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NAVAL OPERATIONS OF THE CIVIL WAR -- Part I.
(At sea and on the coasts)

Yesterday Colonel Wright described the more important aspects of the land campaigns of the Civil War. Today we will examine the major Naval and Joint Operations of that conflict.

In the first section of this presentation I will attempt to cover, very briefly, the outstanding activities of the Navy, at sea and on the coasts, with the exception of the attacks on Fort Fisher. The latter, as well as the major river operations, will be discussed by Colonel Peck, later this afternoon.

Colonel Wright discussed the general Political and Economic factors involved; but I wish to emphasize two points:

The great dependency of the South upon imports and exports; and the significance of Great Britain's attitude in the early phases.

The Prime Minister of that country openly stated that the belligerency of the Confederacy had been recognized so that the United States might be disrupted and thus made a less dangerous commercial rival to his country. The interruption of trade with the South meant idleness to British cotton mills, and would also reduce her market for many exports. This situation certainly did not urge England to strict neutrality.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS:

About one-fifth of the Navy's commissioned personnel "Went South," but almost the entire enlisted force retained their allegiance to the Union.

The morale of the Navy was generally good, but there were

some superannuated and inefficient officers. One captain in command afloat and the Commandants at Norfolk and Pensacola were nearly 70 years of age. The 5,000 enlisted personnel were reasonably well trained and experienced but, by the end of the war, the Navy's enlisted strength had grown from 5,000 to 50,000. Officers and men were taken in from the Merchant Marine, where there were, fortunately, many available and, in general, these recruits proved remarkably satisfactory. Midshipmen then at the Naval Academy became Lieutenants before they reached the age of 19.

In the North, after certain incompetents had been weeded out, the officers placed in high command were reasonably efficient. Unquestionably, Admiral Farragut was the greatest naval personality of the war.

The North was also most fortunate in its new and efficient Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, who, although he had no experience in naval affairs, took vigorous hold of the situation. He was ably assisted by Mr. Fox. ^{The Asst. Sec.} This gentleman had served in the Navy for eighteen years and then engaged, very successfully, in civilian pursuits. Fox was the professional adviser, and Welles had the vision to give him great latitude in planning operations and in choosing men to carry them out. It was not the business of secretaries to command but to select commanders, and, on the whole, these gentlemen exercised remarkable judgment in their appointments.

In the South the morale was high and there were sufficient

trained officers for the very limited number of southern ships but there were practically no seamen.

The Confederacy had no opportunity to develop outstanding naval leaders although several of their officers, notably "Alabama" Semmes, proved themselves to be very able cruiser warfare captains.

CHARACTER OF THEATER OF OPERATIONS.

The Atlantic Coast of the Confederacy from Cape Henry to Key West covered a distance of approximately 1,000 miles. The fringe of long, low sandy ~~is~~^llets, extending along most of this area, formed sounds and inlets, particularly in North Carolina, ideally located for use by shallow draft blockade runners which operated from nearby neutral islands.

A glance at the chart of the North Carolina coast shows that the Sounds may be entered on either side of Hatteras, but Hatteras Inlet was the best and most convenient for the distribution of supplies to the Confederate Army in Virginia, and this area produced large quantities of naval stores and cotton that furnished ample outbound cargoes. Newbern on the Neuse River and Morehead, a few miles to the South, were rail heads.

About one hundred miles to the southwest, Wilmington - also at a rail head - lay on the Cape Fear River protected from seaward by Forts Fisher and Caswell.

Along the South Carolina coast, Georgetown and the Santee River offered possibilities, but Charleston with its labyrinth of inter-connecting sounds and rivers was the ideal port of

entry. Savannah could also be reached through various entrances in South Carolina and Northern Georgia.

Further to the southward along the Georgia and Florida coasts a similar system of waters existed but, except for Cumberland Sound, they were of minor importance due to their distance from the battle area and their lack of out-bound cargoes.

From Bermuda and Nassau to the principal ports used by the blockade runners, in North and South Carolina, is some six hundred miles.

The Gulf Coast is generally low and either sandy or marshy. There are occasional bluffs. A large portion of this coast has sounds and inlets that can be easily entered by light draft vessels. The principal ports were Galveston, New Orleans, Mobile and Pensacola. The latter had an excellent bay for a fleet base. The Navy Yard here had been surrendered to the Florida Militia prior to the outbreak of war.

