

Naval history

SENIOR CLASS OF 1929

HISTORICAL PRESENTATIONS

OPERATIONS OF THE GULF SQUADRONS INCLUDING
THOSE CONDUCTED BY ADMIRAL FARRAGUT FROM
HIS ASSUMPTION OF COMMAND IN GULF WATERS,
TO AND INCLUDING THE BATTLE OF
MOBILE BAY

Submitted by

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OPERATIONS OF THE GULF SQUADRON 1861

to and including

THE BATTLE OF MOBILE BAY.

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The subject of this paper is "The operations of the Gulf Squadron, including those conducted by Admiral Farragut from his assumption of command in Gulf Waters, to and including the Battle of Mobile Bay". The paper was prepared by committee Number Six composed of Captain Old, Commander Knauss, Commander Magruder and myself.

When Lincoln was inaugurated in 1861, the peace time organization assigned the Atlantic and Gulf waters of the United States, included those of the West Indies, Mexico, and Central America, as the cruising grounds of a single command known as the Home Squadron. At the beginning of the hostilities of the Civil War this was under the command of Flag Officer G.J.

SLIDE: 1 PENDERGRAST

Pendergrast, who rendered essential and active service during and after the confused events immediately following the bombardment of Fort Sumpter in April 1861. But this large area was too extensive to be administered by one man under actual war conditions, so it was divided into three separate commands.

The West Indian Squadron, having in its charge United States interests in Mexico and Central America, as well as in the islands, remained under the command of Flag Officer Pendergrast.

The Atlantic Squadron included the Atlantic coast as far south as Cape Florida was placed under the command of Flag Officer Stringham, while,

SLIDE: 2 GULF OF MEXICO

the Gulf Squadrons were assigned the care of United States interests in the Gulf of Mexico and the U.S. coast with its tributaries from Cape Florida to the Rio Grande. Flag Officer William Mervine was assigned to command, and on 8 June 1861 reached his station. By 4 July 1861 the Gulf Squadron consisted of twenty-one vessels, carrying two hundred and eighty-two guns and manned by three thousand five hundred men. With

this force the squadron commander was charged with all operations along the 900 miles of enemy coast line.

The character of the Gulf coast of the U.S. from one end to the other varies but slightly in appearance. It is generally low, and either sandy or marshy. An occasional bluff of moderate height is to be seen. A large portion of the coast line is skirted by low sandy islands, sometimes joined by narrow necks to the mainland, forming inland sounds of considerable extent. The shallow channels generally deny entrance to vessels of much draft. These sounds, however, can easily be entered by light draft vessels in many places, and during the war small steamers and schooners on both sides frequently used them. There is very little rise and fall of tide in these waters, but the height of the water is much effected by the direction of the wind.

The principal ports are New Orleans in Louisiana, Mobile in Alabama, Pensacola in Florida and Galveston in Texas. The best base for a fleet is in Pensacola Bay.

The town then was of little commercial importance, but the secure spacious anchorage made it of great value as a naval station.

SLIDE: 3 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

The Union plans in this area had two major objectives; First: isolate the Confederate States west of the Mississippi by gaining control of the river. This would be done by joint Army and Navy operations working up from the mouth to form a junction with a similar undertaking working down stream from

the upper waters. If successful the Confederates would be denied use of the river for their communications and would, at the same time, be deprived of a sorely needed supply of men and food-stuffs from their western states.

SLIDE: 2 GULF OF MEXICO.

The Second Objective was to enforce a strict blockade over the entire coast, from the Rio Grande to Florida. Its purpose was to close every inlet by which the products of the South could find their way to the markets of the world; and to shut out material not only of war, but essentials to the peaceful life of the people.

Such a blockade could be made technically effective by ships cruising or anchoring off shore, but there was a great gain in actual efficiency when the vessels could be placed within the harbors. The latter method was, therefore, followed wherever practicable.

At first the blockade was maintained as well as the number and character of vessels permitted, but nothing of much con-

SLIDE: 4 PENSACOLA BAY

sequence was accomplished. The general dullness of affairs was relieved by a brilliant dash which a force from the blockader Colorado made into the harbor of Pensacola.

The schooner Judah was being fitted out by the Confederates at the navy yard to be used as a privateer. On the night of 13 September 1861 one hundred men in boats from the Colorado under the command of Lt. J.H. Russel proceeded into the harbor and in spite of the vigilance of the Confederates, they arrived

near the schooner undiscovered. They were entirely successful in firing and destroying her in the face of determined opposition.

Shortly after this, about October 1 Flag Officer W.W. McKean took over the command of the Squadron. Mervine was relieved solely on account of ill health. He had made a fine record in the Mexican War and had the full confidence of the Department.

Under its new commander the Squadron became more active. Larger forces were placed off Galveston and New Orleans.

SLIDE: 5 PASSES OF THE MISSISSIPPI

At the latter place the results were unfortunate. The Confederates had been using this port for much shipping and Flag Officer McKean, in early October, sent the steam-sloop RICHMOND, sailing sloops VINCENNES and PREBLE, and the small side-wheeler WATER-WITCH to the head of Passes at the mouth of the Mississippi. It was known on board the Union vessels that the Confederates had a ram fitting out up the river, but no precautions looking to security against surprise were taken. No plans were made for a possible action. This neglect coupled with a too quick decision to run away resulted in a rout that reflected no credit on the officers concerned.

SLIDE: 6 MANASSAS

The Confederates had taken the Enoch Train, an old Boston tow boat 128 feet long, housed her over with 5" timbers and railroad iron and fitted an underwater ram of cast iron. There was but one gun on board and it was useless. She was renamed the MANASSAS.

At 0330 October 12th, this improvised craft was sighted close aboard and heading for the RICHMOND. The surprise was complete. She struck the RICHMOND while making about 8 knots and made a small hole below the water line. Drifting clear with damaged engines the ram lay off the RICHMOND for a few minutes and then headed slowly back to New Orleans. There was some desultory firing from the RICHMOND and PREBLE.

A few minutes later the ram fired a rocket as a signal for the Confederates up the river to release fire rafts. These rafts drifted on shore and did no material damage but they were sufficient to precipitate a stampede. The Union forces slipped their chains on signal from the S.O.P., Captain John Pope of the RICHMOND, and hastily retreated down the S.W. Pass. In their hurry to get across the bar the RICHMOND and VINCENNES grounded and lay stranded all the next day. The VINCENNES actually abandoned ship but Captain Handy was ordered back on board.

Captain Mahan heaps much censure on Captain Pope, and even Spear says, "A squadron of four great ships, armed with 45 first class guns, had been driven into a shameful panic by one crippled tug carrying a gun that couldn't be fired."

Captain Pope was relieved 12 days later.

SLIDE: 7 GALVESTON HARBOR.

On November seventh a more creditable incident occurred. The U.S.S. SANTEE then on blockade duty off Galveston, sent two boats under Lieutenant Jouett to destroy an armed Confederate steamer, the GENERAL RUSK. Guarding the entrance of the Bay was the ROYAL YACHT, an armed schooner which Jouett safely passed.

However, the boats then ran aground and their presence was discovered by the GENERAL RUSK. As the success of such a cutting-out expedition depended mainly upon the element of surprise, Jouett with instant decision turned upon the ROYAL YACHT, captured and burned her.

It was not until November 22nd that the Gulf Squadron undertook what might be called a major operation. It was decided to attack Pensacola. The entrance was guarded by Fort McRea, on the west bank.

SLIDE: 4 PENSACOLA BAY

On the East side, was Fort Pickens which was occupied by Union troops. On November twenty-second, Flag Officer McKean with the NIAGARA and RICHMOND attacked Fort McRea the fire of the ships being augmented by Fort Pickens. However, on the second day, the wind lowered the water to such an extent that the vessels could not get within range of the fort with the result that this engagement was indecisive.

