other reputable persons support the claim states that Florence began waving at these ships as a result of a childhood affliction. The story goes that one night in the early 1800's Florence almost froze to death on a journey from Savannah to her home, and that she soon developed diphtheria. The attack deprived her of her speech and hearing. Supposedly, it was during these silent years that Florence's love for the passing ships was born. Florence would wave in welcome and

the snips would return the salute. It was said that the friendship with the vessels and their crew brought happiness that was able to penetrate the solitude of young Florence's life.

The story also claims that because she was "moved by the shock of terror" during the earthquake of 1886, Florence instantly regained her speech and hearing. It was also said that although "her life was still fraught with loneliness," she could not forget her friends, the ships, and continued the custom of waving and would probably continue the custom while she lived at the lighthouse station.³²

Another story addressing the purpose of Florence's waving is the one of a sailor friend of hers who was lost at sea. It was believed that her friendly greetings to other seamen were in tribute to him.³³

But the most well-known and widely accepted explanation of why Florence Martus began waving suggests that as a young woman Florence fell in love with a sailor and they became engaged to be married. The wedding was to take place upon his return to port. Before he left she vowed to greet every passing vessel so that no matter when he arrived,

her wave would be the first to welcome him. So he sailed away and never returned. Florence, so the story goes, waved at every passing vessel day or night for 44 years waiting... waiting for her lover to return... waiting.³⁴

For whatever reason one October day in 1887 Florence began waving from her front porch to the crew and craft that passed in front of her cottage at Elba. Whether day or night, clear or foul weather supposedly not a ship, since the first, out of probably thousands of ships entered the harbor or sailed away without a wave from Florence. She waved a handkerchief or white towel by day and a lantern by night.³⁵ When asked how she had heard the boats approach at night, she replied, "I always heard them and it seemed somehow that I woke at night when they were nearing."³⁶

Thus began the tradition of the "Waving Girl" so named by the seamen of the world.

As the years went on stories of "Savannah's River Queen" spread and Florence earned the love, admiration, and respect of the men of the sea. The steamers in the harbor of the Savannah River dipped their flags out of respect for another "River Queen

as the tug McCauley carried the body of Florence's mother, Rosanna Cecelia Decker Martus, from Elba Island to Savannah for burial.³⁷

Rosanna Martus had lived an adventurous, robust life that was devoted to her husband John and her children. She died of dysentery and senile debility and was buried between her husband and her son.³⁸

The death of her mother left Florence more alone than ever. George, her beloved collies, and an occasional visitor afforded her some companionship. Again, however, it was her love affair with the ships that brought Florence her greatest pleasure. As Florence once said, "... my love for the ships has ever abided, and I shall always love them. The captains and the crews are good to me, too. I know it must be troublesome for them to speak to me as they do, far across the water, but I am also sure that they do not grudge me the favor, for they must know how I love the ships and how it cheers me in my loneliness to have them acknowledge my salutes."³⁹

As Florence dearly loved her ships and their crew, so, too, did they love their "Waving

Girl." Letters were sent to Florence with postmarks from all over the world. Numerous poems and verses were dedicated to her, and gifts were presented in appreciation from The Ocean Steamship Company, the Merchants and Miners Transportation Company, the Pilot's Association, and the towboat companies.

On one occasion "big, crystal tears appeared in the corners of the 'River Queen's' eyes as she accepted the testimonials of the seamen's love." On Monday, January 4, 1915 aboard the steamer SOMERSET the officers and crews of all the M. & M.T. Company's ships that made the Savannah port surprised Florence with a silver tea-service that included a bowl, a cream pitcher and ladle, and a sugar holder and spoon. And, as if this was not gratitude enough, the poet laureate of the M. & M.T. line recited the following verses that he had dedicated to "The River Queen":

"There's just one queen in all the world

That mariners adore.

She dwells upon a lonely isle,

Close by its marshy shore.

If ever you are passing,

In storm, or rain, or shine,

You're bound to get a welcome

From the queen of Elba's Isle.

