

EMORY PRICE
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SECRETARIES:
LURA CANNON
BENNIE HELMICH

COMMITTEE
NAVAL AFFAIRS

AAH
PR
IAC

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

December 17, 1946.

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Rec'd. 12/23/46
CAB: WNW: eq 4: PM

The Honorable James F. Byrnes
The Secretary of State
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

It has been brought to my attention that the International Lion's Club of America has sponsored a movement to present "The Three Friends" to the Cuban Government.

This vessel was owned by Captain Napoleon Bonaparte Broward, a distinguished citizen of Florida, and was used by him to aid Cuba during the Spanish-American War. His grand-daughter who is present owner of this vessel has offered to give it to Cuba but it is in need of repair before it can be towed to Cuba.

My purpose in writing to you in regard to this matter is to inquire if the good-will gesture would be of sufficient value to the United States to have you recommend to the Navy Department that they do some minor repair work on the vessel, not to put it in running condition but repair it to the extent that it may be towed.

The Cuban Government has accepted this boat and intends using it for a shrine.

Will you please advise me in regard to this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Emory Price
Member of Congress.

DCR - 23 Unit

B M Byrnes
JFK

nr
093.111

COPIES TO STATE

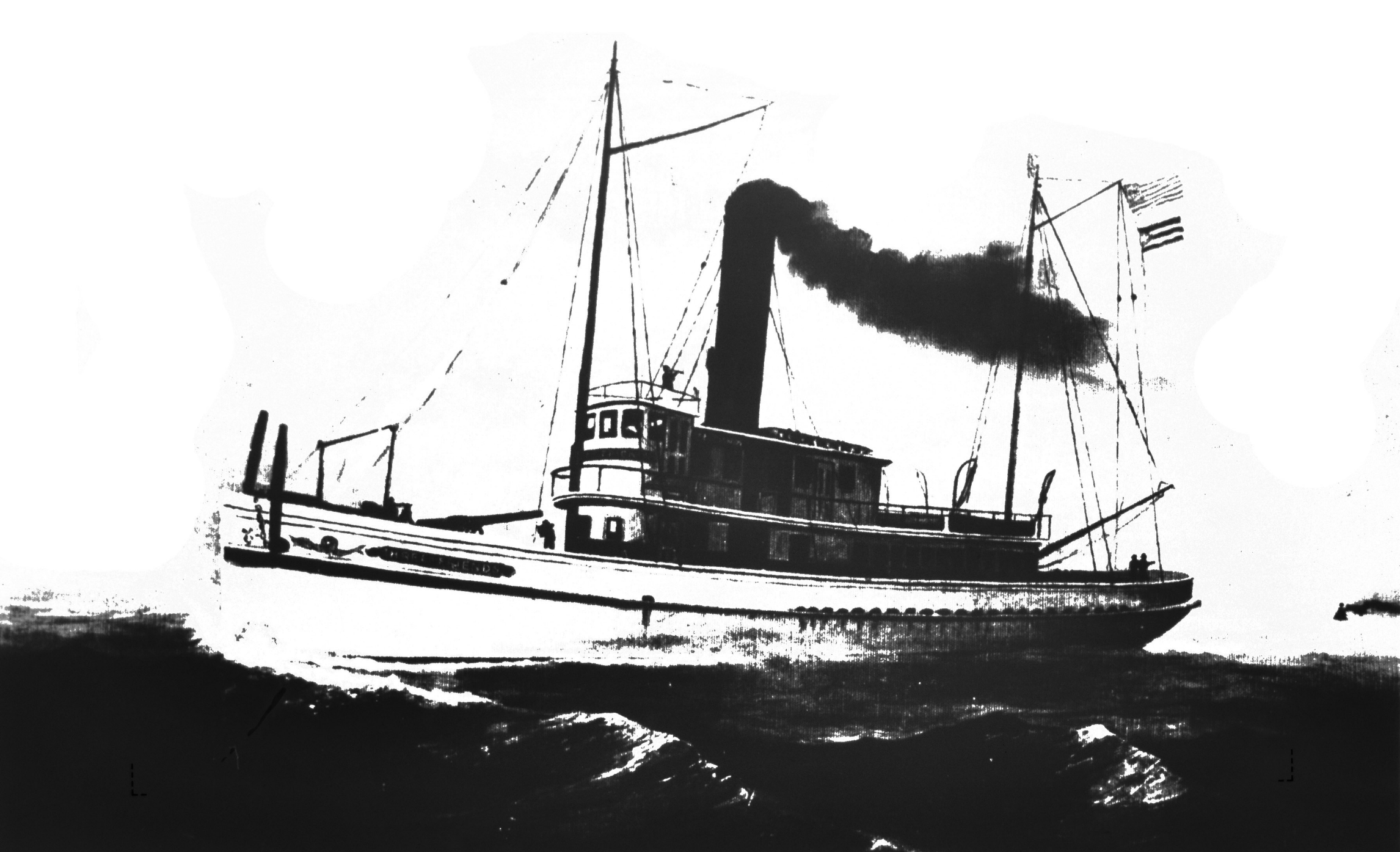
837.413/12-1746

NY 1746

JAN 8 1947

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837.413/12-17



THE THREE FRIENDS

As gallant and audacious a vessel as ever crossed the Seas of the New World, carried to Cuba in 1836 the brave and daring Cuban Generals with their men, arms and munitions to help the cause of Freedom and Independence.

LOS TRES AMIGOS

El buque galante y audaz como ninguno cruzara jamas los Mares del Nuevo Mundo, llevo a Cuba en 1836 a los bravos y osados Generales Cubanos con sus hombres, armas y municiones para ayudar a la causa de la Independencia y Libertad.

JAN 7 1947

In reply refer to
CAB 837.413/12-1746

837.413/12-1746

My dear Mr. Price:

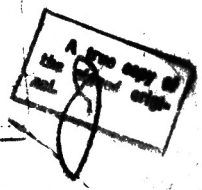
I have your letter of December 17, 1946 stating that the International Lion's Club of America has sponsored a movement to present the vessel, "The Three Friends", to the Cuban Government. You inquire whether I feel that this goodwill gesture is of sufficient importance to this Government to justify a recommendation to the Navy Department that it undertake to effect minor repairs of this vessel.

