



# THE DAYBOOK<sup>®</sup>

CIVIL WAR NAVY SPECIAL EDITION

The foundation of any good history rests upon its primary source material. Historians, by training, interpret this material and explain an event's significance. Sometimes though, the actual participants' emotions and opinions are lost in the historical interpretation. This Special Edition of *The Daybook* sets aside the historian's craft, and allows the participants to speak directly, with only minimal abridgement allowed for space. This issue presents four types of source material: official log books, letters, diaries and reflective memoirs. Graphic material is provided by way of editorial cartoons pertaining to the U.S. Navy.



-Image of snake from the lithograph Scott's Great Snake by J.B. Elliot, 1861.



NAVAL HISTORY &  
HERITAGE COMMAND



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*The Daybook*'s purpose is to educate and inform readers on historical topics and museum related events. It is written by staff and volunteers.

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*"King Cotton Bound, or the Modern Prometheus" (1861 Punch Magazine engraving)*

# JUST THE FACTS- LOG BOOK ENTRIES



## Witness to the Beginning (1861)

### Deck Log, Steam Sloop USS *Pawnee*

“**A**pril 10-At 5:40 a.m., steaming down for Hampton Roads.

**April 12** At 5 a.m., Cape Romain light [north of Charleston] N.N.W. Went to quarters, loaded guns with shell. This ship got underway at 11:45 and steamed in toward the bar. The *Harriet Lane* and *Baltic* came out towards us and reported that the forts and batteries were firing on Fort Sumter.

From meridian to 4 p.m.: Came to anchor and made preparation to get out the boats. Forts on shore still firing. At 7 p.m., heavy squall; batteries on shore firing incessantly on Fort Sumter, to which she replied occasionally. From 8 p.m. to midnight: Fort Johnson firing on Fort Sumter; Fort Sumter silent.

**April 13**-Midnight to 4 a.m. During the

watch, a desultory fire kept up by the batteries on Fort Sumter. At 2 p.m. firing ceased from fort and batteries. Sent a boat in charge of Lieutenant Marcy with a flag of truce. From 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. The battery at Cumming's Point fired two shots in the direction of the boat with the flag of truce.

**April 14** From 8 a.m. to meridian: Appearances of great rejoicing in Charleston Harbor. Smoke still rising from Fort Sumter. 1 p.m. observed the American flag flying over Fort Sumter. At 2, a salute of 50 guns was fired and then flag was then hauled down. At 4 p.m., the so called Confederate flag was hoisted on Fort Sumter amid a general fire from all the forts and batteries.

**April 15** At 12 m. Commenced transferring the officers, men, and luggage from the



*Bombardment of Fort Sumter (Harper's Weekly engraving)*

*Isabel* to the *Baltic*. At 4 p.m., the *Isabel* returned to Charleston. The stops of the flag which waved over Fort Sumter during the attack were broken, and as it blew out from the main truck of the *Baltic*, it was saluted by the United States steamers and greeted by three cheers from the crews of the vessels. At 5:30, took our departure.”

**Deck Log, USS *Pawnee*. Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion, Volume 4. Richard Rush and Robert H. Woods, Editors. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896. 254-255.**

## USS *Monitor* Goes to War (1862)

### USS *Monitor*, Battle of Hampton Roads

“**T**hursday March 6th, 1862 From 8 to Meridian, clear & cold weather, wind from WNW. At 10:30 a.m. left the Navy Yard in company with, U.S. Steam Gunboats *Currituck* & *Sachem*, also steam tug *Seth Low*.

-Louis Stodder

From 12 to 4 PM first part cloudy, later part clear, with fresh breeze from Westward Crossed the bar & discharged the Pilot. At 4 PM, Sandy Hook light bore WNW. Distance 6 miles, Making 5 knots an hour by Log.

-Geo. Frederickson

From 4 to 6 PM wind west, weather with streaked clouds. Course S ½ W. 5 ¼ knots an hour. 6 P.M. Gun Boats *Currituck* & *Sachem* bore abaft the beam

-Webber

From 8 to midnight, fine weather.

At 8:30 made Barnegat light, beaming S by W, At 10.15 bore west & at 12 S.S.W. Speed 5 ¼ knots

-Geo. Frederickson

### Sunday March 9th/62

Comes in fine weather & calm At ½ past One piped all to quarters, hove up anchors, At 2 AM came to anchor again.

-Geo Frederickson

4 to 8 AM in fine weather & calm. At sunrise, saw 3 steamers lying under Sewalls Point. Made one out to be the Rebel Steamer *Merrimac*. At 7:20 got under weigh & stood towards her & piped all hands to quarters.

-J. Webber

From 8 to Meridian fine clear weather, the Rebel steamer advancing & opened fire on the *Minnesota*. 8:20 opened fire on the *Merrimac*, from that time until 12, constantly engaged with the *Merrimac*.

-Louis Stodder

From Meridian to 4 PM. Clear weather. At 12,30 rifled shell struck the Pilot House severely injuring Commander Worden. 1 PM, the *Merrimac* hauled off in disabled condition. Stood toward the *Minnesota* & received on board Ast. Sec Fox of the Navy.



“Professor Brother Jonathan USS Monitor” (Harper's Weekly engraving)

2 PM Capt. Worden left for Fort Monroe in Charge of Surgeon Logue.

-Geo. Frederickson

4 to 6 PM fine weather. I came to anchor alongside the *Minnesota*.

-J. Webber”

**Deck Log, USS *Monitor*, National Archives and Records Administration via The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia.**

## A Week on the Front Lines: The Ironclads Attack Charleston (1863)

### USS *New Ironsides*-Captain S.C. Rowan

“**S**eptember 2-From midnight to 4 a.m.: Hove up port anchor and stood up main channel, toward Fort Sumter, in company with the ironclad fleet, Fort Moultrie and Battery Gregg firing briskly on the monitors. At 1:40 a.m. came to, with port anchor under a heavy fire from the rebel batteries, Fort Gregg distant about 1,200 yards, Fort Sumter distant 1,700 yards, and bearing N.W. by W. At 1:50 opened with port battery on Cumming’s Point. At 2:30 opened with No. 1 gun on Fort Sumter. The ship swinging to the tide, the remainder of the battery would not bear. Firing the port battery slowly with 5-second shell at Battery Gregg, and firing No. 1 gun with 15-second shell at Fort Sumter. From 4 to 6: Hove up port anchor, the admiral having made signal “Discontinue action,” and steamed out of range. During the action, expended 50 rounds of ammunition. Ships was struck 7 times from Forts Moultrie and Gregg.

**September 5**-At 5:15 a.m., hove up starboard anchor and steamed up the main channel toward Fort Wagner. At 5:45 opened on Fort Wagner bearing W. 1/4N., distant 1,350 yards, Moultrie House bearing N., distant 2 miles. Firing port battery at Wagner, firing deliberately in rotation; the enemy at first replying briskly from Fort Gregg, the shot passing over and around us. At 7:35 a.m. loaded with 15-second shell and opened on Gregg, Fort Wagner not replying, the enemy being driven into their bomb proofs. At 10:30, the ship having swung to the flood tide, opened with the starboard battery on Fort Wagner, firing deliberately in rotation, the Army batteries keeping up a heavy fire at the same time. At 2, the Army advanced their colors to rifle pits to within 50 yards of Fort Wagner.

At 4:45 [p.m.], a rebel steamer with flag of truce came down from Charleston and entered the North Channel. Ceased firing and sent a boat in charge of Ensign Porter to communicate. At 5:45 boat returned from rebel flag of truce; immediately opened on Fort Wagner and at 6:35 ceased. During the action, expended 464 XI-inch shell and 60 rifle 150-pounder shell.”

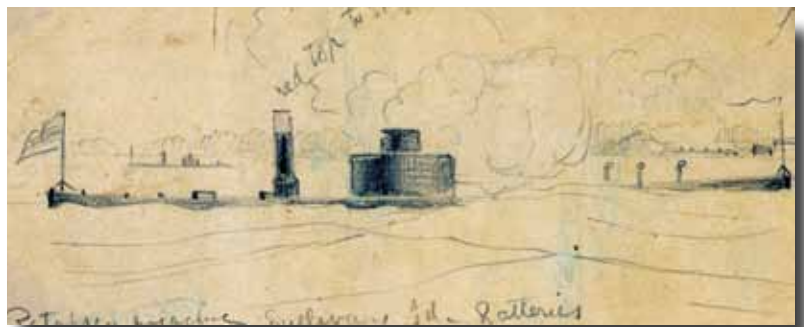
### USS *Patapsco*, Commander T.H. Stevens

“**S**eptember 2-At 1:30 [a.m.], anchored abreast of Wagner. At 1:50 got underway and followed the motions of the admiral. At 2:45, anchored within 300 yards of the flagship and opened fire on the fort. At 4:25, ceased firing, got underway, and followed the flagship to our anchorage. During the engagement was struck seven times, but doing no damage. Expended 14 XV-inch shell, 12 Schenkle rifle shell.

**September 7**-Commences and until 4: At 12:45 a.m., opened fire on Sumter at a distance of 1,800 yards with rifle gun. At 4:17 a.m., got underway and steamed down to our anchorage. At 6:30, flagship made signal. At 7, sent a tug with a flag of truce to communicate with the enemy. At 7:35, flag of truce returned. At 8:30 anchored with the other monitors abreast of Wagner. At 5:30, *Ironsides* made signal, got underway and steamed up to within 400 yards of Sumter and 150 yards of obstructions. At 6:35, opened fire on the obstructions; Fort Moultrie and all the batteries on Sullivan’s Island opened on us at the same time with a terrific fire. At 7:15, turned and ran out of range of the batteries that were doing us the most damage. Expended during the action 1 XV-inch shell, 1 XV-inch shrapnel, 10 rifle shell. The vessel having been hit twenty-three times, one of which broke through the top of our pilot house.”

### USS *Passaic*, Lieutenant-Commander E. Simpson

“**S**eptember 2- At 1:15 a.m., got underway and followed the *Weehawaken*, with the Admiral on board, up nearer to fort and came to anchor and continued firing. At 2:45, carried away a cap square bolt XV-inch gun, but kept on firing. At 3:15, again got underway and steamed up still nearer to Sumter and anchored; still firing on Sumter. At 4, the admiral signaled to discontinue the engagement, when he got underway and steamed down the channel, having fired 26 shot and shell from the rifled gun and 20 shells from the XV-inch gun and been struck 3 times on the turret.



“Patapsco-Sullivan’s Island Batteries” by Alfred Waud (Library of Congress image)

**September 5**-From midnight to 4 a.m.: Heard some firing in direction of Moultrie and saw the flashing of a bright white light several times in same direction. From 4 to 8 a.m.: At 4:10, a boat came down from Charleston and landed some men in Fort Wagner. At 5, the *Ironsides* commenced firing at Wagner, our batteries on shore firing briskly. At 8 a.m., got underway and proceeded toward Sumter. At 8:30, came to anchor. During the watch, the *Ironsides* and our batteries kept up a constant fire, which was not returned.”

### USS *Lehigh*, Commander Andrew Bryson

“**S**eptember 2-From midnight to 4 a.m.: Firing at intervals during the watch at Fort Sumter. Fired 8 XV-inch shell and 1 200-pounder Parrott shell. We were struck by the enemy’s shots several times during the watch.

**September 6**-We fired during the night 8 XV-inch shell and 1 200-pounder rifle shell.”

**Deck Logs USS *New Ironsides*, *Patapsco*, *Passaic*, and *Lehigh*. Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion, Volume 14. Edward Rawson and Charles Stewart editors. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902. 558-562.**

## Damning Torpedoes for Four Hours: Three Views of Mobile Bay (1864)

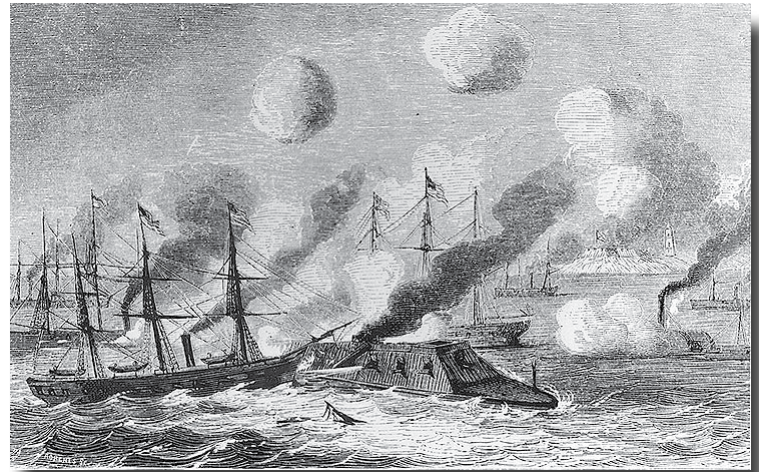
USS *Lackawanna*, Captain J.B. Marchand,  
Steam Log via First Assistant Engineer

“From midnight to 4 a.m., fires banked; distilling apparatus in operation during the watch. From 4 a.m. to 12 meridian: Fires banked; 5:44, commenced spreading fires and working the engines per bell; 5:55, stopped and connected the outboard water valve of forward engine, the key having worked out; 6:01, went ahead; 6:04, stopped; 6:13, ahead; 6:14 stopped; 6:16 ahead; 6:33, stopped; 6:34, ahead; 6:47 stopped; 6:48, ahead; 7:17, ahead; 7:23 stopped and fired our first shot at Fort Morgan; 7:30, ahead; 7:41 stopped; 7:44 backed to avoid colliding with the *Richmond*; 7:46, stopped; 7:47, ahead; 7:58, stopped; 7:59, ahead; 8:09, stopped, having passed Fort Morgan; 8:11, ahead; 8:20, stopped; 8:23 ahead fast, to avoid the rebel ram *Tennessee*, which was bearing down on our starboard beam; 8:30, stopped; 8:31, ahead; 8:39, stopped; 8:43 ahead; 8:46, stopped; 8:47 backed; 8:49, stopped; 8:50, backed; 8:52, stopped; 8:53, ahead; 9:02, stopped and back; 9:04, stopped and commenced banking fires; 9:22, respread fires then banked fires and went ahead full throttle to select a favorable position for attacking the *Tennessee*; 9:35, stopped and went ahead again, having dealt the ram a severe blow on the port side just abaft the beam and disabled the steering apparatus; 9:47, stopped; 9:50, backed to avoid a collision with the flagship *Hartford*, which we struck on the starboard quarter.”

Captain James Alden's log book via  
Lieutenant Thomas L. Swann, USS *Brooklyn*'s sailing master.

“At 3 a.m. called on hands. At 5 the *Octorara* came alongside. Lashed her to out port side. At 5:15 called all hands up the line; the monitors standing out from Sand Island. At 5:40 beat to quarters for general action. Made ever preparation for meeting the enemy. At 6, heading up the channel, followed by rest of the fleet, the *Hartford* directly astern of us and the ironclads off our starboard bow. At 6:50 first shot fired by the enemy at this ship; immediately replied to by our bow chaser, a 100-pounder Parrott, which commenced the engagement. At 7:20 fairly abreast of fort under a sharp fire. Rebel ram *Tennessee* with her gunboats, opened fire on us. Cast off the *Octorara*. The fort and batteries well silenced. At 7:25 ironclad *Tecumseh* was sunk almost instantaneously by a torpedo. Rebel ram making for us. Backed the ship clear of two buoys, evidently attached to torpedoes, there also being 16 or 17 feet of water. The flagship at this instant sheered under our port beam and stood up the bay, giving the ram a broadside in passing. Ram next made for our bow, then sheered off, giving us a broadside and receiving ours; passed our beam and attempted to ram a broadside in passing. Ram next made for our bow and attempted to ram our stern. Fired our stern chasers at her, and stood after the *Hartford*, which had anchored by this time out of range. Rebel gunboats firing at us at long range from shoal water. At 8:05 came to with port anchor abreast of the *Hartford*, veered to 12 fathoms chain, the rest of the fleet following up after us. At 8:35, beat retreat from quarters. At 9:10, hove up the anchor and stood for the ram *Tennessee*, then making for the fleet. At 9:15, opened fire upon her with solid shot from our 100-pounder Parrott.”