Control of the Chesapeake Bay Area was of great strategic significance as such control would give to the successful party freedom of action for both land and sea forces in this vital theater. The Potomac, in particular, was of great importance. Due to the proximity of Washington to the Confederate lines and the doubted loyalty of Maryland, it was very desirable to maintain the capitals water line of communication.

ARMED FORCES.

The North had unquestioned advantages in sea power and facilities to increase this advantage but valuable time was

required for the tremendous expansion necessary to make the Navy an effective weapon against 3,500 miles of sea coast as well as to furnish essential support to the Army on inland waterways.

At the close of the war, the Federal list of vessels showed nearly 1100 of all types, ranging in speed from 14-knots to "2-knots upstream." Of these, almost half were built and half purchased during the war.

When Lincoln was inaugurated, the vessels comprising the Navy were scattered over the world, with but four ships in Northern waters ready for service. Strange to relate, the three latest and most powerful steam frigates were laid up.

At this time the Atlantic and Gulf waters of the United States, including the West Indies, Mexico and Central America, were the cruising grounds of a single command. This area was now divided into three separate commands. The West Indies Squadron was given charge of the nation's interests in these islands as well as in Mexico and Central America.

The Atlantic Squadron's area included the Atlantic Coast as far south as Florida. The Gulf Squadron was assigned the North American Coast from Florida to the Rio Grande.

Some 35 vessels were built in Southern yards during the war, the largest being of the TENNESSEE type, about 150 feet in length, with iron armor over wooden hulls. The great weakness of all the Southern ironclads was their propelling machinery.

The number of vessels in the Confederate States Navy - built, bought, seized, or captured - reached a total of two

hundred and fifteen but only three of these were capable of being used as actual men-of-war.

Over fifty vessels were commissioned as commerce raiders, including the famous ALABAMA and SHENANDOAH. One submarine was given a letter of marque and another, the HUNLEY, sank with the HOUSATONIC, which she torpedoed off Charleston in 1864.

Privateering was attempted by the South in the first part of the struggle, but the lack of accessible home ports and the early denial of neutral facilities for the disposal of prizes destroyed hopes of gain; consequently, such activities died a natural death.

In addition to vessels actually commissioned in the Confederate States Navy there were many blockade runners, some owned by the Confederacy and others owned abroad. Some fifteen hundred of these runners were captured or destroyed during the war.

LOGISTIC SUPPORT.

The lack of facilities, especially iron works prevented the South from answering the monitors with anything more effective than iron-plated rams and as previously stated but three of these were actual matches for the Union vessels.

The North, after some preparation, was in a position to turn out ships of all classes.

Two distinct types of vessels were employed by the Union in the blockade operations. These were sailing craft and

steamers. The sailing craft presented no logistic difficulties but the steamers required continual refueling and fresh water. It was quickly proved that each blockading squadron required at least one base near at hand for such logistic support.

The Confederate naval forces operating in American waters were never distant from their bases. The commerce raiders depended primarily on sail but when fuel and provisions were required had but little difficulty in obtaining such supplies from neutral countries. (Had neutral colliers)

ENEMY COURSES OF ACTION.

The South was not in a position to conduct offensive naval operations and confined their fighting craft to defensive activities in support of their land forces. The MERRIMAC was an exception and for a moment threatened the Federal supremacy at sea. But the major task undertaken by the Confederate Navy was commerce destruction.

DETERMINATION OF COMMANDER'S OWN BEST COURSES OF ACTION.

Mr. Lincoln considered, at an early date, the establishment of a blockade, but there were many objections to this step. Such a declaration might and ^{eventually} did result in the recognition of the belligerent rights of the South by foreign powers and tended to antagonize such nations; furthermore, the Navy was in no position to make a blockade effective.

However, when President Davis invited Southern citizens to fit out privateers, Mr. Lincoln's hand was forced. In two

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proclamations, on the 19th and 27th of April, he declared a blockade of the entire Southern Coast. This proclamation, because of the political reasons given previously, was very much qualified. Ships would only be seized: "when approaching or attempting to leave any of the said ports; - the ship must approach with a view to violate the blockade; - the ship could be captured only when ^{on} its second attempt to enter the same port."