From this period until Farragut took command of the force the general blockade was continued, but nothing of moment occurred.

SLIDE: 8 CAPTAIN FARRAGUT

From the time that David Glasgow Farragut assumed command events well demonstrated what the personality and ability of the leader means to a fleet. Farragut, a real leader had taken charge. His own spirit, courage and determination was soon instilled in his subordinates, and was reflected in the operations to follow.

Consequently, before proceeding further, it is desirable to sketch the earlier life of the man who became the leading character in the navy of that period, and whose accomplishments contributed so much to the success of the Union Cause.

SLIDE: 9 MINORCA

George Farragut, the father of Admiral Farragut, was of unmixed Spanish descent. He was born September 29th, 1755, in the island of Minorca, under the British Flag. In less than a year the island fell into French hands after Byng's futile effort to save it. An earlier ancestor, Don Pedro Farragut, served with distinction under James 1st., King of Aragon, in wars against the Moors. In 1776 the father emigrated to North America, and served gallantly on the side of the Colonies in the Revolutionary struggle. After the war he went to live on the border of Tennessee and North Carolina; while there he married Elizabeth Shine. David

SLIDE: 8 CAPTAIN FARRAGUT

Glasgow Farragut, the second son, was born on July 5th 1801, at Campbell's Station, near Knoxville, Tennessee. In the early part of the 19th century the family moved to New Orleans, and the father received an appointment as sailing-master in the navy and commanded a gunboat in the river.

At this time Captain David Porter, was in command of the Naval Station at New Orleans. Thus these two families were brought closely together. Captain Porter offered to adopt one of the Farragut children, so David went to live with him. The Porter family soon went north, and Farragut then only 8 1/2 years old,

was sent to boarding school, at Chester Academy, in Philadelphia, for a year.

SLIDE: 10 THE ESSEX

When 9 years and 5 months of age he received his appointment as midshipman, the youngest officer in the service. In August, 1811, at the age of 10, he joined the frigate ESSEX at Norfolk, Va., in company with his adopted father, Captain Porter.

In the War of 1812 he was serving on board the ESSEX when she was attacked by and surrendered to the PHOEBE and CHERUB off the coast of Chile. He was only 12 years 9 months of age when he had this, his first baptism under fire. During the fight he performed the duties of Captain's aid, quarter-gunner and powder boy. He was on parole from July to November, 1814, and after being exchanged he was ordered to duty on the brig SPARK, one of the vessels in Captain Porter's squadron.

SLIDE: 11 INDEPENDENCE

In March 1815, he was ordered to the INDEPENDENCE, a seventy-four gun ship. In the spring of 1816, he was ordered to the WASHINGTON, also a ship-of-the-line. She was commanded by Captain Creighton, considered the greatest martinet in the navy at that time. The ship was said to be an ideal in smartness, order and spotless cleanliness, "But", Farragut says, "All this was accomplished at the sacrifice of the comfort of everyone on board. My experience in the matter, instead of making me a prosylite to the doctrine of the old officers on this subject, determined me never to have a 'crack ship' if it was only to be attained by such means".

SLIDE: 12 SAN JUAN DE VLLOA

In 1838 while in command of the sloop ERIE he was at Vera Cruz and witnessed the attack and subjugation of the fortress of San Juan de Vlloa by the French fleet under Admiral Baudin on November 28th. At that time it was considered the strongest fort in Central America. He made a study of the effect of the horizontal fire of shells against a fort as compared to the vertically thrown bombs. The information so gained, and the study of the operations and effects of the bombardment, proved of the greatest value to him when attacking forts during the Civil War.

When war with Mexico broke out he applied for duty on a ship in Mexican waters, and suggested plans for taking the fortress which he had seen Admiral Baudin subdue. No attention was paid to his request at the time. In 1847, he obtained command of the sloop-of-war SARATOGA but arrived at Vera Cruz after the Fortress had been taken by General Scott. Hewas greatly disappointed that this duty had not been delegated to the navy, and considered the naval advisors in Washington had lost a great opportunity. As he said, "They all paid the penalty as not one of them will fly an admiral's flag which they might have done had that castle been taken by the navy". At this time he contracted yellow fever and nearly lost his life.

SLIDE: 8 Captain Farragut

In 1854, when the Crimean War broke out, he requested to be sent abroad to study the English and French Ships, their im-

provements, etc., but was refused, though the army did send observers. Instead of this he was ordered to Mare Island to establish a Navy Yard at that place.

In 1855, he was promoted to captain, the highest rank in the navy prior to the Civil War.

In 1858, he returned to the east coast and was ordered to command the BROOKLYN, where he served until 1860, when he was detached and returned to his home in Norfolk.

Though born in the south, and having spend many years in Norfolk, Va., where he had established his home when not on active duty, he decided, when war was declared to remain in the U.S.Navy. He knew this decision meant giving up his home and moving north among strangers who would be liable to misconstrue his motives and distrust him, and this did prove to be the case at first.

The Navy Department was formulating plans for joint Army-Navy operations against New Orleans. Farragut's name was under consideration for the command but there was some concern as to his fealty. Commander David D. Porter went to New York to see Farragut. He returned and urged the assignment which was made and Farragut was called to Washington and told of the proposed task. When asked his opinion of the possible success of such an expedition with the forces available he answered unhesitatingly that it would succeed.

SLIDE: 13 HARTFORD

On December 23d, 1861, Farragut received preparatory orders

and on January 9th, 1862, was formally appointed to command the Western Gulf Blockading Squadron; the limits of which, on the coast of the Confederacy, were from St. Andres's Bay to the mouth of the Rio Grande.

On January 20th, orders were received as follows:

Navy Department,
January 20th, 1862.

"Sir: When the Hartford is in all respects ready for sea, you will proceed to the Gulf of Mexico with all practicable dispatch, and communicate with Flag-Officer W.W. McKean, who is directed by enclosed dispatch to transfer to you the command of the Western Gulf Blockading Squadron. There will be attached

SLIDE: 14 PORTER

to your squadron a fleet of bomb-vessels, and armed steamers enough to manage them, all under command of Commander D.D. Porter, who will be directed to report to you. As fast as these vessels are got ready they will be sent to Key West to await the arrival of all, and the commanding officers, will be permitted to organize and practice with them at that port.

"When the formidable mortars arrive, and you are completely ready, you will collect such vessels as can be spared from the blockade and proceed up the Mississippi River, and reduce the defences which guard the approaches to New Orleans, when you will appear off that city and take possession of it under the guns of

SLIDE: 3 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

of your squadron, and hoist the American Flag thereon, keeping possession until troops can be sent to you, If the Mississippi

expedition from Cairo shall not have descended the river, you will take advantage of the panic to push a strong force up the river to take all their defenses in the rear. As you have expressed yourself satisfied with the force given to you, and as many more powerful vessels will be added before you can commence operations, the Department and the country will require of you success. There are other operations of minor importance, which will commend themselves to your judgment and skill, but which must not be allowed to interfere with the great object in view -- the certain capture of the City of New Orleans.

SLIDE: 15 GIDEON WELLES

"Destroy the armed barriers which these deluded people have raised up against the power of the United States Government, and shoot down those who war against the Union; but cultivate with cordiality the first returning reason, which is sure to follow your success!"

Respectfully, etc.,

Gideon Welles.

SLIDE: 2 GULF OF MEXICO

On February 2nd, 1862, Farragut in the Hartford sailed from Hampton Roads and on the 20th, reached Ship Island, about 100 miles from the mouth of the Mississippi, which had already been seized as a base of operations. The next day Farragut took over command from Flag Officer McKean and began assembling and preparing his squadron.