Log Books, USS *Brooklyn* and *Lackawanna*. *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion, Volume 21*. Edward Rawson and Charles Stewart, editors. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906. 453, 782-786.



USS *Lackawanna* ramming CSS *Tennessee* during the Battle of Mobile Bay. Engraving by S.C. Roberts, 1864 (NHHC image)

Steam Log Book via Chief Engineer  
Mortimer Kellogg, USS *Brooklyn*

“At 3 o'clock called all hands and prepared to get underway. Fires banked, distilling water for ship's use.

At 5 o'clock spread fires, filled oil cups, moved engines. At 5:12 a.m. placed all engineer's department at quarters. Hove up anchor and started ahead slow, with the U.S. gunboat *Octorara* lashed to out port side. At 5:40 beat to quarters for general action. The *Brooklyn* was heading up the channel, followed by the rest of the fleet. Moved the engine first slow, stopped, and back quite frequently in accordance with the bell signals from deck.

From 7:15 to 7:30 close under and abreast the water batteries of Fort Morgan and receiving rapid and sharp firing from the batteries of the fort and from the rebel ram *Tennessee*.

Under a brisk fire at intervals until out of the range of the enemy, and came to anchor in Mobile Bay at 8:05 a.m. Closed all outboard valves, banked fires.

At 9:15 spread fires, hove up anchor, and got underway to engage the rebel ram *Tennessee*, that was discovered making for the fleet. The machinery worked well and quickly in conformity with bell signals. The engagement closed at 10 O'clock with the surrender of the rebel ram. At 10:10 closed, came to anchor.”



(Harpers Weekly engraving)

# FIRST REFLECTIONS- DIARIES AND LETTERS



# An African American Sailor's Experience (1862-1865)

Excerpts from the Diary of Steward William B. Gould

## Aboard USS *Cambridge*

1862

### Thurs. Oct. 1st

At Beaufort. Fine day. Made preparation for Sea. About 1 O'clock. A steamer came along side with Sixty seven paroled Rebel prisoners for us take to Wilmington. We had them stowed on the Berth Deck and about 3 O'clock we upped anchor and stood out to sea bound for our station of New Inlet N.C.

### Fri. Oct. 2nd

Off New Inlet. We arrived last night 11 O'clock. We came near being fired into by the *Mystic* mistaken us for a Blockade-Runner. We learnt of the capture of the [blockader runner] *Sun Beam* by the *Mystic* and *State of Georgia*. About 9 O'clock, we hoisted a Flag of Truce and ran in lowered a Boat and sent it to meet one from the shore. After consultation our boat returned and we anchored off Fort Fisher about 11 O'clock. About 1 O'clock, a steamer came out from Wilmington anchored close to us. We soon transferred the Rebs and their Baggage to the Steamer. We up Anchor and stood out to our Anchorage and the other steamer returned to Wilmington. By the By, the *State of Georgia* and the *Mystic* collided last night damaging each other considerably. Made preparation for painting.



"U.S. Gun Boat Cambridge" by Alfred Waud (Library of Congress image)

### Sat. Oct. 3rd

Off New Inlet. Got under way at five O'clock. Anchored about 9 O'clock. We painted ship. The *State of Georgia* sailed today for the North. All of us shipped today for three years first taking the Oath of Allegiance to the Government of Uncle Samuel.

### Sun Oct. 4th

Off New Inlet. Got under way 2 bells a.m. About 7 O'clock made out a boat. Picked her up. Contained for men from Wilmington. About 8 bells picked up another boat from Brunswick with four men. At the same a sail was reported. We gave chase. Proved to be the yacht *Hiawatha* from Wilmington with twelve Men, heard from my people, all well.

### Tues Oct. 6th

Off New Inlet. Cruise as usual. Signed accounts. The blockade running steamer *Kate* is now lying under the Fort, formed an expedition to destroy her.

### Fri Oct 10th

Off New Inlet. Rained very hard last night. The Expedition did not go. Cruised until 3 O'clock P.M. Cleared off. Made preparation to make another attempt at her. Wind strong, S.W.

### Sat Oct 11th

Off New Inlet. Cruised as usual. About 7 O'clock, we got under way and ran in as near as we could to the shore, came to anchor. The boats then left ship, one in command of Lieutenant Strong of the *Cambridge* and the other, Lieutenant Brannon of the *Penobscot*. When approaching the steamer they were discovered by the batteries when the expedition returned but resolved to try again. It began to Rain in the evening with light wind from the South West last night. I kept Boat for the first time at Sea

### Tues Nov. 4th

Off New Inlet. The weather is becoming quite cold. This morning we heard firing up the coast. Dispatched the *Mount Vernon* to ascertain what it was. The *Daylight* had driven a barque ashore (the *Sophia* of and from Liverpool) and was destroying her. They [*Mount Vernon* and *Daylight*] boarded and captured some of the Crew (the others escaped to the Shore) and brought them off. Then returned to set the ship on fire. It then began to breeze up and soon the surf was rolling so high that they could not get off. They attempted several but each time they were driven ashore.

Night coming on, the gunboats fired an occasional shot to keep away the Johnnies.

### Wens. Nov. 5th

Off New Inlet. We sent up our Life Boat and a lot of spare rope to try and get the men off but when daylight dawned lo and behold the Rebs had nabbed them all and a battery on shore sent the boats word not to come near. There was 14 men from the *Daylight* and 6 from *Mount Vernon*. The Rebs sent a flag of truce to us informing us of the situation of our men. We sent them their clothes, bedding, and some provisions. The *Mystic* returned from the shoals with the mails of the fleet.

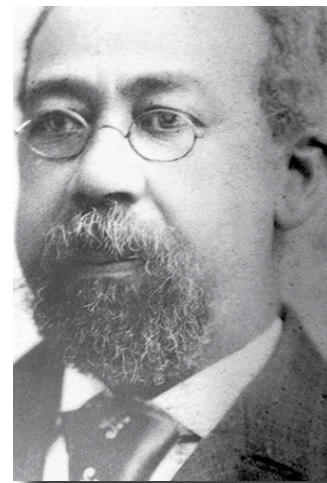
### Mon. Nov. 17th

About 1 bell a sail [the British sail schooner *J.W. Pindar*] was reported close under the land right ahead. We gave chase. When within range, we told them "Good morning" in the form of a shot for her to heave to. To this they took no notice. We sent another which fell under her stern. At this she about ship and stood for the beach. Shot after shot was sent after her but they heeded not. She pilled high and dry upon the Beach.

We immediately man the first cutter and sent her in chase of Acting Master Mace to board and destroy her. We also sent two other boats to lend assistance. The first go into the breakers and was capsized. We lost eleven men and three officers. Rather a bad day's work.

### Wens Dec 3rd

Off New Inlet. Cruised as usual, about daylight we made a sail [the schooner *Emma Tuttle*] up close Smith's Island We gave chase. We were soon alongside in answer to our hail. The Captain said the schooner is yours. About 10 O'clock we arrived at our anchorage with our prize. Soon after the *Daylight* came in with a prize in tow, captured this morning after



William Gould in the 1880s. (Image provided by William Gould IV)

one on shore at Masonbo. We then took the prizes in tow and started for Beaufort.

#### Sun. Dec. 21st

At Hampton Roads. Very cold. Plenty of ice. In the afternoon we ran in alongside of the wharf. Took on board a 30lbs Parrott gun for the quarter deck.

#### Mon. Dec. 22nd

At Hampton Roads. About 9 O'clock we hauled alongside of the *Brandywine* to take in stores. I went on board and took a good look at this old Majestic ship.

#### Thurs Dec 25th

Off New Inlet. This being Christmas I think of the of the Table at Home.

#### Fri. Dec. 26th

Off New Inlet. Thick and misty. About 8 O'clock we picked up a boat containing three refugee's one of my acquaintances. After taking them on board, we ran up the coast where they lived and fired a gun to let his people know they were safe on board.

#### Sun March 8th

Off New Inlet. We got under way 2 bell. Cruised until 1 o'clock. Came to anchor at 4 bells. Quarters and Service. Read the Articles of War. Also the Proclamation of Emancipation. Very Good.

#### Mon March 9

Off New Inlet. About 3 bells saw two sails but could not give chase. Quite pleasant.

#### Saturday March 21

Off Newport News. It has moderated somewhat. Ceased snowing about 2 bells. We return to the Flagship [steam frigate USS *Minnesota*] with prisoners, then ashore. Took a look at the (Devil or What do you call it?) submarine battery cigar ship that is propelled by a screw and fires a gun underwater after being submerged [reference to the submersible *Alligator*].

#### Sat March 28

At Boston. Went ashore. All hands were mustered with bags and hammocks and marched aboard *Ohio*. So ends my first trip at sea.

#### Aboard USS *Niagara* 1864

#### Thursday Jan 7th

Brooklyn Navy Yard. Taking out guns. While removing one of our guns this

morning, one of the straps gave way and the Gun fell and struck one of the workmen belonging to the yard and injured him so severely he died two hours after.

#### Saturday Jan 16th

Very fine day. Received letter from C.W.R. Also one from J.M. Went ashore in afternoon. Served out Grog Money. We received \$400 all around. [Editor's Note: "C.W.R." are the initials of a woman and former slave who lived in Massachusetts. Gould would marry her after the war.]

#### Wednesday March 3rd

A very fine day. We are still lying off the [Brooklyn Navy] Yard, uncertain what is to be done with us.

#### Friday March 4th

A fine clear day. Went ashore. Received A letter from C.W.R. Heard of the arrival at Cambridge of Edger Miller. Visited Mrs. A.E.H. Wrote to G.P.R.

#### Saturday March 5

A very fine. Today I finished packing up Dr. Fox then took some of the things to the steamer *Newbern*. In the Afternoon I took the remainder of his things to the Astor house. I then took a stroll up Broadway. Departure of 20th Regiment of U.S. (Colored) Volunteers, the first colored regiment raised in New York. Pronounced

by all to a splendid regiment. Received a letter from H.L.B. one from A.A.J. and from A.E.H. Remained ashore all night.

#### Friday March 18

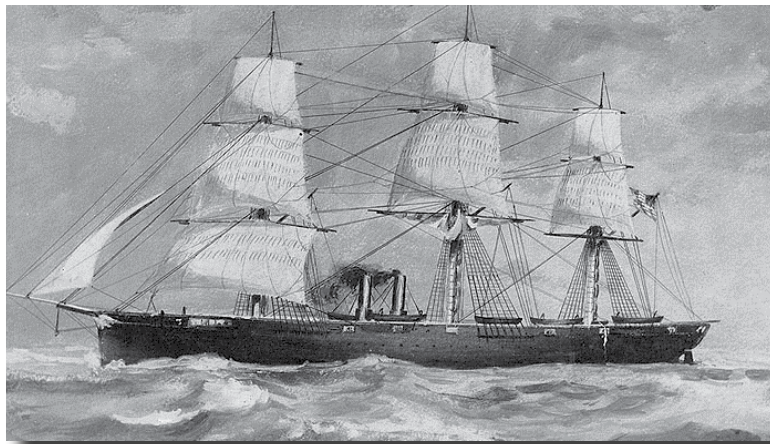
All hands were called at 3 bells, after taking breakfast, they commenced to bend on sails and got up the Port Anchor. Took aboard our stores. The Pilot came on board about 11 O'clock. At 1 ½ O'clock, we commenced to take up the starboard anchor. James Thompson was discharged, his time having expired. We secured anchor and started for sea about 2 ½ O'clock. After passing Sandy Hook, we passed several vessels inward bound. About 5 P.M., we discharged the pilot. We now are once more on the boundless deep, blowing quite

fresh, the ship rolls heavily. The great portion of our crew being landmen on their first cruise, there is a large number of them sea sick. You can see them trying to get forward by crawling and helping each other. They do not like their first feeling a seafaring. After night, we set our foretopmast staysail fore and mainsail and foretopsail. Making ten knots, our course lay to the Eastward.

#### Wednesday March 23

Very cloudy with strong winds from the South west. About 4 bells A.M. it commenced to rain very hard. We could not stow our hammocks in the nettings. Sea running very high, the blow increases to a gale, under double reef. Main Top Sail, ship'd several sea's over our bow. It was really amusing to see the landmen trying to keep their feet. Many a one sight for their home they have left to become a sailor. The gale increases.

#### Tuesday May 31st



Gould's second ship, the steam frigate USS *Niagara* (NHHC image)

Still very busy at work upon us. Went up to the chaplain's house. Got his things. Sent them on board. I remain on shore all night.

#### Wednesday June 1st

Now begins a great confusion. Officers coming on board with a great deal of baggage, some moving up into their new rooms not waiting for the upholsters and painters to finish their work. Then a draft of men came for us all the men having less than three months to serve were transferred. Here we were left without a cook, but I attempted to get dinner ready amid the greatest confusion imaginable.

#### Sunday June 12th

This morning I am sick so as to be obliged



to leave off cooking, violent pains in my head and a severe cough.

### Wednesday June 22.

Bay of Biscay. Bearing up for the English Channel. I have been taking lessons in hat making. The ship at present looks like a hat manufactory. All hands mark their clothing with their name and number. My number is 44, [the] ship's number.

### Sunday June 26th

Passed through the Straits of Dover early this morning into the North Sea. I have a very severe boil under my arm. Had it lanced. We entered the River Scheldt passed Ostend [Belgium]. The Country presents beautiful scenery as we pass up the River; beautiful cottages, and farms looking very beautiful.

### Monday August 15th

Cursing off the coast of Portugal. We saw many sails. About 7 O'clock we made a steamer and stood for her. She kept on her course until we got within five miles of her when she suddenly changed her course. We beat quarters and fired a shot. She showed the English Colors. We fired another when she came to. We boarded her and found her to be the Rebel Privateer *Georgia* from Liverpool on her way to refit as a cruiser. That is one good deed for the *Niagara* and we hope that she will do many more before the cruise is up.

### Wednesday August 31st

At Flusing [England]. Heard the details of the capture of Mobile and the loss of the monitor *Tecumseh* with all on board including Captain Craven, brother to Commodore Craven [*Niagara's* senior officer]. It was called the greatest naval battle of the War.

1865

### Saturday February 11th

Off the Island of Galicia. We stood off and on all night. This morning we stood in hoisted the Jack. The pilot came on board. He brought the report that Rebel Ram *Stonewall* was in port. Now there looks like a fight certain. The crew were ordered to sharpen their cutlasses and we took up plenty of shots.

### Wednesday February 15th

At Ferrol [Spain]. As soon as day dawns the Crew was all eagerness to see the monster that have vowed vengeance for

us. We are lying about one thousand yards for her. She looks like an ugly customer for anything that she can hit her prow, but we don't think she can [overcome] this ship. Some of our men meet some of her crew on shore and they brought a Rebs cap as a trophy.

