THE
DAYBOOK®

VOLUME 15 ISSUE 3

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The HRNM reports to the Naval History and Heritage Command, Museums Division (www.history.navy.mil). The museum is dedicated to the study of 235 years of naval history in the Hampton Roads region. HRNM was accredited by the American Association of Museums in 2008.

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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Meet The Interns! 2011

The Director's Column

by Becky Poulliot

Summer 2011 welcomed two new interns to HRNM's education department. HRNM's internship program provides college students with the opportunity to enrich their knowledge of museum studies through hands-on work creating programs and working in the museum gallery. This year's interns, Sam Nelson and Jordan Hock, started at the museum in May and worked through mid-August. Jordan, a rising senior at Hampden-Sydney College, is a classics major, and intends to be an English professor. Sam is a rising sophomore at George Washington University majoring in urban studies. Sam wants to be a high school teacher after he graduates.

Sam and Jordan worked on a number of projects, from helping with the debut of a Civil War Blockade "choose your own adventure" game to learning the museum's Life at Sea program so they could conduct it in the gallery and on outreach programs at local schools. Additionally, they helped run HRNM's three "Family Fun Friday" programs during the summer. This involved learning (and then teaching) four different activities—knot-tying, saluting, running an obstacle course, and making paper helicopters that kids would try to drop on a target.

Jordan and Sam also spent a significant amount of time working on some new programs HRNM will be introducing, such as a LEGO shipbuilding activity. They created the designs for a number of different ships, including LEGO versions of USS *Monitor* and CSS *Virginia*. The new LEGO shipbuilding program will utilize math and technology to teach how Naval architects build ships on a much grander scale.

Finally, Sam and Jordan's work on HRNM's upcoming puppet shows has been invaluable. They created scenery for the shows, worked on writing scripts, and practiced puppeteering with the education staff. These puppet shows, which have been sponsored by the Tidewater Officers' Spouses' Association (TOSA), will be presented to audiences beginning this fall.

Their internship wasn't all hard work, though. While here, Jordan and Sam took some time to meet staff members at the MacArthur Memorial, where they got to see some of the collections behind the scenes. They also visited Japanese ship *Kashima* while it was docked behind Nauticus in early August. Overall, their hard work and dedication will be greatly missed by the education staff. It was a very successful, productive summer, in large part due to HRNM's wonderful interns!

HRNM Intern Sam Nelson works on the ship plans for a LEGO ship model. (Photo by Matt Eng)

HRNM Intern Jordan Hock works with children during one of the museum's "Family Fun Friday" events. (Photo by Matt Eng)

Becky

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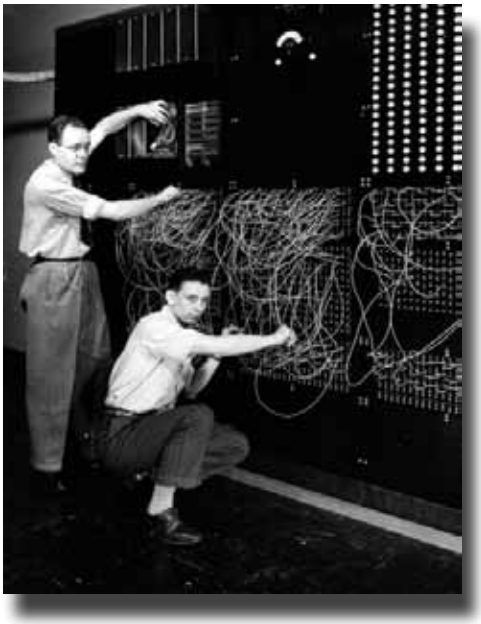

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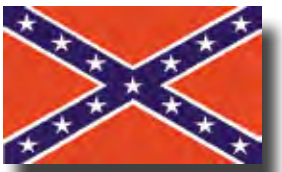


Leaders and Heroes of the Confederate Navy

Here is part three of a series showcasing the important personalities who operated the U.S. and Confederate States Navies. Parts 1 and 2 appeared in previous issues of *The Daybook*. In this installment, we introduce some of the men who led the Confederate States Navy. Despite what some of the Founding Fathers may have thought in the 1790s, a navy was not like the militia. One could not instantly assemble it from a group of farmers. But this was the task facing the civilian leaders and officers of the new Confederate States Navy in 1861. The South had precious little manufacturing capability, no tradition of maritime service, and more importantly, no ships. But the men who chose their lot with the Confederate cause came with experience, talent, and ingenuity.

Stephen Russell Mallory, Secretary of the Navy

Few in the Confederacy had a more daunting task than Stephen Mallory. He took control of a fleet that had no ships, a few patriotic Southern officers, and little infrastructure. The longest serving member of the Davis administration, Mallory was a U.S. Senator from Florida before the war. In this position, he had served for six years as the chairman of the Senate's Naval Affairs Committee and educated himself on new technologies and naval administration. He became the logical choice to be the Confederacy's only Secretary of the Navy. Realizing that his fleet could never match the sheer numbers of the U.S. Navy, Mallory embraced technology as the equalizer.

Samuel Barron, Jr., Rear Admiral

Born in Virginia into one of the nation's leading Naval families, Samuel Barron was yet another of America's elder statesmen who brought a wealth of experience to the Confederate Navy. Initially he served as commanding officer of the defenses at Hatteras Inlet and the James River Squadron. Barron then became the senior military officer for Confederate Naval forces in Europe. Working from his office in Paris, he organized officers and men to outfit the cruisers under construction in European shipyards.

Franklin Buchanan, Rear Admiral

Born in Baltimore, Maryland in the year 1800, Franklin Buchanan enjoyed over forty-five years of extensive and worldwide sea duty in the U.S. Navy. Believing that his native state would soon leave the Union, Buchanan resigned his commission in April 1861. He led the pioneer ironclad *Virginia* in her successful attack on U.S. Naval warships on March 8, 1862, but was wounded in action. In August 1862, Buchanan was promoted to the rank of admiral and sent to command Confederate Naval forces on Mobile Bay. He commanded the ironclad CSS *Tennessee* during the battle with Rear Admiral David Farragut's squadron on August 5, 1864.

French Forrest, Rear Admiral

The dean of the Confederate Naval officer corps, French Forrest saw combat at the Battle of Lake Erie and then with USS *Hornet* during the War of 1812. He later served as the commanding officer of the frigates USS *Cumberland* and USS *Raritan* during the Mexican-American War. Though born in Maryland, he called Virginia home and joined the Confederacy in 1861. While commanding the Gosport Navy Yard, he oversaw construction of the ironclad CSS *Virginia*. After the Federal capture of Norfolk and Portsmouth, Forrest served as the commanding officer of the James River Squadron before serving as the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

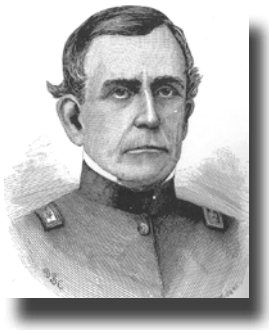
Raphael Semmes, Rear Admiral

Among the most recognizable of the Confederate Naval officers, Raphael Semmes had served thirty-four years in the U.S. Navy before resigning his commission. He took charge of the commerce raider CSS *Sumter* in 1861 and later the famous CSS *Alabama* in 1862. Between the two ships, he captured eighty-seven U.S. merchant ships. The Northern press labeled him a pirate. He found this title wrong and insulting as he strictly followed international law, at least in his own mind. The law was something he had great interest in and he passed the Maryland bar while serving in the U.S. Navy. After losing *Alabama* in 1864, he travelled to Virginia and took command of the James River Squadron as its last commander. After the war, he served as a professor of philosophy and law at Louisiana State University.