For if on ships you travel,

And on the sea you roam,

From Greenland's icy mountains

To India's sunny zones --

Mention old Savannah, in Georgia by the
sea,

You're bound to get a greeting

For the queen that thinks of me."⁴⁰

Although lonely, Florence's life was not without its snare of excitement. One source reports that once Florence assisted in rescuing several men from a sinking boat during the hurricane of 1893.⁴¹

On another occasion it was reported that one morning at 3 a.m. Florence saw a dredge on fire. She awoke George, and the pair immediately put off in their small boat and rescued over thirty men. Only one man was burned. He died later from the burns.⁴²

And who else could boast the distinction of being the first person to greet the returning soldiers of the U.S. transport *ST. MIHEL*. On

February 7, 1923 Florence waved as the ST. MICHEL rolled down the Savannah River carrying the last contingent of returning American "doughboys" after a lengthy period of service on the Rhine in Germany.⁴³

On May 31, 1931, George Washington Martus turned seventy and was required to retire from active service as keeper of the lights on Elba Island. Thus, Florence and George had to leave the place they had called home for over forty years. On the next day, June 1, 1931, Florence Martus officially waved her last salute thereby ending her forty-four year reign as "Queen of the Savannah River."⁴⁴

Florence and George must have felt as if they had lost a dear friend. How does one say goodbye after all those years? Perhaps she might have walked down the river's edge and as the river flowed by, so too, did her life at Elba, for the two were one.

She might have recalled trips aboard their launch the "Cecelia M" into Savannah to attend mass.⁴⁵ Or perhaps she remembered her nephew, Father Thomas A. Brennan, holding services at the island.⁴⁶ No man-made church could have rivaled the natural

celestial dwelling at Elba.

Florence never returned to Elba.

Although sad and tearful over her departure from her river home, Florence decided to approach life with a new interest asking that her friends visit her and furnish interests which would take her mind from her life-long associations on the water.⁴⁷

Her friends did not forget her. A certificate of deposit for \$500 was presented to Florence. Actually \$523.65 was collected from friends, local citizens, shipping and towing firms, crews of numerous ships and others. The generosity was spawned by a letter from Frank W. Spencer, chairman of the "Waving Girl" fund. It charged:

To the People of Savannah:

On June 1, 1931, Miss Florence Martus, the 'Waving Girl,' will send out her last courtesy salute to the ships of all nations entering the Port of Savannah. The 'Waving Girl' has become an international personality through her constant loyalty and devotion in welcoming the people of the world to the Port of Savannah over a period of nearly a half century. *She has pursued her very courteous activities*

each day and night regardless of weather conditions or her own personal comfort. Miss Martus has unflinchingly aided in the rescue of persons in distress on the river.

Savannah's 'Waving Girl' is known in all ports of the maritime nations. Her long and faithful service is deserving of some definite token of appreciation by the people of this community in general and it is respectfully urged that contributions for a 'Waving Girl' fund be sent to

Capt. Frank W. Spencer,
228 East Bay Street,
Savannah, Ga.,

acting for the committee."⁴⁸

Florence wrote Capt. Spencer a letter expressing her gratitude. It read:

642 E. Liberty St.

Capt Frank W. Spencer

dear friend

Just a line to thank you for your kindness to me I suriey appreciate it and thank you very much
My Brother and I are feeling fine

at the present time

hope you and your family are the same our best regards to you and all my friends

Sincerley

Florence M. Martus.⁴⁹

After leaving Elba, Florence and George moved into an apartment at 642 E. Liberty Street in Savannah.⁵⁰ Though a small apartment, Florence was able to bring her collies to their new home. "When asked how they liked their new location, she said that she had questioned them over and over but could not determine their answers, though she thought they felt a little strange, like herself."⁵¹

During the following years Florence and George found it hard to "take root." Florence once explained: "'I get along all right during the day, but when night comes on' and she made a gesture of waving as if she still saw on the horizon the boats which she had hailed on their courses for years. 'You know how it is,' she apologized. 'We had lived there so long.'"⁵²

In their search for a place to call home, the two moved from Liberty Street to Bona Bella and

finally settled around 1939 on Mechanics Avenue in Thunderbolt, Georgia.⁵³ Once when asked about these various moves, Florence "pointed out the window and said, 'It's just like trying to dig up that big oak tree and get it to take root some place else.'⁵⁴