His main force finally consisted of 4 screw sloops, 1 side-

wheeler, 3 Corvettes and 9 gunboats. A total of 17 vessels mounting 154 guns, over half being 9" or better; and about 90 of which could be fired on each broad side. To these was added a mortar force under flag officer David D. Porter, and made up of six gunboats and 20 schooners, each mounting a 13-inch mortar.

The total broadside of the Federal fleet was approximately 120 heavy guns.

The forces defending the river below New Orleans consisted of Fort Jackson on the south; and

SLIDE: 16 FORTS AT NEW ORLEANS.

Port St. Philip on the North. Their location at the sharp bend gave them control of fire over the full course of the channel within the range of their guns. The forts mounted over a hundred guns but these were mostly small and unsuited to the purpose. Spears says only 13 were of larger size and of these two 7-inch rifles were the only really up-to-date armament. The forts were augmented by a naval force of river steamers mounting about two small guns each and the floating battery Tennessee, not yet completed. There were some fire rafts. In addition the Confederates tried to obstruct the channel with chains and booms.

SLIDE: 5 PASSES OF THE MISSISSIPPI

Farragut's first operation was to get his 'squadron up to the head of the passes. In moving his heavy ships over the bar much time was lost in lightening the deep draft Mississippi and Pensacola. The Colorado had finally to be left behind as she could not be got across even without her guns. Captain Bailey

and most of the Colorado's crew, were, however, brought along on other assignments. Captain Bailey was made a division commander and hoisted his burgee on the Cayuga.

Farragut's plans called for a long, preliminary bombardment by Porter's Mortar Flotilla preparatory to the main Fleet's attempt to run the forts. A complete survey was made of the river and the position of each mortar schooner

SLIDE: 17 BOMBARDMENT OF FORTS AT NEW ORLEANS

marked thereon. Before going in, each knew the objective and the range.

On April 18th, Porter was sent in to his previously assigned berths with one division on each side of the River. These mortars kept up a slow but steady fire day and night firing a total of about two thousand 13" shell each 24 hours. This bombardment slowly wore down the resistance of the forts while Farragut kept his main body ready to move in on short notice when he should decide the moment had arrived.

SLIDE: 18 MORTAR BOATS

The mortars out-ranged all but a very few of the guns of the forts so that the situation steadily improved for the Federals. Farragut's plans were working beautifully. He knew the bombardment was continually bettering his position so patiently kept back the main force while the mortars hammered away for five days and five nights.

On the night of April 18, he sent in the ITASOA, Lieutenant Caldwell, and the PINOLA, Lieutenant Crosby, to attempt to break

the chain barrier. The batteries put out a heavy cannonade against these little vessels but Caldwell kept at his task and finally was able to run the ITASCA at full speed over the sagging chains.

These parted and Caldwell withdrew with slight losses. With the Channel now open Farragut still waited. He had lost but two of his mortar schooners and wisely judged that the forts were slowly becoming more and more untenable.

Finally on the 23rd, Farragut issued the order to run the forts during the mid-watch of the night of 23-24 April. The squadron weighed at two a.m., and stood in. Captain Bailey in the CAYUGA was at the head of the leading division.

SLIDE: 19 FARRAGUT'S ORDER OF ENTRY

Just after the CAYUGA with first division had passed through the barrier abreast Fort Phillips about 0330, the Forts let loose a storm of fire against the big PENSACOLA, which was next astern.

The Confederates lighted fires of pine knots to illuminate the river and upstream was sighted the Confederate river craft getting underway. Bailey's gunboats rushed upstream at the Confederate ships. The PENSACOLA and MISSISSIPPI fought a hot gun-duel at close range with the fort and both succeeded in getting by without much damage.

SLIDE: 20 FARRAGUT PASSING THE FORTS

The second division, however, with Farragut leading in the HARTFORD, approached the barrier under the fort when the Confederates were well underway with their defensive plans. The shore

batteries were firing with maximum rapidity. Fire barges were standing out, rafts aflame were coming down the river. The glare and smoke were blinding to the pilots. But Farragut with characteristic determination and courage never faltered. He came on until the HARTFORD ran aground.

SLIDE: 21 HARTFORD AND FIRE RAFT

While the HARTFORD was aground, the Confederate tug MOSHER forced alongside a flaming barge and though unarmed, persisted in holding it there. The HARTFORD fired many broadsides at point blank range but Captain Sherman still held on. Finally the MOSHER drifted off thoroughly demolished and shortly sank with all onboard. With great difficulty the HARTFORD set about to extinguish the flames. It was at this stage that Farragut told his crew if they did not suppress these flames there was a much hotter fire awaiting them. Shortly the fire was extinguished and the HARTFORD now afloat proceeded up the river.

Ahead of the heavy ships there was a lively but unco-ordinated engagement between the gunboats and the Confederate River craft which were in general trying to escape upstream.

The CAYUGA, ONEIDA and VARUNA were in the thick of this. The VARUNA due to faster speed came up among the fleeing Confederates. She and the CAYUGA exchanged broadsides with the McREA and the GOVERNOR MOORE, the latter under the command of Lt. Kennon. The McREA escaped by turning back and

SLIDE: 22 KENNON FIRES THROUGH HIS OWN BOW

succeeded in getting under Fort St. Phillip. The MOORE and the

STONEWALL JACKSON had a hot fight with the VARUNA. Both succeeded in ramming the VARUNA which upto that time had the better of a gun fight against her two opponents. The VARUNA finally had to be beached. But the persistent CAYUGA and the ONEIDA were soon to avenge the VARUNA. They together shortly overtook the fleeing MOORE, and STONEWALL JACKSON and forced them ashore under heavy fire. The MOORE finally surrendered to the PENSACOLA.

SLIDE: 6 MANASSAS

The ram MANASSAS which had on a previous occasion caused such a hasty retreat of the Federal ships did not play such an important role against the Federals under Farragut. She did succeed in ramming the BROOKLYN without, however, doing much damage. Later she was beached by the crew when the MISSISSIPPI and KINEO jointly attacked her with guns. The LOUISIANA, not yet completed, never left the cover of Fort St. Phillip. She only fired a few ineffectual salvos.

Shortly after daylight, the Union fleet anchored for the day at quarantine.

SLIDE: 23 NEW ORLEANS AND VICINITY

The following morning the Fleet got underway and went on up the river toward New Orleans. As they advanced, burning ships and steamers were passed. Four miles below New Orleans, a slight opposition was met from the forts, Cholmette and McGebee. These were soon silenced, and at noon on 25 April, the fleet anchored off the city of New Orleans. Up and down the levee stores and ships were ablaze. Among the ships destroyed was the Confederate

iron-clad MISSISSIPPI which was partially completed. Farragut's rapid advance prevented her being towed to the Yazoo River where she might yet have been an ugly foe.

Captain Bailey was sent ashore to demand the surrender of the city. The local troops having been withdrawn, the mayor announced his submission to the inevitable. The United States Flag was hoisted on the mint. The next day it was hauled down by a party of citizens, so a battalion of marines was sent ashore. They rehoisted the flag and guarded the building until the arrival of General Butler on 1 May, when the city was turned over to him.

SLIDE: 24 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY, VICKSBURG TO GULF

Meanwhile Commander Porter remained in command below the forts which surrendered to him on 28 April. New Orleans being now in the hands of the Union Forces the other forts nearby were hastily abandoned and the guns transferred to Vicksburg.

The fall of New Orleans brought disaster to the Confederate cause by the loss of their most valuable sea port, and what was more vital to their success - delayed the recognition of the Confederacy by Great Britain and France which up to this time had been seriously contemplated by these nations.