### Friday March 24

At Corruna. Fine Day. While at muster, the ram was reported going out. We were piped down brought on the cable but did not go out. A Spanish officer came on board for what purpose we know not. The ram was maneuvering all day accompanied the Spanish frigate. We expect a fight tomorrow. We laid quietly at anchor all the time. We know not.

### Tuesday. March 28th

At Lisbon. About 10 ½ o'clock the *Stonewall* went to sea. She passed closed to us and it was very mortifying to see her gout so close to us, flaunting the Rebel Rag in our very face and dare not follow. In order to go higher up the river, we were obliged to go down the river in order to turn around. Castle Bellam near the fort opened fired on us. We dipped our flag, but they took no notice of it. One shot struck us forward of the beam and another stuck our smoke stack and several passed over us. An officer came to apologize, but the officer accepted no apology.

### Mon April 3rd.

We hear cheering news from home and feels wrong, because we cannot fight the Ram.

### Sat May 6th

Off Cape Vincent

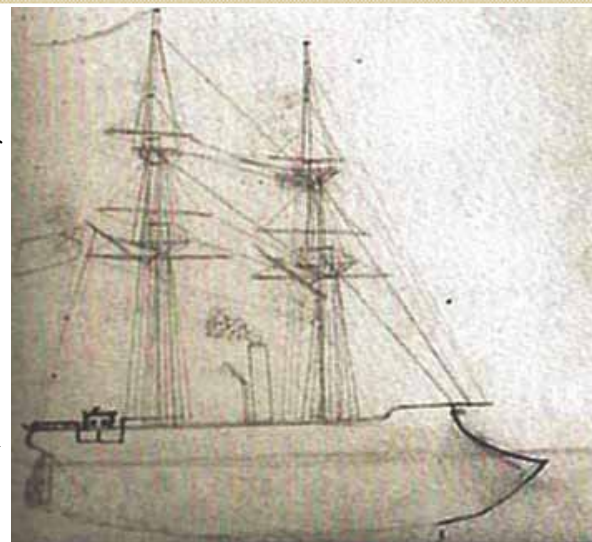
*Kearsarge* brought us the awful tidings of the assassination of President Lincoln at the Theater in Washington.

### Wednesday May 24th

At Flushing

A letter from J.M., he had visited Wilmington. Saw many people, all well. I felt very much relieved. But my job was of short duration, for this evening I received a letter from my sister bringing me the sad new of the death of my mother. She died March 13.


### Wednesday June 14th



Gould's sketch of the ram CSS Stonewall at anchor in Lisbon. (Image provided by William S. Gould IV)

Off Southampton. We see by the papers that the President in a speech intimates colonization for the colored people of the United States. This move of his must be and shall be resisted. We were born under the Flag of the Union and we never will know no other. My sentiment is the sentiment of the people of the States.

### Sunday July 30

We had quarters and inspection about 4 bells. We were soon all confused and excited. Started fires. Brought to the cable immediately thus everything stood until about 6 bells when the welcome cry from the boatswain's mates of all hands up anchor for home and soon the shrill sound of the boatswains pipe with the sharp notes of the fife. The tramp of the men and clinking of the capstans all told that were soon to be plowing the deep Blue Sea on our homeward course. 

William B. Gould IV, editor. *Diary of a Contraband: The Civil War Passage of a Black Sailor*. Palo Alto: Stamford University Press, 2002. Used with permission.



## An Officer Clings to His Lifeline (1863)

### Lieutenant Commander George Morris's Letters to His Fiancee



George U. Morris (NHHC image)

**U.S. Gunboat *Port Royal*  
St. George's Sound [Florida], May 13, 1863**

“Dear Mary, I don't know what has gotten into me during the last month, but I rebuke the Devil. I have entirely given up reading the Bible and apparently have gone to bed. I am spirit-rum satisfied. My case just now should remind one of the “garnished chambers” in the Bible. My whole thoughts are to the mailing, wishing and wondering when it will come. I am part losing the hopeful notion which once was mine, in part I am losing my interest in everything, and would if I could transfer my position to some far off station. Damned to God the Ironclad [CSS *Jackson*, currently under construction at Columbus] would come down and decide my direction at once whether it be life or death.

I long every day to see my little Jack, a child of eight, it is about the only thing that amuses me. I am very fond of children and they finally take a fancy to me. The ambition which you think has been a martyr spirit with me, seems likely to die a natural death. One requires it to keep it alive. There is some here and but little at home. This world is a miserable place anyhow. One should think that with good health, strength, and more than enough this should find the supply my wants, which fortunately are few. Any should be satisfied, but I am not. Fame could not satisfy me, even if I could reach to its top most heights. Wrath I care not for. The only real thrill of pleasure I feel is when in actual danger. The life I now lead is in one sense is quite enough, but I should exchange it for one still more quiet, if only there could be a little more variety. How strangely I am writing tonight dear Mary. I wish this war was over,

it has cost me more pain trouble than during the entirety of my human life. I am afraid I shall never again see the gay, bright George Morris I was when it commenced. It has made me hard and bitter. Sometimes when I think of those one hundred twenty men lying quietly at the bottom of the James River. I think of my friends there. I find as if with my own hand I could be with them. But I must not write anymore tonight. I am in one of my dark moods. [Editor's note: This is a reference to USS *Cumberland*. Morris was the acting commanding officer when the ironclad CSS *Virginia* rammed and sank her on March 8, 1862.]

You are living now with Katie. Tell her she must write me long, cheerful letters, and I will truly answer them all. I fear she will derive very little pleasure from my letters. The days are long by which I could write entertaining letters. Perhaps they may return again after these days when my mind dwells only upon pleasant subjects instead, as of now, dark and gloomy ones.

It is nearly 11 o'clock and dark. I will close, light my pipe, and go on deck for a little while. I retreat now about 1 and rise about 10 or 11 o'clock.

Give my love to your mother and the girls  
With love, your own  
George”

**U.S. Gunboat *Port Royal*  
St. George's Sound, June 12th 1863**

“Dear Mary, And so you want me to give you some just advice? How should I advise you where you tell me in your last letters that you walked the streets of St. Paul [Minnesota], with Mrs. Q-who you say was seen on a public highway by C. in the presence of one of your friends because you liked her and did not care what others thought in regard to the matter. Now if you really want my opinion, I should think under the circumstances, as you have shown them to me, you acted fine. You are a young girl and although I am fully aware, you should consider yourself an able judge in those matters. Judging totally from your letters, consider your Mother did not prohibit you walking “everyday” with her. You have asked my advice. I give you my opinion fairly. A young girl cannot be intimate making as you lay across and learn constantly daily on the streets with a married woman whose friends you lay there “find her unpleasant,” without bringing herself to the unpleasant remarks.

You told me that every night, you make them informed of all your movements. You walk, you ride. I do not wonder at it from what you told me. And now I have further news to impart. Your rebel friend the Gunboat *Chattahoochee*, whose appearance have I have been waiting for months, on the 27th, burst her boiler killing eighteen and wounding a large number of her crew. A number of her officers are killed-a deserter from her brought me the information on the next day-it has since been fully confirmed from various sources. Among which are many families of six killed who are from Apalachicola [Florida]. Since I captured the [blockade runner] *Fashion*, [via a small boat raid that Morris personally led] they have lined the river banks with artillery, infantry, and cavalry-locking the stable door after horse is gone, etc.

I have not been well during the day and if the mosquitoes will let me sleep, I shall retire early.

I am thirty-three years old today. Fitting old fart. But I do hope I will have many a long years before I shall feel I am getting old. Good night-God bless and keep you.”

George U. Morris Papers, Hutchins Library, Special Collections. Berea College, Berea, Kentucky.

## Words from a Bitter Man (1863-1864)

### Having Deserted from the Army of the Potomac, a Man Hides as a Sailor in Hampton Roads

[Editor's Note: The writer did not have a good command of written English. He often spelled words phonetically and frequently wrote run on sentences. Punctuation marks have been added for readability, but otherwise is shown as written. ]

**On Board USS *Iron Age*, Fortress Monroe, Va.**

**December. 29th 1863**

“Dear Brother, I now take my pen in hand to rite a few lines to let you no that I am well and in good health it is some time since we met but I hope that we shall meet again sometime another. I suppose that you know where I am. I am in the Navy, I like a bloody fool went and shipped I could not let well enough alone. So I went and shipped I shipped in Boston on board of the *Iron Age* and went down to Wilmington on the blockade. I stayed in her a spell and then I volunteered to go in the *Nansemond* where I had the fun of destroying two vessels and taking another and then we went to Baltimore for repairs we got 15 days liberty. The [y] got her repaired and started out again we gut as fur as Cape Hatteras and had a little [trouble] and had to put back into Hampton Roads and [they] shoved us aboard of the old store ship *Brandywine* [where] I am yet. They are all drafted, but three of us I expect every day to be drafted I shant be sorry when it comes that is if I get on a good boat when I shipped.

I shipped under the name of George E Arnold and if you write direct it so and I shall get it. I wish that I was with you working in the woods I think it would be much better than going to sea. Hester told me that you had cut your foot I am sorry for it. We have all got trials and tribulations to bear, for this is a hard world. At any rate, you and I have had it bout as hard. But I hope that we shall come out all right, yet I am an altered boy from what I was once. I have been through many a danger since I saw you and expect to go through money more but it is no use to bid the devil good morning till you meet him I suppose you have a good time in the woods I expect you go out hunting once in a while don't you I had a letter from 8 to day she said that Aunt Eunice was very sick and she gave me your address so I thought I would set down and write to you and I hope that you will do the same. When you git this I expect you think I dun rung when I left the army. But I don't I think I served them just right. I was in two battles and came near dying twice and they would not discharge me. And then I could not be contented, but must ship in the Navy. I will soon be out again if nothing happens which hope thare will not. If I do, they never get me to go again. My time is out next August. I have come across an old fellow that was shipmates with Uncle Jim in the *North Carolina*. I want you to rite and til me all about the country up whare you are. Tell me all [about] your years cruse in the *Ino* and how you came out about the prize you took. I have got prize money to me, but I don't no as I will ever get any or not. I would like to get it. I am beginning to think that it is pretty near time to knock off, so I will bid you good bye for this time. Rite as soon as you get this but be sure and direct it to George E Arnold. Do not forget.”

**Beaufort, NC Feb the 6th 1864**

“Dear Cousin, I now take my pen in hand to answer your letter that I received on the 11 of last month. I would have wrote before, but I could not for we was busy getting the *Brandywine* from Fort Monroe up to Norfolk, and on the 16th the *Nansemond* came down and I had to go in her. We started out that night for Beaufort. We had a very pleasant passage till we got of Beaufort and it came in foggy and so we came to an anchor that night and in the morning it commences to blow it blew so hard that we could not git in over the bar and so we lade there till about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. When we had to git under way for we could not stay there any longer for it was blowing a gale of wind and the sea was coming over fore and aft and so we had to put to sea and run very slow to give her time to ride the sea which was running mountains high the gale continued all that night till morning when it begun to lull about 8 o'clock in the morning. It was good weather again and we shaped our course for Beaufort and got in there in the after noon and we took in coal and went down to Wilmington on the blockade. We had very fine weather thare. We stayed there till we got out of coal and then we came back to Beaufort, where we took in coal again and was all ready to go out, when we had a dispatch to go up to a place called Carline City. For the Rebs was coming to take Beaufort so up we went and anchored of brest of the town and towards night there was heavy firing about 4 miles of we could see the smoke plane from where we lay the firing ceased about dark. We was expecting them to come every minuet. We was all ready for them. They had drove our pickets in and we knew nothing about it and there we was and the rebs was on the beach before we knew.”

**U S Steamer *Nansemond* May 15th 1864**

“Cousin -- I received your letter and was glad to hear from you. We are in Beaufort agane. We came in five days ago. We did not go to the blockade as soon as we expected to for we had to go up Bogue Sounds because they expeted that the rebs was coming to take this place. We stayed up there a spell and then went on the blockade. We stayed there a spell without



“Sinbad Lincoln Carrying the Navy.” (Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper engraving)

enney thing ocurring worth menshioning till the other night. We had a little confab with the Rebble ram. We was lying on the bar as usual when the hawkwar [*Howquah*], a gun boat, saw us and mistook us for a blockade runner, which is often the case, and let drive at us and just cleared our pilot house and bursted rate along side and then we signalized to her and found that it was one of our boats. It was rather dark and we could not see a great wayes. In about two hours after that we saw a vessel pretty close to us we did not no [whether it was one ] of our boats or not or whether it was a blockade runner or not we could not tell we signalized to her and she woud not answer us. Pretty soon she showed a red lite and made towards us. We saw then what she was. We knew it was usles to stand and fight her so we fired a couple shots at her and then turned tale and was soon out of site of her. In the dark in the morning, we had it against us and the [*Howquah*] none of the other boats would come near. The [*Howquah*] got a shot through her smoak stack and the ram went in again and hasent ben out again. I hope she wont. The gatersburg [*Gettysburg*] came in here yesterday. She is the one that we helped to take *Margret and Jessey*. She is a splended vessel of about 500 tons.

I got one paper, the *Maine Farmer*. We have got news that Grant has got Petersburg and is going into Richmond. I hope it is so you said you wer going to begin to plant in about a week. If som you have commenced before now. I wish that I was with you. I long to be my own master again to go where I like and to do as I like. We ar not going home so much as I hope. She wont go home till the first of July or the first of august. Ask jim what the reason he don't rite I suppose. there is good wages this summer. No, if I was out of this, I could get my cool \$40 a month to go fireman on some vessel. But then a man earns it for it is hard hot work. I will tell you how it feels in the fire room of a hot day you can image how a crab would feel in a pot of hot water. Thats the way I feel. It is about time that I came to an anchor. I guess I hope that uncle dudley will excuse these few lines. If I could rite as well as you I would not call old abe my uncle. Give my best respects to all. Rite as soon as you get this.

**Norfolk, V. A. July the 6th [1864]**

“Cousin - I will try and answer your letter I am well and hope you are the same. We are now laying at Gosport Navy Yard. We shall lay here 10 days and perhaps longer they wont let us go to Baltimore where we expected to go when we started they think that she can stand it a while longer although she has a new boiler in Baltimore wating for her we cant carry only 15 lbs of steam for the boiler is very weak. We have patched it so much that it is nearly all patches. I suppose you are haying by this time I dreamed that I was to your house last thort that you was haying and that you was plaid out I hope it is not so. You asked me when my time was out I will tell you I have 48 days from to day and I shant be sorry. When that has come, I am going on a regular tare when my time is up. I have got 150 green backs do me now. Do you mind that when the boat gave a role you said that Jim was going to invade the draft? Bully for him. I hope you wont get drafted. If you no where Jim has gone let us know. You said that Eunice was marid. I am glad of it. You must rite and tell me who she is spliced to and where he lives and what he does for a living tell us what kind of a time you had on the 4. I was coming around Hatters about that time I did not forget the time we had 6 months ago. By the way, I will excuse that half sheat of paper if you wont do so enney more. The time that the ram came out we killed 6 men on board of her the second shot we fired went in her port hole it was us for we was all that fired at her that night the howitzwer. Fired at her in the morning. She is destroyed now. If the cales youth had ben there she never would have gorn in again. You don't know who I mean it is capain Cushon. I suppose you have hurd of him. He is a brick. We have ben on an expedi-tion sence I rote last up to a place cald Sneaze Ferry about 8 miles from the mouth of the river. We had a detachment of the 9th Vermont under Captain Kelley, the luckiest man in the service for that kind of bisnes. We captured their pickets and held the ferry til our caverly from neerburn [Newbern] made a raid up some where I don't no where but when they came back they made a mistake and fired in to our men at the ferrey and the Vermonters gave them fits. You see it in the papers. I will bid you good by for this time...”