The presentation of this vessel to the Cuban Government is a splendid gesture. I would be reluctant, however, to recommend that the repair of the vessel be undertaken by the Navy Department, as I am informally advised that the Navy's facilities and funds are heavily encumbered with regular Navy ship repair work.

Sincerely yours,

James F. Byrnes

ECR - ARA Unit	
Final	<i>BmByrnes</i>
	<i>MFG</i>
	<i>rc</i>



XX
JAN 6 1947 F.M.

The Honorable

6 1947 F.M.

Henry Price,

House of Representatives.

A
ARA

Routing

CAB:VWalker:ag:MFG
12/23/46 1/2/47

Cleared by phone
with FG, Mr.
Anderson

Cleared by
phone with
FG, Mr. Falok

Cleared by
phone with Mr.
Yingling, Lc

CS/V

837.413/12-1746

DCR

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Memorandum of Conversation

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OFFICE OF
AMERICAN REPUBLIC AFFAIRS
FEB 4 - 1947 *ph*
DATE: February 3, 1947

SUBJECT: Repair of Vessel, "Three Friends".

PARTICIPANTS: Senator Pepper
Mr. Walker - CRB

COPIES TO: IA
CAB - Mr. Rescher

837.413/2-347

*** 1-1408

Senator Pepper stated that he had received an inquiry from some friends who are anxious to assist in arranging for the repair of an old schooner called the "Three Friends" in order that it can be towed from Jacksonville, Florida to Habana, Cuba to be presented to the Cuban Government by the Lion's Club International. He stated that he had taken the matter up with the Navy Department and had recently received a letter from Under Secretary Sullivan stating that the Navy had no funds available for repairing private vessels and that a special Act of Congress would be required in order to repair the vessel in question. He asked whether the Department in the interest of promoting good will would be able to arrange for the repair of the vessel. I told him that the Department was aware of the plans of the Lion's Club to present this vessel to the Cuban Government and that while it was considered a friendly gesture, I did not believe that the Department could possibly arrange for the ship's repair.

CS/V

FEB 10 1947

FILED

837.413/2-347

DCR - ARA Unit
[Handwritten initials and marks]

CRB:WWWalker:MFC

ARA

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
935 East Church Street
Jacksonville, Florida
OFFICE OF
PUBLIC AFFAIRS
14 February, 1948

MAR 15 1948
Feb. 3-5-48
CRB:WWH

State

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837.413/12-1746

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837.413/2-347-*DelR*
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The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

I am inclosing clippings, and copies of letters in reference to the "THREE FRIENDS".

