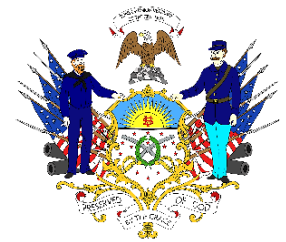




THE HARRIET LANE



The Official Newsletter of
Lt. Commander Edward Lea, USN, Camp No. 2 – Houston, Texas

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

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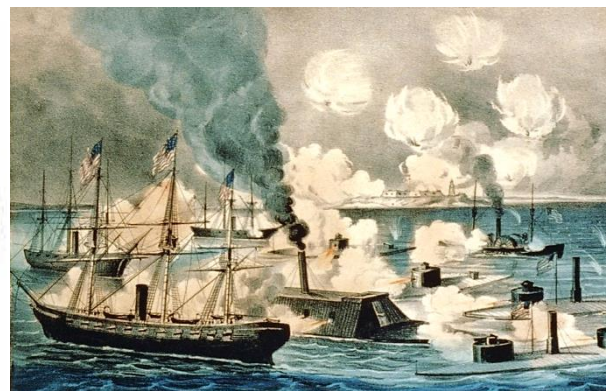
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Cover Image

“Sinking of the CSS Alabama” – On June 9, 1864, during a naval duel known as the *Battle of Cherbourg*, the *CSS Alabama* was defeated and sunk by the U.S. Navy warship, *USS Kearsarge*, in Cherbourg Harbor, France - Naval art by Lukasz Kasperczyk.

The *Harriet Lane* newsletter is published quarterly (March, June, September, and December). Send questions or comments concerning the newsletter to the Editor at: mlance387@gmail.com

142nd National Encampment - 2023

The 142nd Annual National Encampment of the *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War* was held in Nashua, New Hampshire on August 3 through August 6, 2023. The Encampment was hosted by the *Department of New Hampshire*, which did an outstanding job organizing and conducting the event. Our friend, Commander-in-Chief Bruce Frail, presided.

Four members of *Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2* traveled to Nashua to participate as Delegates representing the *Department of Texas and Louisiana*. They included Camp Commander and Department Signals Officer John C. Vander Meulen, Department Graves Registration Officer Terry T. Sutton, Department Commander Michael L. Lance, and Department Chaplain and Camp Secretary/Treasurer, Stephen D. Schulze. Two other Brothers from the *Department* also participated: Department Secretary/Treasurer Donald L. Gates, from *Camp 18* in Dallas, and his wife, Susan; and Past-Department Commander John E. Schneider Sr., also of *Camp 18*, and his wife Jill.

In addition to the lengthy business meetings conducted on Friday and Saturday, the program included a full schedule of other activities, including pre-encampment tours, a Joint Memorial Service with the Allied Orders, a fun-filled Campfire program with a live band honoring outgoing CinC Frail and Auxiliary National President Allison Pollitt, a beer and wine reception, a cocktail hour, a formal *Sons of Veterans Reserve (SVR)* Breakfast, an elegant dinner banquet, and a short Sunday morning religious service conducted by National Chaplain Jerry Kowalski.



John and Jill Schneider



Donald L. Gates



Terry T. Sutton

The business meetings were punctuated by lively discussion, the election of National officers, and the presentation of awards. This newsletter, *Harriet Lane*, was honored to receive the coveted *Marshall Hope Award* for best Camp newsletter in the nation – the 4th time so honored over the past several years (see image on page 20).

John Vander Meulen, in his role as Assistant National Secretary of Proceedings, played a key role during the business sessions by working to ensure that the discussions were properly recorded for later transcription purposes. John E. Schneider, Chair of the Department's *National Encampment Host Committee*, along with committee members John Vander Meulen and Stephen Schulze, met with the *National Encampment Site Selection Committee* and successfully articulated our bid to bring the National Encampment to Texas in 2025.

The *Lea Camp* and *Department of Texas* were well represented at the National Encampment, and an enjoyable experience was had by all. Next year, the 143rd National Encampment will be held in Kentucky.

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142nd National Encampment (continued)



Delegates from the Department of Texas and Louisiana in Nashua, New Hampshire

L-R: John E. Schneider Sr., John C. Vander Meulen, Terry T. Sutton,
Michael L. Lance, Stephen D. Schulze, and Donald L. Gates

... submitted by Michael L. Lance, PCC/DC

One of the most memorable moments of the National Encampment was a special Initiation ceremony for two new members. Past Commander-in-Chief Donald Darby instructed Chace Frail, age 8, and Colin Frail, age 6, to approach the Alter, grasp the standard of the U.S. flag, and repeat after him the *Oath of Obligation*.



"I Chase/Colin, in the presence of the great creator, and the witnessing members of this Encampment, hereby voluntarily and solemnly pledge myself to support and defend the government of the United States of America. To offer my life, if need be, to preserve the flag from being lowered in defeat. To always observe the day, set aside by the Grand Army of the Republic, as Memorial Day. Sacred to the memory of the Union soldiers and sailors of 1861 – 1865. To do all in my power to persuade others to do the same. To be faithful in all duties of citizenship, and to promote actively its objects and interests always and everywhere, so help me God."



... submitted by John C. Vander Meulen, Camp Commander

Ancestor Profile – Stephen Francis Brayton

Stephen Francis Brayton was born March 24, 1841 in Fall River, Massachusetts, where he lived all his life, except for a year during the Civil War. In 1862, as the Civil War raged, he married Mary Peckham of nearby Tiverton, Rhode Island, where Stephen's father, Francis Brayton, was from. Five months later, Stephen left an expecting Mary behind and walked seven hours to Lakeville to volunteer for service with the *3rd Massachusetts Infantry Regiment*.

Stephen's Company C and Regiment left for Boston 5 days later where they boarded the *Merrimac* steamer bound for New Bern, North Carolina. That city had been captured by the Union seven months earlier. New Bern was a strategic position, as the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad that connected the coast with the interior passed through there. In March 1862, the Federals had captured several nearby gun positions and occupied a base that they would hold to the end of the war, in spite of several Confederate attempts to recapture it.

