

## THE OPENING OF THE LOWER MISSISSIPPI.\*

APRIL, 1862.



THE MAN WHO WOULD NOT  
HAUL DOWN THE UNION  
FLAG AT THE PENSACOLA  
NAVY-YARD. (FROM A  
SKETCH FROM LIFE BY  
WILLIAM WAUD.)

THE most important event of the War of the Rebellion, with the exception of the fall of Richmond, was the capture of New Orleans and the forts Jackson and St. Philip, guarding the approach to that city. To appreciate the nature of this victory, it is necessary to have been an actor in it, and to be able to comprehend not only the immediate results to

the city were in no way behind the most zealous secessionists in energy of purpose and in hostility to the Government of the United States.

The Mississippi is thus seen to have been the backbone of the Rebellion, which it should have been the first duty of the Federal Government to break. At the very outset of the war it should have been attacked at both ends at the same time, before the Confederates had time to fortify its banks or to turn the guns in the Government forts against the Union forces. A dozen improvised gun-boats would have held the entire length of the river if they had been sent there in time. The efficient fleet with which Dupont, in November, 1861, attacked and captured the works at Port Royal could at that time have steamed up to New Orleans and captured the city without difficulty. Any three vessels could have passed Forts Jackson and St. Philip a month after the commencement of the war, and could have gone on to Cairo, if necessary, without any trouble. But the Federal Government neglected to approach the mouth of the Mississippi until a year after hostilities had commenced, except to blockade. The Confederates made good use of this interval, putting forth all their resources and fortifying not only the approaches to New Orleans, but both banks of the river as far north as Memphis.

the Union cause, but the whole bearing of the fall of New Orleans on the Civil War, which at that time had attained its most formidable proportions.

Previous to fitting out the expedition against New Orleans, there were eleven Southern States in open rebellion against the Government of the United States, or, as it was termed by the Southern people, in a state of secession. Their harbors were all more or less closed against our ships-of-war, either by the heavy forts built originally by the General Government for their protection, or by torpedoes and sunken vessels. Through four of these seceding States ran the great river Mississippi, and both of its banks, from Memphis to its mouth, were lined with powerful batteries. On the west side of the river were three important States, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas, with their great tributaries to the Mississippi,—the White, the Arkansas, and the Red,—which were in a great measure secure from the attacks of the Union forces. These States could not only raise half a million soldiers, but could furnish the Confederacy with provisions of all kinds, and cotton enough to supply the Rebel Government with the sinews of war. New Orleans was the largest Southern city, and contained all the resources of modern warfare, having great workshops where machinery of the most powerful kind could be built, and having artisans capable of building ships in wood or iron, casting heavy guns, or making small arms. The people of

WHILE in command of the *Powhatan*, engaged in the blockade of the South-west Pass of the Mississippi,—a period of seventy-six days,—I took pains to obtain all possible information concerning the defenses of the river. I learned from the fishermen who supplied the city with oysters and fish that very little progress had been made in strengthening the forts, and that no vessel of any importance was being built except the ram *Manassas*, which had not much strength and but a single gun. The only Confederate vessel then in commission was a small river-boat, the *Ivy*, mounting one four-pounder rifled gun. Had I been able to cross the bar with my ship, I would have felt justified in going up to the city and calling on the authorities to surrender. I could easily have passed the forts under cover of the night without the aid of a pilot, as I had been up and

\* For a description of the "Operations of the Western Flotilla" (including the opening of the Mississippi from Cairo to Memphis), see the paper by Rear-Admiral Walke in THE CENTURY for January, 1885.

down the river some thirty times in a large mail steamer. But the *Powhatan* drew three feet too much water, and there was no use thinking about such an adventure.

This was the position of affairs on May 31, 1861, only forty-five days after Fort Sumter had been fired on.

On the 9th of November, 1861, I arrived at New York with the *Powhatan* and was ordered to report to the Navy Department at Washington, which I did on the 12th. In those days it was not an easy matter for an officer, except one of high rank, to obtain access to the Secretary of the Navy, and I had been waiting nearly all the morning at the door of his office when Senators Grimes and Hale came along and entered into conversation with me concerning my service on the Gulf coast. During this interview I told the senators of a plan I had formed for the capture of New Orleans, and when I had explained to them how easily it could be accomplished, they expressed surprise that no action had been taken in the matter, and took me in with them at once to see Secretary Welles. I then gave the Secretary, in as few words as possible, my opinion on the importance of capturing New Orleans, and my plan for doing so. Mr. Welles listened to me attentively, and when I had finished what I had to say he remarked that the matter should be laid before the President at once; and we all went forthwith to the Executive Mansion, where we were received by Mr. Lincoln.

My plan, which I then stated, was as follows: To fit out a fleet of vessels-of-war with which to attack the city, fast steamers drawing not more than eighteen feet of water and carrying about two hundred and fifty heavy guns; also a flotilla of mortar-vessels, to be used in case it should be necessary to bombard Forts Jackson and St. Philip before the fleet should attempt to pass them. I also proposed that a body of troops should be sent along in transports to take possession of the city after it had been surrendered to the navy. When I had outlined the proposed movement the President remarked:

"This should have been done sooner. The Mississippi is the backbone of the Rebellion; it is the key to the whole situation. While the Confederates hold it they can obtain supplies of all kinds, and it is a barrier against our forces. Come, let us go and see General McClellan."

At that time General McClellan commanded the Army of the Potomac, and was in the zenith of his power. He held the confidence of the President and the country, and was engaged in organizing a large army with which to guarantee the safety of the

Federal seat of government, and to march upon Richmond.

Our party was now joined by Mr. Seward, the Secretary of State, and we proceeded to McClellan's headquarters, where we found that officer diligently engaged in the duties of his responsible position. He came to meet the President with that cheery manner which always distinguished him, and, seeing me, shook me warmly by the hand. We had known each other for some years, and I always had the highest opinion of his military abilities.

"Oh," said the President, "you two know each other! Then half the work is done."

He then explained to the general the object of his calling at that time, saying:

"This is a most important expedition. What troops can you spare to accompany it and take possession of New Orleans after the navy has effected its capture? It is not only necessary to have troops enough to hold New Orleans, but we must be able to proceed at once towards Vicksburg, which is the key to all that country watered by the Mississippi and its tributaries. If the Confederates once fortify the neighboring hills, they will be able to hold that point for an indefinite time, and it will require a large force to dislodge them."

In all his remarks the President showed a remarkable familiarity with the state of affairs. Before leaving us, he said:

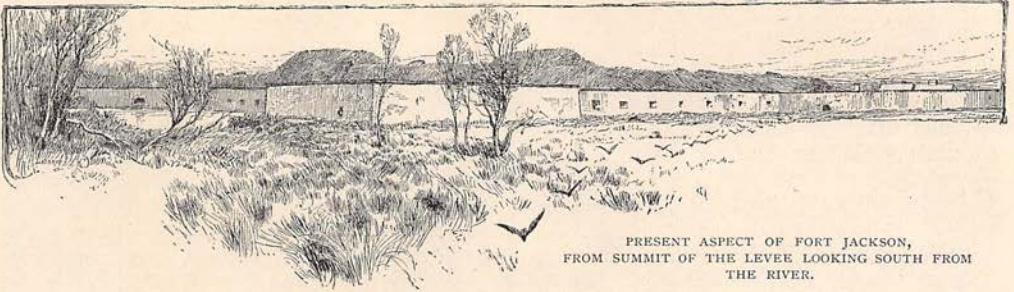
"We will leave this matter in the hands of you two gentlemen. Make your plans, and let me have your report as soon as possible."

General McClellan and myself were then left to talk the matter over and draw up the plan of operations. With a man of McClellan's energy, it did not take long to come to a conclusion; and, although he had some difficulty in finding a sufficient number of troops without interfering with other important projects, he settled the matter in two days, and reported that his men would be ready to embark on the 15th of January, 1862.

The plan of the campaign submitted to the President was as follows: A naval expedition was to be fitted out, composed of vessels mounting not fewer than two hundred guns, with a powerful mortar-flotilla, and with steam transports to keep the fleet supplied. The army was to furnish twenty thousand troops, not only for the purpose of occupying New Orleans after its capture, but to fortify and hold the heights about Vicksburg. The navy and army were to push on up the river as soon as New Orleans was occupied by our troops, and call upon the authorities of Vicksburg to surrender. Orders were to be issued to Flag-officer Davis, who commanded the iron-clad fleet on the Upper



*D. V. Amherst*



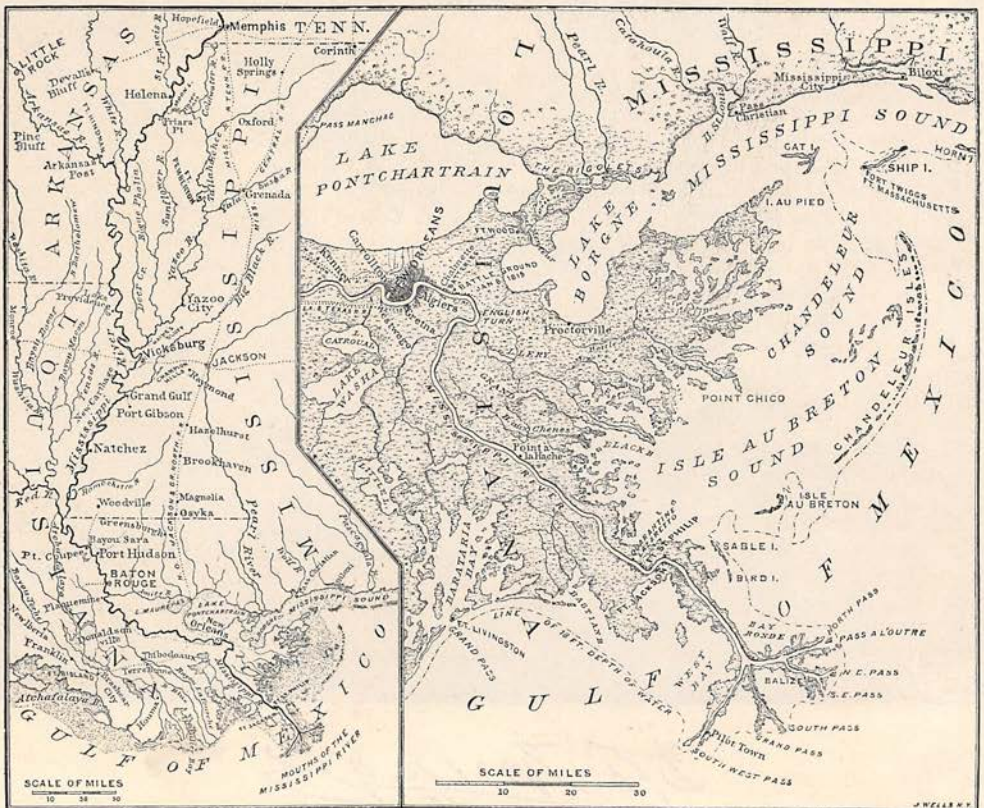
PRESENT ASPECT OF FORT JACKSON, FROM SUMMIT OF THE LEVEE LOOKING SOUTH FROM THE RIVER.

Mississippi, to join the fleet above Vicksburg with his vessels and mortar-boats.