As you will note, I have attempted to present, to the people of Cuba, their 'Old Ironsides', and, to all purposes have, except for the fact that no one has come for her.

I have no desire for any personal gain, but this, as it stands now, what can I do? The "THREE FRIENDS" is tied up at the dock, I have given her to Cuba, and, it would be embarrassing to have her destroyed now. Mariano Viranco Zayas said they could, and would, restore the "THREE FRIENDS" for a shrine in Cuba, if we could get her there.

As the letters indicate, I tried to find a way — surely there is a way for this great Country to present Cuba with this good-will gift that means so much to her people.

I have the honor to remain,

Very respectfully yours,

Dorcas B. Foster

Dorcas B. Foster

✓

837.413/2-1448

CS/IV

837.413/2-1448

RESPECTFULLY,
W. Foster

William D. Foster
Secretary to the President

enc att ✓

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
UNIT

Adm.

WVF
HW

FILED



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DR. MARIANO VIVANCO ZAYAS
GOBERNADOR DE DISTRITO, DISTRITO "C"
CUBA
CALLE VIVANCO 4
SAN ANTONIO DE LOS BANOS, HABANA, CUBA

Havana, Cuba
June 12, 1946

Mr. George H. Rast
District Governor
Leesburg Fla.

Dear Governor Rast:

Upon my return from "Las Villas", I received your letter dated June 7 and with it the joy of knowing your plans about "The Three Friends" who has so much significance to to Cuba for giving us so many glorious days bringing to the Cuban troops arms and expeditions with the greatest success in the struggle for our independence.

The Cuban Lyons have appreciated very much your offert and this act will surely strengthen the friendship and companionship that unites us to the Florida Lyons, for by means of you we might be able to keep as a relique that "glorious piece" of our history: "The Three Friends".

Next Saturday I shall talk with the Cuban Marines in order to obtain their aid to bring the ship back to Cuba after the Convention in which you will present it to Dr. Collazo.

We will organize great feasts for the coming of the ship and I hope you, your wife and Mrs. Foster will visit us then to participate of the acts of which you and Mrs. Foster will be the principal actors.

Waiting to see you at Philadelphia, I am, very truly yours,

Jacksonville, Florida
16 December, 1946

Hon. Claude J. Pepper
Tallahassee, Fla.

My Dear Senator;

I know you are familiar with the record of the vessel "THREE FRIENDS", in the war between Cuba and Spain and the important part in which she participated. From the information I have been able to obtain, this vessel has been offered to and accepted by the Republic of Cuba.

A representative of the Lions Club of Jacksonville and a Mrs. Foster contacted me regarding my opinion of the safety of this vessel to make the trip under tow from Jacksonville to Havana, Cuba. In response to their request, and as a civic gesture, I unofficially looked her over while afloat.

It is my opinion that this vessel should be dry-docked and gone over for minor repairs. However, I believe that if one place in the hull, where she has been weakened by a collision, was to be shored up with two inch planking, she could make the trip in comparative safety. This is the only apparent repair actually needed from looking the vessel over while afloat. A dry-docking would be necessary for a complete examination and minor repairs resulting from such an examination.

I feel sure you are interested in this matter and would like to see this purpose accomplished in the interests of all concerned.

Sincerely yours,


James P. Chaplin

Copy to:
Mr. B. K. Roberts
Attorney-at-Law
Tallahassee, Fla.

COPY

In reply refer to
CAB 837.413/12-1746

January 7, 1947

My dear Mr. Price:

I have your letter of December 17, 1946, stating that the International Lien's Club of America has sponsored a movement to present the vessel, "The Three Friends", to the Cuban Government. You inquire whether I feel that this goodwill gesture is of sufficient importance to this Government to justify a recommendation to the Navy Department that it will undertake to effect minor repairs of this vessel.

The presentation of this vessel to the Cuban Government is a splendid gesture. I would be reluctant, however, to recommend that the repair of the vessel be undertaken by the Navy Department, as I am informally advised that the Navy's facilities and funds are heavily encumbered with regular Navy ship repair work.

Sincerely yours,

James F. Burnes

The Honorable

Emory Price

House of Representatives

COPY

**THE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
Washington**

23 January, 1947

My dear Senator Pepper:

I have read with great interest your letter inquiring as to whether or not it would be practicable for the Navy to effect certain repairs to the tug "Three Friends".

Naval appropriations are solely for Naval purposes and may not properly be expended on projects of a private nature. I believe the best course of action in the subject case would be to place a special bill before the Congress to provide the authority and necessary funds for this particular purpose.