SECRETARY WELLES (reading from a Paper a Fortnight old). "The Rebel Steamer NASHVILLE run the Blockade at Beaufort on Thursday last." Well, I declare! this is too bad! Really, if George doesn't send me the New York Papers more regularly, I'll have to Subscribe for them myself."

(Harper's Weekly engraving)

“Memoranda and Documents: A Bluejacket’s letters home, 1863-1864.” Arthur M. Schlesinger, editor. *The New England Quarterly*, Volume 1, Number 4 (October 1928), 554-567.

## The Final Words of a Dying Nation (1865)

The Cruiser CSS *Shenandoah's* Assistant Surgeon Documents  
the Confederate States of America's Last Combat Unit

**Feb. 18, 1865.** "Steaming out of Hobson's Bay."  
Steam up at daylight—safely out of the bay—soon after the pilot was discharged, 42 stowaways come above decks— all gladly shipped—useful men among them—

**Feb. 19, 1865.** Lat. (DR.)38-53S. Long. 147-25E.  
Pass Bass' strait—under sail—ships in sight—

**Feb. 22, 1865.** Lat. 38-32-18S. Long. 152-15-30E.  
Drank the fourth anniversary of the inauguration of the President—

**Feb. 26, 1865.** Lat. 34-23S. Long. 167-15-15E.  
Read articles of war to the new crew—

**Feb. 28, 1865.** Lat. 32-21S. Long. 169-17-30E.  
No sail since leaving Cape Howe—thought we were bound for New Zealand—complaint at vacillation of the Captain—

**Mch. 2, 1865.** Lat. 28-12-56S. Long. 171-04-15E.  
Some men went through the propeller tunnel and tapped a barrel of rum—more than 50 gallons gone—two men found drunk—

**Mch. 4, 1865.** Lat. 23-07-43S. Long. 170-42-33E.  
Filling shells—I hope they never will be used—

**Mch. 20, 1865.** Lat. 10-26S. Long. 171-58E.  
Captain disgusted—we get up steam—heading for Drummond's Island—

**Mch. 24, 1865.** Lat. 1-21S. Long. 174-22E.  
In sight of Drummond's island—three naked natives approach the ship—state no whalers have been there for a long time—Captain disgusted again—

**Mch. 25, 1865.** Lat. 0-23S. Long. 173-05E.  
No captures yet—believe it due to bad management—

**Mch. 26, 1865.** Lat. 0-9-30N. Long. 170-55E.  
Cross the line—my fourth time—only want to finish cruise and get out of the ship—

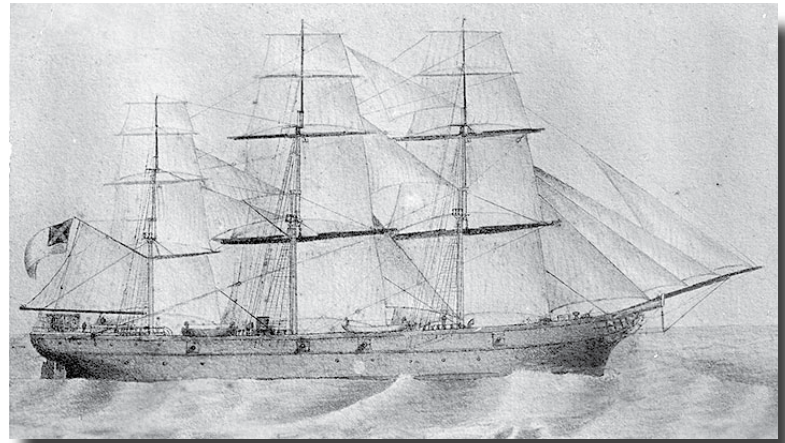
**Mch. 27, 1865.** Lat. 1-18N. Long. 170-57E.  
Blowing hard—many thought they saw a sail—

**Mch. 30, 1865.** Lat. 5-0-45N. Long. 163-46-30E.  
Sight and coast Strong's or Oualan Island—no sail—make for Ascension—

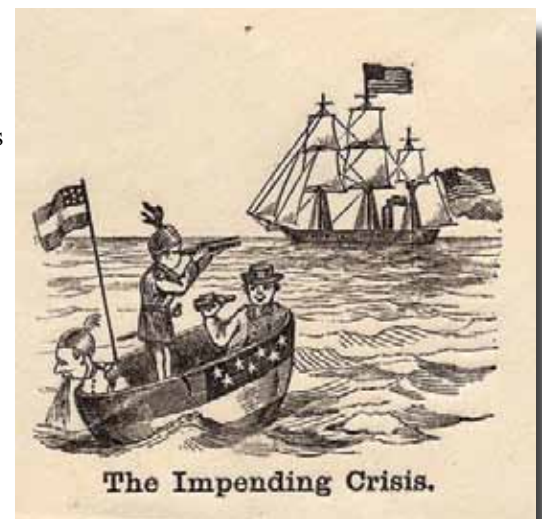
**April 1, 1865.** Ponassi Island, (Ascension.)  
Pilot comes off—make the middle harbor—four vessels there —take possession of and condemn all—one claims to be Hawaiian—think myself the transfer is valid, but she was condemned—description of the islands—the captains put in irons on the ship—cargoes and supplies transferred—ships left to their crews—A visit from the king—a visit in return—descriptions of the natives—Two of the prizes visited—had been looted by their crews —further cargo shipped—one set afire—

**April 13, 1865.** Lat. 7-04[N.] Long. 158-30[E.]  
Cleared harbor—I suppose Guam is prospective point—  
[Editor's Note: Army of Northern Virginia formally surrendered on April 12, 1865]

**May 1, 1865.** Lat. 33-01-20N. Long. 150-48-15E.  
Gale in clear weather—choosing a caterer—a dance at night—



CSS Shenandoah (NHHC image)



(Library of Congress image)

**May 8, 1865.** Lat. 39-44N. Long. 149-32E.  
Fight among the crew—

**May 25, 1865.** Lat. 54-55-40N. Long. 153-01E.  
Waddell on watch — with two lieutenants without watches—

**June 1, 1865.** Lat. 58-00-30N. Long. 153-25E.  
In sight of the coast of Siberia—a mirage—stories of the Captain of the *Abigail*  
—fine day—

**June 4, 1865.** Lat. 57-51N. Long. 150-18E.  
Portrait of Scales on watch—in the midst of ice-floe—the ship weathers it well.

**June 8, 1865.** Lat. 56-55-10N. Long. 153-36[E.]  
Think now we are bound for the Arctic—decided again against going to St. Jonas'—

**June 1, 1865.** Lat. (DR.) 62-nN. Long. (DR.) 179-57E.  
Sight Cape Naverin—appearance of shore—Captain gives a feast.

**June 22, 1865.** Lat. 62-23N. Long. 179-46-30E.  
Sight and capture the ships *William Thompson* and *Euphrates*—fine appearance of the former—"Heard through papers which were on board a batch of bad news, which if it proves true will be terrible—First that Charleston was captured. This, I was expecting, as I did not think we could hold it against Sherman's army. Next that Richmond & Petersburg were taken. I was looking for their evacuation, so it did not surprise me much. But, when I heard that Gen. Lee had surrendered with the whole of the Army of Northern Virginia, I was knocked flat aback—can I believe it? And after the official letters which are published as being written by Grant & Lee can I help believing it? It is either true, or the Yankees are again publishing official lies. God grant it may not be true!"—I remained on the *Thompson*—efforts to keep the men from the liquor—

**June 22, 1865.** Lat. 62-40-48N. Long. 178-50W.  
Sight six ships—capture of the bark *Milo*—the *Sophia Thornton* takes to the ice—but returns—capture the *Jireh Swift*—burn her at once—the *Milo* bonded for \$48,000 to carry the prisoners ashore—

**June 23, 1865.** Lat. (DR) 62-48 [N.] Long. (DR) 179-04W.  
Capture the Brig *Susan Abigail* from San Francisco—engaged in trading and whaling—immense cargo of liquor, gunpowder, guns, etc., to trade for furs and ivory—Captain does not wish ship to be burned—other sail reported in sight—

**June 25, 1865.** Lat. 63-50N. [Long.] 172-58W.  
Sight two sail—one hoists Hawaiian flag—pass her—other appears to be a Frenchman—did not follow her—come up with and capture the ship *General Williams*—burn her in three hours—

**June 26, 1865.** Lat. (DR.) 64-21 [N.] Long. (DR.) 172-20W.  
Manning's fine navigation—capture barks, *NSmrod*, *W. C. Nye*, and *Catherine*, all of New Bedford—took off what was wanted and fired all—capture barks *General Pike*, *Isabella*, and *Gypsy*—bonded the *Pike* and transferred prisoners—repairs to engine—fire the prizes—

**June 28, 1865.** Lat. 65-39N. Long. 170-08W.  
Capture the bark *Waverly*—burn her—capture eight barks—names not given—peculiar courage of the *Favorite's* captain—two bonded to carry prisoners—others burned—

**June 29, 1865.** Lat. 66-14N. Long. 169-06W.  
Ice thick—turn southward again—sight and chase a ship—proves to be French—strike the ice.

**July 1, 1865.** Lat. (DR) 63-09N. Long. 173-56W.  
Great danger from floating ice—the rudder-chain shackle broken—under steam.

**July 4, 1865.** Lat. 53-52[N.] Long. 173-00-00[W.]  
Fine day—home sick.



*CSS Shenandoah's officers—the author of the diary is sitting on the far right. (NHHC image)*

**Aug. 2, 1865.** Lat. 16-20-10N. Long. 121-11-16W.

This is doomed to be one of the blackest of all the black days of my life, for from today I must look forward to begin life over again, starting where I cannot tell, how I cannot say—but I have learned for a certainty that I have no country....boarded her and brought off the news that the Southern Confederacy was a thing of the past, all her Armies having surrendered, Mr. Davis & Mr. Stephens prisoners, which was also the case with most of the prominent men. I now see no reason to doubt it & it remained for us to see what we ought to do. It is the opinion of the Majority of the Officers that we ought to take her to 'Australia,' turn her over to the Government & we ourselves leave for England. Waddell, at last, came round to this opinion & the Ship's Course was changed for Sidney much to the delight of every body—or nearly every body, for some still think we ought to go to England with her—Thus ends our dream!—But I am too sad to think of it.

**Aug. 3, 1865.** Lat. 15-52N. Long. 121-44W.

Sadness is deeper with further appreciation of it—general grief—Waddell changes course—is steaming for Liverpool— says would be foolish to land crew penniless in Australia— Lee and Bulloch urge him to go to Australia—he is stubborn—even thinks he ought to run into a "Yankee" port and surrender the ship, or run into an English port and surrender it to the consul—think myself ship should be turned over to the English government until the home government is heard from —Put all our guns etc. down in the hold—so now we are defenseless.

**Aug. 4, 1865.** Lat. 14-11N. Long. 126-29W.

The crew much disturbed over the news—present a petition to the captain—he calls all hands aft—makes a speech telling them the South had been conquered—they were in a position such as no ship had ever occupied—their cruise would go down in history—he would run the ship into the first English port—promised them "he would stick by them & only ask them to stand by him"—seems the petition asked to be carried to the first English port, but if he thought otherwise, they would stand with him.

**Aug. 17, 1865.** Lat. 0-48S. Long. 116-56W.

We crossed the line for the fifth time—McNulty drunk— the liquor of the steerage officers stopped as McNulty got it from them.

**Aug. 20, 1865.** Lat. 9-08S. Long. 121-54W.

Captain wishes to know if I can dispense with McNulty's services—the latter is drunk on every occasion—I said yes—.

**Aug. 24, 1865.** Lat. 22-26S. Long. 127-15-30W.

Trouble aboard—Scales oversleeps himself—the Captain says that as he is now only master of the ship, he could not punish him—relieves him from duty—Blacker to take the watch—various troubles—

**Aug. 25, 1865.** Lat. 25-06-30S. Long. 127-19W.

More trouble between Scales and Capt. Waddell—

**Oct. 29, 1865.** Lat. 42-36N. Long. 30-22W.

Still squally—McNulty and others drunk—


**Oct. 30, 1865.** Lat. 43-47N. Long. 26-46W.

Sgt. Canning dies—cause phthisis, superinduced by an old gun-shot wound—his strange history—said to have served on Polk's staff at Shiloh, where he was wounded—

**Nov. 5, 1865.** Lat. 52-25N. "Going up the Irish Channel."

Land in sight at daylight—chronometers right to almost a minute—pass numerous sail—pay off the men—only a few dissatisfied—later rumor that they intend to demand more— "bosh"—they know the officers too well—difficult sailing— lights misleading—

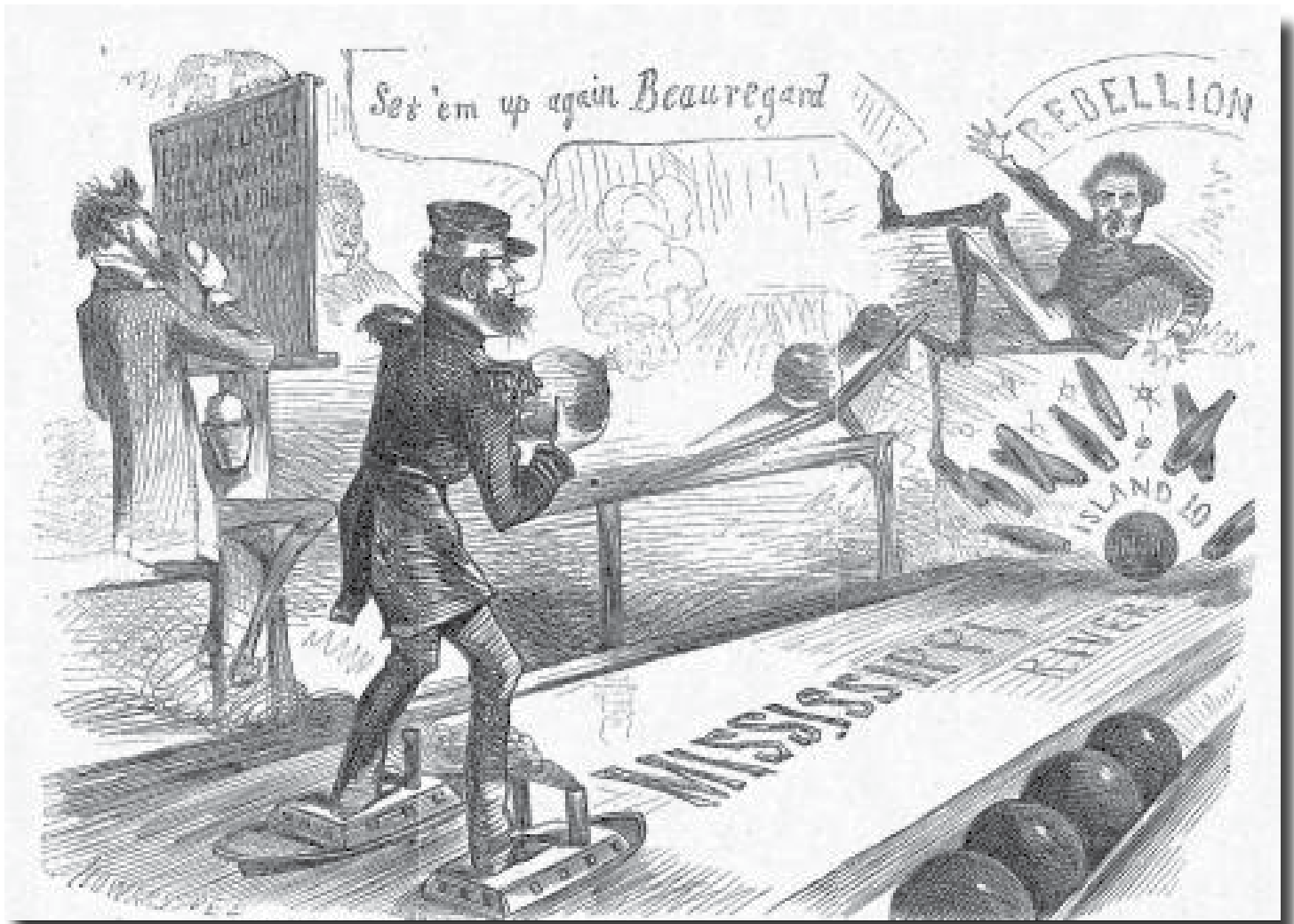
**Nov. 8, 1865.** "Off Liverpool."