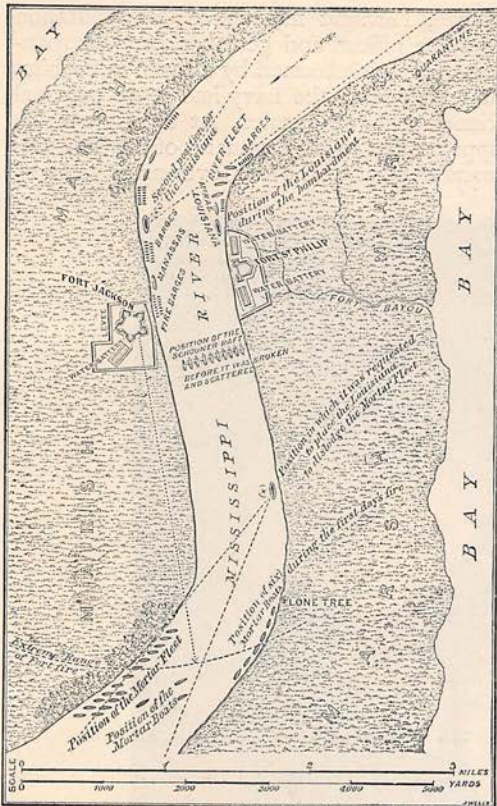
The above plans were all approved by the President, and the Navy Department immediately set to work to prepare the naval part of the expedition, while General McClellan prepared the military part. The officer selected to command the troops was General B. F. Butler, a man supposed to be of high administrative ability, and at that time one of the most zealous of the Union commanders.

The Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Mr. G. V. Fox, selected the vessels for this expedition, and to me was assigned the duty of

purchasing and fitting out a mortar flotilla, to be composed of twenty large schooners, each mounting one heavy thirteen-inch mortar and at least two long thirty-two-pounders. It was not until December, 1861, that the Navy Department got seriously to work at fitting out the expedition. Some of the mortar-vessels had to be purchased, the twenty mortars, with their thirty thousand bombshells, had to be cast at Pittsburgh and transported to New York and Philadelphia, and the mortar-carriages made in New York. It was also necessary to recall ships from stations on the coast and fit them out; also to select officers from the few



MAPS OF THE LOWER MISSISSIPPI.



MAP SHOWING THE DEFENSES OF THE MISSISSIPPI AND THE POSITIONS OF THE MORTAR-FLEET AT THE OPENING OF THE BOMBARDMENT.

NOTE. The top of the map is west.

available at that time to fill the various positions where efficiency was required — especially for the mortar flotilla, the operation of which imposed unfamiliar duties.

By the latter part of January the mortar flotilla got off. In addition to the schooners, it included seven steamers (which were necessary to move the vessels about in the Mississippi River) and a store-ship. Seven hundred picked men were enlisted, and twenty-one officers were selected from the merchant marine to command the mortar-schooners.

An important duty now devolved on the Secretary of the Navy, viz., the selection of an officer to command the whole expedition. Mr. Fox and myself had often discussed the matter. He had had in his mind several officers of high standing and unimpeachable loyalty; but, as I knew the officers of the navy better than he did, my advice was listened to, and the selection fell upon Captain David Glasgow Farragut.

I had known Farragut ever since I was five years old. He stood high in the navy as an officer and seaman, and possessed such undoubted courage and energy that no possible objection could be made to him. On the first sign of war Farragut, though a Southerner by birth and residence, had shown his loyalty in an outspoken manner. The Southern officers had used every argument to induce him to desert his flag, even going so far as to threaten to detain him by force. His answer to them has become historical: "Mind what I tell you: You fellows will catch the devil before you get through with this business."\* Having thus expressed himself in a manner not to be misunderstood, he left Norfolk with his family and took a house on the Hudson River, whence he reported to the Navy Department as ready for duty. I knew Farragut better than most other officers of the navy knew him; and as he is here to appear as the central figure of the greatest naval achievement of our war, I will give a brief sketch of his early naval life.

Farragut was born in Tennessee, from which State his family moved to New Orleans. His father was not a man of affluence, and had a large family to support. In 1807 Captain David Porter, United States Navy, was appointed to the command of the New Orleans station. His father, David Porter, senior (who had been appointed by General Washington a sailing-master in the navy, for services performed during the Revolution), accompanied him to this post and served under his command. Being eighty-four years of age, his services were nominal, and he only lived in New Orleans for the sake of being near his son. One day, while fishing on Lake Pontchartrain, the old gentleman fell over with a sunstroke, and Farragut's father took him to his house near by, and treated him with the most assiduous attention. Mr. Porter died at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Farragut, it being considered dangerous to move

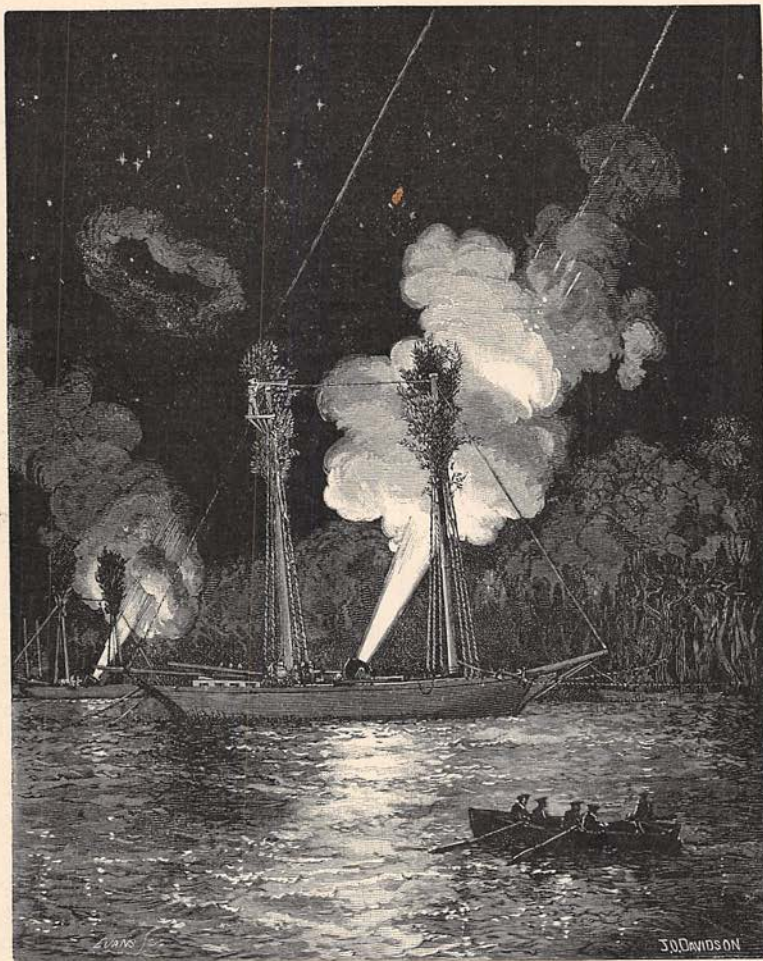


ENTRANCE TO FORT ST. PHILIP. (PRESENT ASPECT.)

\* It is worthy of note in this connection that in 1833, during the nullification troubles, Farragut was sent by Andrew Jackson to South Carolina to support his mandate that "the Union must and shall be preserved."—ED.

him. Captain Porter then, in order to show his gratitude to the Farraguts for their kindness to his father, offered to adopt their son Glasgow. This offer was gladly accepted, and from that time young Farragut became a member of Captain Porter's family, and was recognized as his adoptive son. The boy was

placed, Farragut maintained his reputation as a fine officer, and genial, cheery companion. He was esteemed by all who knew him, and no one in the navy had more personal friends or fewer enemies. At the time of his appointment to the command of the New Orleans expedition, he was over sixty years of



MORTAR-SCHOONERS ENGAGED AGAINST FORT JACKSON.\*

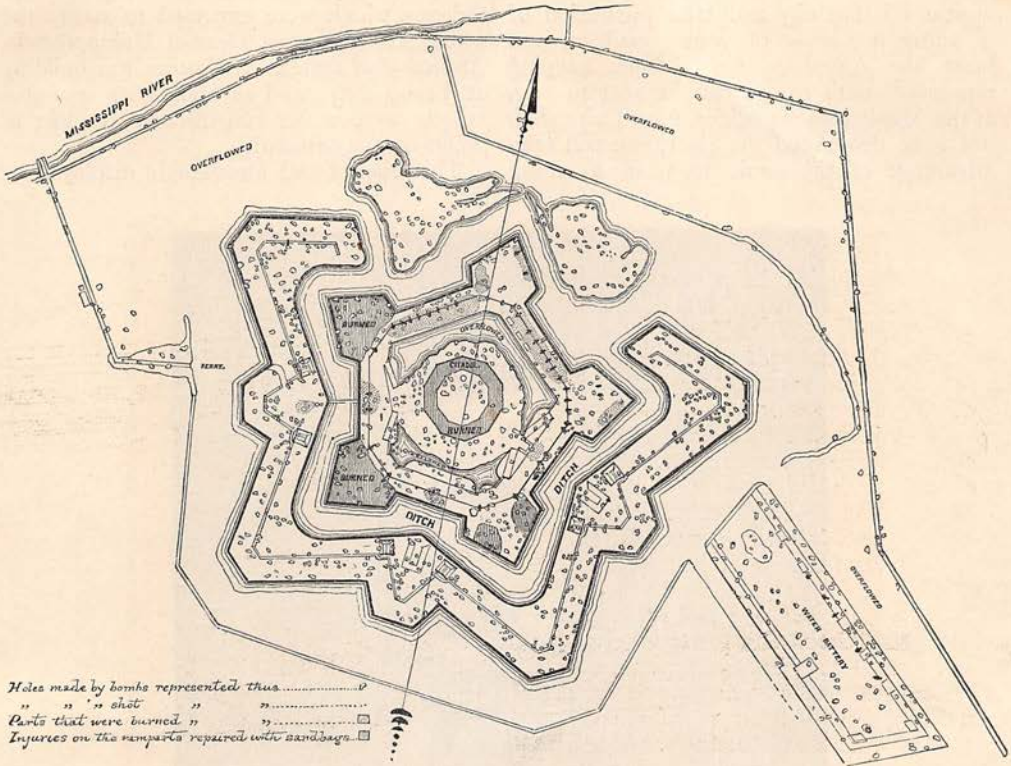
(Distance of leading schooner from the fort, 2850 yards. Duration of fire, six days. Total number of shells fired, 16,800.)

placed at school when he was eight years old, and on the 17th of December, 1810, he was appointed an acting midshipman in the navy. He accompanied Captain Porter in the cruise of the *Essex* around Cape Horn, and was with him at the memorable capture of that frigate, on which occasion he showed the spirit of a brave boy. He remained with his adopted father some years, and served under him in the "mosquito fleet" of the West India squadron. In whatever position he was

age; but he was as active as a man of fifty, with an unimpaired constitution, and a mind as bright as ever.

On his return to the North with his family, he had been assigned to duty by the Department as president of a board for the examination of officers, and he accepted it as an acknowledgment on the part of the Government that he was a loyal man. The Department hesitated for some time, however, when his name was proposed as commander of the im-

\* The drawings of vessels in action printed with this article, except the general view, are from sketches by Admiral Porter, and all have received his criticism and final approval.—ED.



Holes made by bombs represented thus.....  
 " " " shot " ".....  
 Parts that were burned " ".....  
 Injuries on the ramparts repaired with sandbags.....

PLAN OF FORT JACKSON, SHOWING THE EFFECT OF THE BOMBARDMENT, APRIL 18TH TO 24TH. (FROM THE GOVERNMENT MAP SURVEYED BY J. S. HARRIS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF F. H. GERDES, U. S. COAST SURVEY.)