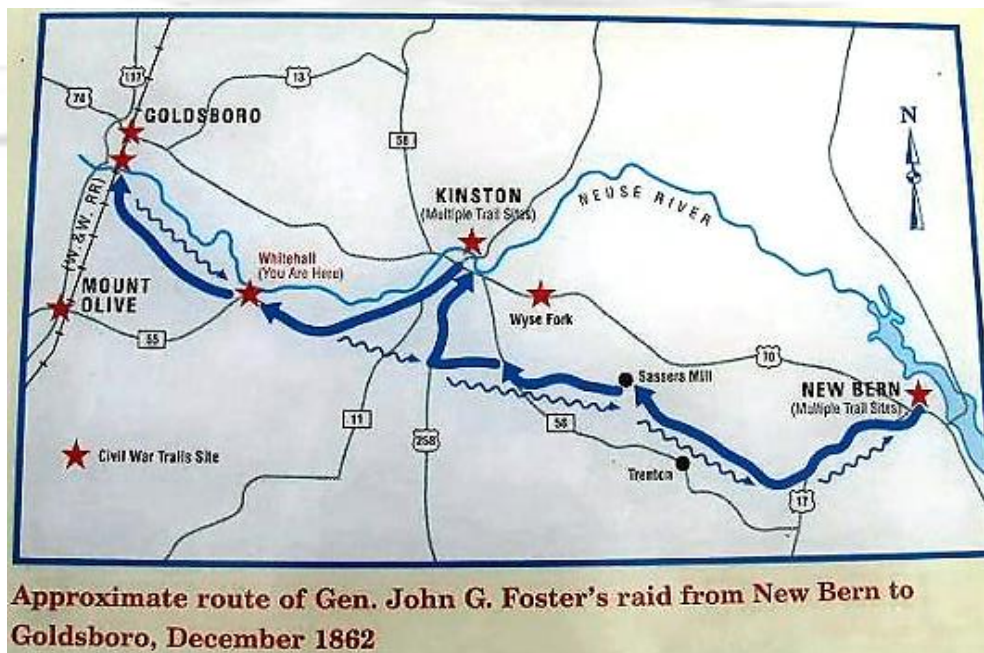
In October 1862, Stephen's Regiment reinforced the garrison under the command of Col. Charles Adam Heckman attached to Col. Lee's brigade. Meanwhile, Burnside's forces also prepared for the ill-fated assault on Fredericksburg, Virginia, almost 300 miles to the north. From their New Bern base of operations, Federal forces launched several raids and expeditions into the interior of the state.

One such raid occurred in December 1862, when Maj. Gen. John G. Foster led a 10,000-man force out of New Bern with the objective of capturing the *Wilmington and Weldon Railroad* bridge over the Neuse River at Goldsboro. The raid was in support of the *Army of the Potomac*, which was currently engaged in the *Battle of Fredericksburg*, Virginia. The railroad was an important supply line into Virginia, and its disruption would hinder the reinforcement and resupply of the Confederate army.

Right: **Maj. Gen. John G. Foster**



Maj. Gen. Foster's expedition included twelve infantry regiments from Massachusetts, including Stephen's *3rd Massachusetts*, three New York infantry regiments, two Pennsylvania regiments, and one each from Connecticut, New Jersey, and Rhode Island. Also supporting them were 640 New York cavalrymen and 40 pieces of artillery. This force of northeasterners left New Bern on the 11th of December for what was known as 'Foster's Raid' or the 'Goldsboro Expedition'. It consisted of three battles in North Carolina, including, in order: the *Battle of Kinston*, the *Battle of White Hall Ferry*, and the *Battle of Goldsboro Bridge*.



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Ancestor Profile – Stephen Francis Brayton *(continued)*

According to Foster's post-operation report, his forces first encountered Confederate forces, consisting of North and South Carolinians under Brig. Gen. N.G. Evans, near the town of Kinston. Evans' gray-clad line was protected by wooded cover and a swamp to its front and was anchored on the left flank by the Neuse River. Foster sent some Federal regiments around to try to flank the Confederates, while others advanced forward into the swamp. Lt. Gershom C. Winsor of the 45th Massachusetts recalled that *"the first step into the swamp filled their shoes with black ooze...the bottom was a network of gnarled roots, covered with thick black ooze, about two and one-half feet deep – even my top boots did not keep it out"*. The fighting during the *Battle of Kinston* was intense until the Confederate left was turned, forcing their retreat across the river.



Battle of Kinston, North Carolina - December 14, 1862

The next morning, December 15, Foster's Federal forces recrossed the river and took the river road towards Goldsboro. Foster left a strong guard of cavalry in Kinston, under Major Fitz Simmons, to make a demonstration on the Goldsboro Road on that side of the river.

Colonel Ledlie, 3rd New York Artillery, remained to destroy the commissary and quartermaster's stores and burn the bridge. Before leaving Kinston, he also destroyed a locomotive and a railroad monitor, among other assets. Major Simmons advanced some 9 miles towards Goldsboro, when, hearing the whistle of a locomotive, he fired three shots in the direction of the sound, upon which the train immediately reversed and returned towards Goldsboro.

On the morning of December 17, *"Colonel Lee's [Federal] brigade was in advance of the main column and came upon the enemy in small force on the edge of the wood lining the railroad track. The Ninth New Jersey and Seventeenth Massachusetts were ordered to strike the railroad track and follow it up direct to the bridge, which they were to burn. Three regiments of Colonel Lee's brigade were ordered to their support (the Twenty-fifth, Twenty-seventh, and Third Massachusetts); the remaining regiment was thrown on the left to protect our flank in that quarter."*

"Colonel Heckman advanced steadily up the track, fighting the enemy's infantry posted at the bridge and receiving a fire from the artillery in a monitor-car on the track of the bridge. After two hours he reached the bridge, and under a heavy fire Lieutenant Graham, Twenty-third New York Battery, acting as aide-de-camp to Colonel Heckman, fired the bridge. All who had previously attempted it were picked off, as was wounded Lieut. B. N. Mann, Seventeenth Massachusetts, who accompanied him. "

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Ancestor Profile – Stephen Francis Brayton *(continued)*

Stephen Brayton and his Company C of the 3rd Massachusetts played a significant role in this daring raid, deep into Confederate territory in the early stages of the war. His unit returned to Boston in June 1863.



Stephen was honorably discharged on June 26, 1863 at Camp Hooker in Lakeville, Massachusetts, and returned home to Mary and his now 3-month-old son, Stephen F. Brayton Jr.

In 1890, Stephen Francis Brayton was granted a military pension for his service with the *Grand Army of the Republic*. He was still working as a machinist in Fall River in 1880. His wife Mary passed away in 1893 after giving birth to ten more children, including Clarabelle Mabel Brayton in 1882. Clarabelle was my great-grandmother.

Left: **Clara Brayton-Wall with child**

... submitted by descendant Frederick Keith Moody



Trivia: Woman at the Lead

No ordinary Color-bearer, this one wore a distinctive uniform consisting of a loose, long-sleeved blouse and Union army trousers surmounted by a short skirt wrapped by a red sash with a tassel. Since Color-bearers were a prime target to begin with, was this sensible attire for a Color-bearer attached to a Union company of sharpshooters? For a time, it worked out just fine for Kady McKenzie Brownell, official Union Color-bearer, South African-born daughter of a Scottish soldier in the British Army, wife of Pvt. Robert Brownell of the First Rhode Island Detached Militia.

