

INDIANTOWN



Chasing “Guerrillas”



Indiantown, a commercial center with a shipyard, store, and mill, became a focal point for military activity during the Civil War. On June 10, 1862, U.S. Navy Lt. Charles W. Flusser led several gunboats up the North River to capture a prominent secessionist here and seize the schooner *Scuppernong* with a load of oak timber bound for a Confederate shipyard. He burned the vessel and its cargo nearby. John Boushell had built the ship in 1853 as a Dismal Swamp Canal schooner. Under owner S.S. Simmons, it sailed to ports such as New York with corn, wheat, and lumber. In 1856, J. Lawrence bought *Scuppernong*, and during



According to local tradition, fiddler Bill Hutchins (left) was playing at a dance nearby when word came of Union troops heading to Indiantown Bridge. The men went to the bridge and took up the boards, and the women went home.

Courtesy Wilbert Roberts and Ray Etheridge



Schooner *Scuppernong* site

Courtesy Ray Etheridge and East Carolina Maritime Program

the war, the Confederates used it to transport military cargo. North Carolina archaeologists located the wreck near here in the 1990s.

Union forces also searched in Currituck and neighboring counties for what the Federals termed “guerrillas” but the Confederates called regularly organized home defense troops. One such unit, Capt. Willis B. Sanderlin’s Co. B, 68th North Carolina State Troops, was raised in July 1863 in Camden County and enlisted Currituck County natives. In December 1863, Union Gen. Edward A. Wild led an expedition into the county against Sanderlin’s and other units. A column under Col. Alonzo G. Draper engaged “guerrillas” here at Indiantown Bridge, then with Wild pur-

“We attempted to ascend the North River to Indiantown, to bring down a schooner laden with live-oak timber for the construction of the rebel war steamer at Deep Creek. ... I hoped to catch a prominent rebel at Indiantown ... but our bird had flown; he had removed from his residence weeks since. ... We found the schooner Scuppernong, partly laden with oak timber. As we could not spare time to clear the river [of obstructions, to tow her away], she was burned.” – Lt. Charles W. Flusser, U.S. Navy, June 10, 1862



Lt. Charles W. Flusser
Courtesy Library of Congress

sued them into a swamp. Wild reported that the Federals “burned their camp, took many guns ... considerable fine ammunition, drum, clothes, provisions, &c. After burning the neighboring houses [including Sanderlin’s] and giving them another chase, we marched to Currituck Court-House.”