We were the last thing that flew the Confederate flag, & that is something to be proud of. Landing—hotel accommodations—visit the theatre—hear news. "So ends my Shenandoah Journal." 



"Old Rip of the Shenandoah" (Library of Congress engraving)

Chase E. Lining, "The Journal of Chase E. Lining of CSS *Shenandoah*." *A Calendar of Confederate Papers*. Douglas Hall Freeman, editor. Richmond: The Confederate Museum, 1908, 128-163.



“Foote: Set 'em Up Again Beauregard!” (Harper’s Weekly engraving)

# UPON FURTHER REVIEW- MEMOIRS





## Hospitals Afloat on the James and York Rivers (1862)

### Using Donated Ships, Volunteer Doctors and Nurses to Care for Union Soldiers

“Perhaps I can better illustrate my meaning by sketching a few of the daily labors of the agents of the Commission as I saw them. The sick and wounded were usually sent down from the front by rail, a distance of about twenty miles, over a rough road, and in the common freight-cars. A train generally arrived at White House at nine A.M., and another at two A. M. In order to prepare for the reception of the sick and wounded, Mr. Olmstead, with Drs. Jenkins and Ware, had pitched, by the side of the railway, at White House, a large number of tents, to shelter and feed the convalescent. These tents were their only shelter while waiting to be shipped. Among them was one used as a kitchen and work-room, or pantry, by the ladies in our service, who prepared beef-tea, milk-punch, and other food and comforts, in anticipation of the arrival of the trains.

By the terminus of the railway the large Commission steamboat *Knickerbocker* lay in the Pamunkey, in readiness for the reception of four hundred and fifty patients,



Civil War nurse. (Harper's Weekly engraving)

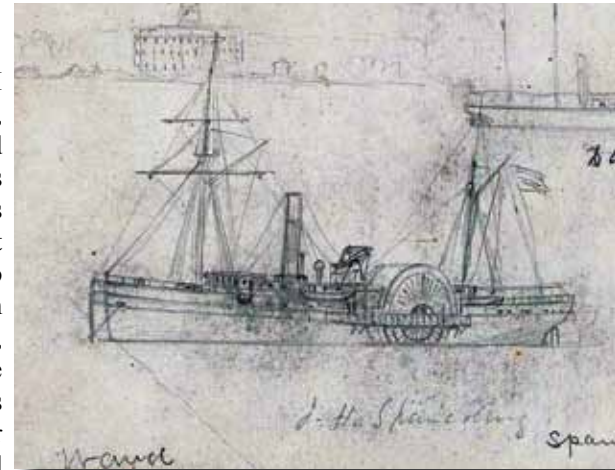
provided with comfortable beds and a corps of devoted surgeons, dressers, nurses, and litter-bearers. Just outside of this vessel lay the *Elizabeth*, a steam-berge, loaded with the hospital stores of the Commission, and in charge of a store-keeper, always ready to issue supplies. Outside of this again lay *Wilson Small*, the headquarters of our Commission. As soon as a train arrived, the moderately sick were selected and placed in the tents near the railroad and fed; those more ill were carried to the upper saloon of *Knickerbocker*, while the seriously ill, or badly wounded, were placed in the lower saloon, and immediately served by the

surgeons and dressers.

During the three nights that I observed the working of the system, about seven hundred sick and wounded were provided with quarters and ministered to in all their wants with a tender solicitude and skill that excited my deepest admiration. To see Drs. Ware and Jenkins, lantern in hand, passing through the trains, selecting the sick with reference to their necessities, and the ladies following to assuage the thirst, or arouse, by judiciously administered stimulants, the failing strength of the brave and uncomplaining sufferers, was a spectacle of the most touching character. If you had experienced the debilitating influence of the Pamunkey climate, you would be filled with wonder at the mere physical endurance of our corps, who certainly could not have been sustained in the performance of duties, involving labor by day and through sleepless nights, without a strong sense of their usefulness and success.

At Savage's Station, too, the Commission had a valuable depot, where comfort and assistance was dispensed to the sick when changing from the ambulances to the cars. I wish I could do justice to the subject of my hasty narrative, or in any due measure convey to your mind the impressions left on mine in observing, even casually, the operations in the care of the sick at these two points.

When we remember what was done by the same noble band of laborers after the battles of Williamsburg and Fair Oaks, in ministering to the wants of thousands of wounded, I am sure that we shall join with them in gratitude and thankfulness that they were enabled to be there. But the end of it all was at hand; the 'change of base,' of which the Commission had some private intelligence, came to pass. The sick and wounded were carefully gathered up from the tents and hospitals, and sent slowly away down the winding river—The *Wilson Small* lingering as long as possible, till the telegraph wires had been cut, and the enemy was announced, by mounted messengers, to be at "Tunstall's." In fact, till the roar of the battle came nearer, and we knew that Stoneman with his cavalry



Hospital ship J.B. Spaulding in the James River. (Library of Congress image)

was falling back to Williamsburg, and that the enemy were about to march into our deserted places.

All night we sat on the deck of the *Small* slowly moving away, watching the constantly increasing cloud and the fire-flashes over the trees towards the White House; watching the fading out of what had been to us, through these strange weeks, a sort of home, where all had worked together and been happy; a place which is sacred to some of us now for its intense living remembrances, and for the hallowing of them all by the memory of one who, through months of death and darkness, lived and worked in self-abnegation, lived in and for the suffering of others, and finally gave himself a sacrifice for them.”

We left White House Saturday night, and rendezvoused at West Point. Captain Sawtelle sent us off early, with despatches for Fortress Monroe; this gave us the special fun of being the first to come leisurely into the panic then raging at Yorktown. *Small* was instantly surrounded by terror stricken boats; the people of the big *St. Mark* leaned, pale, over their bulwarks, to question us. Nothing could be more delightful than to be as calm and monosyllabic as we were.

At daybreak for Harrison's Bar, James River, where our gunboats are said to be; we hope to get further up, but General Dix warns us that it is not safe. What are we about to learn? No one here can tell.”

“Letter from Doctor C.G. Agnew” in *Documents of the U.S. Sanitary Commission Volume 1*. New York: United States Sanitary Commission, 1866. 44a.

## The Commodore and the Overseer (1863)

During the Vicksburg Campaign, the Navy Clears the Yazoo River, Plantations Burn, and David Dixon Porter Has a Conversation with the Most Indifferent Man in the South

“The next we did was to stop and breathe after getting through that smoke, and look back and regret the loss of the cotton. The worst thing to be done with cotton is to burn it, especially when it is not your own.

Here was the Confederate Government complaining of Northern oppression, and yet their own agents were riding around on horseback, setting fire to the people’s cotton to keep it from falling into our hands, while, if they had let it alone, it would not have been troubled by us, except by giving a receipt for it, and, when the war was over, the owners would have netted more than the full value of their property.

This was one of the worst cases of vandalism I had yet seen. When all the vessels had passed through the flame and smoke we hauled up at a small collection of houses, where the Negro women were running around screaming and driving in the pigs and poultry.

A burly overseer, weighing over two hundred pounds, sat at the door of log-hut with a pipe in his mouth. He was a white man, half bull-dog, half blood-hound, and his face expressed everything that was bad in human nature, but he smoked away as if nothing was the matter—as Nero fiddled while Rome was burning.

He looked on us with perfect indifference; our presence didn’t seem to disturb him at all. Doubtless he felt quite secure; that we didn’t want anything so bad as he was.

I called to him, and he came down in his shirt-sleeves, bareheaded, and looked stolidly at me as if to say, “Well, what do you want?”

“Why did those fools set fire to that cotton?” I inquired.

“Because they didn’t want you fools to have it,” he replied. “It’s ourn, and I guess things ain’t come to such a pass that we can’t do as we please with our own.”

“Tell them we won’t trouble it,” I said; “it is wicked to see such material going off like smoke.”

In five minutes he had a dozen Negroes at his side, and they were all sent up the bayou on a full run to stop the burning of cotton. He believed our word, and we did not disappoint him.

“And who are you?” I inquired of the man.

“I am in charge of this plantation,” he

replied; “this is the mother of my children”—pointing to a fat, thick-lipped Negress who stood, with her bosom all bare and arms a-kimbo, about ten yards away—”and these fine fellows are my children,” he continued, pointing to some light-colored boys who had followed him down.

“I suppose you are Union, of course? You all are so when it suits you,” I said.

“No, by G-- , I’m not, and never will be; and as to the others, I know nothing about them. Find out for yourself. I’m for Jeff Davis first, last, and all the time. Do you want any more of me?” he inquired, “for I am not a loquacious man at any time.”

“No, I want nothing more with you,” I replied; “but I am going to steam into that bridge of yours across the stream and knock it down. Is it strongly built?”

“You may knock it down and be d—d,” he said, “It don’t belong to me; and, if you want to find out how strong it is, pitch into it. You’ll find a hard nut to crack; it ain’t made of candy.”

“You are a Yankee by birth, are you not?” I asked.

“Yes, d—n it, I am,” he replied; “that’s no reason I should like the institution. I cut it long ago,” and he turned on his heel and walked off.

“Ring \* Go ahead fast,” I said to the captain; “we will let that fellow see what bridge-smashers we are.”

In three minutes we were going four knots through the water, and in one more we went smashing through the bridge as if it was paper. I looked toward the overseer to see how he would take it, but he did not even turn his head as he sat at his door smoking. This man was but one remove from a brute, but there were hundreds more like him.

We came to one more bridge; down it went like nine-pins, and we steamed slowly on, forcing our way through small, lithe willows that seemed to hold us in a grip of iron. This lasted for an hour, during which we made but half a mile.

But that was the last of the willows for a time. Had they continued, we would have been obliged to give it up. The small sprouts, no larger than my little finger, caught in the rough plates of the overhang and held us as the threads of the Lilliputians held Gulliver.

Now we came to extensive woods again on either side, the large trees towering in the



David Dixon Porter (NHHC image)

air, while underneath they looked as if their lower branches had been trimmed to give them a uniform appearance; but they had



“The Overseer” (Drawing by Granger)

only been trimmed by the hand of Nature, whose fair impression fell on all about us. Man only marred the prospect there.

It was hard and slow work. The brutal overseer felt quite sure that we would be bagged before night. He didn’t know that Sherman was right behind us with an army that was no respecter of ducks, chickens, pigs, or turkeys. I was in hopes they would pay the apostate Yankee a visit, if only to teach him good manners.”

**Admiral David Dixon Porter. *Incidents and Anecdotes of the Civil War.* New York: D. Appleton Company, 1885. 148-152.**

## And Wag Goes the Dog (1863)

### Off the Coast of Charleston, the Boarding Officer of USS *Wissahickon* Takes Prisoners from the Blockade Runner *Georgiana*

“Nothing had occurred to disturb our serenity up to the mid-watch at twelve o’clock. At this hour, the watches were changed, and all had again settled down to quietude, and no sound was heard but the regular tread of the officer of the deck upon the bridge. Captain Davis was still on deck, when at about half-past twelve firing was heard from the ships outside us, and the rattle was immediately sprung, and in a moment we were all at our quarters ready for action. We were satisfied from the direction of the firing that a blockade-runner was trying to come in, and our large pivot-gun was run out, and the officer stood waiting the command from the captain to fire as soon as the stranger should show himself in our neighborhood. The suspense was not of long duration, for in a few minutes a large steamer was close aboard of us, having successfully passed the other ships.

In an instant, and before she could possibly change her course, our large pivot gun was trained on her and the command given to fire, which was quickly obeyed. The stranger was evidently much surprised at finding such a serious obstacle in the way of his progress toward Charleston, where he expected to arrive with his valuable cargo in a short time.



An 1860s engraving of a Southdown sheep

He was evidently very badly frightened, for as soon as our first shot was fired, he showed a light, and an officer hastened to inform us that he surrendered, whereupon the order was given to cease firing on her. Our ship was immediately under-weigh, but as we approached him he changed his course suddenly and took to his heels again, hoping to run in along the beach to the north of us and escape. The night was intensely dark, and it was impossible to follow him directly,

but our captain assumed that he would still make the attempt to run in to Charleston, and so we shaped our course so as to head him off if possible, not knowing his position accurately enough to give him a stern chase, and possibly by that means lose him entirely. So we adopted the plan mentioned as the only possible one, or at least probable one of intercepting him. Our captain did not feel disposed to be specially lenient with him, or to show him any very marked respect, since he had so treacherously and unceremoniously fled after having surrendered, and thereby compelled us to cease firing.

I must say, however, that he showed considerable genius in attempting this trick, and had nearly been successful in it. The plan which Capt. Davis had adopted of heading him off, was a successful one, for he very soon appeared again, and we gave him another pill from our big gun. This last shot had evidently taken effect, for he ran aground at a point about two miles from Breach Inlet, and immediately showed a bright white light.

A boat was immediately lowered from our ship, and Lieutenant Casey was sent to board the stranger, with orders to bring back the prisoners with him, and to ascertain what cargo she had, and get such other information as he could by an examination of her papers. It was past midnight, but we all sat up and waited patiently for the return of the boat, as we were anxious to see the prisoners and hear all the particulars about the ship.

In due time the boat returned bringing the *prisoners*, which consisted of a large Newfoundland dog and a very large Southdown sheep. Lieutenant Casey had obeyed his instructions to the letter, so far at least as the prisoners were concerned, for the dog and sheep were the only living things to be found on board the vessel, and these amiable animals had met him at the gangway as he stepped on board, and gave him a hearty welcome, at the same time indicating their willingness to surrender, without any words on the subject.

The arrival of these unexpected prisoners caused an immense amount of amusement for us, as we all crowded to the rail to see them hoisted on board, and the Lieutenant seemed to be very proud of his peaceful



1860s engraving of a Newfoundland dog.

capture. He reported that he had made a thorough examination of the ship in search of officers and crew, whom it was possible might be stowed away somewhere among the cargo, but, that he could find no trace of any living beings except the prisoners mentioned. So he had concluded that all hands had escaped to the shore in their boats, as soon as the ship had struck the bar. Signals were at once made from our ship for assistance in getting the stranger off the bar, and in a few minutes several boats arrived from the other blockading ships, and preparations were made for hauling her off.