[“ All the scows and boats near the fort except three small ones were sunk. The drawbridge, hot-shot furnaces, and fresh-water cisterns were destroyed. The floors of the casemates were flooded, the levee having been broken. All the platforms for pitching tents on were destroyed by fire or shells. All the casemates were cracked (the roof in some places being entirely broken through) and masses of brick dislodged in numerous instances. The outer walls of the fort were cracked from top to bottom, admitting daylight freely.”—Inscription on the original plan.]

portant expedition against New Orleans. A widespread feeling prevailed at that time that Southern officers should not be given active duty afloat; for, although their loyalty was not doubted, it was naturally thought that they would find no duty congenial that would compel them to act offensively against their friends and relations. It was afterwards proved that this opinion was unjust, for among the officers who hailed from the South were some of the most zealous and energetic defenders of the Union flag—men who did their duty faithfully. When Farragut came North he simply reported himself to the Department as ready for duty, without applying for active service against the enemy. It was owing to this fact that the Department was so long in coming to a conclusion, and this explains why the commander of the expedition was not (as he ought to have been) the very first man selected.

I continually urged Farragut's appointment, and finally the Department directed me to go on to New York, and ascertain in a personal interview whether he would accept the command and enter warmly into the views of the

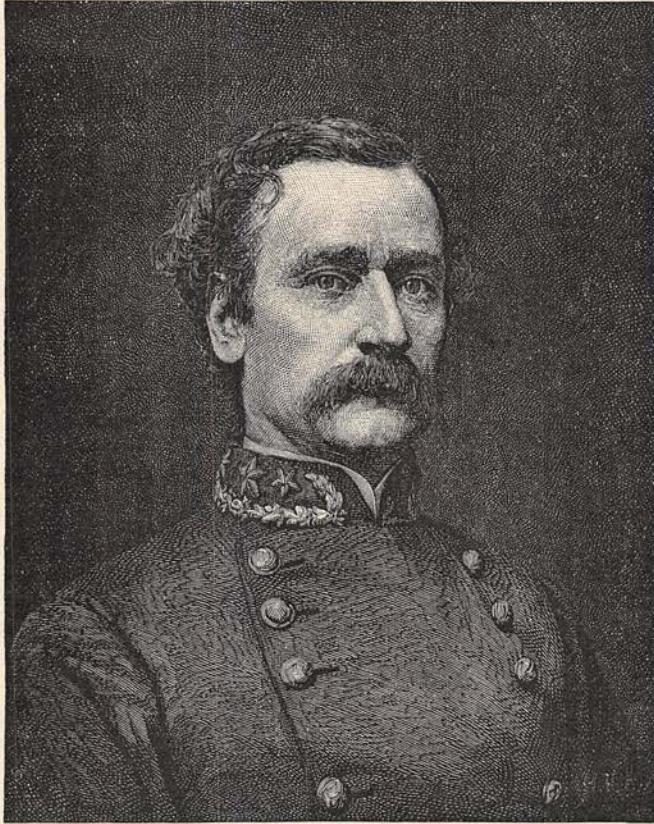
Government. I found him, as I had expected, loyal to the utmost extent; and, although he did not at that time know the destination of the expedition, he authorized me to accept for him the Secretary's offer, and I telegraphed the Department: "Farragut accepts the command, as I was sure he would."

In consequence of this answer he was called to Washington, and on the 20th of January, 1862, he received orders to command the expedition against New Orleans. In the orders are included these passages: "There will be attached to your squadron a fleet of bomb-vessels, and armed steamers enough to manage them, all under command of Commander D. D. Porter, who will be directed to report to you. As fast as these vessels are got ready they will be sent to Key West to await the arrival of all, and the commanding officers will be permitted to organize and practice with them at that port. When these formidable mortars arrive, and you are completely ready, you will collect such vessels as can be spared from the blockade, and proceed up the Mississippi River, and reduce the defenses which guard the approaches to New Orleans, when you will

appear off that city and take possession of it under the guns of your squadron, and hoist the American flag therein, keeping possession until troops can be sent to you. If the Mississippi expedition from Cairo shall not have descended the river, you will take advantage of the panic to push a strong

Orleans, which were expected to sweep the whole Southern coast clear of Union vessels. An iron-clad ram, the *Arkansas*, was building at Yazoo City, and several other iron-clad vessels were under construction at different points on the tributaries.

This energy and forethought displayed by



MAJOR-GENERAL MANSFIELD LOVELL, COMMANDER OF CONFEDERATE DEPARTMENT NO. 1, WITH HEADQUARTERS AT NEW ORLEANS. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY COOK.)

force up the river to take all their defenses in the rear."

As soon as possible Farragut proceeded to his station and took command of the West Gulf Blockading Squadron. In the mean time the Confederates had not been idle. They had early been made acquainted with the destination of the expedition, and had put forth all their energies in strengthening Forts Jackson and St. Philip, obstructing the river, and preparing a naval force with which to meet the invaders. The ram *Manassas* was finished and placed in commission, and the iron-clad *Louisiana*, mounting sixteen heavy guns and heavily armored, was hurried toward completion. Besides these vessels there were two other powerful iron-clads building at New

the South will seem marvelous when compared with what was done by the North during the same period of time; for among all the ships that were sent to Farragut there was not one whose sides could resist a twelve-pound shot. Considering the great resources of the Northern States, this supineness of the Government seems inexcusable. Up to the time of the sailing of the expedition, only one small iron-clad, the *Monitor*, had been commenced; and it was only after her encounter with the *Merrimac* that it was seen how useful vessels of this class would be for the attack on New Orleans, particularly in contending with the forts on the banks of the Mississippi.

Flag-officer Farragut did not arrive at Ship Island with the *Hartford* until the 20th of



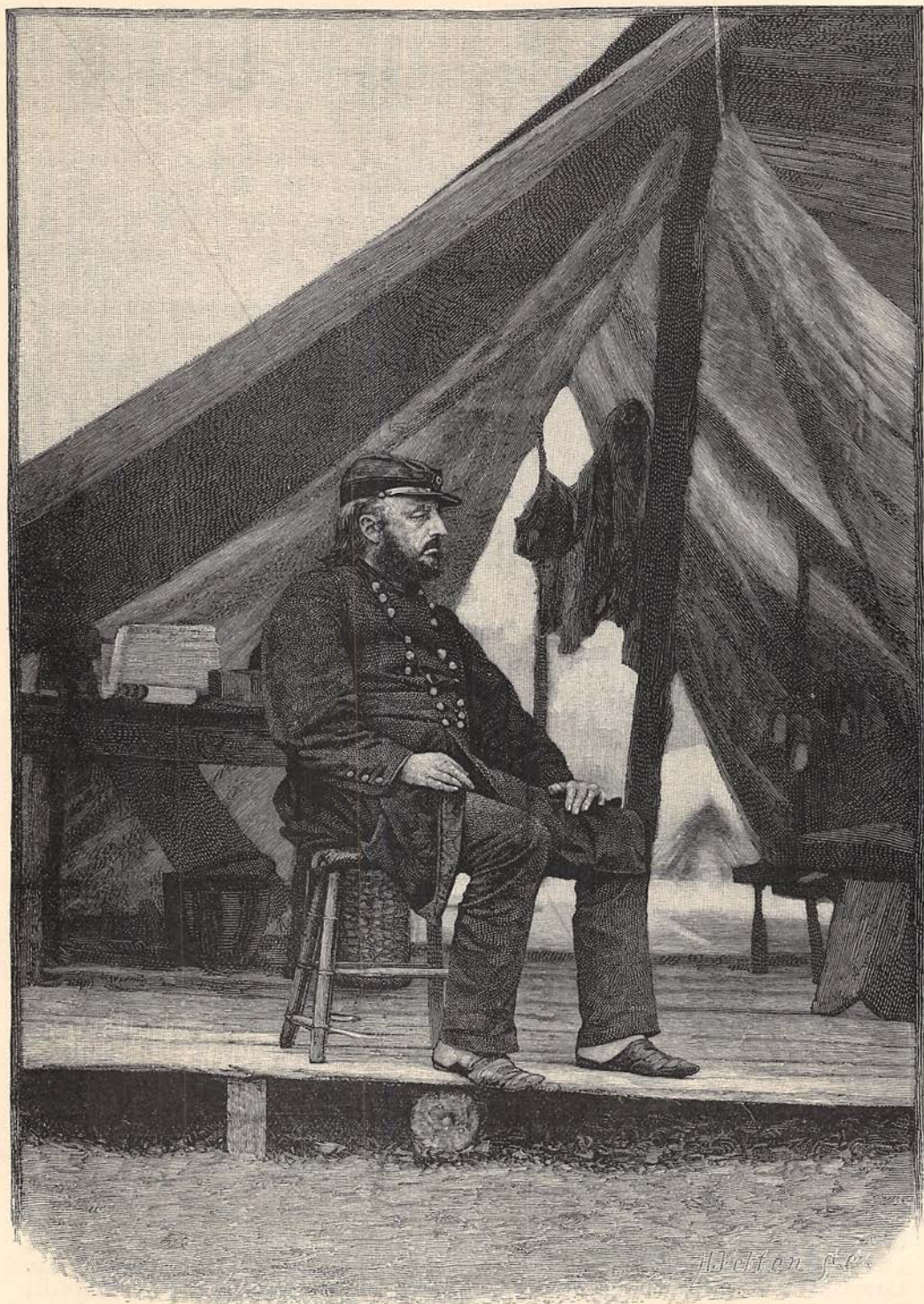


COMMANDER DAVID D. PORTER (NOW ADMIRAL U. S. N.),—IN COMMAND OF THE MORTAR-FLEET AT FORTS JACKSON AND ST. PHILIP.

February, 1862, he having been detained for some time at Key West, where he commenced arranging his squadron for the difficult task that lay before him.

The vessels which had been assigned to his command soon began to arrive, and by the middle of March the following ships and gun-boats had reported: *Hartford*, 25 guns, Commander Richard Wainwright; *Brooklyn*, 24 guns, Captain T. T. Craven; *Richmond*, 26 guns, Commander James Alden; *Mississippi*, 12 guns, Commander Melancton Smith; *Pensacola*, 24 guns, Captain H. W. Morris; *Cayu-*

*ga*, 6 guns, Lieutenant-com'g N. B. Harrison; *Oncida*, 9 guns, Commander S. P. Lee; *Varuna*, 10 guns, Commander Charles S. Boggs; *Katahdin*, 4 guns, Lieutenant-com'g George H. Preble; *Kineo*, 4 guns, Lieutenant-com'g George M. Ransom; *Wissahickon*, 4 guns, Lieutenant-com'g A. N. Smith; *Winona*, 4 guns, Lieutenant-com'g E. T. Nichols; *Itasca*, 4 guns, Lieutenant-com'g C. H. B. Caldwell; *Pinola*, 4 guns, Lieutenant-com'g Pierce Crosby; *Kennebec*, 4 guns, Lieutenant-com'g John H. Russell; *Iroquois*, 9 guns, Commander John De Camp; *Sciota*, 4 guns,



MAJOR-GENERAL BENJAMIN F. BUTLER, IN COMMAND OF THE MILITARY FORCES OF THE NEW ORLEANS EXPEDITION.  
(FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN VIRGINIA IN 1864.)

Lieutenant-com'g Edward Donaldson. Total guns, 177. Also the following steamers belonging to the mortar flotilla: *Harriet Lane*, *Owasco*, *Clifton*, *Westfield*, *Miami*, *Jackson*; besides the mortar-schooners, the names of which will be given farther on. The frigate *Colorado*, mounting fifty guns, had arrived, but Admiral Farragut and Captain Bailey both came to the conclusion that she could not be lightened sufficiently to cross the bar.