Florence once returned to her own roots. She visited Fort Pulaski on Cockspur Island, August 24, 1937 after a six-year absence. She remembered the "storm of '81" and the destruction it caused as she visited the spiral stairway in the fort that had befriended Florence and her family all those years ago.⁵⁵ She told of how all the fine homes that had been occupied by the Union Army officers after the Civil War had been destroyed.⁵⁶ Perhaps she even remembered young George carving his name in the wall of the northwest stair screen of the old fort.⁵⁷ Florence found the fort much changed since her time now that it was a national monument. She stated that she never thought the island would be connected with the mainland, for now a bridge connected the two. She also said that the restorations had done justice to the old fort.⁵⁸

In 1938 the people of Savannah again showed their love and appreciation of Florence Martus. On

August 7 in honor of her seventieth year the Savannah Propeller Club threw a birthday party on the parade grounds at Cockspur Island, the place where it all began. The celebration was "in recognition of a sentiment that moved a bit of a young woman years ago to make a gesture of welcome to passing ships."⁵⁹

When Florence was told of the celebration, she was surprised and remarked, it "is quite an honor, but I never expected anything like this. It's very nice."⁶⁰ While the bands of the Savannah Police and the United States Marines of Parris Island played, over 3,000 people attended in tribute. Docked nearby at the old Quarantine Pier the United States Coast Guard cutter TALLAPOOSA in full dress supplied a landing force and salute. Congressman Hugh Peterson called Florence "the sweetheart of mankind" and Savannah Mayor Robert M. Hitch spoke of her friendly character. Samuel A. Cann, president of the Propeller Club introduced Florence, but she was too moved to speak. She handed a note to Edward A. Dutton, general chairman of the event, which read, "This is the grandest day of my life."⁶¹ Later a "huge birthday cake bearing a

replica of the Eboa Island home and a miniature waving girl" were presented amidst a splendid display of ship flags and the flags of the nations of the seafarers she had befriended.⁶²

The old fort welcomed its one daughter home in grand fashion.⁶³

During the last years of their life, Florence and George lived a relatively quiet life. They shared their house with their beautiful collies, one of which was named Dan.⁶⁴ Their hearts were on the river, and although they lived near the sea, it was not the same.

In the summer of 1940 brother and sister were separated. George Washington Martus died on June 24, 1940 of myocardial failure.⁶⁵ Florence was alone now.

A letter in the file of Father Thomas A. Brennan whose authenticity has not yet been proven although the handwriting closely resembles Florence Martus' own handwriting and whose contents parallel her life and reveals correspondence from "Aunt Flora" of Thunderbolt, Georgia to "My dear Father Tom" describes a lonely woman who is all by herself except for her three pets. She has been saddened by

the damage the big storm did to the beautiful big trees in Savannah. She is "trying to keep things as near the way George always liked them and with Gods help" and the protection of her guardian angels she is doing very well.⁶⁶

On February 8, 1943 as the sun set behind the Savannah River, Florence Margaret Martus died at St. Joseph's Hospital of bronchial pneumonia.⁶⁷ The flags on the tugs of the Atlantic Towing Company bowed and waved one final farewell to their waving girl as Father Tom eulogized his aunt from her beloved church.⁶⁸

The world had lost an old friend. She had been many things to many people. To strangers she became a warm welcome, to sailors a symbol of their homeland, to romantics a symbol of enduring love, and to Savannah "a symbol of the river life on which the city had been built."⁶⁹ She unselfishly dedicated her life to others. For forty-four years she was always there, no matter the hour, no matter the personal sacrifice.

Florence's house no longer stands at Cockspur, nor does her cottage at Elba, but her spirit lives on. Tributes to her began soon after

her death and have continued to this day in simple statement that people must never forget this honorable woman.

At Laurel Grove Cemetery a handsome memorial was carved into the tombstone of George's and Florence's graves. It reads: In Memory of the Waving Girl and Her Brother. Keepers of the Light House on Elba Island, Savannah River for 35 years.⁷⁰ Although the actual time spent in service to the mer of the sea was forty-four years, the tombstone is, nevertheless, an impressive tribute. Someone carved a lighthouse out of the stone and, just as they protected their beloved river, so, too, does this little lighthouse watch over them.