There was no manifest of the cargo found, but it was presumed that she was loaded with arms and ammunition, as a portion of the cargo was in sight, and consisted of small rifled cannon and Enfield rifles. There must also have been a considerable quantity of medical stores on board, as quite a number of bottles of quinine were found, as well as several cases of brandy. The quality of the latter article was tested.”

**Israel Evertt Vail. *Three Years on the Blockade*. New York: The Abbey Press, 1902. 110-118.**



(Library of Congress image)

## The Pirate and the Tartar Woman (1863)

**Lieutenant John Newland Maffitt,  
Commanding Officer, CSS Florida**

“February 12 [1863]—At 10 A. M. saw a large sail on our port beam. Gave chase, and at 4 P. M. made a prize of the ship Jacob Bell of New York. Her tonnage was about 1,300, and she is esteemed one of the most splendid vessels out of New York that trades with China. A message came that the captain had ladies on board and that his wife was on the eve of confinement. I sent Dr. Garrettson on board to investigate and to say that the ladies must leave the ship, as I was determined to burn her. The ladies came, and with tons of baggage. I surrendered my cabin to the ladies. The party consisted of Mrs. Frisbie (the captain's wife), Mrs. Williams, whose husband is a custom house officer at Swartow, China, Louis Frisbie, and another, Charlie, son

of a missionary from Rhode Island, now stationed at Swartow. The passengers and crew amounted to forty-three persons.

The *Jacob Bell* had a cargo of choice tea, camphor, chow-chow, etc., valued at two million or more. We took such articles as we required, and on the 13th at 4 p. m. we set her on fire. Mrs. Frisbie was a very quiet, kind-hearted lady; Mrs. Williams, I fancy, something of a tartar. She and Captain Frisbie were not on terms. They remained in possession of my cabin for five days, when I put the entire party on board the Danish brig *Morning Star*, bound to St. Thomas. If they speak unkindly, such a thing as gratitude is a stranger to their abolition hearts.

The woman, Mrs. Williams, left some empty hamper baskets on board the *Florida*, and it took Captain Maffitt hours to convey her personal baggage from the *Florida* to

the *Morning Star*. He learned after the war that she had claimed insurance from the company with which she was insured, for this baggage as lost, and also had gained possession of some of his estate, which was libeled and divided with this informant by the Federal Government. She also wrote a book, *A Year in China*, in which she grossly misrepresented all the facts of her capture and treatment. Admiral [George] Preble sent a copy of this book to [me], and after reading the book. [I] wrote for Admiral Preble a true account of her whole conduct while on board, and of the courtesy with which she had been treated.”

**Emma Martin Maffitt, editor. *The Life and Services of John Newland Maffitt*. New York: The Neale Publishing Company, 1906. 272-278.**

**Mrs. D. Williams, Wife of the  
Ambassador to China and Passenger on  
*Jacob Bell***

“While I was still remaining on deck, the crew commenced bringing boat-loads of property from the ship, although I am not positive that any luggage had as yet been sent. In a short time, however, to my amazement I observed some of the officers and crew of the pirate coming over the side of the vessel, each with an armful of things from my packages. There was bed and table linen, towels made up and in the piece, articles of my wardrobe, silver plate, a box of rare china, two chairs from Canton, Oriental table-mats, a box of India sweetmeats, our stores, and two cases of claret; which, with the sweetmeats, were marked with my name in full. There were also boxes of spools of sewing-silk and sewing-cotton, boxes of pins and of dress-trimmings, and various other articles required for personal or housekeeping use. The officers of the *Florida*—the so-called boasted chivalry of the South — were now shamelessly enacting the burglar and shop-lifter, directly before my eyes; and carrying my property in tumbled, confused masses, into their ward-room. I saw Lieutenant Reed with a huge armful of cottons sheeting and unmade table-linen, rush from the side of the ship to the ward-room entrance; when seeing that I was watching him in mute astonishment, he dropped his eyes and hurried below like a detected thief.

The reader must not lose sight, in what follows, of the fact that Captain Maffitt had all along led me to believe that from kindly motives he had done all he could to protect us and our effects; and that, could he have controlled the pillagers, our packages would have remained untouched to burn with the ship. He also asserted that he had allowed us to have all the luggage he could, and that he greatly regretted we should have been so unfortunate. With these things in mind, the conversation held with him as he accompanied us from the companion-way of his cabin nearly to the bow of the vessel, where we were again to be lowered into the boat that was to receive us, will be readily understood; but we had little idea of the extent of the deception which he was again to practise upon us.

After remarking, as we passed the pile of luggage, that we had placed ours there, hoping it would all reach us safely, Captain Maffitt said, — “It shall all be sent on board, Mrs. W.” I then expressed my thanks for his civilities, adding, that we were grateful for his protection, and that our friends would also be thankful that, in our misfortunes, we personally had fared so well; whereupon he remarked something about it being very disagreeable for ladies to be situated as we had been, and expressed himself as extremely sorry for not having been able to make us more comfortable; after which I remarked, — “



*Florida Burns Jacob Bell* (Harper's Weekly engraving)

Captain Maffitt, if you are taken, we hope you may be treated as well as you have treated us.” Responding quickly, he said, — “I hope I shall not be taken at all.” I dared not, in the midst of such surroundings, say, as I must, if a reply were given, that I wished him to be taken, and therefore was silent. Meanwhile we walked several steps, when the captain, divining my thoughts, continued, — “But I suspect, Mrs. W., that you wish I may be taken?” This said interrogatively, enabled me to escape from my dilemma by the ready rejoinder, — “I shall not pray for it, Captain Maffitt.” He then assisted me to disembark, and shaking hands, said, with great show of fervor and sincerity, — “Goodbye, God bless you.”

**Mrs. H. Dwight Williams. *A Year in China and a Narrative of Capture and Imprisonment, When Homeward Bound, Aboard the Pirate Ship Florida*. New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1864. 303-340.**

## White Knuckle Fever-Blockade Running (1864)

### The Steel-Hulled Steamer *Banshee* Makes a Run For Wilmington, While Schooner *Rob Roy* Attempts to Break Out of Galveston

#### *Banshee's* Run

“Now the real excitement began, and nothing I have ever experienced can compare with it. Hunting, pig-sticking, steeple-chasing, big game shooting, polo—I have done a little of each—all have their thrilling moments, but none can approach “running a blockade”; and perhaps my readers can sympathise with my enthusiasm when they consider the dangers to be encountered, after three days of constant anxiety and little sleep, in threading our way through a swarm of blockaders, and the accuracy required to hit in the nick of time the mouth of a river only half a mile wide, without lights and with a coast-line so low and featureless that as a rule the first intimation we had of its nearness was the dim white line of the surf.

We steamed cautiously on until nightfall: the night proved dark, but dangerously clear and calm. No lights were allowed—not even a cigar; the engine-room hatchways were covered with tarpaulins, at the risk of suffocating the unfortunate engineers

and stokers in the almost insufferable atmosphere below. But it was absolutely imperative that not a glimmer of light should appear. Even the binnacle was covered, and the steersman had to see as much of the compass as he could through a conical aperture carried almost up to his eyes.

With everything thus in readiness we steamed on in silence except for the stroke of the engines and the beat of the paddle-floats, which in the calm of the night seemed distressingly loud; all hands were on deck, crouching behind the bulwarks; and we on the bridge, namely, the captain, the pilot, and I, were straining our eyes into the darkness. Presently, Burroughs made an uneasy movement— “Better get a cast of the lead, Captain,” I heard him whisper. A muttered order down the engine-room tube was Steele’s reply, and the *Banshee* slowed and then stopped. It was an anxious moment, while a dim figure stole into the fore-chains; for there is always a danger of steam blowing



*Blockade Runner Banshee (NHHC Image)*

off when engines are unexpectedly stopped, and that would have been enough to betray our presence for miles around. In a minute or two came back the report, “sixteen fathoms—sandy bottom with black specks. We are not as far in as I thought, Captain,” said Burroughs, “and we are too far to the southward. Port two points and go a little faster.” As he explained, we must be well to the northward of the speckled bottom before it was safe to head for the shore, and away we went again. In about an hour Burroughs quietly asked for another sounding. Again she was gently stopped, and this time he was satisfied. “Starboard and go ahead easy,” was

#### *Rob Roy's* Run

“ABOUT the 12th of September a good, steady breeze was blowing from the eastward, which freshened up towards evening. And the chance had come. We were well to windward, as we intended to run out by the south-west, or Swash Channel, as it was called. At the place where we lay we could see plainly all the blockading fleet and note their position. Beyond the shoal which separated this channel from the sea, and very near to the outer mouth of the channel, lay a gunboat in what we considered a very bad position for us.

In passing out by this channel the first difficulty was to find it, where it branched off the main channel. On entering it, it led in a south-westerly direction, with from eight to nine feet of water, with the land on the right, and on the left the shoal, which considerably broke the sea and kept the channel tolerably smooth.

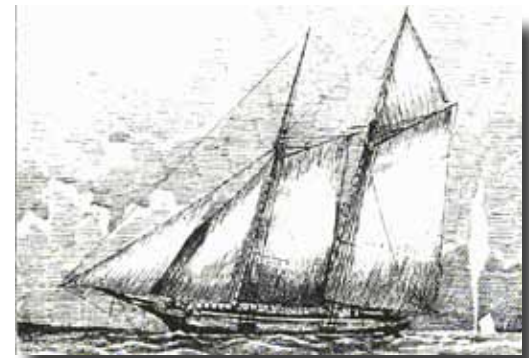
Everything was got ready, the large boat was hoisted on board and lodged in a place reserved for it forward of the main-hatchway. Inside of the boat was placed

a large coop or arrangement made for the poultry to roost upon, among which was a fine cock, to which some of the men had taken a great fancy, but which was soon afterwards sentenced to death as a traitor. Into the dingy was stowed some small packages of cotton, made up for the purpose, to shield the steersman in case of shots from boats astern. Double reefs were put in the mainsail and foresail, so that under low canvas we would be shadowed by the dark loom of the land to leeward.

The wind kept increasing, and in the evening there was a fine, steady breeze, and the night was dark.

About eight o'clock we raised anchor and proceeded down the bay. We passed well to the eastward of the wreck of the [USS] *Westfield* and the guard-boat, keeping the lead going, and taking care to avoid observation from the Forts. After a little difficulty we found the entrance to the Swash Channel, and got into nine feet of water, with the land on the starboard side. All well so far.

Along this channel we steered cautiously.



*Schooner Rob Roy (Engraving from Adventures of a Blockader Runner)*

No lights could be used at the compass; but on entering the channel the course was taken from a star and regulated by the lead.

With my night-glass I looked out for the gunboat, and I soon discovered her on the port bow, close on, and well in shore she was, and there was very little room to pass between her and the breakers. The wind, however, was a little north of east, and there was not a great sea on, and the breakers did not sound loud.

As we got towards the end of the shoal the swell from seaward caused us to keep in the deepest water, and it was evident that

the order now, and as we crept in not a sound was heard but that of the regular beat of the paddle-floats still dangerously loud in spite of our snail's pace. Suddenly Burroughs gripped my arm,—

"There's one of them, Mr. Taylor," he whispered, "on the starboard bow."

In vain I strained my eyes to where he pointed, not a thing could I see; but presently I heard Steele say beneath his breath, "All right, Burroughs, I see her. Starboard a little, steady!" was the order passed aft.

A moment afterwards I could make out a long low black object on our starboard side, lying perfectly still. Would she see us? that was the question; but no, though we passed within a hundred yards of her we were not discovered, and I breathed again. Not very long after we had dropped her Burroughs whispered,—

"Steamer on the port bow."


And another cruiser was made out close to us.

"Hard-a-port," said Steele, and round she swung, bringing our friend upon our beam. Still unobserved we crept quietly on, when all at once a third cruiser shaped herself out of the gloom right ahead and steaming slowly across our bows.

"Stop her," said Steele in a moment, and as we lay like dead our enemy went on and disappeared in the darkness. It was clear there was a false reckoning somewhere, and that instead of rounding the head of the blockading line we were passing through the very centre of it. However, Burroughs was now of opinion that we must be inside the squadrons and advocated making the land. So "slow ahead" we went again, until the low-lying coast and the surf line became dimly visible. Still we could not tell where we were, and, as time was getting on alarmingly near dawn, the only thing to do was to creep down along the surf as close in and as fast as we dared. It was a great relief when we suddenly heard Burroughs say, "It's all right, I see the 'Big Hill'!"

The "Big Hill" was a hillock about as high as a full-grown oak tree, but it was the most prominent feature for miles on that dreary coast, and served to tell us exactly how far we were from Fort Fisher. And fortunate it was for us we were so near. Daylight was already breaking, and before we were opposite the fort we could make out six or seven gunboats, which steamed rapidly towards us and angrily opened fire. Their shots were soon dropping close around us:

an unpleasant sensation when you know you have several tons of gunpowder under your feet.

To make matters worse, the North Breaker shoal now compelled us to haul off the shore and steam further out. It began to look ugly for us, when all at once there was a flash from the shore followed by a sound that came like music to our ears—that of a shell whirring over our heads. It was Fort Fisher, wide awake and warning the gunboats to keep their distance. With a parting broadside they steamed sulkily out of range, and in half an hour we were safely over the bar. A boat put off from the fort and then,—well, it was the days of champagne cocktails, not whiskies and sodas—and one did not run a blockade every day. For my part, I was mightily proud of my first attempt and my baptism of fire. Blockade-running seemed the pleasant and most exhilarating of pastimes. I did not know then what a very serious business it could be." 

**Thomas E. Taylor.** *Running the Blockade: A Personal Narrative of Risks, Adventures, and Escapes During the American Civil War.* London: John Murray, 1896. 47-55.

we must pass the gunboat very close. The night was dark, and by the dark loom of the land beyond there was not so much danger of us being observed; but the strictest silence was demanded, and orders were passed in an undertone; and I was uneasy at the noise made by the breaking of the water from the bow of the vessel, which had now got past the lee of the reef and into the swell of the open sea, which was causing her to heave considerably.

We were just coming abreast of the gunboat, and every breath was hushed, when "Cock-a-leery-lou!" rang out in a loud and clear note from the hen-coop in the boat amid ship.

"Confound that brute," I hissed out, in a rage; "twist its neck."

The order was quickly executed; there was a momentary nutter of wings, and poor Chanticleer had given his last crow. In a few minutes we had brought the gunboat on our weather-quarter, and as there was considerable swell, and the breakers close under our lee, we luffed up and stood off the land a little. We had not proceeded far when, looking with my nightglass, I discovered another cruiser on the port bow much larger than the one we had passed,

evidently with steam up and not at anchor, as she was not riding to the wind like the others.

Hard up and ease off sheets, and we were off before the wind heading towards the shore, expecting every moment to be fired upon; but we soon lost her in the darkness, and had just time to luff up and get sheets hauled in before we reached the breakers, and we now stood a good distance to the westward before we stood off the land again.

This latter vessel had, no doubt, come up after dark to watch the wide gap we had observed before sunset between the first and second vessels on the left wing of the blockading fleet, and had we passed out through that gap she would most likely have picked us up.


Since we had passed the Confederate guard-boat we had seen nothing of the *Mary Elizabeth*, though she raised anchor at the same time, and followed us down the bay; but as we had heard no firing we concluded that she had got out all right.