John Randolph Tucker, Rear Admiral

During the war, John Tucker served mostly in Hampton Roads as the commanding officer of CSS *Patrick Henry* and later as commanding officer of the battery at Fort Darling. He was transferred to Charleston to take command of one of the ironclads in 1863. After the fall of Charleston, he organized a battalion of sailors to serve with the Confederate Army in the last days of the war. "Tucker's Naval Brigade" became famous for not surrendering at the 1865 Battle of Sayler's Creek (the last battle before Lee's surrender at Appomattox). Towards the end of the battle, U.S. Army officers informed the admiral that the unit was completely surrounded and pleaded with Tucker to quit or be completely destroyed. Only upon learning that his unit was the last Confederate formation standing did Tucker agree to surrender.

Nathaniel Duncan Ingraham, Commodore



The son of one of John Paul Jones' lieutenants, Nathaniel Ingraham had a fighting spirit bred into him. During his career with the U.S. Navy, he threatened conflict with an Austrian warship over the fate of a lone man who wanted to become an American citizen. At the beginning of the Civil War, he helped Mallory plan the new navy. Mallory then gave him a more hands-on assignment to oversee the construction of ironclads in Charleston. He led these ironclads into battle in 1863 and temporarily lifted the blockade. Mallory relieved him of ship duty due to his age, but he remained in charge of shore defenses until the end of the war.

Josiah Tattnall, Captain

Josiah Tattnall was born near Savannah, Georgia, in 1795. He became a midshipman in the U.S. Navy in January 1812, and saw action during the War of 1812 and in the Barbary campaign that followed. After resigning his commission in 1861, he commanded Confederate Naval forces in Georgia and South Carolina, participating in the battle of Port Royal, South Carolina. He was then placed in charge of the naval defenses of Virginia in March 1862, and took over command of CSS *Virginia* from Buchanan after the commodore was injured. After two months of naval stalemate in the Hampton Roads area, the Confederate evacuation of Norfolk forced Tattnall to destroy *Virginia*. For the rest of the Civil War, Tattnall commanded naval forces in Georgia and the Savannah naval station.

John Taylor Wood, Captain

John Wood became an officer on the newly-converted ironclad CSS *Virginia,* participating in her actions against Union forces in the Hampton Roads area. He then assisted with the defense of Drewry's Bluff. Wood later served as naval aide to Confederate President Jefferson Davis. Promoted to commander in May 1863, he simultaneously held the rank of colonel in the cavalry. Wood commanded CSS *Tallahassee* during her successful cruise against U.S. shipping off the Atlantic coast in 1864. A few months later, as the Confederacy was disintegrating, he took part in President Davis' attempts to evade capture. After the war, he left the United States and settled in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

James Dunwoody Bulloch, Commander/Foreign Agent

With the Confederacy in desperate need for ships, James Bulloch worked tirelessly to get them built in England at the country's finest shipyards. Using creative means of financing construction, Bulloch succeeded in getting the famed commerce raiders *Alabama, Florida,* and *Shenandoah* to sea. He constantly did diplomatic battle with his Federal counterpart Charles Francis Adams, who attempted to get the British government to stop building the ships. When the war ended, his perceived disloyalty prevented him from returning to the United States. He did inspire one family member on the importance of naval warfare, his nephew, Theodore Roosevelt.

John Mercer Brooke, Engineer/Commander

One of the Confederacy's leading engineers, John Brooke helped design the ironclad CSS *Virginia*. He then became the C.S.N.'s chief of Ordnance and Hydrography, where he experimented with a new type of solid shot that could penetrate the armor on the U.S. Navy's ironclads. He also designed a new type of muzzle-loading rifled gun that was widely used by Confederate ships and forts. The "Brooke Rifle" is characterized by a series of iron bands (ranging from one to three, depending on caliber) on the back of the gun and was, in large part, a success. Brooke succeeded in developing his armor-piercing shot, which was largely responsible for the sinking of the tower-type ironclad USS *Keouk* in 1863.

Issac Newton Brown, Commander

Leaving the service upon the outbreak of the Civil War, Issac Brown accepted an appointment as a lieutenant in the Confederate States Navy in June 1861 and served in the Mississippi River region during the next two years. In May 1862, he was assigned to the incomplete ironclad CSS *Arkansas*, finishing her outfitting and serving as commanding officer during her dramatic run through the Federal fleet to Vicksburg. In 1863, Mallory appointed him commanding officer of the ironclad CSS *Charleston*, which operated in defense of Charleston, South Carolina.

John Newland Maffitt, Commander

John Maffitt was born at sea on February 22, 1819. Entering the United States Navy as a midshipman in February 1832, he reached the rank of lieutenant in 1843. Just before he resigned his commission in 1861, he took the gunboat USS *Crusader* into Mobile and refused to turn it over to the local authorities, as he felt the ship properly belonged to the U.S. Government. In 1862 he became the first commanding officer of the cruiser CSS *Florida*, taking her through a difficult outfitting period and then a successful commerce raiding cruise. Promoted to the rank of commander in May 1863, ill health forced him to relinquish command of *Florida* later that year. Starting in 1864, Maffitt returned to duty and commanded blockade runners for the remainder of the war.

Matthew F. Maury, Scientist/Commander

One of the United States' great scientific minds, Matthew Maury is credited with many important discoveries in the field of oceanography and navigation. A Virginia native, he cast his lot with the Confederacy and worked on several inventions to help the cause. His most well-known inventions were early prototypes of electric torpedoes. Richmond sent him overseas to drum up support and sympathy for the Confederate cause. After the war, he accepted a teaching position at the Virginia Military Institute and continued his research into such diverse subjects as meteorology and geology.

James Henry Rochelle, Commander

Born in Southampton County, Virginia, James Rochelle was a member of a prominent Virginia family. He served on CSS *Patrick Henry* during the first day of the Battle of Hampton Roads. The Confederate Navy then transferred him to Charleston, South Carolina, to take command of the ironclad CSS *Palmetto State*. With this ship, he guarded the harbor and aggressively attacked the Union blockade. In mid-1865, he continued the fight by leading Confederate sailors in land battles. Once the war was over, he returned to the county of his birth. He settled down as a gentleman farmer and wrote a memoir of his mentor, Rear Admiral John Randolph Tucker.

Catesby ap Roger Jones, Commander

Catesby Jones is most famous for being the executive officer of the ironclad CSS *Virginia* and taking command of the ironclad when Commodore Franklin Buchanan was shot. Buchanan requested that Jones remain in charge, but Mallory decided a more senior officer was needed and gave the command to Josiah Tattnall. After seeing action at the Battle of Drewry's Bluff, Mallory transferred him to command the Confederate ordnance works in Selma, Alabama, where he remained for the rest of the war. He stayed in Selma after the war. Jones was tragically the accidental victim of a gunshot wound during a dispute between two other men.

James Iredell Waddell, Commander

James Iredell Waddell was born in Pittsboro, North Carolina, in 1824 and joined the U.S. Navy as a midshipman in 1841. Lieutenant Waddell resigned his commission while his ship USS *John Adams* was returning home from the East Indies in late 1861. In March 1862, Waddell was appointed a lieutenant in the Confederate States Navy. In May of that year, he participated in the battle between Confederate shore batteries and Federal ironclads at Drewry's Bluff, Virginia. After being sent overseas in 1863, he took command of the Confederate cruiser *Shenandoah* and led her on a devastating raid of American whaling ships.

Francis Nathaniel Bonneau, Blockade Runner Captain

Francis Nathaniel Bonneau was appointed an acting master in the Confederate Navy in 1862 and served in South Carolina waters. He commanded three different blockade runners during the war. The most famous was *Ella and Annie*, with which Bonneau attempted to ram the blockader USS *Niphon*. He was subsequently convicted of piracy on the basis of the aggressive tactics he employed to avoid capture. The Federal Government later suspended the conviction and paroled him. After the war, the *New York Times* labeled him "The Most Daring Blockade Runner."