Just fine for a time even in combat.... combat such as First Bull Run, a Union debacle from which she had to be pulled away despite her own protests. Separated from her husband in the rout, fearing that he might have become a casualty, she was assured of his safety by future Division Commander Ambrose Burnside.

Prior to Bull Run, she had carried her company's colors at Fairfax Court House. Before that, she had 'joined' the regiment as wife of her newly enlisted husband. She became a 'daughter of the regiment,' or *vivandiere*, which meant she would be expected to serve as a combination cook, laundress, and nurse. Somehow, though, she won official appointment as a company Color-bearer.

Right: **Kady McKenzie Brownell**

After Bull Run, her husband mustered out of the First Rhode Islander - only to reenlist with the Fifth Rhode Island. Soon both Brownells set off - under Burnside again - on the Carolina campaign of 1862 resulting in the Union capture of New Bern, North Carolina.

Brave Kady Brownell once more faced a storm of enemy fire while carrying the colors in the lead of Union soldiers ranged behind her. This time, though, both Kady and her husband came up casualties. Of the two, it was Robert who was the more seriously hurt. After a long hospital stay, with wife Kady acting as his personal nurse, he was discharged from the army in 1863. They returned for a time to Providence, Rhode Island, but later made their home in New York. Widowed in time, Kady could thank Burnside for the pension she received for her army service. She also had been allowed to keep her sword and the colors she had carried under enemy fire... as a real-life *heroine*.

...source: *Best Little Ironies, Oddities, and Mysteries of the Civil War*, by C. Brian Kelly, 2000



Patriotic Instructor Minute

Anyone familiar with the Civil War knows about the *Battle of Fredericksburg* which took place in December 1862. It was not the Union's finest hour. After the Confederates had been driven out of the town, the Union army prepared to attack Confederate defensive positions on the heights just outside of the city.

I've heard it said the Confederates were dug in like 'ticks on a hound dog'. Tactics being what they were, wave after wave of Union soldiers attacked Marye's Heights on December 13, 1862 - each time with devastating results. Confederate artilleryman, Edward Porter Alexander, claimed that "*a chicken could not live on that field.*" And Lee, seeing the carnage, remarked "*It is well that war is so terrible, we should grow too fond of it.*"

I've read that as the Union *Irish Brigade* assaulted Marye's Heights, they were met with gunfire from a unit of Irish Confederates who had tears in their eyes as they shot down their fellow Irishmen - such was the *Battle of Fredericksburg*.

Right: Assault on Marye's Heights

The casualties were horrendous. The Union suffered around 12,500 dead and wounded - and the South about 6,000. For the North, it was a devastating defeat, but not a catastrophic one. The Union had the ability to replace their losses in men and material - the South did not.



As the morning of December 14th dawned, almost 8,000 Union soldiers lay dead or wounded on the field in front of Marye's heights. I've read that had you tried to walk across the field, you could not have done so without stepping on a dead or wounded soldier, and that the ground was soaked in blood. Just think of that picture for a moment! I've noticed that after a heavy rainfall, when I walk into my backyard, the ground is squishy because it is soaked with water that cannot be absorbed. Now imagine walking onto a field that is squishy because it is soaked in blood. That was the brutality of that battle!

As the morning wore on, soldiers on both sides were forced to listen to the painful cries of the wounded. No one dared to venture onto the field for fear of being shot. Then, amid all the carnage stepped forward 19-year-old Richard Roland Kirkland, a Sergeant assigned to *Co. G, 2nd South Carolina Volunteer Infantry* under the command of Brigadier General Joseph B. Kershaw. Kirkland's actions that day would earn him the title "*The Angel of Marye's Heights.*"

Right: Richard R. Kirkland, before 1863

Kirkland could not stand to hear the cries of the Union wounded and asked Gen. Kershaw if he could go over the wall and render aid. At first, Kershaw refused his request, but Kirkland persisted. Finally, Kershaw gave his consent under one condition - Kirkland could not enter the field carrying a white flag. Kershaw did not want the other side to think he was surrendering. Kirkland gathered up all the canteens he could carry and climbed over the wall onto the field in front of Marye's Heights and began to give water to the federal wounded. The Union soldiers on the other side of the field were astounded and, at first, thought Kirkland was going to strip the Union dead. When it became clear what he was doing, they held their fire. For an hour and a half, Kirkland gave water and provided blankets to his fallen enemy. Kirkland's actions remain a legend in Fredericksburg to this day. However, his story does not have a happy ending. He was a veteran of *First Manassas*, *Antietam*, and *Gettysburg*, but was killed on September 20 1863 at the *Battle of Chickamauga*. His last words were: "*I'm done for. Save yourselves, and please tell pa I died right.*"



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Patriotic Instructor Minute *(continued)*

There have been a few books written about Kirkland, and in 1965, a statue of him tending to a wounded Union soldier was unveiled in front of the stone wall at Fredericksburg. He is even briefly mentioned in the *Time/Life Civil War* series in the book on Fredericksburg.

Right: Statue of Richard R. Kirkland tending to a wounded Union soldier

But here things get a little sticky. A few modern historians doubt the veracity of the Kirkland story. They base their doubt on several things. They note that his name is not mentioned in any official reports or dispatches concerning the battle - by either side - while the names of other soldiers and surgeons are mentioned.

They also feel he may be a composite of several men who offered aid that day - though there is no evidence to support this. These same historians also like to point out that it wasn't until 1880 that this incident first became known. Apparently, in 1880 a vague reminiscence was written

by an unnamed correspondent which was published in the *Charleston News and Courier*. This article is typically cited as the initial report of the Kirkland incident, although his name is not even mentioned in it.

It is said that it wasn't until Joseph Kershaw saw the newspaper article, after which he contacted the paper's editor and provided him Kirkland's name, that the name of the '*Angel of Marye's Heights*' became known. There is evidence, however, that the Kirkland story - *with his name mentioned* - appeared in the *Louisville Kentucky Ledger* in 1874, six years before the 1880 story.

So what are we to believe? Did the incident occur, or is it a myth? Are historians trying to rewrite history because it's not popular to say anything positive about the Confederacy these days? Did Kirkland help the Union wounded? I believe he did - but you have to decide for yourself.

Since our Order is called the *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*, you may be asking: "*Why is he talking about some Johnny Reb?*" Don't get me wrong, I do not support the Confederate cause. I believe their ability to wage war had to be utterly crushed for our country to move forward. But picture this for a moment and ask yourself: "*What if Kirkland had been a Union soldier who jumped that wall to help Confederate soldiers?*" Would the incident be questioned?

Probably not. Instead, schools might be named after him, statues might be erected everywhere, and songs might be sung and stories told of his courage. His name would likely appear in every history book, and children everywhere would know his name. But because he was a Confederate soldier, his name is just a footnote in history, and some even doubt he existed at all.