The object now was to get as far out to sea as possible before daylight, and this was the all-important object of a sailing

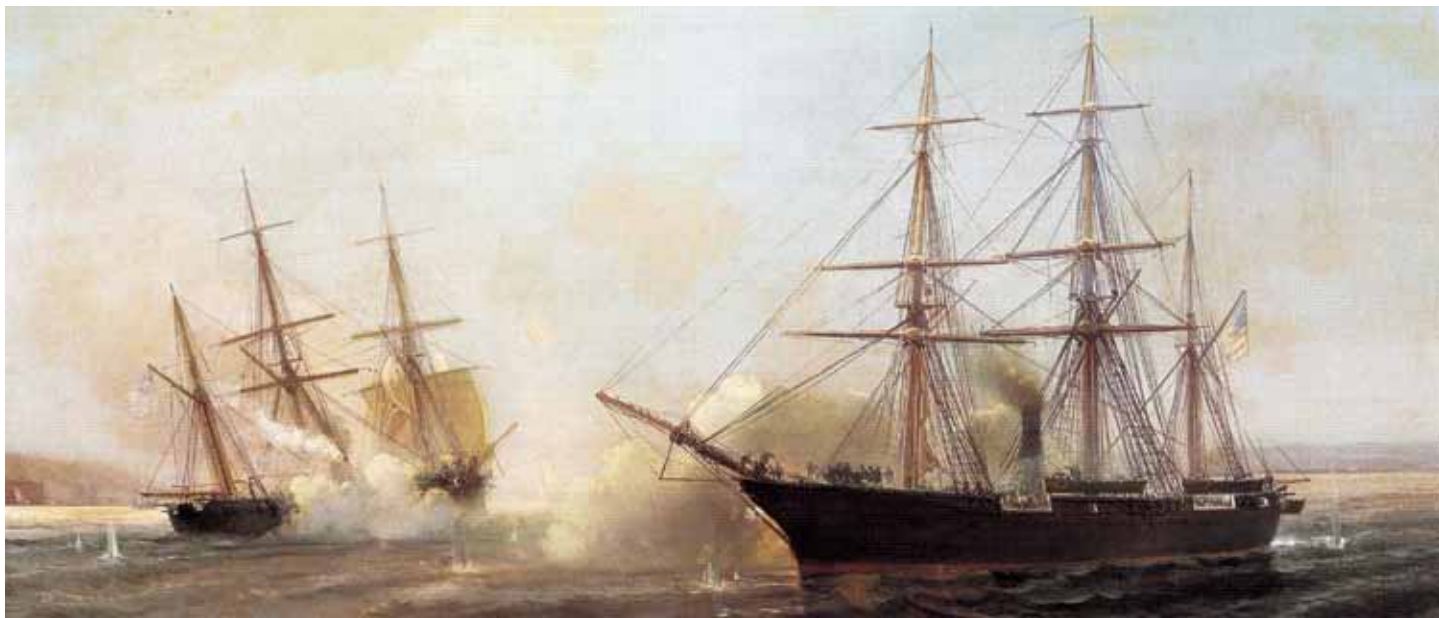


Rob Roy *Outside of Galveston* (Engraving from *Adventures of a Blockade Runner*)

vessel running the blockade on the outward trip. A steamer could always depend upon making her distance, but if the wind died away a sailing vessel was left helpless in the very jaws of the enemy.

Throughout this day the breeze continued, but got gradually lighter, and hauled more round to the southward, which caused us to head more to the westward, but we saw nothing the whole day except the *Mary Elizabeth*, which still kept in sight, though luffing up and standing more to the southwards." 

**William Watson.** *Adventures of a Blockade Runner.* London: T. Fisher, 1892. 200-205.



"Battle of the USS Kearsarge and the CSS Alabama, 1864" (Painting by Durand-Brager)

## Three Views From CSS *Alabama* and Her Duel With USS *Kearsarge* (1864)

**Raphel Semmes,  
Commanding Officer**

"I have the honor to inform you, that, in accordance with my intention as previously announced to you, I steamed out of the harbor of Cherbourg between nine and ten o'clock on the morning of the 19th of June, for the purpose of engaging the enemy's steamer *Kearsarge*, which had been lying off, and on the port, for several days previously. After



Captain Raphel Semmes (NHHC image)

clearing the harbor, we descried the enemy, with his head off shore, at the distance of about seven miles. We were three quarters of an hour in coming up with him. I had previously pivoted my guns to starboard,

and made all preparations for engaging the enemy on that side. When within about a mile and a quarter of the enemy, he suddenly wheeled, and, bringing his head in shore, presented his starboard battery to me. By this time, we were distant about one mile from each other, when I opened on him with solid shot, to which he replied in a few minutes, and the action became active on both sides. The enemy now pressed his ship under a full head of steam, and to prevent our passing each other too speedily, and to keep our respective broadsides bearing, it became necessary to fight in a circle; the two ships steaming around a common centre, and preserving a distance from each other of from three quarters to half a mile. When we got within good shell range, we opened upon him with shell. Some ten or fifteen minutes after the commencement of the action, our spanker-gaff was shot away, and our ensign came down by the run. This was immediately replaced by another at the mizzen-masthead. The firing now became very hot, and the enemy's shot, and shell soon began to tell upon our hull, knocking down, killing, and disabling a number of men, at the same time, in different parts of the ship. Perceiving that our shell, though apparently exploding against the enemy's sides, were doing him but little damage, I returned to solid-shot firing, and from this time onward alternated with shot, and shell.

After the lapse of about one hour and ten minutes, our ship was ascertained to be in a


sinking condition, the enemy's shell having exploded in our side, and between decks, opening large apertures through which the water rushed with great rapidity.

For some few minutes I had hopes of being able to reach the French coast, for which purpose I gave the ship all steam, and set such of the fore-and-aft sails as were available. The ship filled so rapidly, however, that before we had made much progress, the fires were extinguished in the furnaces, and we were evidently on the point of sinking. I now hauled down my colors, to prevent the further destruction of life, and dispatched a boat to inform the enemy of our condition. Although we were now but 400 yards from each other, the enemy fired upon me five times after my colors had been struck.

It is charitable to suppose that a ship of war of a Christian nation could not have done this, intentionally. We now directed all our exertions toward saving the wounded, and such of the boys of the ship as were unable to swim. These were dispatched in my quarter-boats, the only boats remaining to me; the waist-boats having been torn to pieces. Some twenty minutes after my furnace-fires had been extinguished, and when the ship was on the point of settling, every man, in obedience to a previous order which had been given the crew, jumped overboard, and endeavored to save himself. There was no appearance of any boat coming to me from the enemy, until after

my ship went down. Fortunately, however, the steam yacht *Deerhound*, owned by a gentleman of Lancashire, England — Mr. John Lancaster—who was himself on board, steamed up in the midst of my drowning men, and rescued a number of both officers and men from the water. I was fortunate enough myself thus to escape to the shelter of the neutral flag, together with about forty others, all told. About this time, the *Kearsarge* sent one, and then, tardily, another boat. Accompanying, you will find lists of the killed and wounded, and of those who were picked up by the *Deerhound*; the remainder, there is reason to hope, were picked up by the enemy, and by a couple of French pilot boats, which were also fortunately near the scene of action.

At the end of the engagement, it was discovered by those of our officers who went alongside of the enemy's ship, with the wounded, that her mid-ship section, on both sides, was thoroughly iron-coated; this having been done with chains, constructed for the purpose, placed perpendicularly, from the rail to the water's edge, the whole covered over by a thin outer planking, which gave no indication of the armor beneath. This planking had been ripped off, in every direction, by our shot and shell, the chain broken, and indented in many places, and forced partly into the ship's side. She was effectually guarded, however, in this section, from penetration.

The enemy was much damaged, in other parts, but to what extent it is now impossible to say. It is believed she is badly crippled. My officers and men behaved steadily and gallantly, and though they have lost their ship, they have not lost honor." 

**Raphel Semmes. *Service Afloat During the War Between the States.* Baltimore: Kelly, Peit, and Company, 1869. 757-758.**

**Lieutenant John McIntosh Kell, Executive Officer**

“To all outward seeming the disparity was not great between the two ships, barring the unknown (because concealed) chain armor. The *Kearsarge* communicated with the authorities to request that our prisoners be turned over to them. Captain Semmes made an objection to her increasing her crew. He addressed our agent, Mr. Bonfils, a communication requesting him to inform Captain Winslow, through the United

States Consul, that "if he would wait till the *Alabama* could coal ship he would give him battle." We began to coal and at the same time to make preparation for battle. We overhauled the magazine and shell rooms, gun equipment, etc.

The *Kearsarge* was really in the fullest sense of the word a man-of-war, stanch and well built; the *Alabama* was made for flight and speed and was much more lightly constructed than her chosen antagonist. The *Alabama* had one more gun, but the *Kearsarge* carried more metal at a broadside. The seven guns of the *Kearsarge* were two 11-inch Dahlgrens, four 32-pounders, and one rifled 28-pounder. The *Alabama's* eight guns were six 32-pounders, one 8-inch and one rifled 100-pounder. The crew of the *Alabama* all told was 149 men, while that of the *Kearsarge* was 162 men. By Saturday night, June 18th, our preparations were completed. Captain Semmes notified the admiral of the port that he would be ready to go out and meet the *Kearsarge* the following morning. Early Sunday morning the admiral sent an officer to say to us that "the ironclad Frigate *Couronne* would accompany us to protect the neutrality of French waters."


Officers in uniforms, men at their best, Captain Semmes ordered them sent aft, and mounting a gun-carriage made them a brief address. We now prepared our guns to engage the enemy on our starboard side. When within a mile and a-quarter he wheeled, presenting his starboard battery to us. We opened on him with solid shot, to which he soon replied, and the action became active. To keep our respective broadsides bearing we were obliged to fight in a circle around a common center, preserving a distance of three quarters of a mile. When within distance of shell range we opened on him with shell. The spanker gaff was shot away and our ensign came down. We replaced it immediately at the mizzen masthead. The firing now became very hot and heavy. Captain Semmes, who was watching the battle from the horse block, called out to me, "Mr. Kell, our shells strike the enemy's side, doing little damage, and fall off in the water; try solid shot." From this time we alternated shot and shell. The battle lasted an hour and ten minutes. Captain Semmes said to me at this time, "Mr. Kell, as soon as our head points to the French coast in our circuit of action, shift your guns to port and make all sail for the coast." This evolution was beautifully performed; righting the helm, hauling aft



John McIntosh Kell (NHHC image)

the fore-trysail sheet, and pivoting to port, the action continuing all the time without cessation,—but it was useless, nothing could avail us. Before doing this, and pivoting the gun, it became necessary to clear the deck of parts of the dead bodies that had been torn to pieces by the 11-inch shells of the enemy. The captain of our 8-inch gun and most of the gun's crew were killed. It became necessary to take the crew from young Anderson's gun to make up the vacancies, which I did, and placed him in command. Though a mere youth, he managed it like an old veteran.

Going to the hatchway, I called out to Brooks (one of our efficient engineers) to give the ship more steam, or we would be whipped. He replied she "had every inch of steam that was safe to carry without being blown up!" Young Matt O'Brien, assistant engineer, called out, "Let her have the steam; we had better blow her to hell than to let the Yankees whip us!"

The chief engineer now came on deck and reported "the furnace fires put out," whereupon Captain Semmes ordered me to go below and "see how long the ship could float." I did so, and returning said, "Perhaps ten minutes." "Then, sir," said Captain Semmes, "cease firing, shorten sail, and haul down the colors. It will never do in this nineteenth century for us to go down and the decks covered with our gallant wounded." This order was promptly executed, after which the *Kearsarge* deliberately fired into us five shots! In Captain Winslow's report to the Secretary of the Navy he admits this, saying, "Uncertain whether Captain Semmes was not making some ruse, the *Kearsarge* was stopped." 

**John McIntosh Kell. *Recollections of a Naval Life: Including the Cruises on the Sumter and Alabama.* Washington: Neal Company Publishers, 1900. 244-246.**



**Arthur Sinclair IV,  
Division Officer**

“The battle is now on in earnest; and after about fifteen minutes' fighting, we lodge a hundred-pound percussion shell in her quarter near her screw; but it fails to explode, though causing some temporary excitement and anxiety on board the enemy, most likely by the concussion of the blow. We find her soon after seeking closer quarters (which she is fully able to do, having discovered her superiority in speed), finding it judicious to close so that her eleven-inch pivots could



Lieutenant Arthur Sinclair IV (NHC image)

do full duty at point blank range. We now ourselves noted the advantage in speed possessed by our enemy; and Semmes felt her pulse, as to whether very close quarters would be agreeable, by sheering towards her to close the distance; but she had evidently reached the point wished for to fight out the remainder of the action, and demonstrated it by sheering off and resuming a parallel to us. Semmes would have chosen to bring about yard-arm quarters, fouling, and boarding, relying upon the superior physique of his crew to overbalance the superiority of numbers; but this was frustrated, though several times attempted, the desire on our part being quite apparent. We had therefore to accept the situation, and make the best of it we could, to this end directing our fire to the midship section of the enemy, and alternating our battery with solid shot and shell, the former to pierce, if possible, the cable chain armor, the latter for general execution.

Up to the time of shortening the first distance assumed, our ship received no damage of any account, and the enemy none that we could discover, the shot in the quarter working no serious harm to the *Kearsarge*. At the distance, we were now




Alabama Sinking as Seen From Kearsarge (NHC image)

fighting (point-blank range). The effects of the eleven-inch guns were severely felt, and little hurt done on the enemy clearly proved the unserviceableness of our powder, observed at the commencement of the action.

The boarding tactics of Semmes having been frustrated, and we unable to pierce the enemy's hull with our fire, nothing can place victory with us but some unforeseen and lucky turn. At this period of the action our spanker gaff is shot away, bringing our colors to the deck; but apparently this is not observed by the *Kearsarge*, as her fire does not halt at all. We can see the splinters flying off from the armor covering of the enemy; but no penetration occurs, the shot or shell rebounding from her side. Our colors are immediately hoisted to the mizzenmast-head. The enemy having now the range, and being able with her superior speed to hold it at ease, has us well in hand, and the fire from her is deliberate and hot. Our bulwarks are soon shot away in sections; and the after pivot-gun is disabled on its port side, losing, in killed and wounded, all but the compressor-man. The quarter-deck thirty two pounder of this division is now secured, and the crew sent to man the pivot-gun. The spar-deck is by this time being rapidly torn up by shell bursting on the between-decks, interfering with working our battery; and the compartments below have all been knocked into one.

The *Alabama* is making water fast, showing severe punishment; but still the report comes from the engine room that the ship is being kept free to the safety-point. She also has now become dull in response to her helm, and the sail-trimmers are ordered

out to loose the headsails to pay her head off. We are making a desperate but forlorn resistance, which is soon culminated by the deathblow. An eleven-inch shell enters us at the water-line, in the wake of the writer's gun, and passing on, explodes in the engine-room, in its passage throwing a volume of water on board, hiding for a moment the guns of this division. Our ship trembles from stem to stern from the blow.

It being now apparent that the *Alabama* could not float longer, the colors are hauled down, and the pipe given, "All hands save yourselves." Our waist-boats had been shot to pieces, leaving us but two quarter-boats, and one of them much damaged. The wounded are dispatched in one of them to the enemy in charge of an officer, and this done we await developments. The *Kearsarge* evidently failed to discover at once our surrender, for she continued her fire after our colors were struck. Perhaps from the difficulty of noting the absence of a flag with so much white in it, in the powder smoke. But, be the reason what it may, a naval officer, a gentleman by birth and education, would certainly not be guilty of firing on a surrendered foe; hence we may dismiss the matter as an undoubted accident. 