On Armistice Day, November 11, 1943, Florence's namesake, the S. S. FLORENCE MARTUS sailed out of the Savannah harbor. This was the culmination of months of work by the Optimist Club of Savannah to have a Liberty ship named in her honor. Florence Martus' name was among over 3,000 names of Americans from all walks of life given for consideration.⁷¹ Official confirmation came when Admiral Emory S. Land, chairman of the U. S. Marine Commission, informed Wylie Statler, president of the

Optimist Club that the name of Florence Martus had been approved for a Liberty ship.⁷²

And so the S. S. FLORENCE MARTUS became the thirtieth of eighty-eight Liberty ships built in history's largest shipbuilding program. The ship was thus christened with Mrs. J. Roger Conan as sponsor.⁷³

Today the ship has been scrapped, but the builder's nameplate resides at the Tybee Island Historical Society.

In 1946 Florence Martus' story was to be captured on film. Stacy Keach formerly associated with Armstrong State College, but who now was connected with Universal Pictures, expressed interest in this project.⁷⁴ But the Martus family, particularly Father Brennan, did not approve in fear that the movie might discredit Florence's name. In deciding to table the idea Stacy Keach wrote:

"Last night I called Father Brennan, and although we talked for about ten minutes, he still has -- I am afraid -- the mistaken idea that people who make motion pictures always become wealthy. Although it is not necessary to get his permission in order to tell a story that

is a matter of public interest -- such as 'The Waving Girl' would be -- I would nevertheless rather drop the whole thing than cause ill feeling."⁷⁵

The young girl's reverie is broken by the approach of footsteps. A couple also admires the bronze statue of the girl and her dog. They note that the statue was erected by the Altrusa Club of Savannah, Georgia 1971. The wife remarks that the Altrusa Club is a women's service organization who overcame many obstacles and controversies to see their dream realized. She tells of how the project was inspired by an article of Frank Rossiter's in "City Beat" that asked why didn't some club or group establish a memorial to the waving girl.⁷⁶ On November 7, 1966 the Waving Girl Memorial Fund, Inc. was established with Ruth S. Healy in charge of the eight-woman committee. Renowned sculptor Felix de Weldon, famous for his "Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima" memorial was secured.⁷⁷

Several controversies ensued. First, the question arose of where to place the memorial. Sites at Fort Pulaski, Washington Square, and Riverside Park were suggested. Next, the question arose as to whether the statue should depict Florence barefoot.⁷⁸ Delay after delay followed, but all matters were finally solved.

In an impressive ceremony on February 5,

1972, the "Waving Girl" Memorial was dedicated in Riverside Park, now Morrell Park. The almost \$60,000 price tag on the project was raised through donations with never a public appeal for money. The bronze statue resting on a base of Swedish granite was revealed to show a properly shod Florence flanked by her beloved collie and her lantern.⁷⁹ Today, the lantern, used to greet nocturnal visitors, resides at the Ships of the Sea Museum.

The Aitrusa Club presented the memorial to the city as the club's cultural, historical and international contribution. Savannah Mayor John P. Rousakis accepted on behalf of the citizens of Savannah.⁸⁰

De Weldon wanted the statue to "create some emotion and speak directly to the viewer." He made the handkerchief larger than normal size to show that "it is not the waving of the handkerchief that is so significant, but the welcome, which is more forceful -- that is why I show the large sheet which expresses the warmth of her heart."⁸¹

The husband listened with interest as the wife continued her story. The young girl was also fascinated with the story, but the questioning look still showed in her eyes. She walked to the rear of the monument, searching. Here the inscription read:

Her immortality stems from her friendly greeting to passing ships, a welcome to strangers entering the port and a farewell to wave them safely onward.

She looks up at the statue as if to ask: Why did you wave all those years? Were you waiting for your lover to return? Are you now still waiting? Will the world ever know the true story? Will it change anything if it did?

When asked about a long lost lover, Florence always replied, "I was young, and it was sort of lonely on the island for a girl and I started to wave at ships that passed. They would return the greeting and sometimes salute, and gradually they came to watch for my friendly wave from shore." ⁸²

And later, "Oh, that old stuff! Why, I was born and raised right down at the mouth of the river, and we all knew the local tugboat and

schooner captains, and it was only natural that I should wave at them when they passed. And then I just got to waving at everybody."⁸³

But why was your face almost always turned away in pictures? Were you afraid that someone might discover the truth in your eyes? And why did you burn your diary in which you recorded your every thought and action of your forty-four years at Elba Island?⁸⁴