Shall we not honor him for the compassion and bravery he showed toward a fallen foe on that dangerous battlefield - even though he wore a gray uniform? I believe we should. But there again that's a question everyone will have to answer for themselves. Also, consider this; apparently, no one helped Kirkland on the field that day. Would any of us have displayed the same type of courage by jumping that wall with him to render aid to a fallen enemy?

... submitted by Camp Patriotic Instructor Ronald 'Steve' Brock



From the Chaplain's Desk

Chaplain Jacob Frankel was born July 5, 1808 in Grünstadt in the Palatinate - at that time part of the French Empire. He was born into a Jewish family with a history of being musicians in and out of the synagogue. As a young man, he toured Alsace (also in France) with two of his brothers doing concerts across the state and throughout the Palatinate.



Jacob served as Cantor [*an official who sang liturgical music and led prayers in a synagogue*] in his home synagogue in Grünstadt, and in 1844 he moved to Mainz. Then in 1848, he emigrated to the United States. From 1848 to 1886, he served as Cantor and leader in the *Rodeph Shalom Congregation* in Philadelphia. He was called the “sweet singer of Israel” due to his lovely voice.

Left: Chaplain Jacob Frankel

On September 18, 1862, during the Civil War, Jacob Frankel was appointed by President Abraham Lincoln as the first official Jewish Chaplain in the United States Army. He was also the first non-Christian Chaplain in the history of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Chaplain Frankel served from his appointment in 1862 until the middle of 1865 when he was discharged from military service. He worked predominantly at the military hospitals in Philadelphia which had become a center for the care of the wounded during the war.

To this day, non-Christian Chaplains continue to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. Many are of the Jewish faith. I have very fond memories of the Rabbi who was the Jewish Chaplain at Fort Sill when I was in high school and college. He lived next door to my family in Lawton, Oklahoma. His daughter was in the band when I was a student teacher, and he was delightful to talk to about what sort of things a teacher should be aware of when they have a student who is an observant Jew.

Chaplain Frankel's services were commemorated many years later following a World War II disaster. In February 1943, the *SS Dorchester* was torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine while transporting 902 servicemen, merchant seamen, and civilian workers. Four American military Chaplains, including a Jewish Chaplain, were onboard the doomed ship. The four moved among the terrified passengers as they scrambled for the lifeboats, calmly handing out life jackets and comforting words. When the life jackets ran out, the Chaplains gave away theirs to others. They also would not take seats in the crowded lifeboats. As the stricken ship went down, survivors in nearby lifeboats saw the four chaplains, linked arm-in-arm on the deck, praying together. Of the 902 aboard the *Dorchester* that night, only 230 survived.

In commemoration of this unselfish act of faith and heroism, a medal was issued by the *Jewish-American Hall of Fame* - the *Four Chaplains' Medal*. The front side shows Jacob Frankel as the first Jewish chaplain of the United States Army, and the reverse side shows the fallen clergymen from 1943.



The Four Chaplain's Medal

The opening of the Chaplaincy to Jews - and then others has led to greater understanding among service members and their families - and that is always a good thing.



... submitted by Chaplain Stephen F. Duncan

Weapons of War - Landmines

The first widespread deployment of landmines or 'subterra shells' took place during the Civil War. As the war progressed the disparity in military manpower, materiel, and weaponry between the North and South grew wider. The Confederacy was forced to innovate and improvise. Landmines, also known as 'torpedoes' provided the South with another much-needed lethal weapon.

Confederate Brig. Gen. Gabriel Rains, a native of North Carolina, is credited with designing the early landmines. He demonstrated a high aptitude for chemistry and artillery and first experimented with explosive booby traps in 1840 during the Seminole Wars in Florida. But it wasn't until the Civil War that his invention was put to wide use. His landmines were shallowly buried and then detonated either by being directly stepped on - or by someone unknowingly moving a common object like a tool or bucket that was attached to the mine's primer by strings or wires.

In early 1862, following the *Siege of Yorktown*, the Confederates planted landmines along their route behind them as their Army retreated. These explosives were a horrifying surprise to the Union soldiers. Historian W. Davis Waters wrote: *"Periodic explosions disturbed the quietness of Yorktown as unsuspecting Union cavalymen and their horses moved through the abandoned Confederate fortification only to have the ground ripped beneath them."*



The soldiers were petrified of these hidden messengers of death - and the generals were appalled. *"The rebels have been guilty of the most murderous and barbarous conduct in placing torpedoes within the abandoned works near wells and springs, and near flag-staffs, magazines, and telegraph offices, in carpet bags, barrels of flour, etc."* (Union Gen. George B. McClellan, *New York Herald*, May 12, 1862).

Landmines were disparaged as the *"tools of cowards or offenses against democracy and civilized warfare."*

Union officers frequently took revenge for the outrageous tactics of landmine warfare. They ordered Confederate POWs to dig up the hidden landmines, or risk execution if they refused. Confederate POWs were sometimes marched ahead of Union troops to identify or detonate landmines deployed by other Confederates - occasionally with fatal results.

On August 25, 1863, Union Brig. Gen. William F. Barry sent the following detailed message (*with light editing for clarity*) to headquarters in Washington regarding his experience with, and disgust of, landmines:

"When it was believed at daybreak May 4, 1862, that the enemy had evacuated Yorktown and its defenses, our pickets and skirmishers and subsequently larger bodies of our troops immediately advanced to occupy the abandoned lines. Before reaching the glacis of the main work, and at the distance of more than 100 yards from it, several of our men were injured by the explosion of what was ascertained to be loaded shells buried in the ground. These shells were the ordinary 8 or 10-inch mortar or columbiad shells, filled with powder, buried a few inches below the surface of the ground, and so arranged with some fulminate, or with the ordinary artillery friction primer, that they exploded by being trod upon or otherwise disturbed."

"In some cases, articles of common use, and which would be most likely to be picked up, such as engineers' wheelbarrows, or pickaxes, or shovels, were laid upon the spot with apparent carelessness. Concealed strings or wires leading from the friction primer of the shell to the superincumbent articles were so arranged that the slightest disturbance would occasion the explosion." These shells were not thus placed on the glacis at the bottom of the ditch, &c., which, in view of an anticipated assault, might possibly be considered a legitimate use

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Weapons of War – Landmines *(continued)*

of them, but they were basely placed by an enemy who was secretly abandoning his post on common roads, at springs of water, in the shade of trees, at the foot of telegraph poles, and lastly, quite within the defenses of the place - in the very streets of the town. A number of our men were killed by them before the disgraceful trick was discovered and information of the fact could be given to the troops. Careful examinations were at once made, and sentinels were posted wherever the existence of these infernal machines was ascertained or suspected."