Thomas Lockwood, Blockade Runner Captain

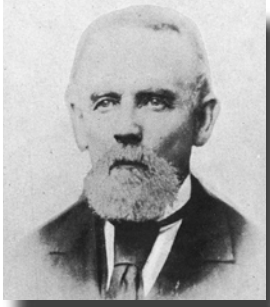
A ship master for a Charleston-based shipping company, Thomas Lockwood became the most famous of blockade runners. With his wife with him at all times, he conducted several daring runs throughout the war with his ship *Kate*. He was a fanatical supporter of the Confederate cause. When some passengers on his ship got seasick and threw up their dinner, Lockwood commented that it was "food for the North." After losing *Kate* in 1863, the "Father of the Trade," as one historian labeled him, travelled to England to oversee the construction of two large blockade runners, *Colonel Lamb* and *Hope*. He personally took charge of *Colonel Lamb* and continued running until the end of the war.

Michael Usina, Blockade Runner Captain

When the war started, Michael Usina enlisted in the Confederate army. He soon found his true calling with ships. Quickly learning the trade, he earned his master's license and served as a senior officer of several blockade runners before he turned twenty-five years old. With his dog Tinker at his side, whom Usina referred to as his good luck charm, the young captain made nineteen successful blockade runs on five different ships. He was known at every port he visited as "the man that owned the dog." While he lost a couple of runners when they ran aground, Usina and Tinker both made it through the war without being captured. Tinker died shortly after the war ended and Usina arranged a burial at sea with full honors.

John Wilkinson, Blockade Runner Captain

One person wrote in the 1860s that, "Raphael Semmes did the most damage to the enemy, but John Wilkinson did the most good for the Confederacy." An experienced U.S. Naval officer before the war, Wilkinson was captured after the failed defense of New Orleans in 1862. After being exchanged, he captained blockade runners that were directly owned by the Confederate government. His most famous ship was *Robert E. Lee*, a ship that made nineteen successful runs before being captured. Exchanged again, he went on to command the commerce raider CSS *Chickamauga*.



John L. Porter, Engineer

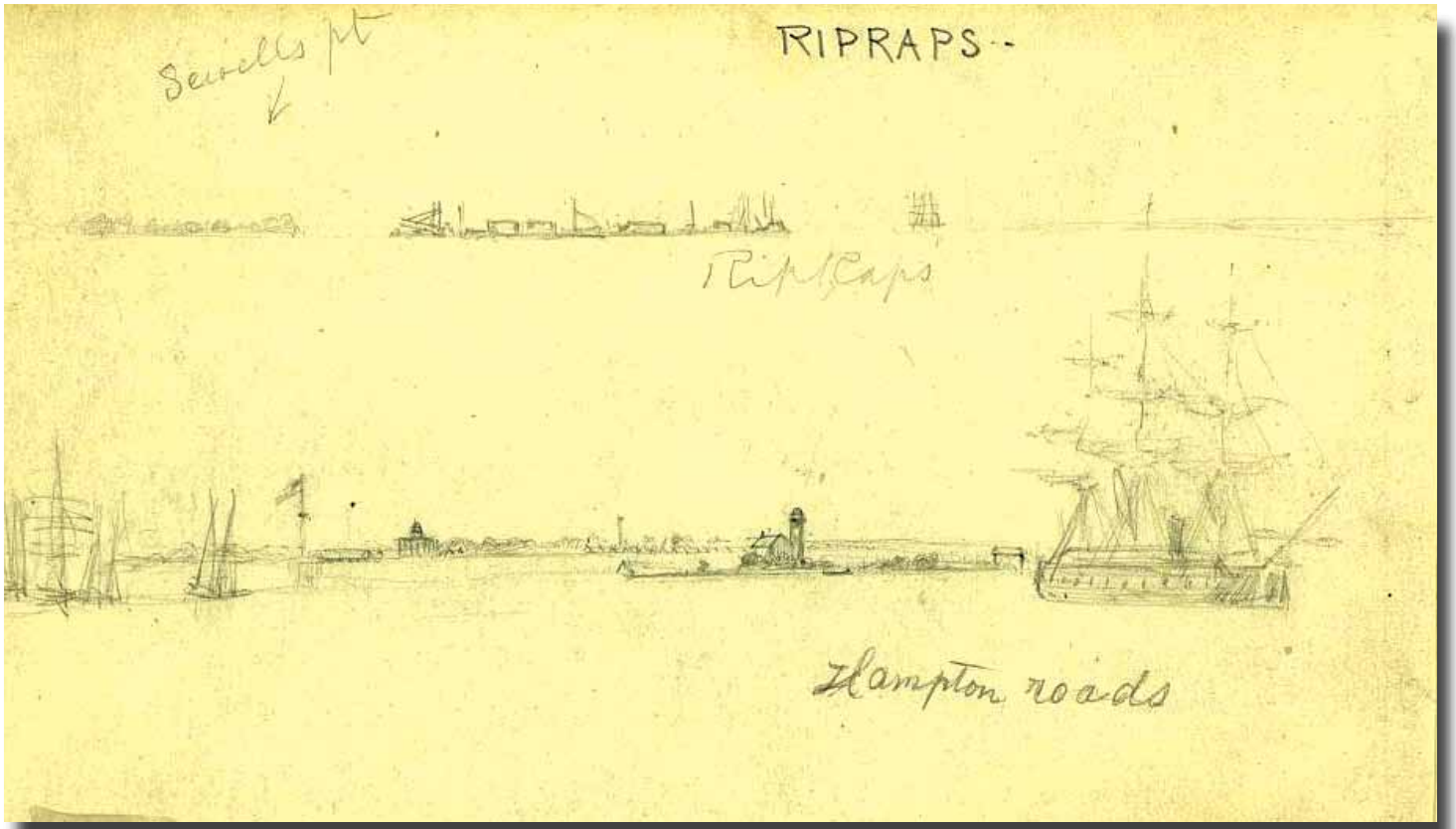
Born into a family of Virginia ship designers and builders, John Porter was the Confederacy's principal ship designer. His casemate design for the ironclad CSS *Virginia* became the standard design for several more ironclads throughout the South. Recognizing the need for cheaper warships, he also designed several wooden gunboats such as CSS *Chattahoochee*. After the war, he continued in the family business of building civilian ships until his death.

William Lamb, Colonel, CSA

A graduate of the College of William & Mary, William Lamb was working as a lawyer in Norfolk at the outbreak of the war. In 1862, the Confederate Army assigned him to Fort Fisher, which at the time was a small outpost at the mouth of the Cape Fear River. With no formal training in engineering, he turned the outpost into one of the most formidable fortresses in the world. He commanded the garrison during two massive Union assaults in 1864 and 1865. After the war, he settled down as a Grant Republican and was elected mayor of Norfolk.

Charles W. Read, Lieutenant

Of all the junior officers in the Confederate Navy, Charles Read had the most active and adventurous career in the war. He resigned from the U.S. Naval Academy as a midshipman and became an officer on the gunboat CSS *McRae* and later on the ironclad *Arkansas*. Mallory then assigned him to serve on the cruiser CSS *Florida*. On this ship, he took charge of three separate smaller cruisers converted from *Florida*'s prizes and raided the New England coast. Toward the end of the war, he attempted to take CSS *Webb* through the Union fleet in the Mississippi River and out into the Gulf of Mexico. Read almost succeeded, but was cornered by several U.S. Navy gunboats and he was forced to scuttle his ship. After the war, he worked with Cuban rebels in their war against Spain.