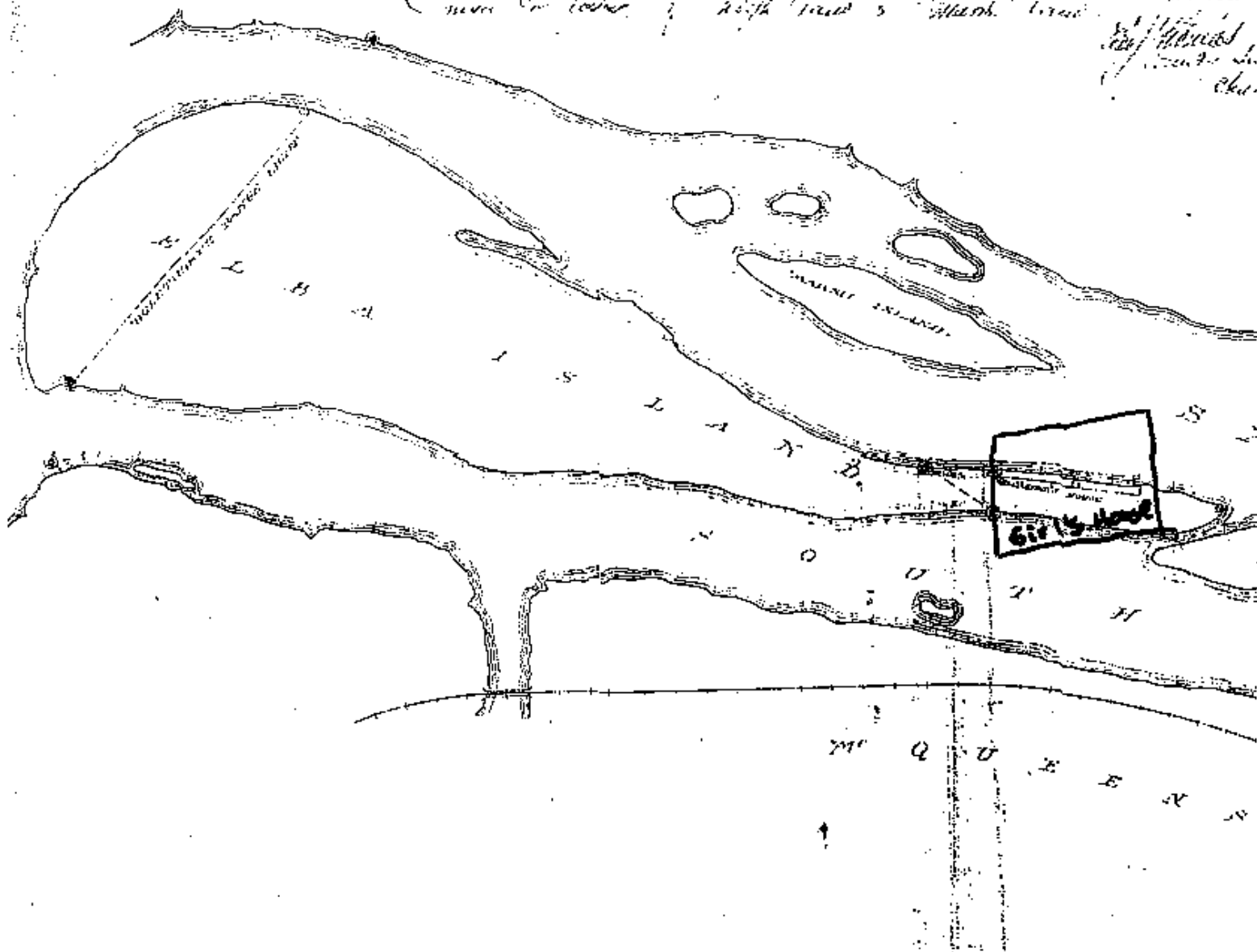
We may never know the answers to these questions. Mankind will view the life and actions of Florence Martus differently. Some will continue to believe the legend and others will dismiss it as fiction. Some will think she was a fine woman, yet wonder why a woman who only waved at ships is so revered and loved. Some may never understand and will dismiss her as a crazy woman.

Maybe it is only important to understand what Florence Martus stood for and what we can gain from her legacy.