On the 18th of March all the mortar-schooners crossed the bar at Pass à l'Outre, towed by the steamers *Harriet Lane*, *Owasco*, *Westfield*, and *Clifton*. They were ordered by Farragut to proceed to South-west Pass.

As yet the only vessels that had crossed the bar were the *Hartford* and *Brooklyn*. The Navy Department had made a mistake in sending vessels of too great draught of water, such as the *Colorado*, *Pensacola*, and *Mississippi*. The two latter vessels succeeded in crossing with great difficulty, but the whole fleet was delayed at least twelve days.

The first act of Farragut was to send Captain Henry H. Bell, his chief-of-staff, up the river with the steamers *Kennebec* and *Wissahickon*, to ascertain, if possible, what preparations had been made by the enemy to prevent the passage of the forts. This officer reported that "the obstructions seemed formidable. Eight hulks were moored in line across the river, with heavy chains extending from one to the other. Rafts of logs were also used, and the passage between the forts was thus entirely closed."

The Confederates had lost no time in strengthening their defenses. They had been working night and day ever since the expedition was planned by the Federal Government. Forts Jackson and St. Philip were two strong defenses on each side of the river, the former on the west bank and the latter on the east. As they are to hold an important place in the following narration of events, it will be well to give a description of them.

Fort Jackson was built in the shape of a star, of stone and mortar, with heavy bomb-proofs. (See page 929.) It set back about one hundred yards from the levee, with its casemates just rising above it. I am told that the masonry had settled somewhat since it was first built, but it was still in a good state of preservation. Its armament consisted of forty-three heavy guns in barbette, and twenty in casemates; also two pieces of light artillery and three mortars; also seven guns in water battery—in all, seventy-five guns, distributed as follows: On main parapet, thirty-three thirty-two-pounders, two ten-inch columbiads, one six-inch rifle; in second bastion, one nine-inch mortar, two ten-inch columbiads; in third bastion, one columbiad, two eight-inch

mortars; in north-west casemate, eight thirty-two-pounders; in north-east casemate, six thirty-two-pounders; in bastion casemates, ten short guns, two brass field-pieces. Extending from the fort down the river was a water battery, containing two large rifled guns, one ten-inch and one nine-inch columbiad, and three thirty-two-pounders on the outer curtain. This was a very formidable part of the defenses, its heavy guns having a commanding range down the river. The main works had been strengthened by covering its bomb-proofs and vulnerable parts with bags of sand piled five or six feet deep, making it proof against the projectiles of ordinary guns carried by ships-of-war in those days. The fort was also well supplied with provisions and munitions of war, which were stowed away in a heavily built citadel of masonry situated in the center of the works. Altogether, it was in very good condition to withstand either attack or siege. Fort Jackson was under the immediate command of Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Higgins, formerly an officer of the United States Navy, and a very gallant and intelligent man.

Fort St. Philip was situated on the other side of the river, about half a mile above Fort Jackson, and, in my opinion, was the more formidable of the two works. It covered a large extent of ground, and although it was open, without casemates, its walls were strongly built of brick and stone, covered with sod. The guns were all mounted in barbette, and could be brought to bear on any vessel going up or down the river. There were in all 53 pieces of ordnance, as follows: Forty-three guns (mostly thirty-two-pounders), one thirteen-inch mortar, four ten-inch sea-coast mortars, one ten-inch siege mortar, one eight-inch siege mortar, three pieces of light artillery. One heavy rifled gun bore on the position of the mortar-fleet, and caused us considerable disturbance until the second or third day after the bombardment commenced, when it burst.

Each of the forts held a garrison of about seven hundred men, some of whom were from the Northern States, besides many foreigners (Germans or Irish). The Northern men had applied for duty in the forts to avoid suspicion, and in the hope that they would not be called upon to fight against the Federal Government. In this hope they had been encouraged by their officers, all of whom, including the colonel in command, were of the opinion that no naval officer would have the hardihood to attack such strong positions.

All of the land defenses were under Brigadier-General Johnson K. Duncan, who

showed himself to be an able and gallant commander.

The best passage up the river was near the west bank close under the guns of Fort Jackson, where the current was not very rapid and few eddies existed. Across this channel the Confederates had placed a raft of logs, extending from the shore to the commencement of a line of hulks which reached to the other side of the river. These hulks were anchored and connected to each other by chains. The raft was so arranged that it could be hauled out of the way of passing vessels, and closed when danger threatened. Although this plan of blocking the river was better than the first one tried by the Confederates, viz., to float a heavy chain across on rafts, it was not very formidable or ingenious.

In addition to the defenses at the forts, the Confederates worked with great diligence to improvise a fleet of men-of-war, using for this purpose a number of heavy tugs, that had been employed in towing vessels up and down the river, and some merchant steamers. These, with the ram *Manassas* and the iron-clad *Louisiana*, made in all twelve vessels. The whole naval force was nominally under the control of Commander John K. Mitchell, C. S. N.

In order that we may come to a full understanding of the composition of this fleet, it will be necessary to give a detailed account of each vessel, stating the authority which directed her movements. The following vessels belonged to the regular navy, and were, from the first, under the exclusive control of Commander Mitchell:

The iron-clad *Louisiana*, mounting sixteen heavy guns, with a crew of two hundred men. She was a powerful vessel, almost impervious to shot, and was fitted with a shot-proof gallery from which her sharpshooters could fire at an enemy with great effect. Her machinery was not completed, however, and during the passage of the Union fleet she was secured to the river-bank and could only use one broadside and four of her stern guns. At this time she was under the immediate command of Lieutenant Charles F. McIntosh, formerly of the United States Navy. (See page 938.) Also the *McRae*, Lieutenant Thomas B. Huger, a sea-going steamer mounting six thirty-two-pounders and one nine-inch shell gun; steamer *Jackson*, Lieutenant F. B. Renshaw, mounting two thirty-two-pounders; iron-clad ram *Manassas*, Lieutenant A. F. Warley, mounting one thirty-two-pounder (in the bow); and two launches, mounting each one howitzer. Also the following converted sea-steamers into Louisiana State gun-boats, with pine and cot-

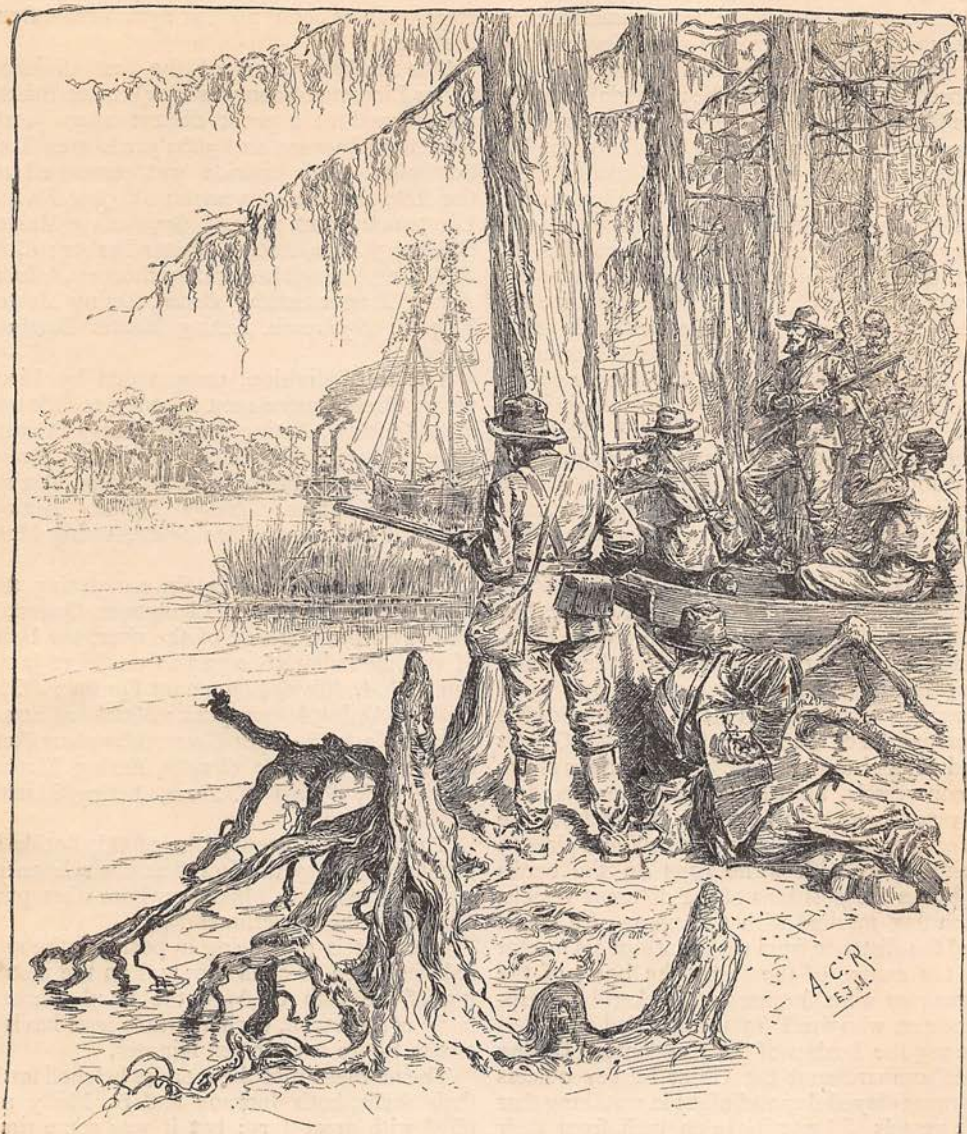
ton barricades to protect the machinery and boilers: The *Governor Moore*, Commander Beverly Kennon, two thirty-two-pounder rifled guns, and the *General Quitman*, Captain Grant, two thirty-two-pounders. "All the above steamers, being converted vessels," says Commander Mitchell, "were too slightly built for war purposes." The following unarmed steamers belonged to his command, viz.: The *Phoenix*, *W. Burton*, and *Landis*. The following named steamers, chartered by the army, were placed under his orders, viz.: The *Mosher*, *Belle Algerine*, *Star*, and *Music* (small tugs).

The River Defense gun-boats, under the command of a merchant captain named Stephenson, were also ordered to report to Commander Mitchell; but they proved of little assistance to him owing to the insubordination of their commander. This fleet consisted of the following converted tow-boats, viz.: The *Warrior*, *Stonewall Jackson*, *Resolute*, *Defiance*, *General Lovell*, *R. J. Breckinridge*. "All of the above vessels," says Commander Mitchell, "mounted from one to two pivot thirty-two-pounders each, some of them rifled. Their boilers and machinery were all more or less protected by thick, double pine barricades, filled in with compressed cotton." They were also prepared for ramming by flat bar-iron casings around their bows.

The Confederate fleet mounted, all told, thirty-nine guns, all but two of them being thirty-two-pounders, and one-fourth of them rifled.

It is thus seen that our wooden vessels, which passed the forts carrying 177 guns, had arrayed against them 128 guns in strongly built works, and 39 guns on board of partly armored vessels.