By October 1861, the situation in Hampton Roads had stalemated. The U.S. Navy controlled the waterways, but the Confederacy had lined its southern shores and rivers with 179 guns. Famed Civil War battlefield artist Alfred R. Waud sketched this drawing of USS Minnesota*, Fort Monroe, and the Rip Raps in September 1861. Waud is best known for his eyewitness drawings of the Battle of Gettysburg, Sherman's Atlanta Campaign, and Grant's Overland Campaign. (Library of Congress image)*

The Battle is Joined

With a Stalemate in Hampton Roads, Federal Forces Move Against Other Southern Ports

by Gordon Calhoun

With the capture of the forts at Hatteras Inlet in September 1861, the ships of the Atlantic Blockading Squadron dispersed to various locations along the Atlantic coastline. About half of them returned to Hampton Roads, a quarter of them went to blockade duty, and another quarter retired to places such as Boston, New York, and Philadelphia for repairs.

Shortly after the return to Hampton Roads from the Hatteras Expedition, Commodore Silas Stringham received word that Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles had relieved him of command of the Squadron, and replaced him with Commodore Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough.

To better manage the blockade of the Atlantic coast, Welles divided the Atlantic Blockading Squadron into the North and South Atlantic Blockading Squadrons. He placed Goldsborough in charge of the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron with its headquarters in Hampton Roads.

As commodore, Goldsborough took no major initiative against Confederate defenses in Hampton Roads. Both Union and Confederate ships and gunners periodically took shots at one another, as if to test the other side's defenses. The region, however, was still a beehive of activity. About the same time the U.S. Navy's senior leaders planned to take Cape Hatteras, they made plans to seize a port in South Carolina in order to support operations around Charleston.

Ships for the "Great Expedition" began

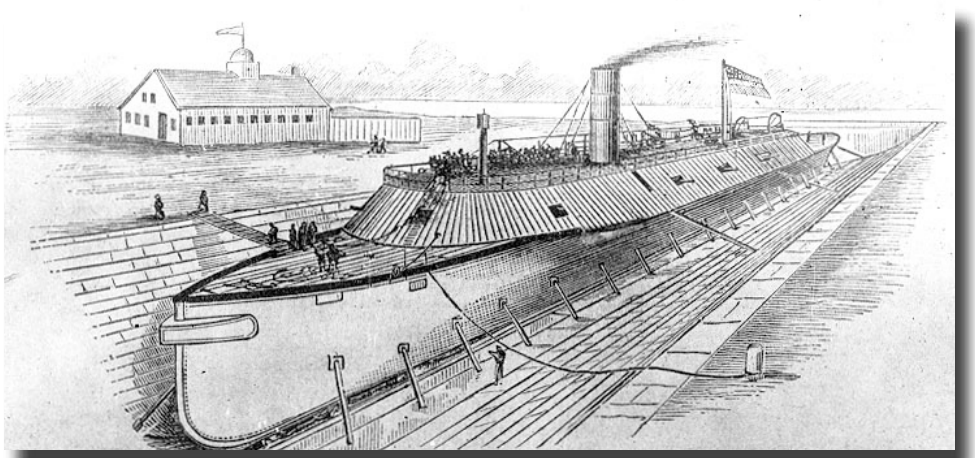
Commodore Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough assumed command of the newly-formed North Atlantic Blockading Squadron on October 29, 1861. An experienced officer, Goldsborough frequently ran afoul of other officers and politicians. He asked to be relieved mid-1862. (HRNM image)

assembling in Hampton Roads in October. A reporter for the *New York Times* was in Hampton Roads to witness the gathering, and exposed everything. Splashed on the front page of the paper was the headline, "The Great Naval Expedition-List of Gunboats, Transports, and Regiments." The article printed in detail the names of every ship and Union Army regiment, and the names of their commanding officers. Southern newspapers picked up the story and reprinted it verbatim. The expedition's commanding officer Flag Officer Samuel Du Pont was naturally furious at the breach of secrecy.

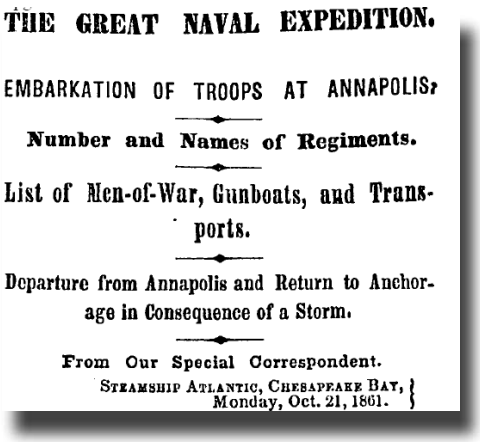
On October 25, 1861, ninety-four ships, including seventeen warships, began to filter out of Hampton Roads and head south. While the *New York Times* did not disclose the expedition's exact target, Confederate authorities picked up enough details from the article, and possibly through their own efforts, to know where the ships were going. On November 1, Confederate Secretary of War Judah Benjamin telegraphed his generals in South Carolina, "the enemy's expedition is heading for Port Royal."

Despite the intelligence and delays caused by foul weather, Du Pont's assault on the Confederate forts at Port Royal was extremely successful. By November 10, both Forts Walker and Beauregard surrendered to Union forces. Port Royal became a major base for the newly formed South Atlantic Blockading Squadron for the remainder of the war.

Back in Hampton Roads, Confederate authorities continued to further strengthen their defensive positions. By December 1861, they had finished placing 179 guns in and around Norfolk and Portsmouth. Workers at Gosport continued to work on the Confederate's great weapon: the ironclad *Virginia*. Using the burnt-out hull of the steam frigate USS *Merrimack*, workers cut the hull down and added two layers of two-inch thick iron. She was slated to have ten guns and a ram. Confederate Secretary of the Navy Stephen Mallory had already selected Captain Franklin Buchanan, currently running the Department's Office of Details and Orders, to take charge of the ship. When he arrived in Hampton Roads, Buchanan was very optimistic about his new ship, but stated there were some very important details to work out.



Since Confederate Secretary of the Navy Stephen Mallory had approved the project in mid-1861, workers at Gosport had made steady progress on converting USS Merrimack *into the ironclad CSS* Virginia. *By February 1862, she was ready. (HRNM image)*



THE GREAT NAVAL EXPEDITION.

EMBARKATION OF TROOPS AT ANNAPOLIS.

Number and Names of Regiments.

List of Men-of-War, Gunboats, and Transports.

Departure from Annapolis and Return to Anchorage in Consequence of a Storm.

From Our Special Correspondent.

STEAMSHIP ATLANTIC, CHESAPEAKE BAY, Monday, Oct. 21, 1861.

A writer for the New York Times *embedded with Union forces in Hampton Roads reported in detail the forces assembling for the Port Royal expedition. The newspaper printed the story two days before the expedition left the area. (October 26, 1861* New York Times*)*

Not sharing Buchanan's optimism was Commodore William Lynch, commanding officer of Confederate naval forces around Roanoke Island in North Carolina. With the fall of Cape Hatteras, the defenses of northeast North Carolina now rested with the Norfolk-born commodore. Located about 100 miles south of Norfolk and connected to Hampton Roads via the Albemarle & Chesapeake Canal, Lynch worried that the island was a prime target for a follow-up Federal offensive. In a letter to Secretary Mallory, Lynch wrote in September that the island was the "back door to Norfolk" and felt that its capture would be a disaster.

Confederate Brigadier General D.H. Hill agreed with Lynch's opinion. During an inspection tour of North Carolina's coast defenses, he wrote, "Roanoke Island is the key to one-third of North Carolina, and its possession by the enemy would enable him to seize the great railway connection between north and south. This all important island is in want of men and guns."