As dusk approached, the young girl walked to the front of the monument for one last exchange. She paused and looked once more into the eyes of one who will stand long after she is gone. A smile slowly crossed her face as if the two had shared some secret. Then she turned and walked away.

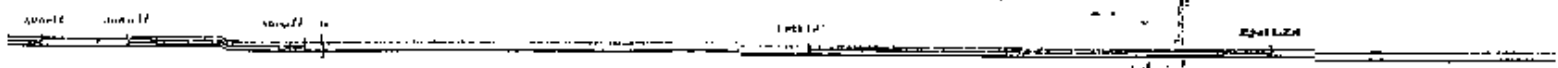
I certify that this map correctly delineates the Sound the
 certain possessions owned by the said family, and that the
 names herein in red, but without according to the survey of
 State Government in 1844, redoubt, and that the evidence
 now in possession of the said family is correct.

Wm. H. H. H. H.
 Wm. H. H. H.
 Wm. H. H. H.



Scale of feet

Scale of statute miles



ENDNOTES

- * Monument states birth year of Florence Martus as 1869: Author of this paper disagrees, see footnote 11 below.
- ¹ Baptismal record of Florence Martus, Cathedral of St. John the Baptist - Baptisms, June 1855-June 1870, 309, Archives - Diocese of Savannah, Georgia.
- ² Baptismal record of Alfreta Martus, Cathedral of St. John the Baptist - Baptisms, June 1855-June 1870, 261, ADS.
- ³ Tombstone of John E. Martus, Martus Lot-1979, Laurel Grove Cemetery, Savannah, Georgia.
- ⁴ Savannah (Georgia) Morning News, 7 February 1923, 14, 3-5.
- ⁵ Annie Martus - United States Federal Census of Chatham County, 1870, s.v. "Inhabitants of Fort Pulaski and Cockspar Island," M593-140, 319, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia; Charles Martus - *Ibid.*, and tombstone of Charles F. Martus, Lot-1979, Laurel Grove; Rosanna Martus - Census of Chatham County, 1870, 319; George Martus - *Ibid.*, and tombstone of George W. Martus, Lot-1979, Laurel Grove.

- * Built in the 19th century on Cockspur Island, Georgia to guard the river approaches to nearby Savannah, Georgia, see map.
- ⁶ Ralston B. Lattimore, Fort Pulaski National Monument, Georgia, United States National Park Service, Historical Handbook Series, No. 18 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1954; reprint 1961), 54 (page reference is to reprint edition).
- ⁷ Talley Kirkland, Park Ranger at Fort Pulaski National Monument, interview by author, 5 November 1989, Fort Pulaski, oral interview.
- ⁸ Lattimore, Fort Pulaski, 54.
- ⁹ Kirkland, interview.
- ¹⁰ Baptismal record of Alfreta Martus, Cathedral of St. John the Baptist - baptisms, June 1855-June 1870, 261, ADS.
- ¹¹ Baptismal record of Florence Martus, Cathedral of St. John the Baptist - baptisms, June 1855-June 1870, 309, ADS; Record of Martus family births and deaths compiled by Thomas Brennan, brother-in-law of Florence Martus, record in the possession of Rose Mary Kenny Usher, great niece of Florence Martus, Springfield, Georgia;

- Census of Chatham County, 1870, 319; tombstone of Florence Hartus, Lot-1979, Laurel Grove.
- ¹² Baptismal record of Alfreta Hartus, Cathedral of St. John the Baptist - Baptisms, June 1855-June 1870, 261, ADS.
- ¹³ Baptismal record of Florence Hartus, Cathedral of St. John the Baptist - Baptisms, June 1855-June 1870, 309, ADS.
- ¹⁴ Death Certificate of Charles F. Hartus, s.v. "1876, H," Department of Public Health, Vital Records, Chatham County, Georgia.
- ¹⁵ Tombstone of Charles F. Hartus, Lot-1979, Laurel Grove.
- ¹⁶ Vertical File, s.v. "Biography, Hal-Mar," SMN, 25 August 1937, GHS.
- ¹⁷ Official Map and Guide, s.v. "12 Damaged Wall," (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1989), Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Fort Pulaski.
- ¹⁸ V.F. s.v. "Biography, Hal-Mar," "Revisits Scenes of Her Childhood," 25 August 1937, GHS.
- ¹⁹ City Directory for Savannah, Georgia, 1886, s.v. "H."
- ²⁰ Death Certificate of John H. Hartus, s.v. "1886,

H," Vital Records.