**Arthur Sinclair. *Two Years on the Alabama.* Boston: Lee and Shepard Publishers, 1896. 265-271.**

## Life in USS *Pensacola*'s Boiler Room (1864)

“Several Days Later.—The great work is finished. The Ship has been tried, and a competent committee reports to the Navy Department that she is considered safe to run down the Potomac with the tide. Go *Triumpher!*”

Rumor had often borne to my ears the musical name of D--n, the engineer. His engines, with the celebrated cut-off, had been described to me—by a pious clerk in the Navy Department—as “Chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.”

As a natural consequence, I had longed to behold a specimen of the great man's art AND now the golden opportunity had come. I was at Washington. So was the *Pensacola*, on board which an old friend of mine held the office of Chief Engineer. She was furnished with a D engine. She would sail at nightfall. I did not hesitate. As the sun descended into the west, I descended into the grimy but gold-laced presence of my friend the Engineer.

On the entering the engine-room, I was filled with amazement, not wholly unmingled with consternation. On every side, as far as the eye could reach, I beheld metallic evidences of the ingenuity of D--n. With a slight effort of fancy, I might have believed my self in a museum of mechanical curiosities. The cloud of witnesses, spoken



of in Holy Writ, would be as mere vapor to the dense cloud of wheels which I then beheld. In fact, the very air was black with cogs.

Cogs to the right of me,  
Cogs to the left of me,  
Handles and monkey-tails,  
Bristled and bothered.

One wheel, in particular, presently fixed my attention. “That,” said my companion, “is the reversing wheel. It adjusts the link, for going ahead, stopping, or backing. Those only can work it, however, who understand how to manipulate the cut-off implements. You will see presently. It isn't every body that's up to science, in these days.”

At this moment the Captain's bell signalled to start the engine. Simultaneously twelve men joined us on the platform. The area of this latter being about two square yards, we were conscious of being crowded.

“These hands will help us,” said the Engineer.

“It appears,” said I, “that science still has a few representatives extant.”

“A select few,” he answered; “they have received instructions from D--n.”

“Now, boys, start her.”

The boys distributed themselves among the cogs, and resolutely commenced operations. I silently admired their resolution.

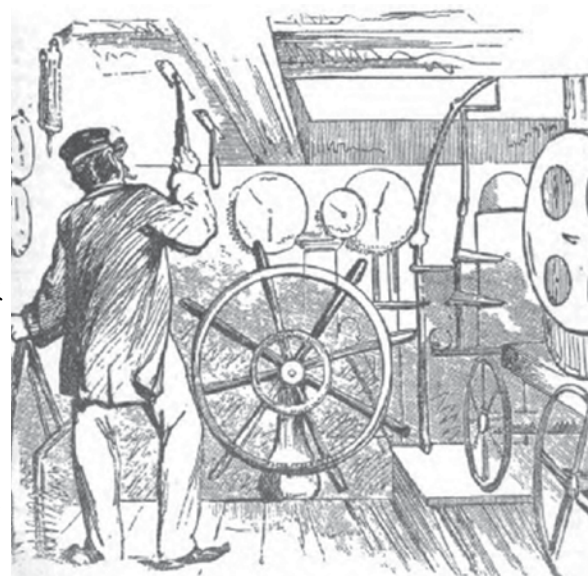
“Take It easy, boys,” said a Lieutenant, looking in at this juncture. “The Captain's gone ashore, to buy a photograph of D--n; he'll be on board again in half-an-hour. If you begin now, you'll get started by the time he gets back.”

They began.

Two men stationed themselves at the water-valves; two went to the injection valves; six assumed charge of the link; one fixed his eyes on the thermometer; one, in a corner, drank something out of a black bottle. The Engineer himself wound up the clock. I helped him. Six more men then came in, variously armed with handspikes, beetles, hydraulic jacks, oil cans, and wrenches. A number of small boys, all in uniform, also made their appearance, bearing buckets of water, more oil cans, and several crow-bars. They stationed themselves at the dash-pots.

“I think she will start,” said I to the Engineer. “Probably,” said the Engineer to me.

Here my companion (or was I deceived in the dim moonlight?) deliberately winked upon me with one eye. Then, seizing the black bottle, he drank, with his mouth, for some time. Finally he resumed his remarks:



D--n is a modest man, too. All great genius exhibits that characteristic.

He never blows his own horn. He said once, that he ‘was profoundly ignorant of a steam-engine, and supposed a cylinder head to be a full moon.’ That was modesty! No one, who has ever heard our cylinders work, would credit it of him. They suggest any thing but moons. Meteors, accompanied by thunder, would much better typify them. But whatever may be the great man's notion as to cylinder-heads, he has certainly got very clear ideas on the subject of DASH-POTS.

Look at that engine, for instance! It's all over dash-pots. They gleam like the brass kettle of by-gone days, in which my venerated and now defunct grandmother used to boil cabbage. Hence the tender associations with which they are fraught. I look upon them, day and night, with never-tiring admiration. The rings of Saturn and the splendors of Mars are really as nothing to these Iridescent vehicles of science. I have, indeed, commenced a poem about them—in humble imitation of the great engineer's favorite bard. It will be comprised in four hundred cantos, commencing thus:

The D--n dash-pots am gleaming like gold,

And are brimming with oil as full as they'll hold;

Neither odor nor sheen more delightful could be—

They are pungent to smell and refulgent to see.

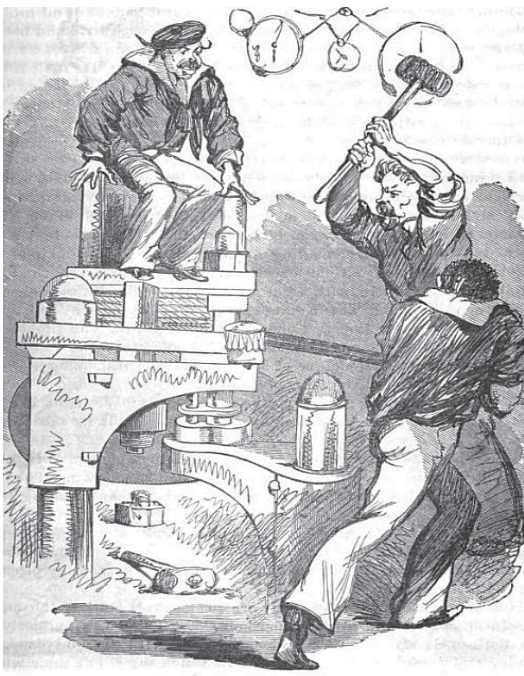
Diddle dol de I diddle dolde

I O the D--n dash-pot's the dash-pot for me.

There, is, however, another feature in

this engine, which illustrates to still greater advantage the grandeur of D--n's inventive genius. That is, the LINK MOTION. The lustre of this device outshines even the lustre of the dash-pots. You have just seen something of its achievements In starting this ship. It is not, like the common and vulgar link-motion in general use, an Instantaneously adjustable apparatus, easily worked by one man. On the contrary, it requires only about fifteen men to work it, and it keeps them occupied from ten to twenty minutes in adjusting the various cogs, and cranks, and levers, in conjunction with the cut-off machinery, for going ahead or backing. Plainly enough, science marks this link-motion for its own. Only a man who, like D--n, had read *Richard the Third*, and 'drank of the pure fountain at its source,' could have devised it. So ponderous is the mass of metal employed, that it necessitates a huge weight, acting—on a principle of sweet simplicity—over a pulley, attached to the upper part of the area of both engines, thereby to lessen what otherwise would be a terrible strain on the ship.

I am sure you will sympathize with my admiration for this triumph of skill. There is a great gain, too, in noise by this



means—noise so salutary in its impression on the common mind. A free space is made for these weights to run up and down inside the bunkers; and so, at the slightest motion of the ship, they create a most exhilarating clatter, harmonizing with the delicious din of the entire engine.

"These little touches evince the philosopher. Common minds would have been content with celerity, safety, and economy, without reference to the ornamental intricacies of science. Not so the expansive D--n. His progress in the realms of thought bears no distant analogy to the wise man's progress in the realms of experience. Youth imagines that the world was made for man. Maturity discovers that man was made for the world. So in mechanism. To the budding and innocent D--n of long ago, it seemed, no doubt, the dash-pots were made for engines.

To the full-blown D--n of to-day, it is manifestly clear that engines were made for dash-pots. Hence the noble machinery, with its patent cut-off and astonishing link motion, that we have here the privilege to observe. It has been constructed under the white light of science, and without the slightest regard to expense. Its dash pot gleam, in the yellow radiance of polished brass, and its monkey-tails are marshalled like the Assyrian cohorts of the pious Byron. Great facilities are afforded for the soothing influence of oil, and for the consequent liberal dissemination of postal currency and green-backed--notes. The whistle is a dear one; but T. Jincie Samuel (like the old trump that he has always been) pays for it without a murmur, and wins the unqualified approbation of D--n. Could more be wished? I leave it to your judgment as a citizen.


You have observed—doubtless with profound amazement—the striking ceremonies with which it is necessary to approach this engine, on the respective subjects of starting and stopping. This, in itself, is evidence of almost human strength of character. In all experience it has been found that large bodies move slowly—an ancient adage, beautifully illustrated in the case of the Clara Clarita.

"It was D--n who selected the boiler and adapted the machinery of that thing of beauty,' at a cost, to the gifted Jerome, of over Twenty-One Thousand Dollars. And she sailed precisely one mile and a quarter in two hours and a half, being ultimately thwarted by a stubborn and unaccommodating tide, at Corlear's Hook.

Equally valid is the venerable adage as applied to all D--n engines, wits their inevitable cut-off. They start slowly; they run with dignity; they stop with due deliberation. In watching this one, I am often reminded of an old gentleman, whose girls I used to flirt with, when I was a



boy. A solid old gentleman he was—with the gout, and a purple nose, and staunch conservative views; and he sat by night in his drawing-room, in a marvellous arm-chair, his noble form arrayed in indescribable complications of raiment. 'Good evening, sir, I used to say to him, on entering the room; 'it's a very cold evening.' And then I turned my attention to the girls. But the old gentleman's brain was an active one; and, after precisely fifteen minutes of preparation, his voice, emerging from many bandages, would be heard to answer, 'Yes, you're right—the evening is very cold.' There was a solidity about that old gentleman, very impressive to me in those days; and there is a similar and equally impressive solidity about this D--n engine.

If it has a fault; that fault consists in its insufficient illustration of its erudite author's idea upon the subject of bricks. With that idea, he electrified a Washington Jury. In the Mattingly Case, and that idea once fully realized in practice, would electrify the entire mechanical world. Imagine a platform supporting a ton of brick, placed upon the end of a piston. Transport that image to yonder engine-room and mark the consequence." 

*Editor's note: All engravings taken from work.*

**Robert Weir (possible *nome de plume*). *Uncle Samuel's Whistle and What It Costs*. Publisher Unknown, 1864. 16-22.**

## To Do and Die at Fort Fisher (1865)

### Two Thousand Sailors and Marines Assault the East Wall

“Like the Rebel army in the fort, the officers (except the leading ones) and the men of the fleet supposed that General Terry had gone up the peninsula to meet General Hoke; and when, on the morning of January 15, sixteen hundred of us landed, we saw no sign of soldiers, and supposed that we were to assault the fort without any support. After we were landed, we were organized into three regiments. The men from each ship formed a company. The senior officer from our ship (Lieutenant Bache) became major of the center regiment, leaving me in command of the *Powhatan's* men, with Ensign (now Commander) Evans as lieutenant. We were the right center company of the center regiment. We were drilled a little after forming, and then lay down in a long line on the beach, while for several hours the fleet fired over us into the fort. This was a very trying ordeal. The shells from fifty eight men-of-war made a horrible screeching, and one eleven-inch gun (said to be the after pivot-gun of the *Vanderbilt*) fired several shells into our column.

The wounded had to be carried through our ranks, and it seemed to discourage the men somewhat. It was about three o'clock when the fleet suddenly ceased its fire, and we rose to our feet and formed a line across the field. It was intended that the marines should occupy some rifle-pits (thrown up by the sailors under Lieutenant Preston), about six hundred rods from the fort. They were about four hundred strong, and armed with Springfield rifles: while only one company of the blue-jackets was armed with anything except cutlasses and revolvers. But, for some reason, the marines were halted in a line nearly out of range, and the sailors prepared to "board the fort in a seaman-like manner." In the mean time some field-pieces opened on us, but didn't do much harm; and, after the shell-fire we had been under, the sailors were more amused than frightened by the little balls that came ricocheting over the sand.

After the marines were halted, our line was faced to the left, and Fleet-Captain Breese gave the order, "Head of column, right," which sent us down the beach in a column of fours. The marines of our ship, the *Powhatan*, happened to be on the left

of the marine line, which opened to let us through, and they deserted their officer (who had lately joined the ship), and fell in with our company. We commenced to "double-quick" nearly a mile from the palisades, and many were very faint from so long a run in the sand. Of the heavy guns in the fort, all except two were disabled. One of these two — an elegant one-hundred-and-fifty-pounder, with the broad-arrow of her Majesty, and mounted on a polished mahogany carriage — had been presented by the City of London, and was so placed that it could hardly be reached by the guns of the ships. A discharge of grape from this gun struck our men just in front of where I was running.

One ball knocked my sword into the water. Many men were struck down, and the unhurt, falling over the bodies, left me for an instant quite alone. On reaching the palisades, the first regiment turned to the right, and, running along the line, got into shot-holes. Our commander, with about thirty others, had to remain in a hole, made by the explosion of a fifteen-inch shell, until night. Our regiment broke through the palisade, and lay down on the glacis of the fort. The third regiment lay on the beach as close up as it could get to the fort. From where I lay on the glacis, we could see the four rows of soldiers in the fort, two ranks firing, and two loading, and hear their taunts to "come on." No sailor reached the parapet. Ensign George C. Davis (now Commander) reached a hole in the face of the parapet. No one went further. At this time there was no distinct sound of the bullets, but only a steady rush, and the water close to the beach was lashed to foam. I would not have supposed men could fire so fast. We only lay a few minutes under this fire before the troops got in on your side, and nearly all the enemy were withdrawn to meet you.

Much has been said of W. B. Cushing.



*U.S. Marines at Fort Fisher (Engraving from Deeds of Valor)*

I saw him half-way back to the rifle-pits. He had seen his friend Porter shot down, and had taken his sword. He was crying and swearing at a few men he had gathered together, and who were being called away by their wounded friends lying near. I spoke to him, and at once he controlled himself perfectly, and told me that an orderly had come from General Terry, saying that he had seven traverses, and could take no more unless the sailors would make another demonstration against the sea-side of the fort. If the sailors could not be brought up again, he said he would dig a ditch between the traverses, and hold what he had till morning. Three or four of us stayed with Cushing till we saw it was useless.

The loss of the navy was great. Admiral Porter reports twenty-one officers and three hundred and nine men lost from twenty-nine ships. There were twenty-nine more ships; and from the "Wabash" only twelve were reported wounded, instead of about thirty. As the marines of our ship joined the blue-jackets, I don't know how many we had; but all but eighteen were hit. The reported loss was twenty-nine. All the officers were wounded. We went ashore in three boats, and returned in one. I say this to show that the probable loss was over four hundred out of the sixteen hundred who landed." 🇺🇸

**Ira Harris.** "Expeditions Against Fort Fisher and Wilmington." *Military Essay and Recollections.* Chicago: A.C. McClurg and Company, 1894. 169-173.