In addition to the above-mentioned defenses, Commodore Mitchell had at his command a number of fire-rafts (long flat-boats filled with pine-knots, etc.), which were expected to do good service, either by throwing the Union fleet into confusion or by furnishing light to the gunners in the forts. On comparing the Confederate defenses with the attacking force of the Union fleet, it will be seen that the odds were strongly in favor of the former. It is generally conceded by military men that one gun in a fort is about equal to five on board of a wooden ship, especially when, as in this case, the forces afloat are obliged to contend against a three-and-a-half-knot current in a channel obstructed by chains and fire-rafts. Our enemies were well aware of their strength, and although they hardly expected us to make so hazardous an attack, they waited impatiently for Farragut to "come on," resting in the assurance that he would



CONFEDERATE SHARP-SHOOTERS AND SWAMP HUNTERS ATTACKING MORTAR-BOATS.

meet with a disastrous defeat. They did not neglect, however, to add daily to the strength of their works during the time that our ships were delayed in crossing the bar and ascending the river.

Having now described the state of the Confederate defenses, we will continue our narrative of the doings of the Union fleet.

Farragut experienced great difficulty in getting the larger vessels over the bar. The *Hartford* and *Brooklyn* were the only two that could pass without lightening. The *Richmond* stuck fast in the mud every time she attempted to cross. The *Mississippi* drew two

feet too much water, and the *Pensacola*, after trying several times to get over, ran on a wreck a hundred yards away from the channel. There she lay, with her propeller half out of water, thumping on the wreck as she was driven in by the wind and sea. Pilots had been procured at Pilot Town, near by; but they were either treacherous or nervous, and all their attempts to get the heavy ships over the bar were failures. Farragut felt extremely uncomfortable at the prospect before him, but I convinced him that I could get the vessels over if he would place them under my control, and he consented to do

so. I first tried with the *Richmond* (Captain Alden), and, although she had grounded seven times when in charge of a pilot, I succeeded at the first attempt, crossed the bar, and anchored off Pilot Town. The next trial was with the frigate *Mississippi*. The vessel was lightened as much as possible by taking out her spars, sails, guns, provisions, and coal. All the steamers of the mortar-fleet were then sent to her assistance, and after eight days' hard work they succeeded in pulling her through. To get the *Pensacola* over looked even more difficult. I asked Captain Bailey to lend me the *Colorado* for a short time, and with this vessel I went as close as possible to the *Pensacola*, ran out a stream-cable to her stern, and, by backing hard on the *Colorado*, soon released her from her disagreeable position. The next day at twelve o'clock I passed her over the bar and anchored her off Pilot Town. All the available vessels were now safely over, and Farragut was at liberty to proceed up the river as soon as he pleased.

The U. S. Coast Survey steamer *Sachem*, commanded by a very competent officer, Mr. F. H. Gerdes, had been added to the expedition for the purpose of sounding the bar and river channel, and also to establish points and distances which should serve as guides to the commander of the mortar flotilla. Mr. Gerdes and his assistants selected the positions of the bomb-vessels, furnished all the commanders of vessels with reliable charts, triangulated the river for eight miles below the forts, and planted small poles with white flags on the banks opposite the positions of the different vessels, each flag marked with the name of a vessel and the distance from the mouth of its mortar to the center of the fort. The boats of the surveyors were frequently attacked by sharpshooters, who fired from concealed positions among the bushes of the river bank. During the bombardment the Coast Survey officers were employed day and night in watching that the vessels did not move an inch from their places, and the good effect of all this care was shown in the final result of the mortar practice.

Having finished the preliminary work, on the 16th of April Farragut moved up with his fleet to within three miles of the forts, and informed me that I could commence the bombardment as soon as I was ready. The ships all anchored as they came up, but not in very good order, which led to some complications.

The place which I had selected for the first and third divisions of the mortar-vessels was under the lee of a thick wood on the right bank of the river, which presented in the direction of the fort an almost impenetrable mass. The forts could be plainly seen from the mastheads of the mortar-schooners, which had

been so covered with brush that the Confederate gunners could not distinguish them from the trees.

The leading vessel of the first division, under Lieutenant-commanding Watson Smith, was placed at a point distant 2850 yards from Fort Jackson and 3680 yards from Fort St. Philip. This division was composed of the following seven vessels: *Norfolk Packet*, Lieutenant Smith; *O. H. Lee*, Acting Master Godfrey; *Para*, Acting Master Furber; *C. P. Williams*, Acting Master Langthorne; *Arletta*, Acting Master Smith; *Bacon*, Acting Master Rogers; *Sophonria*, Acting Master Bartholomew.

The third division, commanded by Lieutenant Breese, came next in order, as follows: *John Griffiths*, Acting Master Henry Brown; *Sarah Bruen*, Acting Master Christian; *Racer*, Acting Master Phinney; *Sea Foam*, Acting Master Williams; *Henry James*, Acting Master Pennington; *Dan Smith*, Acting Master George Brown.

The following six vessels, composing the second division, under Lieutenant Queen, I placed on the east side of the river, the head of the line being 3680 yards from Fort Jackson: *T. A. Ward*, Lieutenant Queen; *M. J. Carlton*, Acting Master Jack; *Matthew Vassar*, Acting Master Savage; *George Mangham*, Acting Master Collins; *Orvetta*, Acting Master Blanchard; *Sydney C. Jones*, Acting Master Graham.

The curious nomenclature of this flotilla is accounted for by the fact that the schooners retained the names which they bore when purchased by the Government.

The vessels now being in position, the signal was given to open fire; and on the morning of the 18th of April the bombardment fairly commenced, each mortar-vessel having orders to fire once in ten minutes.

The moment that the mortars belched forth their shells, both Jackson and St. Philip replied with great fury; but it was some time before they could obtain our range, as we were well concealed behind our natural rampart. Their fire was rapid, and, finding that it was becoming rather hot, I sent Lieutenant-commanding Guest up to the head of the line to open fire on the forts with his eleven-inch pivot. This position he maintained for one hour and fifty minutes, and only abandoned it to fill up with ammunition. In the meantime the mortars on the left bank (Queen's division) were doing splendid work, though suffering considerably from the enemy's fire.

I went on board the vessels of this division to see how they were getting on, and found them so cut up that I considered it necessary to remove them, with Farragut's permission, to



Wrecks of Confederate River Fleet.  
 Fort St. Philip and Confederate Iron-clad *Louisiana*.  
 Bird's-eye view of the passage of the forts below New Orleans, April 24, 1862.

Mortar Fleet (in the distance).  
 Mortar Steamers (attacking Water Battery, Fort Jackson).  
 Farragut's Division of the Fleet, led by the *Hartford*.

*Richmond* (Confederate).  
*Matanzas* (Confederate).  
 Confederate Rams and (sinking) Vessels. Rear Vessel of Bailey's Division.  
 Fort Jackson.

THE SECOND DIVISION IN ACTION, 4:15 A. M.



COMMANDER JOHN K. MITCHELL, C. S. N., IN COMMAND OF THE NAVAL FORCES AGAINST FARRAGUT. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDERSON.)

the opposite shore, under cover of the trees, near the other vessels, which had suffered but little. They held their position, however, until sundown, when the enemy ceased firing.

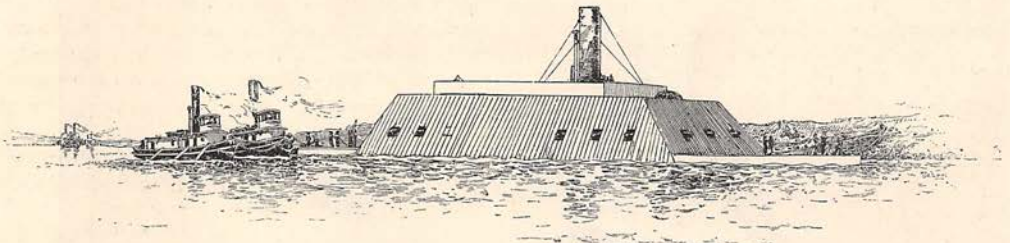
At five o'clock in the evening Fort Jackson was seen to be on fire, and, as the flames spread rapidly, the Confederates soon left their guns. There were many conjectures among the officers of the fleet as to what was burning. Some thought that it was a fire-raft, and I was inclined to that opinion myself until I had pulled up the river in a boat and, by the aid of a night-glass, convinced myself

that the fort itself was in flames. This fact I at once reported to Farragut.

At nightfall the crews of the mortar-vessels were completely exhausted; but when it became known that every shell was falling inside of the fort, they redoubled their exertions and increased the rapidity of their fire to a shell every five minutes, or in all two hundred and forty shells an hour. During the night, in order to allow the men to rest, we slackened our fire, and only sent a shell once every half hour. Thus ended the first day's bombardment, which was more effective than that of any other day during the siege. Had the fleet been ready to move, it could have passed up at this time with little or no difficulty.

Next morning the bombardment was renewed and continued night and day until the end, with a result that is thus described in an unpublished letter from Colonel Edward Higgins, dated April 4, 1872, which I received in answer to my inquiry on the subject:

"Your mortar-vessels were placed in position on the afternoon of the 17th of April, 1862, and opened fire at once upon Fort Jackson, where my headquarters were established. The practice was excellent from the commencement of the fire to the end, and continued without intermission until the morning of the 24th of April, when the fleet passed at about four o'clock. Nearly every shell of the many thousand fired at the fort lodged inside of the works. On the first night of the attack the citadel and all buildings in rear of the fort were fired by bursting shell, and also the sand-bag walls that had been thrown around the magazine doors. The fire, as you are aware, raged with great fury, and no effort of ours could subdue it. At this time, and nearly all this night, Fort Jackson was helpless; its magazines were inaccessible, and we could have offered no resistance to a passing fleet. The next morning a terrible scene of destruction pre-



THE CONFEDERATE IRON-CLAD "LOUISIANA" ON THE WAY TO FORT ST. PHILIP.

Mr. Wm. C. Whittle, who was third lieutenant on the *Louisiana* during the contest against Farragut's fleet in the Mississippi, has sent to the Editor the following statement concerning her armament:—

"The hull of the *Louisiana* was almost entirely submerged. Upon this were built her heavy upper works, intended to contain her battery, machinery, etc. This extended to within about twenty-five feet of her stem and stern, leaving a little deck forward and aft, nearly even with the water, and surrounded by a slight bulwark. The structure on the hull had its ends and sides inclined inward and upward from the hull, at an angle of about forty-five degrees, and covered with T railroad iron, the lower layer being firmly bolted to the wood-work, and the upper layer driven into it from the end so as to form a nearly solid plate and a somewhat smooth surface. This plating resisted the projectiles of Farragut's fleet (none of which perforated our side), although one of his largest ships lay across and touching our stem, and in that position fired her heavy guns. Above this structure was an open deck which was surrounded by a sheet-iron bulwark about four feet high, which was intended as a protection against sharpshooters and small arms, but was entirely inefficient, as the death of our gallant commander, McIntosh, and those who fell around him, goes to prove.

"The plan for propelling the *Louisiana* was novel and abortive. She had two propellers aft, which we never had an opportunity of testing. The novel conception, which proved entirely inefficient, was that right in the center section of the vessel there was a large well in which worked the two wheels, one immediately forward of the other. I suppose they were so placed to be protected from the enemy's fire.

"The machinery of these two wheels was in order when my father, Commodore W. C. Whittle, the naval commanding officer at New Orleans, against his better judgment, was compelled to send the vessel down to the forts. The vessel left New Orleans on the 25th of April, I think. The work on the propellers was incomplete, the machinists and mechanics being still on board, and most of the guns were not mounted. The center wheels were started, but were entirely inefficient, and, as we were drifting helplessly down the stream, tow-boats had to be called to take us down to the point about half a mile above Fort St. Philip, on the left side of the river, where we tied up to the bank with our bow down-stream. Thus, as Farragut's fleet came up and passed, we could only use our bow-guns and the starboard broadside.