"Major-General McClellan ordered that the Confederate prisoners taken by us at Yorktown should be made to search for these buried shells and to disinter and destroy them when found. I was myself a witness of the horrible mangling by one of these shells of a cavalryman and his horse outside of the main work upon the Williamsburg road, and also of the cruel murder in the very streets of Yorktown of an intelligent young telegraph operator, who, while in the act of approaching a telegraph pole to reconnect a broken wire, trod upon one of these shells villainously concealed at its foot."

"It is generally understood that these shells were prepared by General George W. Rains, of the Confederate Army, for his brother, Brigadier General Gabriel Rains, the commander of the post of Yorktown, at whose instigation they were prepared and planted. The belief of the complicity of General Gabriel Rains in this dastardly business is confirmed by the knowledge possessed by many officers of our Army of a similar mode of warfare inaugurated by him while disgracing the uniform of the American Army during the Seminole war in Florida."

Confederate generals were also uneasy about the use of these subterra torpedoes - and briefly banned their use. But as the momentum of the war continued to turn against the South, opposition within the Confederacy's high command abated, especially by Gen. Joseph E. Johnston and Lt. Gen. James Longstreet. As the war progressed, they became increasingly desperate to defend their shrinking territory. Brig. Gen. Rains, in defense of his deadly creation, is reported to have stated: *"Each new invention of war has been assailed and denounced as barbarous and anti-Christian. Yet each in its own turn notwithstanding has taken its position by the universal consent of nations according to its efficiency in human slaughter."*

Confederate President Jefferson Davis pressured his generals in Georgia to use landmines as a way to obstruct *"roads by every practicable means"* to delay Gen. William T. Sherman's march for as long as possible. As a result, many of Sherman's soldiers were killed or horribly mangled, or both, by torpedoes buried in the roads, railroads, paths, and at all places where men were likely to march. The manner of these fatalities enraged Sherman. *"This was not war,"* he fumed, *"but murder."*

Another especially well-disguised version of a mine was the 'coal torpedo'. They were explosive-filled iron containers coated with beeswax and then powdered with coal dust. These 'fake lumps of coal' could then be slipped into Union coal supplies. When the fake lumps were unwittingly placed in the burners of steam engines, an explosion and death would occur.



Coal torpedo

There are no precise figures on how many Civil War soldiers were killed and maimed by land mines. It is reported that at least 2,363 land mines were hidden around Richmond, Virginia and more were buried elsewhere throughout the South. They were so widespread that land mines continued to be uncovered in Alabama as late as the 1960s. Thankfully, civilian casualties from this type of ordnance were low during and after the Civil War. Details concerning landmine deployment authorizations were rarely written down, and most of what was recorded was destroyed near the end of the war for fear of the possibility of proponents being charged as war criminals.



... submitted by Michael L. Lance, DC/PCC

Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients – U.S. Navy (Part 30)

The *Medal of Honor* is the highest military honor awarded by the United States for personal acts of valor above and beyond the call of duty. It was first awarded during the Civil War after President Lincoln signed a bill on December 21, 1861, containing a provision for the medal for the Navy. It was "to be bestowed upon such petty officers, seamen, landsmen, and Marines as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry and other seamanlike qualities during the present war."

Right: **Navy Version of the original Medal of Honor (1862)**

Editor's note: With this issue of the Harriet Lane, in honor of Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea, USN - the namesake of our Camp, I am continuing to present a review of the recipients of the Medal of Honor who served in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War.



- **Thomas G. Lyons - Seaman** – Thomas G. Lyons was born sometime in 1838 in Salem, Massachusetts. On April 24, 1862, he was onboard the *USS Pensacola* during the attack on Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip. Lashed outside of that vessel, on the port-sheet chain, with the lead in hand to lead the ship past the forts, Lyons never flinched, although under a heavy fire from the forts and Confederate gunboats. His actions earned him the Medal of Honor. Lyons died August 29, 1904, at age 65 or 66, and is interred at Mount Moriah Cemetery in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His citation reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Seaman Thomas G. Lyons, United States Navy, for extraordinary heroism in action, serving as Seaman on board the U.S.S. Pensacola in the attack on Forts Jackson and St. Philip, Louisiana, 24 April 1862. Carrying out his duties throughout the din and roar of the battle, Seaman Lyons never once erred in his brave performance. Lashed outside of that vessel, on the port-sheet chain, with the lead in hand to lead the ship past the forts, Lyons never flinched, although under a heavy fire from the forts and rebel gunboats.



- **James Machon - Boy** – James Machon was born in 1848 in England. He joined the U.S. Navy from New York during the Civil War, working as a cabin "boy" onboard the *USS Brooklyn*. The *Brooklyn*, a screw steamer sloop of war, carrying a crew of 381 men, worked with 17 other ships to blockade and take control of Fort Morgan near Mobile, Alabama. Confederate gunships worked hard to defend this very important fort. In fact, the *CSS Tennessee* attempted in vain to ram the *USS Brooklyn*. Cannons and firearms shot at the *Brooklyn* killed numerous crew members on deck who were working the cannons. Sixteen-year-old James Machon, continued to restock the guns with powder, even after cannons on the *Tennessee* destroyed areas of the gun deck. Because of his bravery, Machon received a Medal of Honor. His citation reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Boy James Machon, United States Navy, for extraordinary heroism in action while serving on board the U.S.S. Brooklyn during successful attacks against Fort Morgan, rebel gunboats and the ram Tennessee in Mobile Bay, Alabama, on 5 August 1864. Stationed in the immediate vicinity of the shell whips which were twice cleared of men by bursting shells, Navy Boy Machon remained steadfast at his post and performed his duties in the powder division throughout the furious action which resulted in the surrender of the prize rebel ram Tennessee and in the damaging and destruction of batteries at Fort Morgan.

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Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients – U.S. Navy (Part 30 continued)

- **Alexander Mack – Captain of the Top** – Alexander Mack was born in May 1834 in Rotterdam, Netherlands. He immigrated to the U.S., joined the Navy from New York, and served as Captain of the Top on the *USS Brooklyn* during the Civil War. The *Brooklyn* was a screw steamer of 2,070 tons and carried a crew of 381 men. It had three tall masts and sails, as well as engines – and was an example of the Navy's transition from sail to steam. The ship was armed with twenty-two 9-inch Dahlgrens, one heavy 12-pounder, and one light 12-pounder.

Mack served with distinction on the *Brooklyn*, earning a Medal of Honor. He died in 1907 at age 73 and is buried in Saint Patrick's Cemetery in Fall River, Massachusetts. His Medal of Honor citation reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Captain of the Top Alexander Mack, United States Navy, for extraordinary heroism in action while serving on board the U.S.S. Brooklyn during successful attacks against Fort Morgan, rebel gunboats and the ram Tennessee in Mobile Bay, Alabama, on 5 August 1864. Although wounded and sent below for treatment, Captain of the Top Mack immediately returned to his post and took charge of his gun and, as heavy enemy return fire continued to fall, performed his duties with skill and courage until he was again wounded and totally disabled.