When Secretary Mallory needed an able commander for his new ironclad, he did not have to look far. Captain Franklin Buchanan had decades of experience and served as Mallory's chief detailer. In February 1862, Mallory formally assigned the Maryland native to take charge of CSS Virginia. *(HRNM image)*

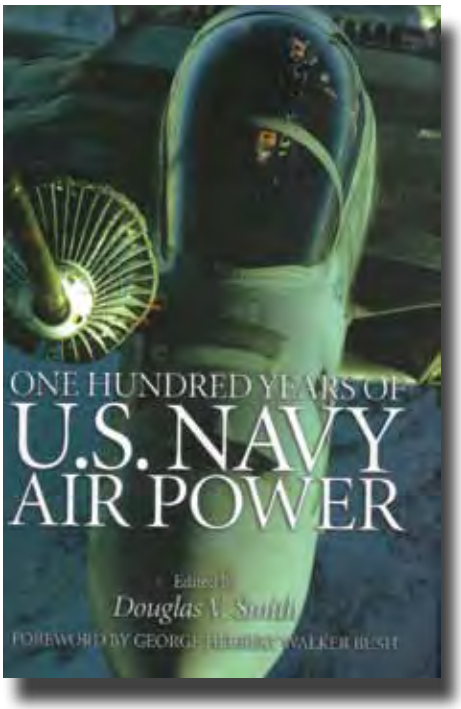
Despite Hill's endorsement for more resources, Lynch had trouble getting others within the Confederate command structure to take his warning seriously. He made many pleas for assistance in fortifying the Island to both Commodore French Forrest and Brigadier General Benjamin Huger. Forrest and Huger were reluctant to release any weapons to Lynch and believed that the 179 guns in Hampton Roads should be pointed north and not south. Forrest even notified Lynch that all his remaining rifled guns at Gosport had been sent off to New Orleans. Commodore Forrest was more concerned about the frigates and steam gunboats in Hampton Roads than the one small gunboat,

Battle is Joined Continued on Page 12

Book Reviews

One Hundred Years of U.S. Navy Air Power

Edited by Douglas V. Smith
Reviewed by Ira R. Hanna



This book is a collection of essays by fourteen respected Naval historians and strategists, seven of whom, including its editor, are or were professors at the Naval War College. The other seven are experts in their subject areas. As the title states, it is not a history of Naval aviation, but one of Naval air power. However, the title is somewhat misleading since the United States did not become a Naval air power until World War II. It devoted one short chapter to the "Experimental Era: U.S. Naval Aviation Before 1916," but quickly shifted to one on "Eyes of the Fleet: How Flying Boats Transformed War Plan Orange," a defensive strategy if Japan attacked Hawaii. One of the most interesting chapters, "Big Guns versus Wooden Decks: Naval Aviation Officer Personnel, 1911-1941," captured the hardship and alienation that Naval aviators endured during that period. Another chapter explained that recognition of the contribution of aircraft to the fleet occurred slowly until fleet maneuvers during those same years established their usefulness. The need to protect American possessions and interests in the Pacific Ocean caused Congress to pass the Two-Ocean Navy Act of 1940 (chapter 8) which helped to stimulate the building of aircraft carriers as well as battleships.

Douglas V. Smith, Editor. *One Hundred Years of U.S. Navy Air Power*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2011. ISBN 978-1-59114-795-4.

The reasons for the change of attitude toward Naval aviation by politicians and military leaders in all the services were well documented, particularly during the 1950s. They began with the belief that land-based aircraft were the major nuclear deterrent and ended with the realization that the ability of aircraft carriers to support conventional warfare as well as deliver nuclear weapons provided the flexibility needed for the world-wide interests of the United States. This is clearly evident today by the United States' involvement in two wars and several interventions in African and Middle-Eastern revolutionary actions.

Douglas V. Smith, the editor, wrote the introduction, conclusion, and a passionate essay on Admiral Joseph Reeves, widely accepted as the "father of Navy carrier aviation." In this chapter he described the path that Reeves took to open the minds of the admirals who commanded the fleets to the strategic importance of the aircraft carrier, the main focus of this book. This was given a historical perspective later in chapter nine, "U.S. Aircraft Carrier Evolution, 1911-1945," by Norman Friedman. It was continued in one of the final chapters, "U.S. Aircraft Carrier Evolution, 1945-2011," also written by Friedman. If one reads these three essays alone, you would be able to understand how the aircraft carrier became America's most powerful strategic weapon. Of course, this may be disputed by the other branches of the U.S. Armed Forces. Still, as former President George H. W. Bush said in the foreword of this book, "One of the first questions I always asked as Commander-in-Chief when American interests were threatened around the globe was 'Where are our aircraft carriers?'"

There are several chapters dedicated to the development of specific types of Naval aircraft. What is missing is an essay from the viewpoint of Naval pilots. Also missing is the development of combat information centers that were paramount to the success of carriers and their escorts to defend against air attacks. This made it possible for carriers to become less vulnerable and more able to become an offensive weapon. Thirdly, there was little told about the part Naval air bases played in securing aviation's place in the fleet – research and training of pilots.

In chapter 10, there was an interesting revelation. It concerned the battle with the Army during the early years of military aviation as to whether the Navy could continue to develop long-range overwater shore-based aircraft or not. In 1931, an agreement was made between Army Chief of Staff, General Douglas MacArthur, and Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral William V. Pratt, that prevented the Navy from operating long-range land-based planes. Even so, the Navy had the last laugh when the Army had to use Navy carriers to launch their long-range bombers to reach Japan during WWII.

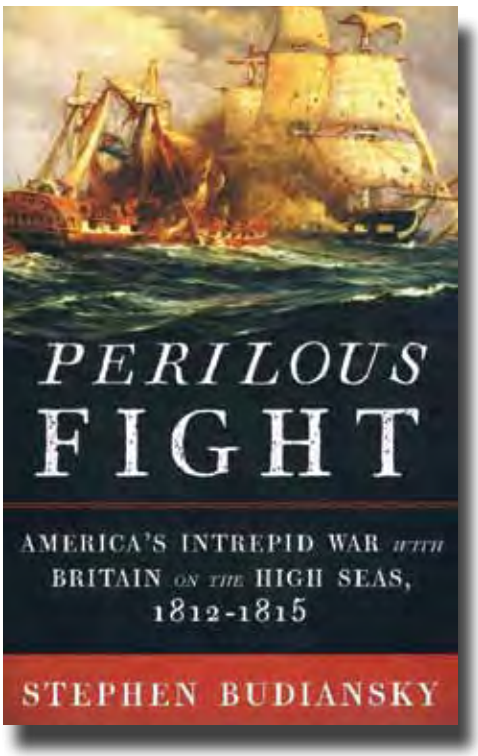
In his introductory chapter, the editor admits that he was a Naval aviator and proud to be among "the best two percent of humanity." It is no wonder that he sought to convince the other ninety eight percent of the public as to which military service has the most potent strategic weapon. Even though this book included every facet of Naval aviation, from its beginning as an observation plane for the big guns of the battleships to the super-carriers of today, it ultimately is a resume of the development of the aircraft carrier. In a very impressive way, Smith has collected the knowledge of fourteen eminent scholars of Naval history and strategy to make his conclusion with authority.

During 2011, the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Naval aviation, there probably will be several books written about its growth and development. This book may not cover all aspects of that history, but it does describe the evolution of the aircraft carrier as a strategic weapon. It is valuable reading for all Naval leaders and certainly for Naval aviators.

Perilous Fight: America's Intrepid War With Britain on the High Seas, 1812-1815

By Stephen Budiansky

Reviewed by Joseph Mosier



Well, naval history fans, it's time to buckle up your swash. The bicentennial of the War of 1812 is upon us. Over the next few years, expect a flotilla of books on the subject to hit the market. Few to come will match Stephen Budiansky's *Perilous Fight*.