"Moreover, the port-holes for our guns were entirely faulty, not allowing room to train the guns either laterally or in elevation. I had practical experience of this fact, for I had immediate charge of the bow division when a vessel of Admiral Farragut's fleet got across our stem, and I could only fire through and through her at point blank instead of depressing my guns and sinking her."





CHARLES F. MCINTOSH, COMMANDER OF THE "LOUISIANA."  
(FROM PHOTOGRAPH BY BENDANN BROS.)



LIEUTENANT JOHN WILKINSON OF THE "LOUISIANA,"  
AFTERWARD IN COMMAND OF THE "R. E. LEE."  
(FROM PHOTOGRAPH BY S. W. GAULT.)

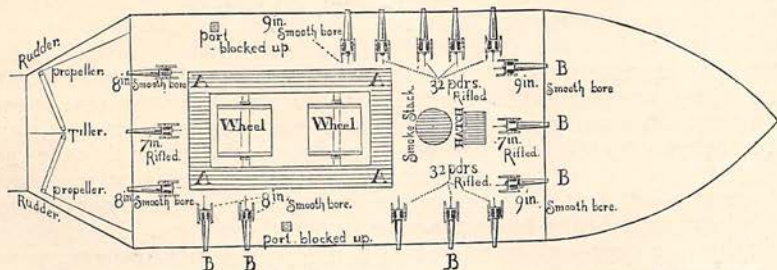
sented itself. The wood-work of the citadel being all destroyed, and the crumbling walls being knocked about the fort by the bursting shells, made matters still worse for the garrison. The work of destruction from now until the morning of the 24th, when the fleet passed, was incessant.

"I was obliged to confine the men most rigidly to the casemates, or we should have lost the best part of the garrison. A shell, striking the parapet over one of the magazines, the wall of which was seven feet thick, penetrated five feet and failed to burst. If that shell had exploded, your work would have ended. Another burst near the magazine door, opening the earth and burying the sentinel and another man five feet in the same grave. The parapets and interior of the fort were completely honeycombed, and the large number of sand-bags with which we were supplied alone saved us from being blown to pieces a hundred times, our magazine doors being much exposed.

"On the morning of the 24th, when the fleet passed, the terrible precision with which your formidable vessels hailed down their tons of bursting shell upon the devoted fort made it impossible for us to obtain either rapidity or accuracy of fire, and thus rendered the passage comparatively easy. There was no very considerable damage done to our batteries, but few of the guns being dismantled by your fire; everything else in and around the fort was destroyed."

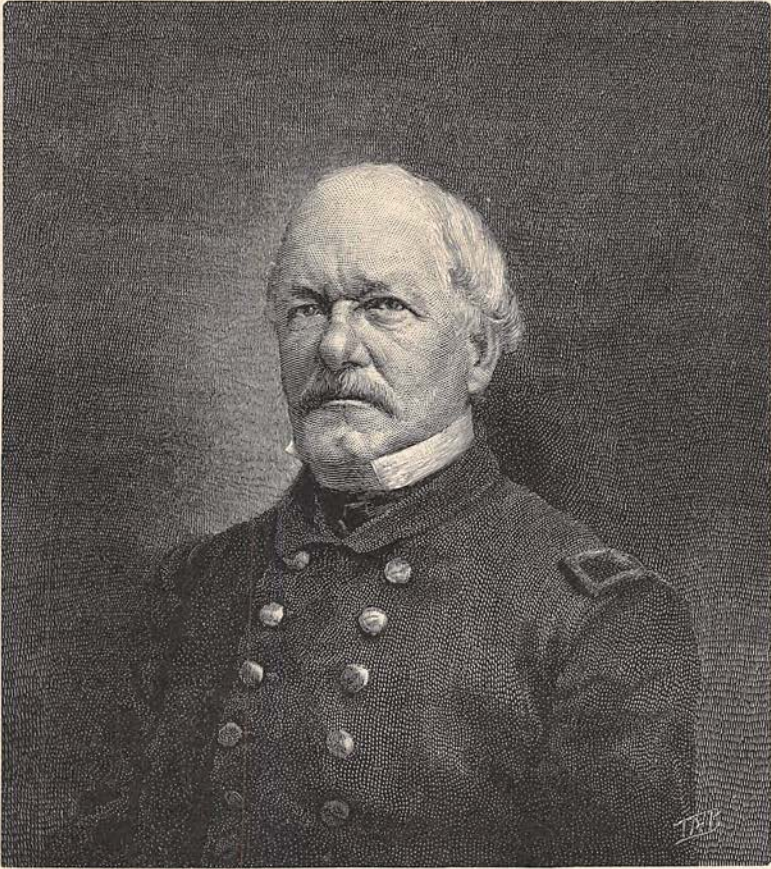
I was not ignorant of the state of affairs in the fort; for, on the third day of the bombardment, a deserter presented himself and gave me such an account of the havoc created by our shells that I had great doubts of the truth of his statements. He represented that hundreds of shells had fallen into the fort, breaking in the bomb-proofs, setting fire to the citadel, and flooding the interior by cutting the levees. He also stated that the soldiers were in a desperate and demoralized condition. This was all very encouraging to us, and so stimulated the crews of the mortar-boats that they worked with unflagging zeal and energy. I took the deserter to Farragut, who, although impressed by his statement, was not quite prepared to take advantage of the opportunity; for at this time the line of hulks across the river was considered an insurmountable obstruction, and it was determined to examine and, if possible, remove it before the advance of the fleet.

On the night of the 20th an expedition was fitted out for the purpose of breaking the chain which was supposed to extend from one shore to the other. Two steamers, the *Pinola*, Lieutenant Crosby, and *Itasca*, Lieutenant Caldwell, were detailed for



PLAN OF THE "LOUISIANA." (AFTER SKETCH MADE BY COMMANDER J. K. MITCHELL ABOUT THE TIME OF THE ENGAGEMENT.)

A. Bulkhead around wheels. B. Guns used in action.



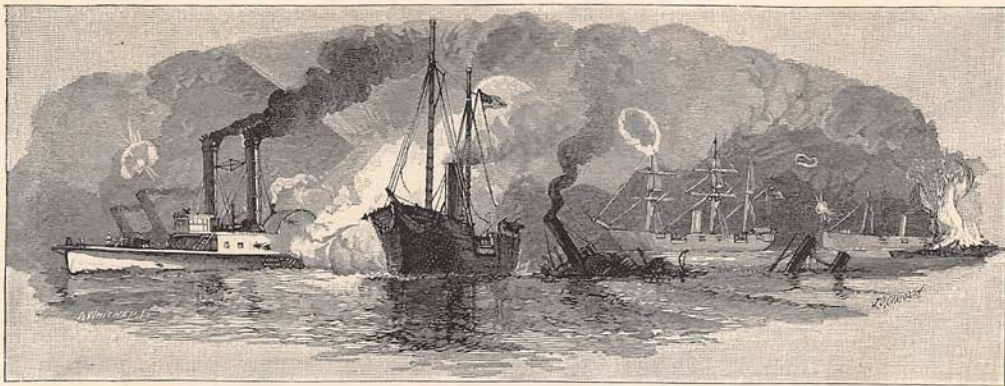
CAPTAIN (AFTERWARD REAR-ADMIRAL) THEODORUS BAILEY, IN COMMAND OF THE FIRST DIVISION OF THE FLEET.  
(FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRADY.)

this purpose and placed under the direction of Captain Bell, chief-of-staff. Although the attempt was made under cover of darkness, the sharp eyes of the Confederate gunners soon discovered their enemies, and the whole fire of Fort Jackson was concentrated upon them. I had been informed of the intended movement by Farragut, so was ready to redouble the fire of the mortars at the proper time with good effect. In Farragut's words: "Commander Porter, however, kept up such a tremendous fire on them from the mortars that the enemy's shot did the gun-boats no injury, and the cable was separated and their connection broken sufficiently to pass through on the left bank of the river."

The work of the mortar-fleet was now nearly over. We had kept up a heavy fire night and day for nearly five days—about 2800 shells every twenty-four hours; in all about 16,800 shells. The men were nearly worn out for want of sleep and rest. The ammuni-

tion was giving out, one of the schooners was sunk, and although the rest had received little actual damage from the enemy's shot, they were badly shaken up by the concussion of the mortars.

On the 23d instant I represented the state of affairs to the flag-officer, and he concluded to move on past the works, which I felt sure he could do with but little loss to his squadron. He recognized the importance of making an immediate attack, and called a council of the commanders of vessels, which resulted in a determination to pass the forts that night. The movement was postponed, however, until the next morning, for the reason that the carpenters of one of the larger ships were at work down the river, and the commander did not wish to proceed without them. The iron-clad *Louisiana* had now made her appearance, and her commander was being strongly urged by General Duncan to drop down below the forts (see the map on page 927) and open fire



CAPTAIN BAILEY, IN THE "CAVUGA," BREAKING THROUGH THE CONFEDERATE FLEET.

upon the fleet with his heavy rifle-guns. On the 22d General Duncan wrote to Commander Mitchell from Fort Jackson :

"It is of vital importance that the present fire of the enemy should be withdrawn from us, which you alone can do. This can be done in the manner suggested this morning under the cover of our guns, while your work on the boat can be carried on in safety and security. Our position is a critical one, dependent entirely on the powers of endurance of our casemates, many of which have been completely shattered, and are crumbling away by repeated shocks; and, therefore, I respectfully but earnestly again urge my suggestion of this morning on your notice. Our magazines are also in danger."

Fortunately for us, Commander Mitchell was not equal to the occasion, and the *Louisiana* remained tied up to the bank, where she could not obstruct the river or throw the Union fleet into confusion while passing the forts.

While Farragut was making his preparations, the enemy left no means untried to drive the mortar-boats from their position. A couple of heavy rifled guns in Fort St. Philip

kept up a continual fire on the head of the mortar column, and the Confederates used their mortars at intervals, but only succeeded in sinking one mortar-schooner and damaging a few others. A body of riflemen was once sent out against us from the forts, but it was met by a heavy fire and soon repulsed.

Two o'clock on the morning of the 24th instant was fixed upon as the time for the fleet to start, and Flag-Officer Farragut had previously given the necessary orders to the commanders of vessels, instructing them to prepare their ships for action by sending down their light spars, painting their hulls mud-color, etc.; also to hang their chain-cables over the sides abreast the engines, as a protection against the enemy's shot. He issued the following

## GENERAL ORDER.

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP *Hartford*,  
MISSISSIPPI RIVER, April 20, 1862.

The flag-officer, having heard all the opinions expressed by the different commanders, is of the opin-



ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE U. S. GUN-BOAT "VARUNA" AND THE CONFEDERATE RAMS "GOVERNOR MOORE" AND "STONEWALL JACKSON."



Ram.

Iroquois.

McRae.

## FIGHT BETWEEN UNION CORVETTE "IROQUOIS" AND CONFEDERATE VESSELS.

[Commander De Camp, of the *Iroquois*, in his official report says: "At 4 A. M. we were hotly engaged with the forts, and shortly after a ram and the Rebel gun-boat *McRae* came upon our quarter and astern of us, and poured into the *Iroquois* a most destructive fire of grape-shot and langrage, part of which was copper slugs; a great many of them were found on our decks after the action. We succeeded in getting one 11-inch shell into the *McRae* and one stand of canister, which drove her from us."—ED.]

ion that whatever is to be done will have to be done quickly, or we shall be again reduced to a blockading squadron, without the means of carrying on the bombardment, as we have nearly expended all the shells and fuses, and material for making cartridges. He has always entertained the same opinions which are expressed by Commander Porter; that is, there are three modes of attack, and the question is, which is the one to be adopted? His own opinion is that a combination of two should be made, viz.: the forts should be run, and when a force is once above the forts, to protect the troops, they should be landed at quarantine from the gulf side by bringing them through the bayou, and then our forces should move up the river, mutually aiding each other as it can be done to advantage.