It was obvious that steps had to be taken to make the blockade effective, consequently the President convened a board - "to examine into the topographical and hydrographical peculiarities of the Southern ports, their defenses and their importance to the Union."

The Board was composed of two naval officers, an Army Engineer, and a member of the Coast Survey. It was our first Joint Board.

This Body determined upon two major objectives:

First. To isolate the Confederate States west of the Mississippi by Joint Army and Navy operations working up from the Gulf and effecting a junction with similar undertakings working down stream from the North.

Second. To close every inlet by which the products of the South could find their way into the markets of the world, thus to shut out not only war materials but also materials essential to the life of the people.

Resulting from these recommendations and other conditions, the tasks eventually assigned the Navy were:

- (1) To blockade the coast from Norfolk to the Rio Grande.
- (2) To capture various ports on the coast.
- (3) To acquire control of the principal bays and sounds.
- (4) To assist the Army in opening the Mississippi, and other rivers.
- (5) To destroy all Confederate cruisers that might be built or hired, and otherwise to protect the commerce of the North.

OPERATIONS.

Immediately after the fall of Fort Sumter the Union Navy suffered its major disaster of the war, and that without the firing of a shot.

This was the loss of the Gosport or Norfolk Navy Yard. No proper steps had been taken to protect the valuable Union property in Virginia.

At the last moment, an abortive attempt was made to save the vessels and munitions of the Union, but Commodore Paulding, who had charge of this late and ill-directed effort, was as plainly a victim of panic as Commandant McCauley. Finally, measures taken to destroy the ships, munitions, ordnance and facilities of the yard were poorly planned. The moment the Northern forces had withdrawn the local people rushed in, extinguished the fuses attached to mines, and saved many of the buildings which were just starting to burn.

The Union lost four ships, ready for sea, including the later famous MERRIMAC, as well as some other vessels, but the great blow was the capture of a large number of powerful guns.

Later Admiral Porter expressed the belief that the Confederates could not have armed their various fortifications for over a year had it not been for the capture of the ordnance at Norfolk and Pensacola.

To maintain control of the Potomac, Commander Ward, in May, 1861, organized a small flotilla. This flotilla was active and efficient but the operations of the Confederate Army, culminated by the establishment of heavy batteries (with guns from Norfolk Navy Yard) practically closed the river to navigation by the middle of October.

In the following spring, the movements of the Army of the Potomac against Richmond compelled the Confederates to abandon their posts on the Potomac and the river again came under Union control.

✓ Returning to the recommendations of the Joint Board, we see that destruction of enemy cruisers and the blockade of the Southern coasts were distinctly naval functions. But to maintain such a blockade, as well as to lessen the number of Southern exits to foreign commerce, required the seizure of various Southern ports and the gaining of control of important bays and sounds.

For the latter tasks, joint operations were in order, both to insure the capture as well as to hold such points. In this

case, the Navy had paramount interest strategically, but not necessarily tactically.

The arrival of the NIAGARA off Charleston early in May, 1861, inaugurated the blockade of that port; but as runners were passing through inlets of the North Carolina Sounds almost at will, it was decided to try out the "Stone Blockade" at Hatteras Inlet.
(1)

This task necessitated joint operations to reduce the two forts protecting the inlet. Stringham had never been optimistic as to the success of a "Stone Blockade" and consequently, after the forts had been captured, in the last days of August, he persuaded General Butler, who commanded the troops, to hold these works. This action not only insured denial of the passage to the Confederates but gave the Union its first foothold on the Southern Coast and provided a base and entrance to the Sounds.

In the meantime, the Gulf Blockading Squadrons, charged with all operations in the Gulf as well as to carry out the plan for the opening up the western rivers from the south, had reached a strength of twenty vessels. Large forces were placed off Galveston and New Orleans. New Orleans was being used extensively for Southern shipping and



(1) One of the first ideas suggested by the Joint Board was to block the various entrances to Confederate ports by sinking vessels loaded with stone in the channels.

Flag Officer McKean had sent the steam sloop RICHMOND, two sailing sloops and a small side wheeler to the head of the passes.

At New Orleans the Confederates had housed over an old Boston tugboat with heavy timbers and railroad iron and fitted her with an underwater ram of cast iron, naming her the MANASSAS. The Union forces knew of the MANASSAS but took no precautions and the latter, in a sortie on 12 October, succeeded in ramming the RICHMOND, making a small hole below the water line. This blow, however, damaged the ram's engines and she steamed slowly back towards the city.