... additional Medal of Honor recipients to be portrayed next issue with Part 31

Battle of Mobile Bay

Editor's note: The following is a more detailed account of the battle action experienced and witnessed by the two previous Medal of Honor recipients mentioned above. Both men served with distinction aboard the *USS Brooklyn* (photo below), a U.S. warship that played a major role during the Battle of Mobile Bay, Alabama in August 1864.



On August 5, 1864, the *Battle of Mobile Bay* began. Rear Admiral David Farragut was aboard his flagship *USS Hartford* as she steamed through the narrow ship channel entrance to the bay. Mobile, Alabama was the last open Confederate port, a haven for blockade runners supplying the Confederacy with supplies and ordnance. The narrow entrance to the

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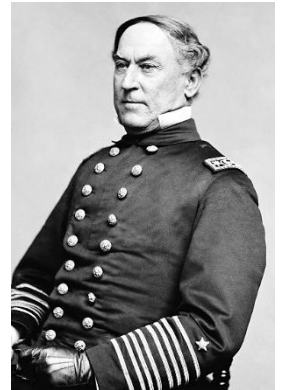
Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients – U.S. Navy (Part 30 continued)

channel was defended by the cannons of the massive star-shaped Fort Morgan. The Federals were determined to shut the port down to the Confederacy.

The *Hartford*, a 2,900-ton sloop-of-war steamer, followed closely behind the *USS Brooklyn*, another large wooden-hulled sloop-of-war. Both of these larger ships had a lighter gunship lashed to their sides. In fact, Farragut's Federal fleet consisted of 14 wooden-hulled vessels – all lashed together in pairs – and four modern ironclad monitors. The *USS Octorara* was lashed to the port side of the *USS Brooklyn*, and the *USS Metacomet* was lashed to the flagship *Hartford*. The ship pairings were in response to Admiral Farragut's pre-attack orders, which state in part:

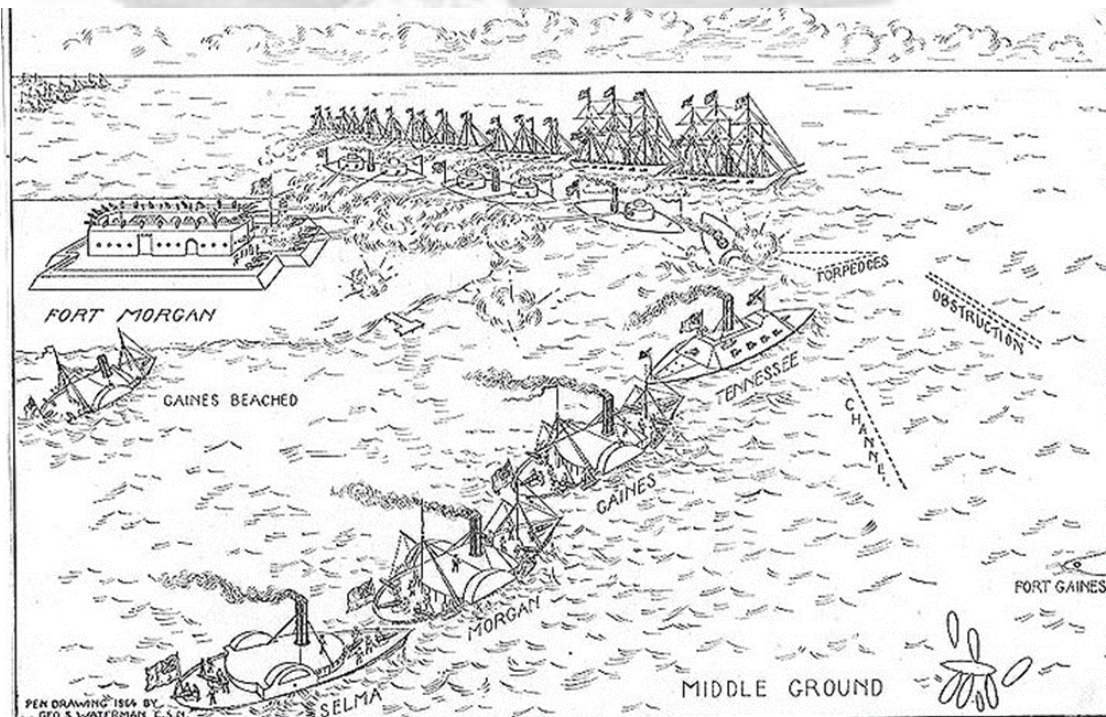
The vessels will run past the forts in couples, lashed side by side. If one or more of the vessels be disabled, their partners must carry them through, if possible.....Should any vessel be disabled to such a degree that her consort is unable to keep her in her station, she will drop out of line to the westward and not embarrass the vessels next astern by attempting to regain her station. Should she repair damages, so as to be able to reenter the line of battle, she will take her station in the rear as close to the last vessel as possible.

Right: **Rear Admiral David Glasgow Farragut, USN**



The Federal fleet entered the bay single-file in two parallel lines - with one line consisting of the four monitors and the other with the 14 wooden vessels. Since most of the channel was protected by obstructions and torpedoes (floating wooden barrels of explosives), the attacking columns were forced to pass closely before the defensive guns of Fort Morgan.

There are certain black buoys placed by the enemy from the piles on the west side of the channel across it toward Fort Morgan. It being understood that there are torpedoes and other obstructions between the buoys, the vessels will take care to pass to the eastward of the easternmost buoy, which is clear of all obstructions....(pre-attack orders by Adm. Farragut).



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Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients – U.S. Navy (Part 30 continued)

The line of monitors was positioned as a shield between the guns of Fort Morgan and the line of wooden Federal ships. The combined firepower of the attacking Federal vessels was expected to pour such heavy fire on Fort Morgan that its defenders would be forced to scramble for cover and not be able to return fire. Farragut's fleet had 199 guns, compared to the 46 Confederate guns at Fort Morgan. The Federal fleet captains were further ordered beforehand to cut their engines as they approached the fort, and simply drift by it.

"So soon as the vessels arrive opposite the end of the piles, it will be best to stop the propeller of the ship and let her drift the distance past by her headway [forward momentum of the ship in water] and the tide, and those having side-wheel gunboats [lashed to their sides] will continue on by the aid of their paddle wheels, which are not likely to foul with the enemy's drag ropes."

The lead monitor, *USS Tecumseh*, fired the first shot at 6:47 a.m. Shortly afterward, the fort fired back in reply. The *USS Brooklyn* then answered - and immediately the action became general.