When, in the opinion of the flag-officer, the propitious time has arrived, the signal will be made to

weigh and advance to the conflict. If, in his opinion, at the time of arriving at the respective positions of the different divisions of the fleet, we have the advantage, he will make the signal for close action, No. 8, and abide the result, conquer or to be conquered, drop anchor or keep under way, as in his opinion is best.

Unless the signal above mentioned is made, it will be understood that the first order of sailing will be formed after leaving Fort St. Philip, and we will proceed up the river in accordance with the original opinion expressed. The programme of the order of sailing accompanies this general order, and the commanders will hold themselves in readiness for the service as indicated.\*

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

D. G. FARRAGUT,

Flag-Officer West Gulf Blockading Squadron.

\* The order of battle for the fleet was inclosed with this, but as it was not adopted and contained errors afterward officially corrected by Farragut, it is here omitted.—ED.



COMMANDER (NOW REAR-ADMIRAL) CHARLES S. BOGGS, OF THE "VARUNA." (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRADY.)

Farragut's first plan was to lead the fleet with his flag-ship, the *Hartford*, to be closely followed by the *Brooklyn*, *Richmond*, *Pensacola*, and *Mississippi*, thinking it well to have his heavy vessels in the van, where they could immediately crush any naval force that might appear against them. This plan was a better one than that afterwards adopted; but he was induced to change the order of his column by the senior commanders of the fleet, who represented to him that it was unwise for the commander-in-chief to take the brunt of the battle. They finally obtained his reluctant consent to an arrangement by which Captain Bailey was to lead in the gun-boat *Cayuga*, commanded by Lieutenant N. B. Harrison,—a good selection, as it afterwards proved, for these officers were gallant and competent men, well qualified for the position. Captain Bailey had volunteered for the service, and left nothing undone to overcome Farragut's reluctance to give up what was then considered the post of danger, though it turned out to be less hazardous than the places in the rear.

The mortar-flotilla steamers under my command were directed to move up before the fleet weighed anchor, and to be ready to engage the water batteries of Fort Jackson as the fleet passed. These batteries mounted some of the heaviest guns in the Confederate defenses, and were depended upon to do efficient work.

The commanders of vessels were informed of the change of plan and instructed to follow in line in the following

ORDER OF ATTACK.

First Division,  
CAPT. BAILEY.

- † *Cayuga*.
- † *Pensacola*.
- † *Mississippi*.
- † *Oncida*.
- † *Varuna*.
- † *Katahdin*.
- † *Kineo*.
- † *Wissahickon*.

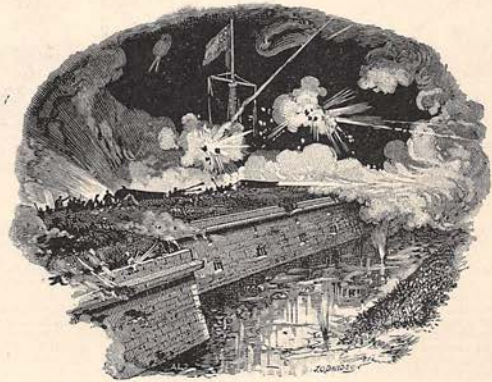
Center Division,  
FLAG-OFFICER FARRAGUT.

- † *Hartford*.
- † *Brooklyn*.
- † *Richmond*.

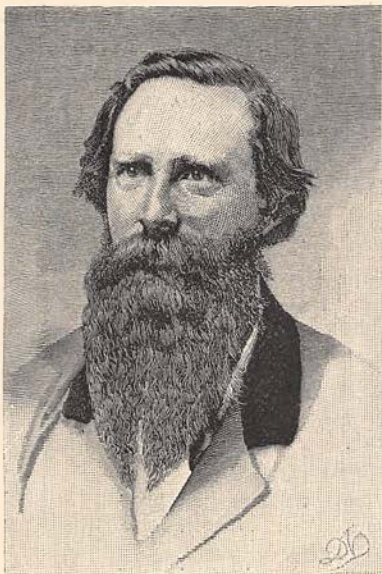
Third Division,  
CAPT. H. H. BELL.

- † *Sciota*.
- † *Iroquois*.
- † *Kennebec*.
- † *Pinola*.
- † *Iasca*.
- † *Winona*.

At two o'clock on the morning of April 24th all of the Union vessels began to heave up their anchors. It was a still, clear night, and the click of the capstans, with the grating of the chain-cables as they passed through the hawse-holes, made a great noise, which we feared would serve as a warning to our enemies. This conjecture proved to be correct, for the Confederates were on the alert in both forts and steamers, and were prepared, as far as circumstances would admit, to meet the invaders. One fact only was in our favor, and that was the division of their forces under three different heads, which prevented



SECTION OF FORT ST. PHILIP DURING THE ENGAGEMENT. (THE FORT IS DRAWN FROM A RECENT PHOTOGRAPH.)



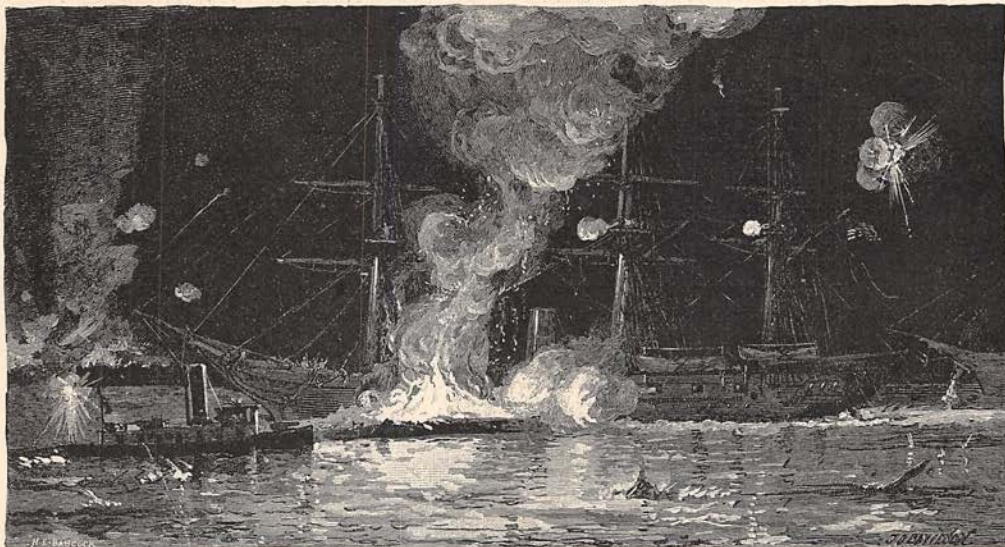
LIEUTENANT THOMAS B. HUGER, C. S. N., IN COMMAND OF THE "MCRAE." (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY JACOBS.)

unanimity of action. In every other respect the odds were against us.

Before Farragut ascended the river, the

French admiral and Captain Preedy, of the English frigate *Mersey*, had both been up as far as the forts and had communicated with the military commanders. On their return, they gave discouraging accounts of the defenses, and pronounced it impossible for our fleet to pass them. This, of course, did not tend to cheer our sailors. There were some in the fleet who were doubtful of success, and there was not that confidence on our side that should have existed on such an occasion; but when it was seen that the river obstructions and rafts had been washed away by the currents, and that there appeared to be an open way up the river, every one became more hopeful.

The entire fleet did not get fully under way until half-past two A. M. The current was strong, and although the ships proceeded as rapidly as their steam-power would permit, our leading vessel, the *Cayuga*, did not get under fire until a quarter of three o'clock, when both Jackson and St. Philip opened on her at the same moment. Five steamers of the mortar flotilla took their position below the water battery of Fort Jackson, at a distance of less than two hundred yards, and, pouring in grape, canister, and shrapnel, kept down the



FLAG-SHIP "HARTFORD" ATTACKED BY A FIRE-RAFT, PUSHED BY THE CONFEDERATE TUG-BOAT "MOSHER."

Commander Albert Kautz, who was at this time lieutenant on the *Hartford*, in a letter to the Editor thus describes this memorable scene: "No sooner had Farragut given the order 'Hard-a-port,' than the current gave the ship a broad sheer, and her bows went hard up on a mud bank. As the fire-raft came against the port side of the ship, it became enveloped in flames. We were so near to the shore that from the bowsprit we could reach the tops of the bushes, and such a short distance above Fort St. Philip that we could distinctly hear the gunners in the casemates give their orders; and as they saw Farragut's flag at the mizzen, by the bright light, they fired with frightful rapidity. Fortunately they did not make sufficient allowance for our close proximity, and the iron hail passed over our bulwarks, doing but little damage. On the deck of the ship it was bright as noonday, but out over the majestic river, where the smoke of many guns was intensified by that of the pine knots of the fire-rafts, it was dark as the blackest midnight. For a moment it looked as though the flag-ship was indeed doomed, but the firemen were called away, and with the energy of despair rushed aft to the quarter-deck. The flames, like so many forked tongues of hissing serpents, were piercing the air in a frightful manner, that struck terror to all hearts. As I crossed from the starboard to the port side of the deck, I passed close to Farragut, who, as he looked forward and took in the situation, clasped his hands high in air, and exclaimed, 'My God, is it to end in this way!' Fortunately it was not to end as it at that instant seemed, for just then Master's Mate Allen, with the hose in his hand, jumped into the mizzen rigging, and the sheet of flame succumbed to a sheet of water. It was but the dry paint on the ship's side that made the threatening flame, and it went down before the fierce attack of the firemen as rapidly as it had sprung up. As the flames died away the engines were backed 'hard,' and, as if providentially, the ram *Manassas* struck the ship a blow under the counter, which shoved her stern in against the bank, causing her bow to slip off. The ship was again free; and a loud, spontaneous cheer rent the air, as the crew rushed to their guns with renewed energy."

fire of that battery. The mortars opened at the same moment with great fury, and the action commenced in earnest.

Captain Bailey, in the *Cayuga*, followed by the other vessels of his division in compact order, passed the line of obstructions without

effect and passed safely above. He was here met by the enemy's gun-boats, and, although he was beset by several large steamers at the same time, he succeeded in driving them off. The *Oncida* and *Varuna* came to the support of their leader, and by the rapid fire



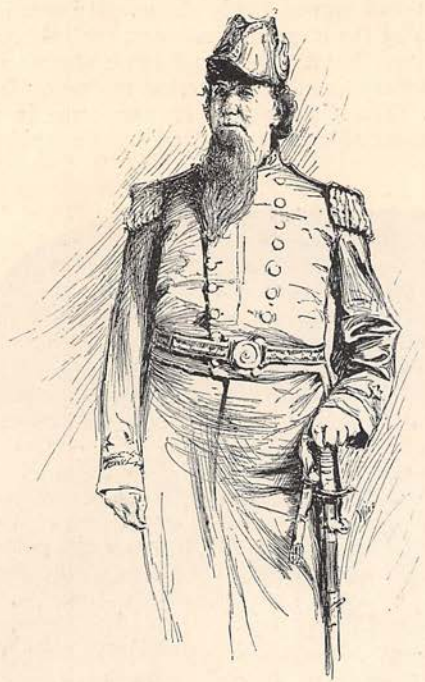
U. S. S. "BROOKLYN" ATTACKED BY CONFEDERATE RAM "MANASSAS."