- ²¹ Tombstone of John H. Martus, Lot-1979, Laurel Grove.
- ²² Lattimore, Fort Pulaski, 54-55.
- ²³ United States Federal Census of Chatham County, 1880, s.v. "Inhabitants in the Islands," 19, T9-138, GWS.
- ²⁴ Marriage license of Whitney H. Milward and Annie E. Martus, Marriage Record Book, 1866-1873, 157, Chatham County Courthouse, Georgia.
- ²⁵ SMN, 7 June 1933, 2, 2.
- ²⁶ Census of Chatham County, 1880, 19.
- ²⁷ Lighthouse File, s.v. "Gary Mikell, 'Lonely Lighthouse Has Survival Instinct,'" Archives, Fort Pulaski.
- ²⁸ The United States Lighthouse Society Pamphlet, A-766, U. S. Lighthouse Society, San Francisco, California, 1906, Tybee Island Historical Society, Tybee Island, Georgia.
- ²⁹ Rose Mary Kenny Usner, great-niece of Florence Martus, interview by author, 8 November 1989, Springfield, Georgia, oral interview, personal photos.
- ³⁰ SMN, 2 April 1909, 4, 5.

- 31 Lattimore, Fort Pulaski, 54.
- 32 SMN, 31 January 1904, 10, 5-6.
- 33 SMN, 9 February 1943, 12, 1.
- 34 SMN Magazine, 16 July 1961, 8, 3.
- 35 SMN, 9 February 1943, 12, 1.
- 36 "Waving Girl" File, s.v. "'Waving Girl' Tells How She Began Saluting Snips," 3 September 1931, Chatnam County Public Library, Georgia.
- 37 SMN, 14 July 1909, 11, 1.
- 38 Death Certificate of Rosanna C. Martus, Vital Records.
- 39 SMN, 31 January 1904, 10, 6.
- 40 SMN, 5 January 1915, 12, 3.
- 41 "Waving Girl" File, s.v. "Savannah's Waving Girl," Text prepared by Ruth S. Healy for program meeting of Altrusa Club, 19 January 1967, 4, Massie Heritage Interpretation Center, Savannah, Georgia.
- 42 Lillian Chapman Bragg Papers, s.v. "Savannah's 'Waving Girl' Was a Notable Personage," Nantucket (Mass.) The Inquirer and Mirror, 24 April 1948, manuscript Collection, Col. 83, Box 6, GHS.
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- 44 ibid., 1 June 31, 10, 4.
- 45 Record Group 6, Series 2.2, T. A. Brennan, s.v.
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Association of Georgia, Special to The
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- 46 RG6 Ser 2.2, personal photos, ADS.
- 47 "W.G." File, s.v. "'Waving Girl'... Ships," 3
 September 1931, Public Library.
- 48 Records of Waving Girl Fund, File of Atlantic
 Towing Company of Frank W. Spencer, Massie
 Heritage.
- 49 Florence Martus to Frank W. Spencer, File of
 Atlantic Towing Company of Frank W. Spencer,
 Massie Heritage.
- 50 City Directory, 1932, s.v. "M"
- 51 "W.G." File, s.v. "'Waving Girl'... Ships," 3
 September 1931, Public Library.
- 52 ibid.
- 53 Death Certificate of George W. Martus, v. 86, 904,
 Vital Records.
- 54 "W.G." File, s.v. "'Waving Girl' Is Pleased About
 Birthday Plans," SMN, 22 July 38, Public
 Library.

- 55 V.F., s.v. "Biography, dal-Har," "Revisits Scene of her Childhood," SMN, 25 August 1937, GHS.
- 56 "W.G." File, s.v. "'Waving Girl'... Plans," SMN, 22 July 1938, GHS.
- 57 Carvings made by G. W. Martus on the northwest stairscreen of Fort Pulaski, see etchings of these made by author.
- 58 "W.G." File, s.v. "'Waving Girl'... Plans," SMN, 22 July 1938, Public Library.
- 59 "W.G." File, s.v. "Savannah's Waving Girl," Text of Ruth S. Healy, 19 January 1967, 9-10, Massie Heritage.
- 60 "W.G." File, s.v. "'Waving Girl'... Plans," SMN, 22 July 1938, Public Library.
- 61 RG6 Ser 2.2, T. A. Brennan, s.v. "'Waving Girl'... Birthday," The Bulletin, special to, 27 August 1938, 14, 1, ADS.
- 62 "W.G." File, s.v. "Savannah's Waving Girl," Text of Ruth S. Healy, 10, Massie Heritage.
- 63 *Idio.*
- 64 Usner, interview.
- 65 Death Certificate of George W. Martus, v. 86, 904, Vital Records.
- 66 Aunt Flora to Father Tom, RG6 Ser 2.2, T. A.