Author Jeff Guinn recently said, "The way history is remembered quite often is the way the general public decides it wants it to have been." For most of the ensuing two hundred years America has viewed the War of 1812 as a naval conflict. This has held true despite the fact that substantially more men fought in the nation's land forces than at sea. Of the 2,600 combat deaths suffered by the nation, only 310 came from the Navy or Marine Corps. Expenditures from the Federal treasury during the period of the war were tilted 2.5:1 toward the Army ($66.6 million versus $26.4 million). Outweighing this calculus of cost is the fact that America's poorly-led and badly-performing land forces mustered only one significant military victory (New Orleans) while a string of victories at sea buoyed the nation's pride.

Stephen Budiansky. *Perilous Fight: America's Intrepid War With Britain on the High Seas, 1812-1815*. New York: Knopf Doubleday, 2011. ISBN 978-0-30759-518-8

Pride was, for many, the only explanation of why the new republic took on one of the superpowers of the day. For twelve years the Jefferson Republicans had held the Presidency and control of Congress. That party's principle political rallying cry was the evil nature of Great Britain. They saw the opposition Federalists as interested only in infecting America's democracy with British "monarchist tendencies".

Budiansky makes a convincing argument that Madison did not slide unseeing into war. After the embargo of 1807-1809 failed to influence British action, the President felt that peaceful means would never successfully force England to respect America's sovereignty and independence. By early 1811, Madison engaged in building a political case for war through newspaper "leaks" and lobbying of Congress. Such militant actions were a complete about face for the man who had been the most vocal supporter of Jefferson's belief in the inherent evil of war. Budiansky explains this change as coming from a mind, which once solutions to complex problems were worked out, could be filled with stubborn resolve to carry out those solutions.

Budiansky writes with a journalist's eye for character. Here is his description of Commodore William Bainbridge: "... Bainbridge had a streak of bullying self-pity that had served him well in the past... He had all of Decatur's pride and vanity and touchy sense of honor with none of his dash; he was not a handsome man, with a rectangular head, heavy jowls, a florid complexion, thick lips, a deeply cleft chin, and a pugnacious air. Even Bainbridge's admirers noted his 'vehemence' and when one of his 'fierce storms' came over him he could barely speak, caught in a stammer that sounded like he was saying 'unto, unto, unto' before he could get his words out." Even leaving out Bainbridge's remarkably bad haircut, the description fits the uncritically acclaimed "naval hero" to a tee. Budiansky also is especially strong in his description of the early frigate battles, often writing with a vividness and authority that rivals Patrick O'Brian or Dewey Lambdin.

Two themes could have been given more emphasis: the role of the Navy on the lakes and the importance of American sloops-of-war in taking the fight to British commerce at a time when the U.S. Navy's larger ships were blockaded in port. Perry's victory on Lake Erie took out an entire Royal Navy squadron together with British chances to continue support to their Native American allies. Thomas Macdonough stopped the invasion of Governor General George Prevost's 10,000-man army at the Battle of Plattsburgh Bay in September 1814. Both of these pivotal events are covered in two pages or less. By the summer of 1814, most of the American "superfrigates" were blockaded in port. To continue the *guerre de course* against British merchant shipping, Secretary of the Navy William Jones relied on a new class of sloops-of-war such as USS *Wasp* and *Peacock*. At a time when the English military outlook was bright, the depredations of American privateers and Jones' sloops on merchant shipping roiled up British opposition to continuing the war. USS *Wasp*, for example, took fourteen prizes, including three Royal Navy vessels in the summer of 1814, before disappearing at sea. She also disappeared from the pages of Budiansky's history, as the ship's operations receive less than a page of coverage.

Perilous Fight offers twelve pages of bibliography, twenty-two pages of end notes, and five maps to support the narrative. Budiansky is a self-described curmudgeon whose acerbic humor leavens and strengthens a serious piece of scholarship. Budiansky's *Perilous Fight* is heavy-duty history written with a light touch. At once insightful and entertaining, the work is most highly recommended.

Battle is Joined Continued from Page 9

USS *Daylight*, patrolling south of Roanoke Island. Forrest and Huger did send a few guns for Lynch's ships.

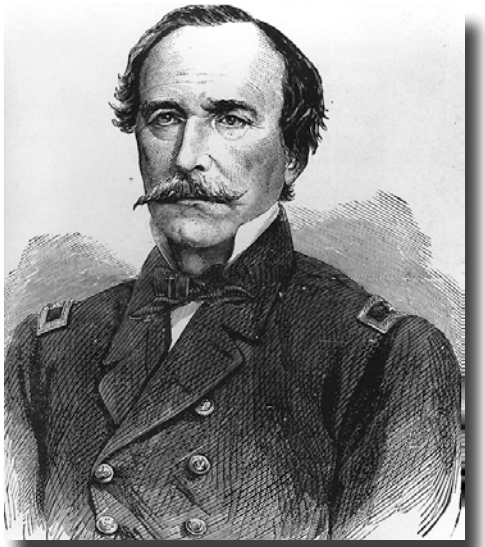
With these guns, Lynch assembled his self-proclaimed "Mosquito Squadron" of seven ships. Lynch also had wooden poles placed into the water across Croatan Sound, and Confederate ground forces constructed three small forts. Complicating matters for Lynch was the new commander of Confederate ground forces at Roanoke Island, Henry A. Wise. The former governor of Virginia and newly appointed Confederate Army flag officer did not get along with Lynch and often refused to cooperate.

The dispute between the two officers reached a climax when Lynch wrote directly to Secretary Mallory expressing his frustration. He commented about the lack of resources; however, most of his disgust was reserved for Wise, whom Lynch believed to be incompetent. Lynch commented that if Wise had his way, most of the soldiers garrisoning the island would be sent east to Nags Head, where they could have easily been shelled by U.S. Navy warships. Wise thought the accommodations at the Nags Head's hotel were better than on Roanoke Island, which was filled with swamps. He also asked that Wise stop spending so much time in Richmond and return to his post. The Confederate Army command staff was inclined to agree with Lynch and ordered Wise to cooperate. The complaints further angered Wise. He replied with a long rebuttal.

While this dispute continued, Lynch's worst fears began to materialize. Union Army commanders made plans for a major offensive against Lynch's defenses. Beginning in Fall 1861, Confederate lookouts in Hampton Roads began reporting on a large collection of ships assembling in Hampton Roads. Local post commanders speculated where the fleet was going and if their particular station was going to be attacked.

Between November 1861 and January 1862, the U.S. Army and Navy assembled over sixty gunboats and transports with about 12,000 soldiers. The original idea for the offensive move against Roanoke Island came from Brigadier General Ambrose Burnside. With the approval of his chain of command, Burnside had been busily assembling a unit known as the "Coast Division." The general hoped to create a permanent task force that specialized in littoral actions, by recruiting soldiers from coastal towns in the North and giving them their own integrated squadron of light-drafted gunboats and transports.