Fire rafts were now released by the Confederates. These rafts drifted ashore and did no damage, but they were sufficient to stampede the Union vessels. In the hurry of retreat, the RICHMOND and VINCENNES grounded on the bar and the latter was for a time actually abandoned.

Throughout the war the Navy operated continuously on the Eastern inland waterways. These were usually joint operations and were conducted either in support of the Army or to consolidate the points captured on the coast.

The work of these units was rarely, if ever, spectacular, and there is little appreciation of the fact that it was their unseen but steady pressure on the flank, as well as their logistic help, which saved McClellan's Army at Harrison's Landing (following the Peninsular Campaign of 1862) and made possible Grant's campaign to the southward in 1864.

At their maximum, the Federal Forces in the Eastern inland waters reached a total of seventy-five vessels - mostly small craft, but including some monitors.

The number of engagements which occurred in these waters is so great as to preclude a detailed study in this narrative. Consequently, we will pass on to the next outstanding event off the Eastern coasts.

Hatteras Inlet was fairly satisfactory for supporting operations off the Northern Confederate coast, but there was no base conveniently located for the units blockading Charleston and Savannah.

In August, Mr. Lincoln directed that a joint expedition be prepared to seize such a base. Flag Officer Goldsborough was ordered to command the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron, operating off the Virginia and North Carolina coasts, and Flag Officer DuPont was given the South Atlantic Squadron, which covered the area from Cape Florida to the Northern boundary of South Carolina.

The latter officer was directed to seize two bases, making his own selection from four that had been named by the Joint Board. He was to be assisted by General T.W. Sherman, with twelve thousand troops.

It is interesting to note that DuPont and Captain Davis, his Chief of Staff, had both been members of the Board and that General Sherman had studied all the Board's reports and discussed them with the Naval Commanders.

The two Commanders acted on the principle of cooperation. A paragraph from General Scott's letter to General Sherman is worthy of remembrance:-

"Cordiality and deference on the part of our land forces toward those of our Navy, in the joint service in question, need scarcely be enjoined. To this end free and frequent conferences between the joint commanders are recommended* * * * *"

In November, 1861, the combined force succeeded in capturing Port Royal, the objective selected by DuPont and Sherman.

This gave the Navy a splendid base from which to carry on the blockade. From it naval and military detachments spread along the coast and effect lodgments in many places. Among these was Tybee Island off the entrance to the Savannah River, the occupation of which made the blockade of that important port much more effective.

While the operations so far described were going on, two events occurred of great political significance.

The offensive against privateers resulted in the capture of the SAVANNAH operating under a letter of marque of Mr. Davis. Hot heads in the Federal Government insisted that such vessels were pirates, and the crew was actually landed in New York for trial. The idea was promptly dropped, however, when the Confederacy announced that Union officers captured at Bull Run were being held as hostages for the safety of the SAVANNAH's crew. The Confederates were exchanged and this question did not arise again.

The other affair was the well known seizure of Mason and Slidell, Confederate Commissioners, enroute to Great Britain on board the British steamer TRENT.

The action of Captain Wilkes of the SAN JACINTO was widely acclaimed by the North. Great Britain felt otherwise, however, and made preparations for war, actually embarking a large body of troops for service in Canada.

It was only through the tact of the American Minister at St. James, Mr. Adams, and similar tact on the part of Lord Lyons in Washington that hostilities were averted.

The next operation of importance was the combined expedition against the defenses of Roanoke Island and the capture of Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds. Port Roanoke was the key to the chain of waterways from Hatteras Inlet to the Dismal Swamp Canal which enabled the Confederates to cover Norfolk and maintain their communications with Richmond. Some heavy iron-clads were under construction in the Roanoke River and, to protect these, as well as this important area, many guns had been mounted and sunken obstructions placed in the Channel.

A Union expedition under Commander Rowan and General Burnside, captured the forts defending Roanoke Island after a short engagement on 7 and 8 February and destroyed several Confederate gunboats.

The two services cooperated whole-heartedly and thus gained complete control of the Sounds of North Carolina.

The South now prepared to make its strongest and most spectacular effort to neutralize the sea supremacy of the Federal Government.