Brennan, ADS.

- ⁶⁷Death Certificate of Florence M. Martus, v. 97, 242, Vital Records.
- ⁶⁸RG6 Ser 2.2, T. A. Brennan, s.v. "Miss Florence Martus, Famed as 'Waving Girl,' Dies in Savannah," The Bulletin, 27 February 1943, 8, 1, ADS.
- ⁶⁹V. E. s.v. "Biography, Mal-Mar," "The Waving Girl," Savannah (Georgia) Evening Press, 9 February 1943; GHS.
- ⁷⁰Tombstone of George and Florence Martus, Lot-1979 Laurel Grove.
- ⁷¹"W.G." File, s.v. "Momento," SMN, 27 June 1964, Public Library.
- ⁷²RG6 Ser 2.2, T. A. Brennan, s.v. "Ship Will Be Named For 'Waving Girl' of Savannah Harbor," The Bulletin, 31 July 1943, 5, ADS.
- ⁷³"W.G." File s.v. "Momento," SMN, 27 June 1964, Public Library.
- ⁷⁴V.F. s.v. "Biography Mar-Mal," "Keach Seeks Background for Film On Life of Famous Waving Girl," GHS.
- ⁷⁵Stacy Keach to Frank W. Spencer, 5 April 1946, File of Atlantic Towing Company of Frank W.

Spencer, Massie Heritage.

76 "W.G." File s.v. "Notes on 'Waving Girl' for
Various Talks," prepared by Altrusa Club,
Massie Heritage.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid.

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81 V.F. s.v. "Savannah Monuments," "His Goal: Depict
'Warm Heart,'" SEP, 4 February 1972, GHS.

82 "W.G." File, s.v. "'Waving Girl'... Plans," SMN,
22 July 1938, Public Library.

83 V.F. s.v. "Biography Mal-Mar," "'Ernie's
America,'" SEP, 6 September 1989, GHS.

84 Ibid.

Record of Deeds, Marriage, Will

Research did not reveal any evidence of marriage by Florence Margaret Martus.

Searched Marriage Index of Chatham County, H-0 Index, 1806-1950.

Research did not reveal any evidence of property ownership by Florence Margaret Martus.

Searched: Grantee Index Mc-Q 1785-1910
 Grantor Index Mc-R 1785-1910
 Grantee Index M-N 1911-1926
 Grantor Index M-N 1911-1926
 Grantee Index L-M 1926-1944
 Grantor Index L-M 1926-1944

Research did not reveal any evidence of a formal will left by Florence Margaret Martus.

Searched 1742-1955 Index to Estates Roll 1, Probate Court, Chatham County Courthouse, Georgia.

- Kirkland, Talley. Park Ranger, Fort Pulaski National Monument, Georgia. Personal Interview. 5 November. 1989.
- Lattimore, Ralston B. Fort Pulaski National Monument. Georgia.
Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1954: Reprint, 1961.
(United States National Park Service, Historical Handbook Series, No. 18.).
- Laurel Grove Cemetery. Martus Lot-1979.
Savannah, Georgia.
- Lighthouse File of Fort Pulaski National Monument. Georgia.
- Marsh Islands between north and south channels of the Savannah River. Fort Pulaski National Monument, Georgia.
- Massie Heritage Interpretation Center. Savannah, Georgia.
Atlantic Towing Company File of Frank W. Spencer.
"Waving Girl" File.
- Savannah (Georgia) Evening Press.
- Savannah (Georgia) Morning News.
- Savannah (Georgia) Morning News Magazine.
- Ships of the Sea Museum. Savannah, Georgia.
- The Bulletin of the Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia.
- Tybee Island Historical Society. Tybee Island, Georgia.