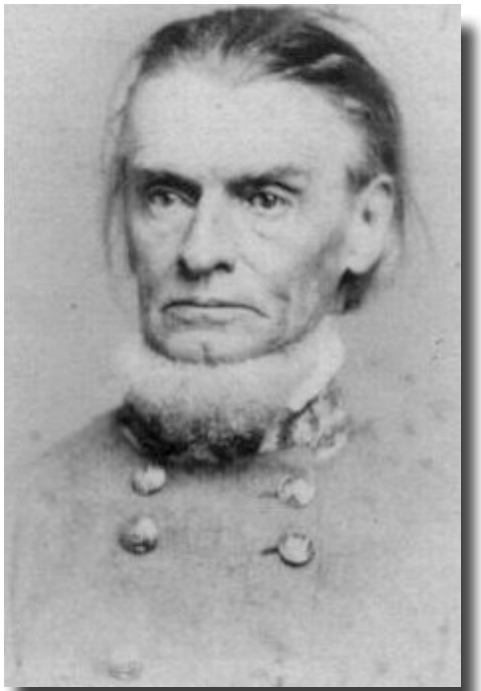
*In charge of Union ground forces at Roanoke Island and the namesake of the campaign was Brigadier General Ambrose Burnside. The general's innovative leadership during the campaign stood in stark contrast to his experiences with the Army of the Potomac later in the war. (*Harper's Weekly *engraving)*



*Goldsborough gave Commander Stephen Rowan operational command of U.S. Naval forces participating in the Burnside Expedition. Originally from Dublin, Ireland, Rowan was a combat veteran with thirty years of Naval experience at the time of the battle. (*Harper's Weekly *engraving)*

On a map, Roanoke Island seemed like an odd place for a major offensive move, as it was sparsely inhabited, it was not a major port for blockade running, and the closest town was Elizabeth City, several miles to the west on the mainland.

However, Union Navy and Army leaders detected the weak defenses in the region and decided it was worth the chance to take one-third of North Carolina and permanently deny those ports to blockade runners and privateers. They also believed that Cape Hatteras and northeast North Carolina citizens had strong Union sentiments and



A pair of Virginians led Confederate forces on Roanoke Island. Norfolk-native Commodore William F. Lynch (left) organized a force of small ships into a squadron he called the "Mosquito Fleet." Eastern Shore-native and the 33rd Governor of Virginia, Brigadier General Henry A. Wise, led the ground forces. The two men did not get along. (HRNM images)

were simply waiting for someone to liberate them from Confederate rule.

Labeled the "Burnside Expedition," the fleet left Hampton Roads in early January 1862 for Cape Hatteras. Burnside and Goldsborough attempted to keep the force's designation a secret by withholding sealed sailing orders until the day it left Hampton Roads.

The task force arrived off Hatteras Inlet in mid-January 1862. Mother Nature greeted the ships and pounded the squadron with high winds, damaging some of the ships and sinking three. The ships' captains then had to navigate across the Inlet's bar one at a time and only at high tide. By February 2, the task force had successfully crossed the bar and proceeded north into Pamlico Sound without further losses.

Once in Pamlico Sound, Goldsborough turned over operational control of the U.S.N. ships to the Irish-born and hard charging Commander Stephen Rowan. After being delayed by heavy fog, Rowan's twenty-one ships advanced north past Marsh Point and into Croatan Sound. The U.S. Army's squadron of transports and gunboats followed in behind them.

At 1:30 p.m. on February 7, Confederate lookouts at Roanoke Island's Pork Point (on the west side of the Island) spotted the squadron. The nine-gun battery went to general quarters and opened fire. Two other shore batteries located farther north at Weir's Point and Redstone Point joined in the action. From behind the wooden barrier, Lynch's ships also fired at Yankee ships.

Rowan's vanguard returned fire at the Pork Point battery and set several structures on fire. They also fired on Lynch's squadron.

Confederate Naval officers in Hampton Roads and the sounds of North Carolina relied heavily on converted steam tugs, dispatch boats, and coastal trading vessels to serve as gunboats. Shown here is a U.S. Navy sailor's drawing of a Confederate gun team aboard CSS Ellis *during a skirmish around Roanoke Island. (New York Historical Society image)*

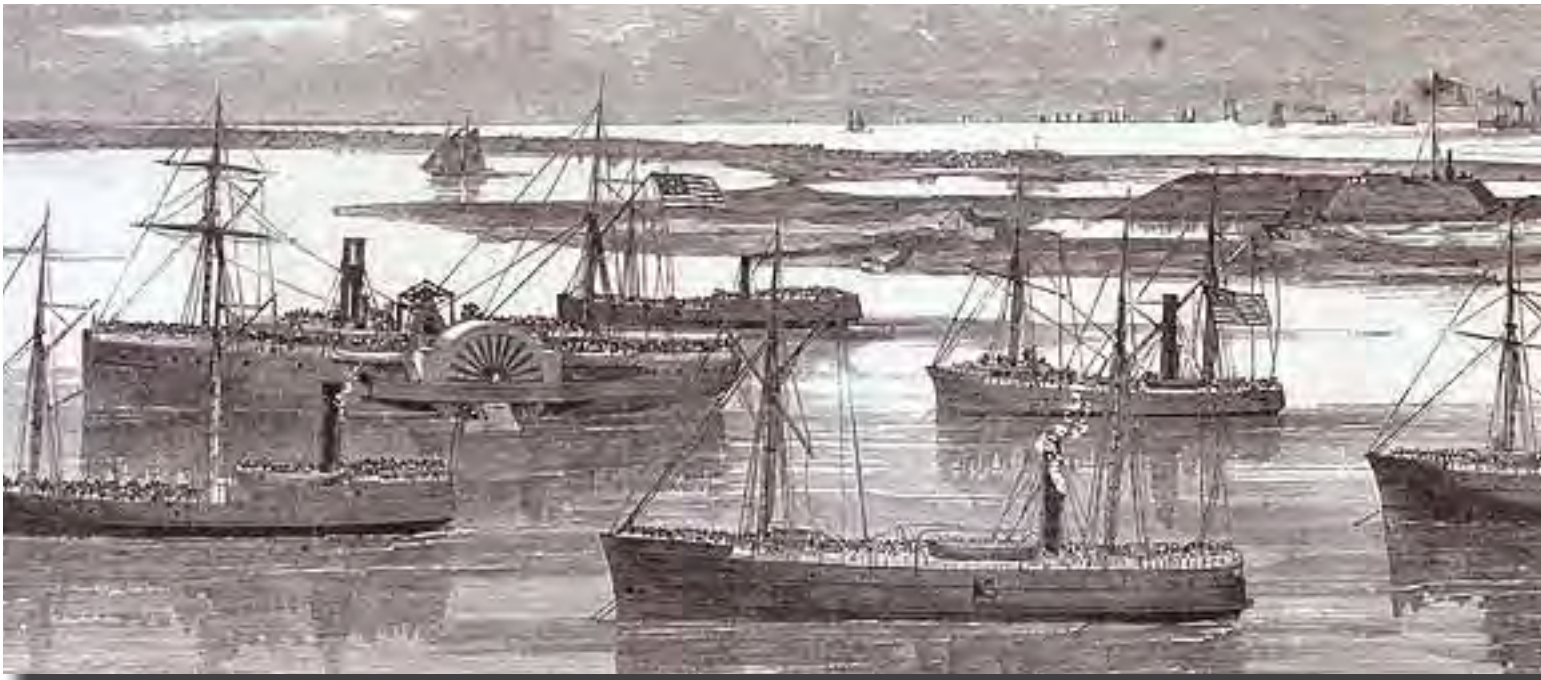
One shot struck CSS *Curlew*'s main deck, passed through the ship's magazine, and out the bottom of the ship. Seeing his ship take on water as a result of the hit, her commanding officer steered her towards shallow water. *Curlew*'s company scuttled and burned her the next day to prevent capture. U.S. Naval gunfire disabled a second ship, CSS *Forrest*, by knocking her propeller out of alignment. Seeing his squadron grossly outgunned and outnumbered, Lynch ordered his ships to withdraw north to Elizabeth City.

*To prepare for a possible Federal assault on Roanoke Island, Lynch had wooden poles staked across Croatan Sound between the north end of the island and the mainland. (*London Illustrated Newspaper *engraving)*

While Rowan's ships engaged the forts and Lynch's ships withdrew, Burnside's soldiers landed at Ashbury Harbor on the south end of the island. A Confederate field battery attempted to disrupt the landing, but guns from Rowan's flagship, the paddle steamer USS *Delaware*, cleared them from the field. By 10 p.m., all sides ceased fire due to nightfall. Ten thousand Union soldiers had landed and began forming up for an attack the next morning. Rowan had five Naval gun teams with five boat howitzers deploy with the Union brigade.