Following a plan suggested by Lieutenant S.M. Brooke, a

former Union officer, the partially burned MERRIMAC was raised and converted into an iron-clad.

The idea of an iron-clad was not new, and at this time nearly one hundred armored vessels were built or building in Europe, but there were no armored vessels in the Union Navy.

Work on the MERRIMAC was begun two months after the opening of war. News of this alarmed the North, and three or four months later the Navy Department signed contracts for three iron-clads. The smallest of these - the MONITOR - was to be completed in one hundred days.

As each side was well informed of the progress of the other, there ensued a shipbuilding race of grave importance. The North had the advantage of superior facilities; the South had a long start and an intensity of feeling stimulated by the constant pressure of her enemy.

The MONITOR was built at Green Point, Long Island, and left New York for the Capes in tow of a tug on 6 March, 1862. She had a most dangerous voyage, with many material casualties, but by great courage and perseverance made the Capes and arrived off Fortress Monroe just in the nick of time.

The MERRIMAC, re-christened VIRGINIA, had been placed under the command of Flag Officer Franklin Buchanan, with Lieutenant (Catesby ap Rogers) Jones as Executive. Her superstructure was covered with rolled iron bars and she was fitted with a ram. The gun crews were selected from artillerymen at Richmond.

On 8 March, in a very one-sided engagement in Hampton Roads, the MERRIMAC, or rather VIRGINIA, sank the CUMERLAND and

destroyed the frigate CONGRESS. When the iron-clad retired, at dark, she had lost two men killed, and nineteen wounded; included among the latter was Flag Officer Buchanan, who turned the vessel over to Lieutenant Jones.

To the relief of the despondent Union Forces, the MONITOR reached Hampton Roads at nine o'clock Saturday evening, and at eight o'clock the next morning, when the VIRGINIA stood down to attack the stranded MINNESOTA, there began the first fight between iron-clads, - one of the strangest encounters on record.

For four hours the two vessels fought, part of the time touching each other, without inflicting serious damage and with only a single casualty. *once*

Twice Jones thought he had silenced the MONITOR's fire. The first time she had simply hauled off into shoal water, to hoist a fresh supply of shot into the turret. Later a shell broke one of the iron logs forming the MONITOR's pilothouse, throwing splinters into the eyes of Lieutenant Worden. Temporarily blinded, and believing that the pilothouse was seriously disabled, the Union Commander directed the pilot to sheer off.

As to whether or not the MONITOR returned to the fray before the VIRGINIA made for NORFOLK, the sources of information are hopelessly in conflict. But the VIRGINIA was leaking forward, and her pilots insisted that if she did not return to Norfolk at once she could not cross the bar until the next day. Jones, with the advice of his lieutenants, gave the order to return home.

The panic in Washington and the cities of the Northern

seaboard which followed the receipt of news of the destruction of the CUMBERLAND and CONGRESS is well known. The battle between the MONITOR and the VIRGINIA did not end the alarm. The President ordered that the MONITOR - "be not too much exposed", and that she should in no event attempt to proceed to Norfolk unattended.

As a successful sortie by the VIRGINIA might play havoc with the movement of McClellan's forces to the Peninsula, neutralizing the Confederate iron-clad became and object of capital importance. However, the extreme caution shown by the Union forces on the occasion when the VIRGINIA again offered battle suggests that the Navy was influenced by the theory "that containment of the enemy was equivalent to victory."

Nevertheless, the VIRGINIA did not break the blockade and she was destroyed when the Confederates evacuated Norfolk.

The Federal Navy immediately began the construction of improved monitors, which were not only useful at home but had a wholesome effect on would-be Confederate sympathizers, or rather, anti-Unionists, overseas.

The next major operation of the Navy was the capture of New Orleans, plans for which were submitted to the President by Mr. Fox.

The object of the capture of the city was to permit an advance up the Mississippi to join hands with the River Squadrons. The plan was to have a mortar flotilla bombard the forts below the town; then for wooden ships to run past these forts and take

possession of the city, which was to be held by ten thousand troops. The Department's concept was therefore a purely naval attack. The proposition at the time was considered one of the boldest and seemingly most foolhardy plans that had ever been seriously contemplated. Its success depended entirely upon the selection of a fearless and well balanced commander. The whole navy list was scanned to be the one best fitted.