Regretting that the Navy cannot render the assistance requested by Mrs. Foster without special legislation, I remain

Sincerely yours,

/s/ JOHN L. SULLIVAN

Honorable Claude Pepper
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

O
P
Y

UNITED STATES SENATE
Committee on Foreign Relations

January 31, 1947

Mrs. Dorcas B. Foster
935 East Church Street
Jacksonville, Florida

Dear Mrs. Foster:

I regret to have to enclose herewith a letter I just received from the Under Secretary of the Navy, advising that the Navy does not have fund available to repair the "Three Friends" without special authorization and funds from Congress. It is so difficult to get through special legislation of this sort that I have taken the matter up again with the State Department to see if there is any way the State Department can help us and I am awaiting a reply from that inquiry. I will let you hear further as soon as possible.

Cordially and sincerely yours,

/s/ CLAUDE PEPPER

CP:awb
Enclosure

C
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UNITED STATES SENATE
Committee on Agriculture and Forestry

February 4, 1947

Lt-Comdr. James P. Chaplin, U.S.C.G.
Steamboat Inspection Division
Jacksonville, Florida

Dear Commander:

I am sorry to be tardy in extending to you my warm thanks for your kindness in making an unofficial inspection of the "Three Friends", and giving me your general observations about the repairs the vessel would need to make a trip to Cuba. You were very kind to do this and you have been very helpful to me.

With kind regards and all good wishes to you, I am

Sincerely yours,
/s/ Claude Pepper

GP:awb

The Journal

SATURDAY, JULY 13, 1946

WJHP-1320 KILOCYCLES

Jaxon to Present Famed Old Steamer, 'Three Friends,' to Cuba As Shrine

The "Three Friends" will sail again. Soon!

Jacksonville's famous old filibustering steamer which played a robust role in the Cuban war for independence, will be formally presented to Cuba by her owner, Mrs. Dorcas Foster, at the international convention of Lions in Philadelphia on Monday.

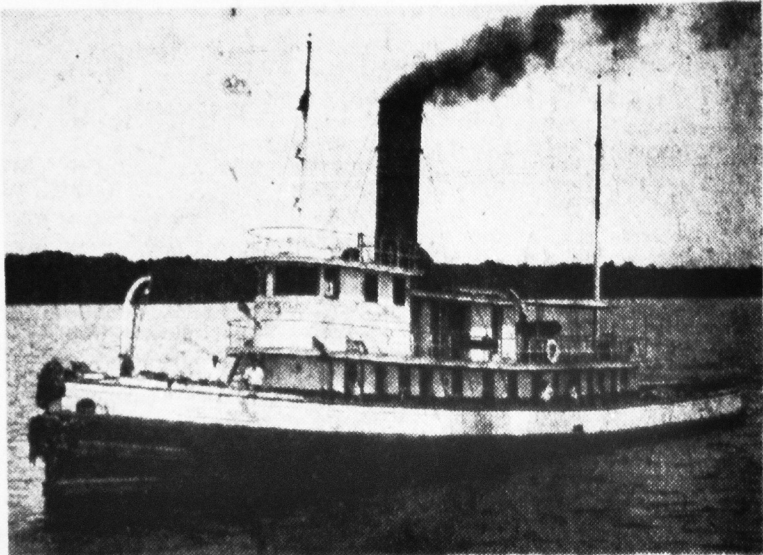
And if present plans are completed, sometime in the near future, escorted by the Cuban flagship, Cuba, and in tow of two Cuban naval tugs, the grand old boat will leave Jacksonville forever to become a monument and a museum at Havana.

Jaxon to Present Ship

Arrangements for the presentation to Cuba of the vessel, once the property of Napoleon Broward, late governor of Florida, have been completed by George H. Rast, of Leesburg, Fla., district governor of Lions International. At special ceremonies in Philadelphia, Mrs. Foster, known as the "Tugboat Annie" of Jacksonville, will present the boat to Dr. Ramiro Collazo, of Havana, international president of the Lions.