SLIDE: 4 PENSACOLA BAY

Now the scene shifts to Pensacola.

On the night of 10 May while cruising in shore to the eastward of Ship Island, Commander Porter saw a brilliant light illuminating the sky which proved to be from flames in the navy yard,

Fort McRee, Warrenton, and other parts of Pensacola.

When daylight permitted, Commander Porter in the HARRIET LANE stood into the harbor, and found that the Confederate Forces had evacuated this area.

The United States Army and Navy took possession of the abandoned area the same day. While there was no severe fighting by either, the recovery of this fine harbor was of importance in that it was again available as a naval base for the Union vessels.

SLIDE: 3 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

Meanwhile, Farragut was refitting at New Orleans. The capture of this city was only a step in the Federal campaign for complete control of the Whole River. Washington had informed Farragut that he was expected to work up towards and form a junction with the Mississippi Flotilla. This later expedition had been unable to get further south than Memphis. The Admiral very correctly pictured the difficulties if he attempted to take his heavy ships so far up stream, especially as the river already begun to recede from the spring floods. The original plan for the juncture of the two river forces was first set on foot five months before the battle of New Orleans. It was then thought the Cairo force would be well down the River by the time New Orleans fell. Also it was contemplated that the army would assist by attacking the defenses in conjunction with the ships or at least furnish garrisons to hold the positions taken by the squadron. But at this time suitable forces from the Army were not available.

SLIDE: 8 FARRAGUT

On May 1, Farragut turned over New Orleans to General Butler,

preparatory to carrying out his orders to move on up the river. His estimate at this time was that fine ships were to be risked and without troops nothing worthwhile would be accomplished. Too, he failed to underestimate his own difficulties. But better than any one could he see that any ground gained could not be held. The General Federal objective was sound -- To deny the Confederates the use of the river. This would be a real accomplishment. But to send ships back and forth with no investing force for the points taken was not control. They could dominate any particular fort or point on the river as long as they were present, but that was all. To scatter his force meant the possibility of defeat in detail. To supply his ships from New Orleans meant armed escorts for the carriers. However, he was too good a subordinate to contemplate not going although he had little faith of the results to be accomplished. His judgment of the wisdom of the Navy Department's orders is shown in one of his letters home:

"They (the Navy Department) will keep us in this river until the vessels break down and all the little reputation we have made has evaporated. The Government appears to think that we can do anything. They expect me to navigate the Mississippi nine hundred miles in face of batteries, ironclad rams, etc., and yet with all the ironclad vessels they have north they could not get to Norfolk or Richmond."

Then the soundness of his military character comes out when he adds:

...."Well, I will do my duty to the best of my ability and let the rest take care of itself."

In that last is a fine guiding principle for any officer today on any billet.

SLIDE: 24 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY, VICKSBURG TO GULF

In early May the ships started north from New Orleans. The first expedition was made up of seven vessels led by Captain Craven in the RICHMOND. Baton Rouge and Natchez surrendered without opposition.

Above Natchez it was considered that only the gunboats should go. So Commander Lee with all gunboats was ordered to proceed to Vicksburg, seize the place, and cut the railroad. Commander Lee arrived off Vicksburg on May 18th. He soon reported back to HARTFORD the defenses were too strong for his force. Admiral Farragut then decided to push the big ships on up from Natchez in spite of the risk of grounding. On May 20th he joined Commander Lee just below Vicksburg.

SLIDE: 25 VICKSBURG IN 1862

The natural advantages of the place were a source of great strength to the defenders. And for a year it was to be one of the principal points of contention finally involving large military forces before it was taken 14 months later.

From Memphis the river flows down through the Mississippi Valley for 400 miles. Ten miles below the mouth of the Yazoo it veers sharply through east to almost north for about three miles. It then makes a hairpin turn of 180 degrees back to south and for about six miles passes close in at the foot of high sloping hills on the east bank. For dominating the river, Vicks-

burg, on these hills, was in many respects a natural fortress.

To the northward and southward it was protected against investment by lowlands. To the eastward the country was hilly. Ships attempting to pass had to come within close range of the batteries and at the strongest point, abreast Fort Hill, they had to make the sharp turn-away. Here they would be subjected to a very strong enfilade fire to which they could oppose but a weak stern-battery reply. It was known that the town was well fortified and that there was a large garrison.

For this projected operation against Vicksburg the Army had furnished 1500 men under General Williams. This force was totally inadequate and General Williams after a careful reconnaissance so reported to Farragut. He could not possibly storm the forts with his small detachment with any promise of success. Admiral Farragut then called a conference of his commanding officers. It was generally agreed that the forts could be run, that some losses would be entailed, but that the squadron could get by. But when by, their supply vessels from New Orleans would be cut off and the ships would be forced to simply turn and run down again. This was sound reasoning. Why try to project a force beyond its communications when the only move left after getting by was to run the forts again to re-establish the supply line? All to no profit and at much risk to valuable sea-going vessels. It was rightly decided to withdraw and not attempt it. The squadron sailed down the River returning to New Orleans.

SLIDE: 3 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

The Washington strategist harassed the Admiral with only one

thought: The two river forces must join up. In spite of his despatches describing conditions and the little to be accomplished the Assistant Secretary of the Navy wrote:

"The only anxiety we feel is to know if you have followed up your instructions and pushed a strong force up the river to meet the Western Flotilla".

There was nothing for it to do but to go ahead with the Department's Plans. So up north again they went.

Meantime, on June 5, Memphis had fallen. This made it possible for the Mississippi flotilla to work their way to the southward.

SLIDE: 25 VICKSBURG IN 1862

On 18 June Farragut arrived below Vicksburg in full force. His squadron consisted of: HARTFORD, BROOKLYN, RICHMOND, and eight gunboats. No military forces were provided.

There were also in company under Porter 17 mortar schooners. At this time the Confederate defenses mounted 26 guns, distributed among the various batteries, but these were supplemented by portable field pieces moved about from place to place. The gun emplacements were so spread out along the bluffs that the eight-knot ships passing upstream against the current could be fired upon for about three quarters of an hour. But go up they must:

On the 26th of June Porter started moving his schooners into position, to cover the passage of the ships. He put nine on the east and eight on west bank. On the afternoon of the 27th all was in readiness and Farragut moved during the mid-watch that night.

The prescribed formation was for

SLIDE: 26 FARAGUT'S FORMATION AT VICKSBURG

the RICHMOND to lead the starboard column of heavy ships followed by the HARTFORD and BROOKLYN in the order named. The IROQUOIS was to lead the port column of lighter vessels; these to be so stationed that the two leading vessels could fire ahead of the RICHMOND, the two rear vessels astern of the BROOKLYN; the remaining four so that two each could fire between the RICHMOND and the flagship and two between the flagship and the BROOKLYN. Thus the lighter vessels could deliver their maximum broadside fire and at the same time have some protection from the larger vessels, particularly from the enemy water batteries, field pieces, and rifle pits.

SLIDE: 27 VICKSBURG

At four o'clock on morning of 28th Porter's mortar schooners opened the battle of Vicksburg. The ships had just cleared the schooners and were approaching the water batteries. Immediately this fire was returned by the defenders. The larger ships engaged as their guns would bear. When abreast^s any particular emplacement the ships could keep down its fire. As these were passed the Confederates would return to their guns and subject the ships to a very severe enfilade to which they could but weakly reply. This was particularly true at the turn abreast the strong battery on Fort Hill. Also there was some lack of support due to straggling. All these difficulties had been foreseen by the Admiral.

It was due to Farragut's endeavor to correct this straggling

that brought about a very unfortunate incident. In the Admiral's instructions for the conduct of the passage he said:

"When the vessels reach the bend of the River, should the enemy continue the action, the ships and IROQUOIS and ONEIDA will stop their engines and drop down the River again, keeping up the fire until directed otherwise."