Farragut, in the HARTFORD, reached the base at Ship Island in the latter part of February, 1862, and for two months perfected, with General Benjamin F. Butler, the arrangement for attack.

About the middle of April, leaving Butler and his troops at Ship Island, he moved his Squadron of 43 vessels up to a point just below Forts Jackson and St. Philip, which were at the head of the passes, some 70 miles below New Orleans.

For six days and 6 nights, the mortar boats, under Porter, bombarded Fort Jackson.

Then becoming very doubtful as to reducing the forts with ships, Farragut changed his plans and decided to run by. The weight of tradition and long-established rules of war were against the proposition of running the forts and the consensus of opinion among the officers of the squadron was by no means in favor of it.

Opposing Farragut were the two forts on opposite sides of the river (where the latter formed a sharp bend), a force of river steamers, some fire rafts, channel obstructions, a floating

battery, some weak fortifications further up the river, a few thousand militiamen in the city itself, and the almost completed iron-clad LOUISIANA of sixteen guns. This ship was said to be the most powerful vessel afloat and, if completed in time, might well have been a match for Farragut's entire squadron. Fortunately for the North, her propelling machine^r was yet inoperative and she could act only as a floating battery during the battle.

On the night of April 24th, Farragut, with seventeen ships, stood up the river. He left his mortar schooners and several other craft below, but these vessels were to bombard the fort during his passage.

After an eventful engagement with the forts and Confederate ships - interspersed with collisions - fire rafts - ramming - and entanglement with logs, thirteen vessels of the fleet, considerably damaged, reached Quarantine, just as day was breaking.

Farragut then sent word to General Butler to proceed to a point five miles above the defenses, and from there to proceed in gunboats to New Orleans. The forts, thus cut off from their supplies, would ultimately be starved out and captured.

Farragut pushed on for New Orleans, overpowered the remaining fortifications enroute, and reached the city the next day.

General Butler acted with energy, and three days after the naval engagement his vanguard of four hundred men reached Quarantine. The same night a mutiny occurred in the lower forts, and part of their garrisons surrendered; the next day the forts themselves surrendered. Two days later Butler arrived at New

Orleans, and on May 1st, Farragut turned the city over to him.

By the summer of 1862 the South retained only four ports of importance - Mobile and Galveston in the Gulf; and Wilmington and Charleston on the Atlantic.

It was decided that the main effort of the Gulf Squadron would be on the Mississippi, - that DuPont should attack Charleston, - and that the blockade of Mobile, Galveston and Wilmington was to be maintained.

Blockade running at these points had been reduced to specially designed small, low, fast craft. This type was difficult to capture but, on the other hand, could transport but small amounts of goods.

In January, 1863, two Confederate rams made a sortie from Charleston, captured a Union ship, and badly damaged another before retiring. The South, backed by foreign Consuls and the Captain of a British warship at Charleston, claimed that the blockade had been raised. However, the Federal vessels were on station the following day and this force was promptly strengthened by the arrival of the NEW IRONSIDES and two monitors.

At the insistence of the Department, on April 7th, DuPont attacked the forts with seven Ericsson monitors, the iron-clad cruiser NEW IRONSIDES, and the experimental monitor KEOKUK. An obstruction across the entrance, supposedly equipped with mines, deterred the captains from engaging as closely as had been planned. But the fight, which lasted for an hour, was as hot as anyone might wish, although suspected shoal water kept the powerful NEW IRONSIDES out of range.

As darkness approached, DuPont gave the signal to withdraw. His ships had been hit four hundred and thirty times; the KEOKUK was sinking; and five other monitors were more or less damaged. During the night DuPont decided not to repeat the attack. - "We have met with a sad repulse," he said, "I shall not turn it into a great disaster."

Later, formidable joint operations were conducted against Charleston, and after extensive efforts several of the forts were reduced. Entrance to the harbor was never gained, but the port was closed to blockade runners. It was not until 1865 that General Sherman, assisted by feints from seaward, outflanked the city and forced its evacuation. In all, the naval operations here, cost the Federals twenty-two vessels.

In 1864, the Confederates held Galveston and Mobile in the Gulf. The former was of no great advantage; but Mobile was well connected both by rail and water with important points of the South.

Farragut had early recommended that operations be conducted against Mobile, but the Department kept him employed on the Mississippi until the surrender of Port Hudson in July, 1863. He then returned to New York for a much needed rest.