Confederate shore gunners scored some hits during the first day of action and their marksmanship was good. The commanding officers of the U.S. Navy gunboats reported that their ships were hit several times. However, most of the hits were done with solid shot and not high-explosive shells. As a result, the damage to the wooden ships was minimal. The most seriously damaged ships were USS *Louisiana*, which was set on fire; USS *Hetzel*, which had a solid shot crash into her coal bunker; and the converted New York City ferry boat USS *Hunchback*, which took several hits to the hull. All three ships survived and were repaired after the battle.

At 9 a.m., the ground assault began.



After recovering from a vicious storm, the ships of the Burnside Expedition reassembled at the entrance to Hatteras Inlet. In contrast to grand fleets with large warships assemble Hampton Roads, but were unsure of its intentions. Even many of the fleet's ship captains did not know. Burnside and Goldsborough waited until the last minute to give the fleet's sh

Rowan's ships continued to keep the Pork Point battery suppressed and succeeded in knocking out most of the fort's guns. By the afternoon, Rowan thought a more decisive move north was in order. Burnside's regiments successfully took the Confederate forts, freeing fourteen of his ships to pursue Lynch's ships toward Elizabeth City. Since many of the gunboat captains reported to Rowan that they were running low on ammunition, the commander ordered them to ram the enemy warships.

Rowan's tactics came as a surprise to Lynch, who expected the U.S. Navy gunboats to engage a small shore battery. The ensuing battle on February 10 destroyed or scattered the rest of Lynch's squadron. Sensing the end, Lynch ordered ship companies to either burn their ships or attempt to escape to Norfolk via the Albemarle & Chesapeake Canal. The results were catastrophic: USS *Commodore Barney* pursued, rammed, and sank Lynch's flagship CSS *Sea Bird*; a boarding team from USS *Ceres* captured CSS *Ellis*; and the CSS (ex-USS) *Fanny* and the sail schooner CSS *Black Warrior* were scuttled by their companies. *Ellis*'s company attempted to scuttle the tug with an explosive, but an African American coal heaver informed the U.S.N. boarding team of the charges. CSS *Beaufort* and *Appomattox* successfully escaped to Norfolk. En route to Norfolk, teams from *Beaufort* and *Appomattox* began placing obstructions in the canal.

The "Burnside Expedition" went on to capture several more small towns near Elizabeth City, including New Bern, Plymouth, and Edenton. Goldsborough decided not to pursue any further north and,

*Once it entered Croatan Sound on the west side of Roanoke Island, the U.S. Naval gunboat squadron split into three groups. One group engaged Confederate forts, a second engaged the Confederate gunboat squadron to the north, and a third provided cover fire for Federal Army units landing on the island itself. (*Harpers Weekly *engraving)*

*d by European navies in the 19th century, the joint U.S. Navy-Army fleet consisted of all small gunboats and transports. Confederate lookouts had noticed the fleet assembling in ip captains their sealed sailing orders. (*Harper's Weekly *engraving)*

ironically, thought that the Confederate idea of obstructing the canal was a good one. Most of his gunboats withdrew either for repairs or to assist in the capture of Forts Macon and Beaufort on the southern end of Cape Hatteras.

Roanoke Island, Cape Hatteras, and most of the surrounding area remained in Union hands for the rest of the war. Roanoke Island became a safe haven for escaped slaves and the location of one of the first Freedman Bureaus.

For the Confederacy, the loss of northeast North Carolina was mentally devastating. However, it seemed to put a sense of urgency in the work going on at Gosport. Workers continued to work hard on the ironclad. By early February, the newly-christened CSS *Virginia* was ready to receive her officers.

Mallory continued to have high hopes for his government's newest warship and believed *Virginia* would reverse his navy's misfortunes. Ever the optimist, Mallory even wondered aloud if *Virginia* could make it past Old Point Comfort, up to the Potomac, and attack Washington D.C. Such an attack would have an "effect upon the public mind" in the North.

On February 24, Mallory formally ordered Captain Buchanan to move from his advisory role to a direct operational role of *Virginia* and the other ships of the James River squadron. Mallory gave Buchanan free latitude to do whatever was needed and attack whenever he felt the time was right.

Buchanan was personally ready to go after the blockading squadron in Hampton Roads. But any attack would have to wait. The ship did not have enlisted crew members and there was a shortage of gun powder at Gosport. Specifically, the yard's commandant, Commodore French Forrest, believed the ship was still 8,000 pounds short. He frantically began soliciting local Confederate Army commanders for powder and wanted it as soon as possible due to the amount of time it would take to fill empty powder bags. The Army complied with Forrest's request. *Virginia*'s company was rounded out with soldiers.

U.S. Naval commanders were well aware of the Confederate activity at Gosport. Before Goldsborough left for North Carolina, he had a plan on paper for a possible Confederate attack. Specifically, the all-sail ships USS *Cumberland* and *Congres*s would wait at anchor at the mouth of the Elizabeth River, with tugs ready to assist them. The steam

*Soldiers of the 9th New York and 21st Massachusetts storm Confederate defenses during the assault on Roanoke Island. This particular battle caught the imagination of print makers on both sides of the Atlantic and became a popular image to reproduce and sell. (*London Illustrated Newspaper *engraving)*

As Burnside's soldiers secured Roanoke Island, Rowan's gunboat squadron pursued Lynch's remaining ships north to Elizabeth City. Because the ships were running low on ammunition, Rowan ordered his ships to ram when possible. Here, USS Commodore Barney *(incorrectly drawn) rams CSS* Sea Bird. *(*Harper's Weekly engraving)

USS Congress *and USS* Cumberland *rest quietly at anchor, while USS* Louisiana *steams by and Union soldiers engage in idle talk at Newport News Point. While the Burnside Expedition was underway, men of the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron in Hampton Roads waited impatiently for something to do. Between December 1861 and early March 1862, all was calm. (*Harper's Weekly *engraving)*

frigates USS *Roanoke* and *Minnesota* and the all-sail frigate USS *St. Lawrence* would then join *Cumberland* and *Congress* and force any Confederate ship to surrender.

Goldsborough left Captain John Marston in charge of the squadron while he was away. Marston had received accurate intelligence about *Virginia* and her intention to attack. It worried him greatly, particularly since his own ship *Roanoke* was non-functional and *St. Lawrence* and several tugs were not in the region. The often-troubled *Roanoke*'s propeller shaft had cracked, leaving her completely immobile. Additionally, the ship's company was deficient of 180 men. "It makes me sick," he wrote, "but we will do the best we can."

Captain G.J. Van Brunt, commanding officer of *Minnesota,* was concerned about Goldsborough's extended absence. "What are you doing?" he sternly asked his commodore, who was still in North Carolina waters. Van Brunt believed his ship was ready for action, but he wished that the Union's senior leadership would do something bold. With no flag officer on the scene, no major initiative could go forward.

This was not the case with the Confederates. On March 4, Commander John Tucker reported to Buchanan that three ships, CSS *Patrick Henry, Jamestown,* and *Teaser,* were ready to go whenever *Virginia* was ready. On March 6, Buchanan signaled his intention to launch an attack that night on the U.S. Navy's squadron in Hampton Roads. "The frigates *Congress* and *Cumberland* temptingly invited an attack," *Virginia*'s executive officer Catesby ap R. Jones later wrote. The local harbor pilots, however, strongly disagreed with the idea of taking out a vessel with limited maneuverability and a deep draft at night. Buchanan took his pilots' advice and waited about 36 hours. His patience was rewarded with a picture perfect day.

In Our Next Issue...

Civil War Special Edition- Technology and the Naval War