So when Farragut stopped the HARTFORD just short of the turn and dropped down to support the stragglers, his movement was naturally interpreted by Captain Craven, who followed in the BROOKLYN, to be in connection with these instructions about "dropping down the river again." Captain Craven stopped his ship followed by the two trailing gunboats, KENNEBECK and KATAHDIN. For two hours he remained abreast the lower batteries, then retired down stream. Surely there was no lack of the will to fight on his part. The smoke up the river prevented him from seeing the other ships. When it cleared they had passed on. Captain Craven had to choose between going by alone or dropping down clear of the water batteries. He elected the latter. In a fair review the worst that can be charged to Captain Craven is that he erred in judgment in not maintaining visual contact so that he could have passed on with the other ships. Less courage and less fighting would have been required to pass on through than to spend two hours in close combat with the strong shore batteries. He thought he was waiting....."until directed otherwise."

In the final outcome Farragut found his squadron separated. He with the larger force were above the forts, the BROOKLYN with KENNEBECK and KATAHDIN below. Whether or not responsibility should attach to Captain Craven he paid nevertheless by being

severely censured by the Admiral.

SLIDE: 25 VICKSBURG IN 1862

Having carried out his orders to pass the forts, Farragut was still of the opinion the Department did not appreciate the difficulties and that they overestimated the value of the results to be attained. His report shows his state of mind.

"The Department will perceive from this report that the forts can be passed, and we have done it, and can do it again as often as may be required of us. It will not, however, be an easy matter for us to do more than silence the batteries for a time....it is not possible to take Vicksburg without an army of twelve or fifteen thousand men....The water is too low for me to go over twelve or fifteen miles above Vicksburg."

On July 1, three days after the Battle, the Mississippi Flotilla Flag Officer Charles H. Davis, joined him from Memphis.

The Department's insistence on a juncture had been accomplished. But as Farragut foresaw, Confederate communications by River were only stopped in the immediate area actually occupied. Vicksburg was still in the hands of the Confederates and gave them an overland outlet to the west, while the forts in turn cut off any supplies coming up from New Orleans to the ships above.

SLIDE: 28 ARKANSAS

While anchored above Vicksburg the enemy force of immediate concern to Farragut was the Confederate ram reported up the Yazoo River. This vessel had fled from Memphis when the fall of that place became imminent. Not yet finished, it was towed with two barges of equipment down the Mississippi and up the Yazoo to Yazoo

City for completion and fitting out. This ram, named the ARKANSAS was of the most ambitious design of any vessel undertaken by the Confederates.

She was of about 1000 tons burden, with the conventional casemate protection of railroad iron backed by heavy wood timbers and cotton bales. The battery was particularly formidable.

A very heavy ram was also fitted. Her source of weakness was the general poor construction of hull and engines. The latter was continually failing. These shortcomings were to be expected in a vessel built in a section of country without metal works or experienced shipbuilders. Her commanding officer, Lieutenant Brown, had received orders to take the ARKANSAS down to Vicksburg to reinforce the defenses there. He started on the 14th and stood down to just below Haines Bluff where he secured for the night. At 0400 July 15 he was underway for the final dash.

Farragut had not felt his squadron seriously menaced. The coal situation was of much more concern so the steamers were not kept habitually with fires ready. Still he considered the possibility of the ARKANSAS coming down, so he sent on July 15 a reconnoitering detachment up the Yazoo under Commander Walke, CARONDELET flagship, accompanied by the TYLER and the RAM QUEEN of the WEST.

SLIDE: 29 ARKANSAS AND CARONDELET

At 0700 when about six miles above the mouth of the Yazoo the ARKANSAS was sighted coming down at full speed - 6 knots. At this time the TYLER was leading. She immediately turned back

and withdrew under the protection of the CARONDELET. This vessel turned too and there resulted a running fight between the two ironclads. The TYLER kept ahead of the CARONDELET. The RAM QUEEN of the WEST turned and out ran them all.

While as strong as the ARKANSAS in general armament the CARONDELET placed herself at a serious disadvantage in turning her weaker stern battery to the strong bow fire of the Confederate, and as Commander Walke had less speed, the result was inevitable. He had in his haste to get back down the river, not only accepted inferiority of gunfire, but allowed the initiative in ramming to pass to his adversary. As the ARKANSAS closed him and maneuvered to ram, he ran his vessel into the bank for protection in the shoal water. The ARKANSAS kept the channel, passed close aboard, and fired a broadside when abeam.

The fleeing TYLER rushed ahead to inform the fleet. The ARKANSAS wasted no time on the CARONDELET but kept coming at full speed never deviating from her main purpose which was to run through to Vicksburg. The vessels of Farragut's and Davis's squadrons and Ellet's rams had only sufficient notice to cast loose the battery. The Ram GENERAL BRAGG had steamed up. But she simply awaited orders and did not attack. Speaking of the lack of initiative of the Commander, Farragut said:

"Every man has one chance. He has had his and lost it."

On the run through the union anchorage the ARKANSAS had to pass thirty vessels with 300 guns. Lieutenant Brown held tenaciously to his purpose and passed right through the middle of

the formation of anchored ships. There was general firing by all the squadron. The ARKANSAS let go salvo after salvo as fast as she could

SLIDE: 25 VICKSBURG IN 1862

at anything within range. Much damaged but still under control, she passed out of range and under the forts of Vicksburg.

Lieutenant Brown's exploit conveys a most important lesson. His Mission was to get through to Vicksburg. No side-shows distracted his attention or caused him to spend one bit of time or energy on anything else. His good judgment in passing up an easy chance to wipe out the CORONDELET was rewarded by reducing the warning had by the Squadrons down the river.

Farragut was much distressed by being thus caught unprepared. Also, he now had serious concern for the safety of his 3 vessels lying below the forts. So steps were taken to immediately avenge this humiliation. It was decided for all Federal ships to immediately run down by the forts and attack the ARKANSAS as they passed.

The attack was launched too late in the afternoon. Davis moved down into position for a preliminary bombardment, but by the time the ships started by, darkness had set in. The ARKANSAS avoided their attacks by the simple expedient of shifting berth after sunset. All Farragut's squadron plus the Ram SUMPTER, passed down as per plan without receiving or inflicting any but trivial damage. The ARKANSAS was hit once. However, at least Farragut had joined up with Captain Craven, and enemy shore batteries were no longer across the line of his supply from New Orleans.

None of his fleet were to pass above Vicksburg again.

On July 20th, 5 days after his last run past, Farragut received orders from the Department dated 14th to get his vessels below Vicksburg as soon as possible. On the

SLIDE: 3 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

24th he sailed for New Orleans where he arrived on 28th after much difficulty on account of the falling river.

Farragut's next movement was again up the River on 6 August. Word had come that the Confederates were to attack the small garrison at Baton Rouge and that the ARKANSAS was proceeding down stream from Vicksburg to assist. Upon Farragut's arrival at Baton Rouge on August 7 he was informed that the ARKANSAS had been destroyed by her own crew.

The ESSEX should, however, be given credit for this. She did not directly destroy the Confederate but she was the indirect cause. The ARKANSAS grounded while on her way down to Baton Rouge. While thus unable to maneuver the ESSEX came upon her. In order to prevent capture by the ESSEX, the commanding officer of the ARKANSAS ordered the vessel burned.

On August 16 the small Union garrison was withdrawn from Baton Rouge and Farragut returned to New Orleans.