Now the wisdom of his recommendation was becoming more and more apparent:

Since the fall of New Orleans the defenses of Mobile had been greatly strengthened and the Confederates were building a formidable ram which would not only be capable of adding materially to the defenses of the bay but might well drive the block-

ading squadrons off.

Consequently, in January, 1864, Farragut returned to the Gulf with orders to institute operations against this important point before the ram TENNESSEE could be completed.

The city of Mobile is situated thirty miles from the Gulf. The entrance was between Mobile Point and Dauphin Island. Fort Morgan, the principal defense, was located on the Point; Fort Gaines was on the Island. The distance between these forts was three miles. Between the Island and the mainland were only shoal channels, and the deepest of these was protected by a small earth work - Fort Powell. The Channel between Fort Morgan and Dauphin Island, except for a narrow gate a hundred yards from the Fort, was further protected by spiling and a triple row of torpedoes (which would now be known as contact mines).

After a reconnaissance, Farragut reported that he would require an iron-clad and about five thousand troops to make a successful attack. It was not until the last of July that troops arrived and August 4th that the four monitors assigned reported. On the fifth Farragut advanced to the assault.

Had he attacked without the iron-clads, disaster would have ensued, but now the TENNESSEE was ready.

The latter had been designed solely for the special work in Mobile Bay. She was heavily armored and well protected from everything but ramming. Her battery consisted of six long-range rifled guns, and she carried a formidable ram. Her main weakness was her engines, which gave her but six knots. In addition to

the ram, the Confederates had three river gunboats. The defenses at Mobile were therefore much stronger than those Farragut had encountered at New Orleans.

Farragut wished a westerly wind to blow the smoke from the ships on to the forts, and a flood tide to carry any damaged ships past the defenses. Both conditions were present on the day of battle.

The plan called for the light vessels to be lashed to the port sides of the heavy wooden ships; the monitors were to take station ahead of and to starboard of the main column.

When the TENNESSEE opened fire, Captain Craven in the TECHMSEH saw that he could not pass inside the buoy which marked the limit of the minefield, so he headed across the mines directly for the ram. The monitor was seen to yaw to port and then plunge, bow foremost, to the bottom. The BROOKLYN, sighting objects in the water, stopped and backed, fouling the HARTFORD and throwing the entire column into confusion. Here it was that the flood tide saved the day. The ships drifted in the right direction.

Farragut signalled the BROOKLYN to proceed and swung the HARTFORD and her consort close under the stern of the BROOKLYN.

A shout was heard that there were torpedoes. "Damn the torpedoes," exclaimed the Admiral, and ordered the HARTFORD full speed ahead.

The HARTFORD was now leading the column and the BROOKLYN attained position astern. Admiral Buchanan headed the TENNESSEE

for the HARTFORD, but the latter easily avoided the ram and, returning her fire, continued up the Bay. The TENNESSEE, unable to keep up, paralleled the Union column heading down stream. The MONCNGAHELA sheered out and attempted to ram, but the Confederate iron-clad received only a glancing blow.

A broadside from the HARTFORD drove two Confederate gunboats under the guns of Fort Morgan; another Confederate gunboat surrendered.

Three hours after getting underway, the fleet had passed the Fort and the HARTFORD was anchored in the middle of the Channel.

It was Farragut's intention to attack the TENNESSEE after breakfast, but Buchanan immediately advanced against the HARTFORD.

Three wooden ships attacked the iron-clad in rapid succession, but the Northern shot glanced harmlessly off the iron sides. However, the arrival of the remaining monitors changed the situation and under their heavy fire, the TENNESSEE became helpless. Buchanan, badly wounded, again turned over his command this time to Johnston. In half an hour, unable to bring a gun to bear, the latter surrendered and the Battle of Mobile Bay was over.

The Union Army forces, under General Granger, had landed one thousand five hundred men on Dauphin Island (on the 3rd); consequently, the forts were doomed. Fort Powell was blown up and Forts Gaines and Morgan surrendered.

Although the city had not been captured, the Bay was under

complete control of the Union arms and that port ceased to exist as a source of supplies for the Confederacy.

Except for Wilmington, North Carolina, the Southern coast was now thoroughly bottled up and the blockade was actually throttling the Confederacy.