Fort Morgan's old obsolete muzzle-loaders were accurate and deadly at close quarters when used against wooden-hulled ships, but their projectiles had little effect on ironclad monitors. The firing became a maelstrom as the Union fleet passed within 150 yards of the Confederate cannons. A Confederate soldier later wrote, *"The roar of cannon was like one continuous peal of thunder, deafening to the extreme."* Admiral Farragut climbed into the rigging of the *Hartford* to see above the smoke as his ships pounded the fort.

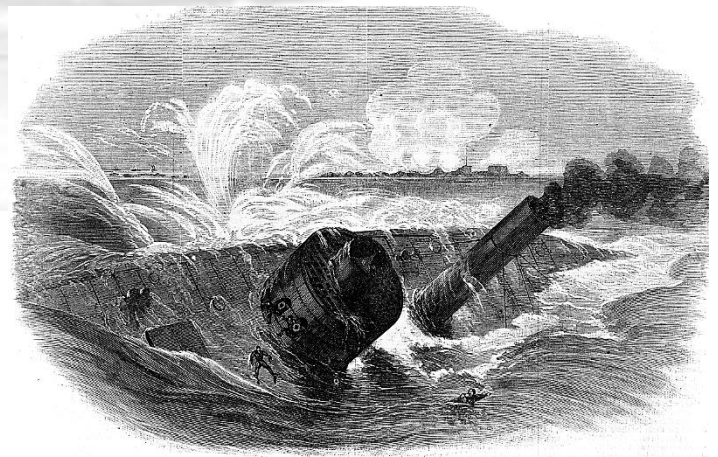
A four-vessel Confederate fleet, commanded by Admiral Franklin Buchanan, soon entered the fray. It consisted of the iron-clad ram *CSS Tennessee*, the partially armored gunboat *CSS Morgan*, and two wooden side-wheel gunboats *CSS Gaines* and *CSS Selma*. The Confederate ships were ready for the attack, and they moved forward single-file into position to intercept the Union fleet as it passed the minefield to enter the bay.

As the Confederate warships made their appearance, the leading monitor, *USS Tecumseh*, veered off to confront the *CSS Tennessee*, the lead Confederate ship. In doing so, *Tecumseh* crossed in front of the *Brooklyn* – and inadvertently blundered into the torpedo field. The ironclad struck a torpedo, which exploded, and the doomed monitor sank within minutes.

"...the monitor Tecumseh was struck by a torpedo and sank, going down very rapidly and carrying with her all of her officers and crew with the exception of the pilot and 8 or 10 men, who were saved by a boat that I sent from the Metacomet [which was lashed] alongside of me."....(post-action report by Adm. Farragut)

Out of caution, the other captains of the Federal fleet began stopping their ships. Disarray prevailed as the *Brooklyn*, the lead Federal ship, began to reverse course. Now at a confused standstill, and within easy range of Fort Morgan's big guns, the trapped Union warships were in serious peril.

The cannons of the fort took full advantage of the situation, raking the decks of the Union warships with a murderous barrage. Admiral Farragut, still lashed in the rigging of the *Hartford*, quickly came to the decision that the fleet had a better chance of survival if it passed through the minefield to the safety of the open waters of the bay than



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Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients – U.S. Navy (Part 30 continued)

by remaining immobilized in place to be blasted by the fort's guns. He ordered *Hartford's* pilot, Martin Freeman, to take the lead and *"to pick my way (through the torpedoes) and go in the bay or blowup."* The pilot complied and ordered four bells, meaning: *"Go ahead at full speed."* Farragut's order would later be immortally translated and remembered as: *"Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead."*

The admiral's flagship passed the *Brooklyn* and led the way forward. Although facing bombardment from both the fort and the Confederate gunships, *Hartford* made it through the minefield in one piece. As the rest of the Federal fleet followed behind through the torpedo field, the crewmen reported feeling the gunpowder-filled torpedoes bouncing against the ships' hulls. Fortunately, no additional torpedoes exploded, and the fleet safely passed through the danger zone. It was later discovered that only one in ten of the torpedoes deployed in the bay were functional. The rest were waterlogged duds.

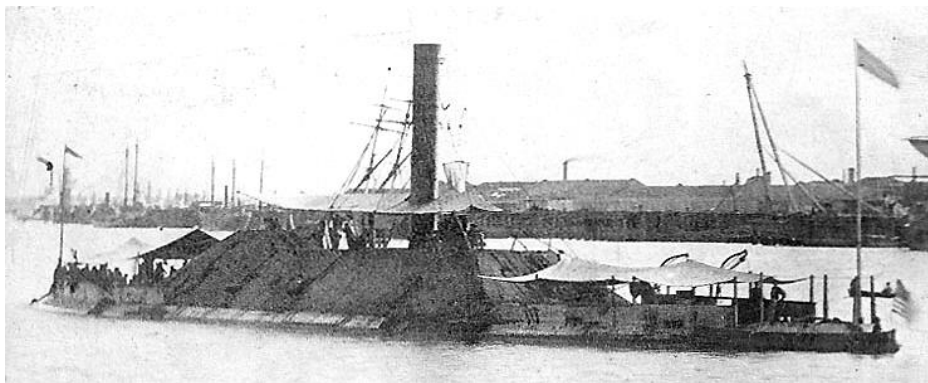
Now inside the expansive bay, the Federal fleet quickly moved out of range of Fort Morgan's guns. Only the Confederate gunships needed to be contended with. The Federals easily dealt with three of the Rebel gunboats, but, despite overwhelming odds, the *CSS Tennessee*, Adm. Buchanan's flagship, aggressively moved forward alone to attack the Northern warships.

In response, the Federal vessels met the attack by ramming the *Tennessee* in succession, while keeping up a constant fire upon her. The remaining three monitors also moved up to assist.

"Signal was at once made to all the fleet to turn again and attack the ram, not only with the guns, but with orders to run her down at full speed. The Monongahela was the first that struck her, and, though she may have injured her badly, yet did not succeed in disabling her. The Lackawanna also struck her, but ineffectually, and the flagship [Hartford] gave her a severe shock with her bow, and as she passed poured her whole port broadside into her, solid IX-inch shot and 13 pounds of powder, at a distance of not more than 12 feet. The [Federal] ironclads were closing upon her and the Hartford and the rest of the fleet were bearing down upon her...."(post-action report, Adm. David Farragut).

The *CSS Tennessee* was soon surrounded by the Union ironclads as she steamed toward the *USS Hartford*. Her armored plating protected her as she was rammed and pounded with shot. However, her weak engine – a product of the Confederacy's limited industrial capacity – made her too slow to outmaneuver her adversaries, and prevented her from successfully ramming any of the Union ships. Instead, the fighting was fought at close quarters as *Tennessee* managed to slide alongside *Hartford* at arm's length. The opposing crews fired their guns at each other at point-blank range.