RECESS

SLIDE: 3 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

The ill-advised expedition up the River had done little real good for the Federal cause. For the Confederates it is true they lost some valuable vessels they could not replace, but it also gave

them an appreciation of the value of preserving for their use at least parts of the River. This spurred them to great activities in strengthening their position. They immediately started establishing stronger points of defense at Vicksburg and at Port Hudson two hundred miles below. With these two positions sufficiently strong to prevent the Federals entering the waters between them, the Confederates hoped to insure to themselves complete access to the West through the Red River. They would thus have light draft communication to the Gulf and would have water communication to the supply of stores from Texas and Louisiana. This was vital to them and they were now fully appreciative of the importance of holding this control.

SLIDE: 2 GULF OF MEXICO

In early August Farragut passed out into the Gulf, disposed his vessels for the conduct of the coast blockade and he in the flagship, proceeded to Pensacola where he arrived August 20, 1862.

Here he received his commission as a Rear Admiral dated July 16, 1862. He was the first officer in the American Navy to fly an Admiral's flag. He remains the foremost Admiral our Navy has produced. Pensacola is near Mobile which was now the centre of activity of the blockade runners.

SLIDE: 3 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

However, Farragut realized that operations against this port at this time would be fruitless without cooperation of troops ashore and as the Union land forces hereabouts were occupied further north he decided that the Mississippi still remained the most important field for a Naval offensive if any troops could be made

available in that area. He therefore recommended to the Department that a combined expedition be undertaken; and that shore forces secure positions captured and these positions used as bases from which to extend the operations further up the river. He specifically advocated that Baton Rouge be occupied as a base from which to operate against Port Hudson twelve miles above. In this recommendation the Department was in accord and Farragut ordered the RICHMOND and two gunboats to Baton Rouge to cover the landing of troops from transports.

SLIDE: 7 GALVESTON HARBOR

While awaiting the army to prepare for this combined movement, all was not going well with the coast blockade. The Confederates had captured Galveston and the Union vessels in the harbor. Again, two sailing vessels of the squadron were captured by steamers. This discreditable series of episodes greatly mortified Farragut who dispatched Captain H.H. Bell, his former chief of staff, to insure the reestablishment of the blockade at Galveston. Upon his arrival off Galveston, Bell ordered the HATTERAS to investigate a sail which had been sighted. It proved to be the Confederate ALABAMA for which the HATTERAS was in no way a match and the latter was speedily sunk. In addition to this bad news came the information that the CRETO, a Confederate cruiser built by the British, had successfully run the blockade out of Mobile on January 15, 1863 and was now on the high seas. All these incidents Farragut considered as bringing discredit to his command.

SLIDE: 3 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

Meanwhile, Admiral Porter, who commanded the Mississippi

Squadron was, during the middle of December, 1862 before Vicksburg supporting the activities of the land forces. In an attempt to secure command of the river immediately below Vicksburg, Porter, on the second of February successfully ran the ram QUEEN of the WEST past the batteries followed ten days later by the ironclad INDIANOLA. Two days after the arrival of the latter vessel, the QUEEN of the WEST ran aground under a battery and was captured. This vessel the Confederates repaired and then with her attacked and captured the INDIANOLA. This put an end to Porter's attempt to secure that part of the river.

The up-river squadron having failed to secure the river, Farragut determined to wait no longer before commencing operations to work upstream from below with or without the assistance of the army.

On March 12, 1863, he arrived off Baton Rouge and two days later anchored just above Profits Island seven miles below Port Hudson, his immediate objective.

SLIDE: 30 PORT HUDSON

In approaching Port Hudson from downstream the course is nearly North followed by a turn of over ninety degrees to the left for some distance on a course about West South West. Port Hudson is situated on the East side just below the bend and from it batteries extended a mile and a half down the river. The guns were mounted on bluffs from eighty to a hundred feet high. Between the two reaches and opposite to the town is a low narrow point from which a dangerous shoal extends, the channel running close to the East bank.

As only one side of his vessels would be engaged in passing the batteries and as they consisted of heavy and light ships, Farragut directed that for the passage each heavy ship secure a lighter vessel on its disengaged side. Thus the heaviest batteries would be engaged, the lighter vessels protected and the maneuvering ability in making sharp turns would be increased. At ten o'clock on the night of March twelfth the squadron got underway in pairs as follows: HARTFORD and ALBATROS; RICHMOND and GENESEE; MONONGAHELA, and KINEO; with the MISSISSIPPI, a large side-wheeler bringing up the rear. Just as they were well underway, a steamer was seen approaching from down the river creating a great deal of noise with her engines and turning on flaring lights. While time and secrecy was the essence of success to Farragut he nevertheless slowed down until the stranger came alongside. It was learned that she had a message from General Banks to the effect that his army was still camped about five miles in the rear of the Port Hudson batteries. The arrival of this vessel was most inopportune because instantly the squadron's movement was noted by the enemy on the East Bank and large fire rafts were lighted and set adrift illuminating the river and throwing the ships in bold relief. Neither the disadvantages created by having to stop nor the intelligence that the army was not ready to cooperate made the slightest change in Farragut's plan. His opinion of General Banks he thus expressed: "He might as well be in New Orleans or at Baton Rouge for all the good he is doing us."

SLIDE: 31 FARRAGUT OFF PORT HUDSON

Regardless of the unfavorable conditions, now existing, Farragut adhered to his plan. At eleven o'clock the HARTFORD had passed the lower batteries and was subjected to a furious fire. This was returned by the ships including the mortar schooners which, with the ironclad ESSEX, were covering the passage with a heavy bombardment.

At this time, there was little or no wind, this and the damp atmosphere of the river caused the smoke from the guns to settle in a fog-like bank upon the water. The ships were soon groping blindly, while the Confederate batteries were firing at fixed ranges covering the channel. Even under favorable circumstances the most skillful navigation would be required to pilot safely large ships through such an intricate waterway. Fortunately for the HARTFORD, Farragut had directed that a voice tube be installed from the mizzenmast to the helmsman. Thus the HARTFORD'S pilot was able to conn the ship from an elevated position above the smoke. The other ships in the squadron had failed to make this provision and the result was soon apparent. As it was, the HARTFORD nearly ran aground when making the sharp turn to the Westward. She was only able to clear by her consort going full speed astern while the HARTFORD'S engines went ahead. In a short time the HARTFORD was safely by. The RICHMOND, next in line, was not so fortunate. As she reached the turn, a shot passed through her boiler room carrying away her safety valves. Thus rendered helpless, she might still have been safely towed by the batteries

by the GENESES had not her Captain ordered the ships to turn and both vessels were carried downstream. The MONONGAHELA, next in column, struck a shoal with such force that the lashings of the KINEO parted.

By desperate efforts she managed to back clear but engine failure made her unmanageable. Fortunately she drifted down-

SLIDE: 32 U.S.S. MISSISSIPPI

stream clear of the action. The last ship in the column, the MISSISSIPPI, likewise suffered from the blinding smoke and struck a shoal close to the bend where she remained hard and fast aground.

In this helpless position, the batteries quickly got her range and inflicted heavy damage. After thirty-five minutes of desperate but fruitless effort to get clear, her commanding officer ordered her to be set on fire and the ship abandoned. At three o'clock in the morning she floated and drifted down the river in flames. Fortunately she cleared the vessels below,

SLIDE: 30 PORT HUDSON

Later she blew up and was a total loss.

Thus, the HARTFORD and her small consort, the ALBATROSS, were the only vessels which succeeded in passing the batteries. This constituted a serious check to Farragut's projected operations because Vicksburg was two hundred miles above Port Hudson and while these two vessels were sufficient to blockade the entrance to the Red River, they could not completely cover all lines of communication in that district. This failure cannot be attributed to any fault of Farragut's tactical dispositions.