About seven months ago, Mrs. Foster offered the "Three Friends" as a gift to the City of Jacksonville, to be preserved here as a memorial and a museum. The offer was made at a meeting of the City Commission at a time when Cuba was becoming more and more interested in obtaining one boat as its own "Old Ironsides." When, by July 10, the city had taken no action on the offer, Mrs. Foster agreed to turn the "Three Friends" over to Cuba through the International Lions

Foster, who, through sentimentality saved the boat from being torn to pieces by a fire, will enjoy the work tomorrow



The famous old filibusterer, "Three Friends," which will be presented to Cuba as a national shrine, is shown in quieter days as St. Johns river tugboat.

too hot for comfort. Broward ordered his crew to pile hundreds of pounds of bacon—fat bacon—in the boilers. The resulting smoke hid the "Three Friends" from the enemy fleet and she steamed happily back to Jacksonville.

General Used Ship

Another time, the "Three Friends" picked up Enrico Collazo, renowned Cuban general, who was stranded in the United States when the Spanish blockade cut him off from his native country. The "Three Friends" ran the blockade, engaged in a short but perilous sea battle and landed General Collazo safely near Havana. Dr. Collazo, the Lions president, is reported to be a relative of General Collazo, thus furthering the sentimental at-

tachment which both the Lions and Cuba have for the old boat.

For many years after the Spanish-American war the "Three Friends" operated as a tugboat in the St. Johns river here and had the reputation for being the "fastest tug with the loudest, hootin'est whistle on the river."

In 1944 while moored at the docks of W. T. Coppedge, president of the Florida Towing corporation, she was badly damaged by a hurricane. Coppedge, who had purchased her, decided that she had outlived her usefulness. He ordered her destruction.

Mrs. Foster heard about it, started a one-woman campaign to have the "Three Friends." Finally, Coppedge, who loves boats himself and appreciated Mrs. Foster's sentimental interest in the "Three Friends," formally presented her with her grandfather's old vessel. For the past year it has remained at Coppedge's docks and he has taken excellent care of her.

Rast said that the Lions will rehabilitate and restore the old craft in Jacksonville before she is escorted down the river where she has made history toward dignified retirement in a country she helped to preserve.

Battleship Cuba Coming to Jax to Escort 'Three Friends' to Havana Place of Honor

Cuba's Old Ironsides—the filibustering steamer Three Friends—will be escorted from here to Havana in style, a representative of the Cuban government assured Mrs. Dorcas Foster, former owner of the boat, here today.

Mariano Vivanco, past district governor of Cuban Lions and a judge in San Antonio de los Banos, a small town near Havana, told Mrs. Foster that arrangements had been completed with the Cuban navy to have the battleship Cuba, flagship of the fleet, come here to escort the Three Friends to Havana.

Given at Convention

Mrs. Foster, as guest of Lions International convention in Philadelphia two weeks ago, officially presented the boat to Cuba. Arrangements for the presentation were made through Lions International and the vessel was accepted by Dr. Ramiro Collazo of Cuba, international president of the Lions.

Vivanco was in Jacksonville today to look over the old steamer, built by Napoleon Broward, Mrs. Foster's grandfather, and used as a filibusterer during Cuba's war of independence to run supplies and men through the Spanish blockade of the island.

Date to Be Set Later

The amount of work necessary to make the old vessel seaworthy will govern the date of the arrival here of the Cuban flotilla of the battleship and two navy tugs that will tow the Three Friends to Havana.

"I have talked to Commodore Gulla Ruiz, chief of the Cuban navy and he has assured me that the battleship will be sent to Jacksonville to escort the steamer and



—Journal Photo by Leo Witt.

Mrs. Dorcas Foster and Mariano Vivanco of Cuba discuss final plans for the escorting of the famed steamer Three Friends from here to Cuba, where the vessel will become a shrine of Cuba's war for independence.

MAR 16 1948

In reply refer to
837.413/2-1448

My dear Mrs. Foster:

Your letter to President Truman of February 14, 1948 concerning your desire to have the vessel "Three Friends" repaired has been referred to this Department for acknowledgment.

The difficulties you have encountered in arranging for the repair of this vessel are appreciated, and it is hoped that you will find some satisfactory solution. I regret to inform you, however, that this Department has no funds available for assisting you in having these repairs made.

Sincerely yours,

For the Secretary of State:

W. W. W.
William W. Walker
Acting Chief, Division of
Caribbean Affairs

Mrs. Dorcas B. Foster,
935 East Church Street,
Jacksonville, Florida.

DOR ARA Unit	
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Cat	<i>JK</i>
Dist.	

A true copy of
the signed original

MAR 12 1948

CRB:WWWalker:aph
3-8-48

S/S-CR

IA
[Signature]

[Signature] ADA

FW 837.413/2-1448