Eventually, *CSS Tennessee* was forced to surrender. Her relatively slow engine, bad gunpowder, and fewer guns took their toll. In addition, her captain was severely injured with a broken leg, and the ship's rudder chains were shot away, preventing her from steering. The Federals were now able to pummel the ill-fated ironclad at will. At 10 a.m., three hours after the fighting began, the *CSS Tennessee* gave up, leaving the bay in Union control.



Former *CSS Tennessee* in 1865, renamed *USS Tennessee*

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Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients – U.S. Navy (Part 30 continued)

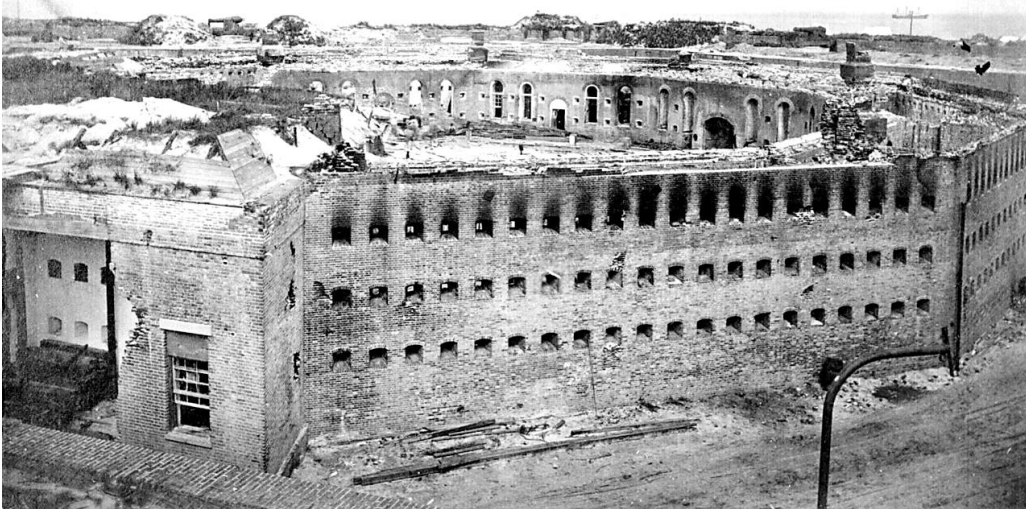
While the naval action on the waters of the bay had basically concluded, the siege of Fort Morgan would continue. A U.S. army landing force under Gen. Gordon Granger went ashore behind the fort, meeting no opposition. The Federals dug trenches to draw closer and closer to the walls of the fort - and finally positioned 16 siege guns and 14 siege mortars only 200 yards from the Confederate fortifications.

A coordinated massive bombardment of the fort soon began, with fury delivered from both land and sea. In addition to the land-based batteries, the Union monitors, about 100 to 200 yards offshore, began shelling the fort, and long-range projectiles from the rest of the fleet in the bay rained down on the Confederates.

The long-range shelling from the bay occurred at the rate of *“one round per minute for four hours.”* An Iowa artillery officer wrote, *“The gunners seemed to perform their duty with wild enthusiasm, stripping themselves of all superfluous clothing, and blackened, begrimed with the smoke, and dirt, and sweat of battle, their eyes sparkling through the hazy air...they might well have been taken for so many Vulcans forging thunderbolts for the gods.”* A private with the 1st Indiana Heavy Artillery noted that, *“the grains of sands danced to the water’s edge.”*

Unsurprisingly, the massive bombardment soon immobilized Fort Morgan’s guns. The Federal forces spent 12 hours lobbing approximately 3,000 artillery rounds at the fort. One soldier wrote that *“three to four shells were in the air all the time.”*

That evening, on August 22, 1864, exploding shells from the siege batteries ignited the wooden roof of the Citadel, the large ten-sided brick and wood structure that dominated the fort’s central parade ground. The massive fire silhouetted the fort and threatened her magazines. Confederate officers ordered their final 60,000 pounds of powder dumped into the fort’s water cistern and the guns spiked. Now with no means of defense, the severely damaged fort unconditionally surrendered on the morning of August 23, 1864.



Ruins of the Citadel at Fort Morgan, August 23, 1864

The capture of Fort Morgan allowed Farragut’s fleet to safely leave Mobile Bay, and supply ships and troop transports to freely enter. During the battle and siege, Fort Morgan suffered only five casualties, while the Union fleet suffered 52 fatalities, in addition to the 93 sailors that went down with the monitor *USS Tecumseh*. The capture of the city of Mobile would come later, as the land forces under Gen. Granger were not sufficient for an immediate attack. However, the capture of Fort Morgan and the defeat of the Confederate naval forces in the bay effectively closed Mobile as an open port for the Confederacy.

... submitted by Michael L. Lance, PCC

Upcoming Camp Activities

Oct 14, 2023	Sat	Boonville Days – Living History Event – 9 a.m. Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History, 3232 Briarcrest Dr., Byran, Texas
Oct 21, 2023	Sat	Camp Business Meeting - 10 a.m. Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, Texas
Oct 28, 2023	Sat	Dept. Special Encampment – Ratification of changes to the Constitution of the <i>SUVCW</i> Virtual meeting – Credentialed Delegates and Alternates only
Nov 4, 2023	Sat	Headstone Cleaning Project – 9 a.m. Washington Cemetery, 2911 Washington Ave., Houston, Texas
Nov 11, 2023	Sat	Veterans Day – Musket Salute and Parade - 11 a.m. Houston City Hall, 901 Bagby St., Houston, Texas
Nov 18, 2023	Sat	Camp Business Meeting - 10 a.m. Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, Texas
Dec 9, 2023	Sat	Camp Business Meeting - Officer Elections and Christmas Social - 10 a.m. Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 7901 Westview Dr., Houston, Texas
Dec 16, 2023	Sat	Wreaths Across America – Wreath laying by Camp Honor Guard – 11 a.m. Houston National Cemetery, 10410 Veterans Memorial Dr., Houston, Texas
Jan 6, 2024	Sat	Battle of Galveston Commemoration Ceremony – Signature Event of the <i>Lea Camp</i> – 10 a.m. Episcopal Church Cemetery, 4001 Ave K at Broadway, Galveston, Texas
May 4, 2024	Sat	Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas and Louisiana Dallas, Texas – hosted by <i>Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp 18</i>

2023 Camp Officers, Staff, and Social Media Links

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Jr. Vice-Cmdr.	Jason D. Hoffman	joincamp2@txsuv.org	Camp Council	Thomas F. Coughlin
Secy./Treas.	Stephen D. Schulze	camp2secretary@txsuv.org		

Chaplain	Stephen F. Duncan	Graves Regis. Officer	Terry T. Sutton
Patriotic Instructor	Ronald S. Brock	Civil War Mem. Officer	Terry T. Sutton
Historian	Michael L. Lance	G.A.R. Records Officer	Herbert W. Powers
Color Bearer	William D. Myers	Facebook Mgr.	John C. Vander Meulen
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