One may say that he should have made obligatory on all ships the precaution he had insisted on the HARTFORD; that of installing a voice tube from one of the tops to the helmsman, still only one ship failed to pass due to running aground; the RICHMOND'S failure was due to enemy gunfire, and the MISSISSIPPI'S loss was primarily due to an error made by her pilot.

SLIDE: 3 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

Feeling that the Red River could not be closed by only two ships, Farragut slowly passed up the River. He destroyed stores enroute which had accumulated on the levees and on March nineteenth came to anchor twelve miles below Vicksburg. He was now in need of coal. Farragut communicated with Grant now in charge of the siege of Vicksburg who turned coal barges adrift above the town and these, safely floating past the Confederate positions, were picked up by the HARTFORD'S boats.

In order to augment his small force, Farragut directed two ^{the} of/Ellet rams which were anchored above Vicksburg to join him. Through some error in judgment, in running the batteries, these rams were in range of the shore guns at daybreak. The result was that one was sunk while the other, the SWITZERLAND, received a shot through her boilers but drifted to safety past the batteries. The SWITZERLAND was quickly repaired and on the twenty-seventh of March with the HARTFORD and ALBATROSS, stood down the river and took station off the mouth of the Red River.

SLIDE: 33 FLOTILLA PASSING VICKSBURG

On April sixteenth Porter successfully ran the batteries at Vicksburg with a large number of ships. Thus the Mississippi

squadron was gradually controlling that part of the river as Farragut had originally planned. Porter joined Farragut on the fourth of May and the latter feeling his personal presence no longer necessary returned to New Orleans on the eleventh of May via one of the bayous.

Upon the surrender of Vicksburg on the fourth of July followed by that of Port Hudson five days later, Farragut turned over to Admiral Porter the command of all the Mississippi above New Orleans.

On August first he sailed north with the HARTFORD, RICHMOND, and BROOKLYN and arrived in New York on the tenth for refit.

SLIDE: 2 GULF OF MEXICO.

With the advent of the year 1864 the blockade of the Southern ports had become more effective, the only ports remaining in Confederate hands being Galveston and Mobile. Due to the fact that the Mississippi was now under Federal control, there was small advantage in the possession of Galveston; and Mobile remained as the major port from which the cargoes carried by the blockade runners could be transported into the interior.

Prior to the war, Mobile ranked next in importance to New Orleans as a seaport. It had excellent communications both by waterways and railroads and as the needs of the Confederacy became more urgent each day, the wisdom of Farragut's recommendation to the Department that operations against this port be commenced immediately after the fall of New Orleans became more and more apparent. This plan merely concerned control of the Bay itself as an actual occupation of the city would require a large

number of troops while only a comparatively small force would be necessary to hold the fort which commanded the main ship channel.

Since the fall of New Orleans, the defenses about Mobile had been greatly strengthened. Word had been received that the Confederates were constructing a formidable ram which would be capable of not only adding greatly to the defense of the Bay but would be strong enough to drive the blockading squadron from the vicinity of the entrance. This spurred the Department to action and Farragut, then at New York, was directed to consider and make recommendations relative to making an attack before the completion of this vessel.

On the twentieth of January, 1864, Farragut arrived at

SLIDE: 34 MOBILE BAY

New Orleans, having stopped off the bar at Mobile Bay enroute, and made a reconnaissance with two gunboats approaching within three miles of the forts guarding the entrance. He then reported to the Department that he felt that with one ironclad in addition to his present command, he could destroy the Confederate force in the Bay and then reduce the forts with the cooperation of about five thousand troops. He insisted upon the ironclad joining before making the attempt.

The city of Mobile is situated thirty miles from the Gulf near the head of Mobile Bay. Entrance is made to the Gulf between Mobile Point and Dauphin Island. On the end of Mobile Point was located Fort Morgan, the principal defense, guarding the main ship channel.

At the Eastern end of Dauphin Island was the smaller Fort Gaines. The distance between the forts was three miles. Between Dauphin Island and the mainland ran shoal channels available only for vessels of very light draft, the deepest of which was guarded by a small earthwork called Fort Powell.

The situation was now whether Farragut could marshall his forces to attack before the completion of the Confederate ram TENNESSEE. This vessel was destined to play a large part in the succeeding operations.

SLIDE: 35 C.S.S. TENNESSEE

She was designed and built solely for the special work in Mobile Bay. Drawing but fourteen feet she was two hundred and nine feet long, forty-eight feet beam. Upon her hull was erected a house-like structure with sides sloping at an angle of thirty-four degrees and covered with iron plating six inches thick forward and aft and five inches thick on the broadsides. This iron shell extended two feet below the waterline. She was thus well protected against anything but the most powerful ram. The battery consisted of six long range rifled cannon, two on each broadside and one at each end. The broadside guns were six inch rifles while the bow and stern guns were seven inch. There was fitted a formidable ram. Her main weakness was her engines which could give but a speed of only six knots.

On the eighteenth of May the builders of the TENNESSEE had won the race and the ram was anchored in the Bay before Farragut was ready.

SLIDE: 34 MOBILE BAY

For it was not until the latter part of July that the iron-clads commenced to arrive. These ironclads consisted of two sea-going monitors, the TECUMSEH and MANHATTAN, single-turreted with two fifteen inch guns. Also there were two river monitors, the WINNEBAGO and CHICKASAW, each mounting 4-11" guns in two turrets. The latter were excellent vessels for the work at hand.

It should be remarked at this time that many a lesser man than Farragut after the successes he had achieved, would not have shown the infinite patience he displayed but would have essayed an attack in order to forestall the arrival of the TENNESSEE. Had he done so, disaster would surely have awaited him, as the Confederate defenses were very strong. The channel forts mounted 38 heavy guns while the forts at New Orleans had mounted 48-24 pounders. Afloat, the Confederates had three river gunboats, the SELMA, MORGAN, and GAINES. Altogether these made the defenses of Mobile much stronger than those Farragut had encountered at New Orleans.

SLIDE: 36 ENTRANCE TO MOBILE BAY

From the sand bank extending Eastward from Dauphin Island, a line of piles had been driven in the direction of Fort Morgan nearly to the edge of the channel. Here the piles stopped, and a triple line of torpedoes was laid across the channel to within one hundred yards of the fort where a narrow gate permitted the passage of friendly vessels. These lines of mines were staggered thus making it impossible to cross the line without encountering at least one of them. All the mines were of the contact type,

All preparations for the defence were made known to Farragut by deserters and refugees. In addition he learned much from reconnaissances made by his officers. As the torpedo was practically an innovation in naval warfare, Farragut did not consider it as very important as he knew the weapon at that time was only imperfectly developed. However, he determined to avoid the mine-field if at all possible and pass through the clear channel next to the fort.

On the third of August 1864 in accordance with the pre-arranged plan with the army, General Grant landed fifteen hundred troops upon Dauphin Island. On the evening of the following day, the RICHMOND and TECUMSEH arrived thus completing the squadron. The weather conditions which Farragut desired for the attack were present on the fifth. He wished the wind from the West whereby the smoke from the guns would be carried in the direction of the fort. He likewise planned to make the ~~passage~~ on the flood tide which would carry any disabled vessel past the fort.

SLIDE: 37 Plan of Entry.

His plan of attack was similar to that employed at Port Hudson in that the lighter vessels were lashed to the port side of the heavy wooden ships.

In accordance with this plan, at four o'clock in the morning, the lighter vessels went alongside and secured to their consorts and at six-thirty the column was formed and steamed slowly ahead.

The four monitors stood down from Sand Island and took station ahead and to starboard of the main column.