The Confederates had now completed the ram ALBEMARLE on the Roanoke River and this one vessel was threatening the Union control of the Sounds. But Lieutenant Cushing in a daring exploit destroyed her. With the ALBEMARLE out of the way Plymouth was recaptured and the blockade remained effective.

While the North was exerting every effort to make the blockade more and more effective, the South resorted to the only possible retaliation - Cruiser Warfare.

The latter was of necessity the weapon employed by the South. It was much more striking and romantic than the prosaic day-after-day blockade and has been the subject of much discussion, not only because of the blow to the carrying trade of the United States, but because of the long controversy with England which was ended by the Treaty of Washington and the Geneva award.

This is too well known to discuss here, but we may recall that of the total of nineteen cruisers that succeeded in making captures of Union vessels, eleven were incorporated in the claims for damages before the Geneva Commissioners. The amount claimed for direct damages caused by these eleven vessels on account of the destruction of ships and cargoes was over Seventeen millions of dollars, all of which except four millions

was caused by the cruises of the ALABAMA and SHEPANDOAH.

Considering that almost all losses inflicted on Union shipping were due to these vessels, it is a fair estimate that the entire direct losses amounted to around Twenty millions of dollars.

The Indirect damage caused by the cruisers included:

(1)

Transfer of American shipping to neutral flags.

(1) About 803,303 tons.

(2)

Diversion of carrying trade to foreign vessels , and

(3)

Enhanced war insurance premiums.

One very indirect loss, mentioned by the United States case against Great Britain, was the expenditure for the pursuit of these cruisers. Some fifty Union vessels were, at one time or another, engaged in the search for Confederate commerce destroyers.

It would appear at first that the Federal Government was very lax in protecting its commerce, but it must be remembered that the blockade rightly demanded first consideration.

The Secretary of the Navy in his Report of 1864, stated:

"It has been the policy of this Department, rigidly adhered to under all circumstances and from which it has not allowed itself to be diverted, never to permit the efficiency of the blockade to be impaired."

The great success of the ALABAMA was in a large measure due to the fact that she was operating, in the main, against sailing vessels which of necessity stuck to the sailing routes. Also Semmes carefully calculated the long time required for

word of his operations to reach the Federal Government, and then shifted his hunting grounds before Union cruisers could reach the scene. Furthermore, these Southern

(2) In 1860, two-thirds of the commerce of New York was carried in American bottoms: in 1863, three-quarters was carried in foreign registered ships.

(3) Over \$1,000,000.

commerce destroyers could keep the seas for long periods, as most of their passages - and even captures - were made under sail

The final destruction of the ALABAMA by the Kearsarge was in many ways unique and the recriminations that ensued, including the DEERHOUND episode, are very interesting. However, these are so well known that they will not be reviewed here. Suffice it to say, that the only important error in judgment made by Semmes was in accepting action with Winslow, but such an error was a difficult one for a man of courage and pride to resist.

The night following Grant's capture of Petersburg, Abraham Lincoln spent on Admiral Porter's flagship - the MALVERN. Lying in the James was the Confederate States Navy - three iron-clads and five wooden vessels under "Alabama" Semmes, now an Admiral. This force with the batteries on the bluffs, as well as the obstructions placed in the river by the Federals, prevented a further advance by the Union Navy; but the presence of Porter held Semmes impotent.

Mr. Lincoln waiting for the evacuation of the Confederate capital, asked if the Navy could not do something to make history of this occasion. The Admiral answered that it was doing its

duty in containing the enemy's iron-clads. "But", said the President, "can't we make a noise?" Porter opened fire and in twenty minutes the Confederate vessels blew up - entirely due to steps taken by their own crews.

With this - its first and last spectacular act - the Navy's work was done.

SUMMARY OF NAVAL OPERATIONS OF THE CIVIL WAR.

The naval tactics employed in the Civil War bear but little resemblance to those of today, but - despite this, and the fact that the major efforts were on land - the war was an excellent example of the effectiveness of sea power.

Without the economic pressure of the blockade and the assistance given the Army on the inland waterways, there is no doubt but that the South could have at least prolonged the struggle. It must, also, be remembered that the Union Navy was a strong factor in discouraging any would-be Confederate Allies over sea.

On the other hand, as in the World War, the possibility of commerce destruction on a grand scale by a distinctly inferior sea power was clearly demonstrated.

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