At six fifty-five, the fleet was in formation and the TECUMSEH which led the column of monitors fired two ranging shots at the fort. Ten minutes later, Fort Morgan opened

SLIDE: 36 ENTRANCE TO MOBILE BAY

with all guns concentrating on the BROOKLYN which could reply only with her bow guns as her broadside could not yet bear. The fire was then taken up by the wooden ships. As at Port Hudson, the HARTFORD'S pilot was stationed in the main top while Farragut in order to gain an unobstructed view of the engagement climbed into the port main rigging ascending as the smoke increased in density. No narrative of the Battle of Mobile Bay could be complete without mentioning the incident which now took place.

SLIDE: 38 KNOWLES

As Farragut slowly ascended the rigging ratline by ratline, Captain Drayton noted his position and ordered Quartermaster Knowles to take a piece of lead line and secure the Admiral.

What followed is best told in Knowles' own words, "I went up with a piece of lead line and made it fast to one of the forward shrouds and then took it around the admiral to the after shroud and made it fast there. The admiral said, 'Never mind, I'm all right', but I went ahead and obeyed orders."

SLIDE: 36 ENTRANCE TO MOBILE BAY

As the column neared the fort, the TENNESSEE which had been behind Fort Morgan together with the gunboats now took a position enfilading the channel and opened a galling fire.

The monitors and the column of wooden vessels approached the

line of torpedoes and were headed for the narrow gate in the channel. Captain Craven in the TECUMSEH was about three hundred yards ahead of the BROOKLYN, when he saw that he could not pass inside the buoy which marked the channel; turned his ship in order to swing clear. Incidentally, the TENNESSEE, which Craven had picked for his antagonist, had now drawn to the Westward. This is all we can infer in the light of succeeding events because the TECUMSEH now headed across the minefield directly for the TENNESSEE while the monitors followed the TECUMSEH. The BROOKLYN discovering certain objects in her path, stopped, and backed. Such an action by the column leader could have but one result. The BROOKLYN drifted down upon the HARTFORD and threw the column into confusion. Fortunately the flood tide kept the vessels headed and drifting up the channel in the right direction.

SLIDE: 39 DESTRUCTION OF TECUMSEH

The TECUMSEH when about two hundred yards from the TENNESSEE and still headed across the minefield, was suddenly seen to yaw crazily to port and then plunge bow foremost to the bottom. The stage was now set for a general fiasco and complete disaster. The BROOKLYN blocked the channel while the entire command was under a heavy enemy cross-fire. Farragut instantly signalled the BROOKLYN to go ahead but that vessel apparently was in the irons of indecision. Realizing the critical situation, Farragut backed the engines of the METACOMET and at the same time went ahead on the HARTFORD'S engines which swung the HARTFORD and her consort close under the stern of the BROOKLYN. As he passed this vessel a shout was heard that there were torpedoes ahead.

"Damn the torpedoes," exclaimed Farragut and then ordered both the HARTFORD and METACOMET to go full speed ahead. This maneuver brought the HARTFORD across the torpedo line about five hundred yards from Mobile Point and well to the Westward of the buoy and although the torpedoes could be heard scraping the HARTFORD'S bottom, fortunately none exploded. The BROOKLYN slowly took position astern of the HARTFORD which was now leading the column.

SLIDE: 40 BATTLE OF MOBILE BAY

The TENNESSEE whose commander, Admiral Buchanan, had served with Farragut in the U.S. Navy prior to the war, determined to concentrate his attack on the flagship and immediately headed for the HARTFORD. The HARTFORD easily avoided being rammed and while returning the fire of the TENNESSEE, continued her course up the Bay. As the TENNESSEE could not overtake the HARTFORD, Buchanan headed down the channel and paralleled the column of wooden ships astern, where the MONONGAHELA sheered out of column and attempted to ram. Only a glancing blow was received by the TENNESSEE which in turn raked the ONEIDA placing a shot through her boilers.

The HARTFORD had now reached the turn of the channel where she could bring her powerful broadside to bear on the Confederate gunboats. At the first salvo, the GAINES was reduced to a sinking condition. Farragut signalled his gunboats to chase these vessels whereupon the METACOMET cut her lashings and entered upon the pursuit. Hardly had the pursuit commenced when a thick^{rain}/squall came up completely obscuring both vessels. Under cover of the

squall the GAINES and MORGAN headed about for Fort Morgan which they reached in safety. The SELMA, however, continued her course and when the squall cleared the METACOMBET opened fire, whereupon the Confederate surrendered.

Three hours after getting underway, the fleet had safely passed the fort and the HARTFORD was anchored in the deepest part of the channel. It was Farragut's intention to attack the TENNESSEE as soon as breakfast had been finished. It was evident that Farragut expected Buchanan to take advantage of his light draft and long range guns to destroy the wooden vessels at his leisure. However, Buchanan seemed to have been obsessed with the idea of sinking the HARTFORD. Soon the TENNESSEE was observed approaching from under the guns of Fort Morgan. It was then apparent that Buchanan had determined to engage in the last thing an experienced naval officer would conceive - a melee with the Union fleet at close ranges.

SLIDE: 35 C.S.S. TENNESSEE

Farragut immediately directed the monitors to attack her and signalled the wooden vessels to endeavor to ram. As the wooden vessels were faster than the monitors, they arrived on the scene first and the MONONGAHELA struck the TENNESSEE squarely on the starboard beam followed by the LACKAWANNA which rammed her on the port side. The two blows were struck within a period of five

SLIDE: 41 HARTFORD AND TENNESSEE AT CLOSE QUARTERS

minutes. The HARTFORD was next on the scene and the TENNESSEE turned toward her with the result that the two vessels met head on, the HARTFORD fired seven nine-inch guns against the side of

her antagonist without effect. In fact the combined fire of the fleet was glancing off the TENNESSEE'S side without apparent damage. As the LACKAWANNA was maneuvering to repeat her attack she collided with the HARTFORD'S port quarter without serious damage.

SLIDE: 40 BATTLE OF MOBILE BAY

The situation changed with the arrival of the monitors especially the CHICKASAW which took her position about fifty yards astern of the TENNESSEE and with her eleven inch guns fired shot after shot at the rate of nearly two a minute. The effect on the TENNESSEE was immediate. This heavy fire loosened her plates, carried away her steering gear and smokepipe and jammed three port shutters which placed that number of guns out of commission.

SLIDE: 42 SURRENDER OF TENNESSEE

Buchanan was wounded very severely by an iron splinter and turned the command over to Captain Johnston.

The situation of the TENNESSEE was now hopeless. Her steering gear had been destroyed. She could no longer be maneuvered. For over half an hour, she was unable to bring a single gun to bear upon her antagonist and soon the pounding of the CHICKASAW together with the fire of the other vessels showed further resistance useless. Johnston represented these facts to Buchanan who directed that the ship be surrendered.

SLIDE: 34 MOBILE BAY

With the surrender of the TENNESSEE the battle of Mobile Bay ended; the engagement had lasted less than three hours.

With the land forces cooperating in a combined offensive against the forts, they were soon to fall. Fort Powell was blown up and evacuated the day of the battle. On the following day, Fort Gaines surrendered to General Grange and on the twenty-third, Fort Morgan fell.

Thus Mobile Bay came under the complete control of the Union arms and although the city remained uncaptured, that port thereafter ceased to exist as a Confederate source of supply from the outside world.

SLIDE: 43 ADMIRAL FARRAGUT

In Farragut's work up the Mississippi River, at New Orleans, and finally at Mobile he demonstrated his fitness for high command.

His estimates of the broad situation always pointed to the best general course.

His plans were bold in conception.

His preparations were thorough.

He stuck to his plans.

In execution he met emergencies with quick, courageous, and sound decisions.

These brought him success.

Because of the fine military character of Admiral Farragut the American Navy can point with pride to the important part it played in the preservation of the Union of the United States.