[The *Manassas* was described by her commander, Lieutenant Warley, as "a tug-boat that had been converted into a ram, covered with half-inch iron, and had a thirty-two-pounder carronade; her crew consisted of thirty-five persons, officers and men. She was perforated in the fight by shot and shell as if she had been made of paper."

Admiral Melancton Smith thus describes his encounter with the ram (see page 946):  
 "Having discovered the *Manassas* stealing up along the St. Philip side of the river behind me, I signaled Farragut for permission to attack, which was given. The *Mississippi* turned in mid-stream and tried to run down the ram, barely missing her, but driving her ashore, when her crew escaped, fired at by the *Kinsie*, which had not yet anchored. The ram's engines were found to be still in motion, but the approach of a burning wreck compelled me to abandon the idea of attaching a hawser. Her machinery was destroyed by my boats, and after receiving a broadside or two from the *Mississippi*, she floated down the river in flames and blew up."—ED.]

difficulty. He had no sooner attained this point, however, than he was obliged to face the guns of Fort St. Philip, which did him some damage before he was able to fire a shot in return. He kept steadily on, however, and, as soon as his guns could be brought to bear, poured in grape and canister with good ef-

of their heavy guns soon dispersed the enemy's flotilla. This was more congenial work for our men and officers than that through which they had just passed, and it was soon evident that the coolness and discipline of our navy gave it a great advantage over the fleet of the enemy. Bailey dashed on up the river,

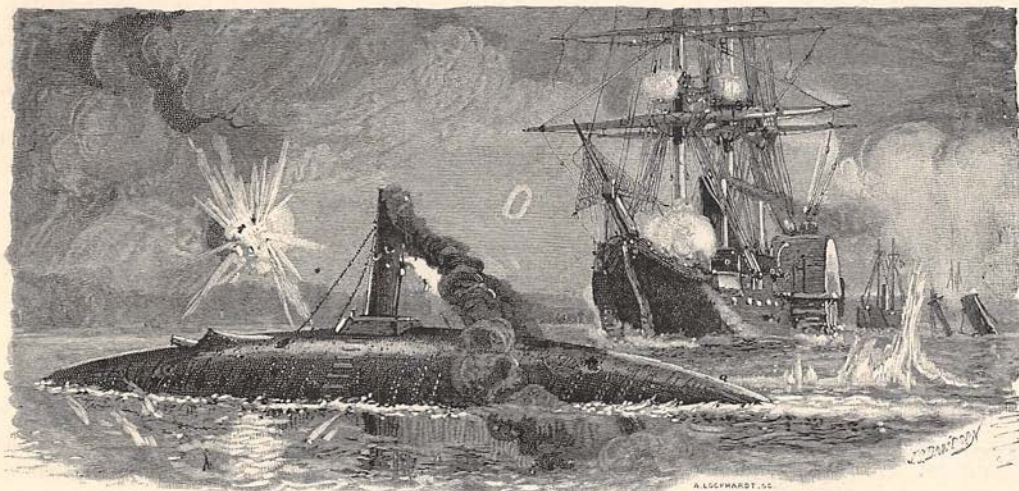


COMMANDER (NOW REAR-ADMIRAL) MELANCTON SMITH, U. S. N.,  
OF THE "MISSISSIPPI." (DRAWN FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.)

followed by his division, firing into everything they met; and soon after the head of the flag-officer's division had passed the forts, most of the river craft were disabled, and the battle was virtually won. This was evident even to Lieutenant-Colonel Higgins, who, when he saw our large ships pass by, exclaimed, "Better go to cover, boys; our cake is all dough!"

In the mean time the *Varuna* (Commander

Boggs), being a swift vessel, passed ahead of the other ships in the division, and pushed on up the river after the fleeing enemy, until he found himself right in the midst of them. The Confederates, supposing in the dark that the *Varuna* was one of their own vessels, did not attack her until Commander Boggs made himself known by delivering his fire right and left. One shot exploded the boiler of a large steamer crowded with troops, and she drifted ashore; three other vessels were driven ashore in flames. At daylight the *Varuna* was attacked by the *Governor Moore*, a powerful steamer, fitted as a ram, and commanded by Lieutenant Beverly Kennon, late of the U. S. Navy. This vessel raked the *Varuna* with her bow-gun along the port gangway, killing five or six men; and while the Union vessel was gallantly returning this fire, her side was pierced below the water-line by the iron prow of the ram *Stonewall Jackson*. The Confederate backed off and struck again in the same place; the *Varuna* at the same moment punished her severely with grape and canister from her eight-inch guns, and finally drove her out of action in a disabled condition and in flames. But the career of the *Varuna* was ended; she began to fill rapidly, and her gallant commander was obliged to run her into shoal water, where she soon went to the bottom. Captain Lee, of the *Oneida*, seeing that his companion needed assistance, went to his relief, and rescued the officers and men of the *Varuna*. The two Confederate rams were set on fire by their crews and abandoned. Great gallantry was displayed on both sides during the conflict of these smaller steamers, which really bore the brunt of the battle, and the Union



U. S. STEAMER "MISSISSIPPI" ATTEMPTING TO RUN DOWN CONFEDERATE RAM "MANASSAS."



commanders showed great skill in managing their vessels.

Bailey's division may be said to have swept everything before it. The *Pensacola*, with her heavy batteries, drove the men from the guns at Fort St. Philip, and made it easier for the ships astern to get by. Fort St. Philip had not been at all damaged by the mortars, as it was virtually beyond their reach, and it was from the guns of that work that our ships received the greatest injury.

As most of the vessels of Bailey's division swept past the turn above the forts, Farragut came upon the scene with the *Hartford* and *Brooklyn*. The other ship of Farragut's division, the *Richmond*, Commander James Alden, got out of the line and passed up on the west side of the river, near where I was engaged with the mortar-steamers in silencing the water batteries of Fort Jackson. At this moment the Confederates in Fort Jackson had nearly all been driven from their guns by bombs from the mortar-boats and the grape and canister from the steamers. I hailed Alden, and told him to pass close to the fort and in the eddy, and he would receive little damage. He followed this advice, and passed by very comfortably.

By this time the river had been illuminated by two fire-rafts, and everything could be seen as by the light of day. I could see every ship and gun-boat as she passed up as plainly as possible, and noted all their positions.

It would be a difficult undertaking at any time to keep a long line of vessels in compact order when ascending a crooked channel against a three-and-a-half-knot current, and our commanders found it to be especially so under the present trying circumstances. One of them, the *Iroquois*, Commander De Camp, as gallant an officer as ever lived, got out of line and passed up ahead of her consorts; but De Camp made good use of his opportunity by engaging and driving off a ram and the gun-boat *McRae*, which attacked him as soon as he had passed Fort Jackson. The *McRae* was disabled and her commander (Huger) mortally wounded. The *Iroquois* was much cut up by Fort St. Philip and the gun-boats, but did not receive a single shot from Fort Jackson, although passing within fifty yards of it.

While the events above mentioned were taking place, Farragut had engaged Fort St. Philip at close quarters with his heavy ships, and driven the men away from their guns. He was passing on up the river, when his flag-ship was threatened by a new and formidable adversary. A fire-raft in full blaze was seen coming down the river, guided towards the *Hartford* by a tug-boat, the *Mosher*. It

seemed impossible to avoid this danger, and as the helm was put to port in the attempt to do so, the flag-ship ran upon a shoal. While in this position the fire-raft was pushed against her, and in a minute she was enveloped in flames half-way up to her tops, and was in a condition of great peril. The fire department was at once called away, and while the *Hartford's* batteries kept up the fight with Fort St. Philip, the flames were extinguished and the vessel backed off the shoal into deep water,—a result due to the coolness of her commander and the good discipline of the officers and men. While the *Hartford* was in this perilous position, and her entire destruction threatened, Farragut showed all the qualities of a great commander. He walked up and down the poop as coolly as though on dress-parade, while Commander Wainwright directed the firemen in putting out the flames. At times the fire would rush through the ports and almost drive the men from the guns.

"Don't flinch from that fire, boys," sang out Farragut; "there's a hotter fire than that for those who don't do their duty! Give that rascally little tug a shot, and don't let her go off with a whole coat!" But she did get off, after all.

While passing the forts the *Hartford* was struck thirty-two times in hull and rigging, and had three men killed and ten wounded.

The *Brooklyn*, Captain Thomas T. Craven, followed as close after the flag-ship as the blinding smoke from guns and fire-rafts would admit, and the garrison of the fort was again driven to cover by the fire of her heavy battery. She passed on with severe punishment, and was immediately attacked by the most powerful vessel in the Confederate fleet, excepting the *Louisiana*—the ram *Manassas*, commanded by Lieutenant Warley, a gallant young officer, of the old service. The first blow that the *Manassas* struck the *Brooklyn* did but little apparent injury, and the ram backed off and struck her again in the same place; but the chain armor on the *Brooklyn's* side received the blow, and her adversary slid off in the dark to seek other prey. (It must be remembered that these scenes were being enacted on a dark night, and in an atmosphere filled with dense smoke, through which our commanders had to grope their way, guided only by the flashes of the guns in the forts and the fitful light of burning vessels and rafts.) The *Brooklyn* was next attacked by a large steamer, which received her broadside at the distance of twenty yards, and drifted out of action in flames. Notwithstanding the heavy fire which the *Brooklyn* had gone through, she was only struck seventeen times

in the hull. She lost nine men killed and twenty-six wounded.

When our large ships had passed the forts, the affair was virtually over. Had they all been near the head of the column, the enemy would have been crushed at once, and the flag-ship would have passed up almost unhurt. As it was, the *Hartford* was more exposed and imperiled than any of her consorts, and that at a time when, if anything had happened to the commander-in-chief, the fleet would have been thrown into confusion.

The forts had been so thoroughly silenced by the ships' guns and mortars that when Captain Bell came along in the little *Sciota*, at the head of the third division, he passed by nearly unharmed. All the other vessels succeeded in getting by, except the *Itasca*, Lieutenant Caldwell; the *Winona*, Lieutenant Nichols; and the *Kennebec*, Lieutenant Russell. The first two vessels, having kept in line, were caught at daylight below the forts without support, and, as the current was swift and they were slow steamers, they became mere targets for the Confederates, who now turned all that was left of their fighting power upon them. Seeing their helpless condition, I signaled them to retire, which they did after being seriously cut up. The *Itasca* had a shot through her boiler, and was so completely riddled that her commander was obliged to run her ashore just below the mortar-fleet in order to prevent her sinking. She had received fourteen shot and shell through her hull, but her list of killed and wounded was small. Had not the people in the forts been completely demoralized, they would have sunk these two vessels in ten minutes.

While these events were taking place, the mortar-steamers had driven the men from the water batteries and had kept up a steady fire on the walls of Fort Jackson. Although at first sight my position in front of these batteries, which mounted seven of the heaviest guns in the Confederate works (one ten-inch and one nine-inch columbiad, two six-inch rifles, and three thirty-two-pounders), seemed a very perilous one, it was not at all so. I ran the steamers close alongside of the levee just below the water batteries, and thus protected their hulls below the firing-decks. I got in my first broadside just as the middle of Bailey's column was opened upon by Fort Jackson. The enemy responded quickly, but our fire was so rapid and accurate that in ten minutes the water battery was deserted. I had twenty-five eight-inch and thirty-two-pounders on one side and two eleven-inch pivot-guns. During the remainder of the action I devoted most of my attention to the battlements of the main fort, firing an occa-

sional shot at the water battery. The *Harriet Lane* had two men killed, but the only damage done to the vessels was to their masts and rigging, their hulls having been well protected by the levees.

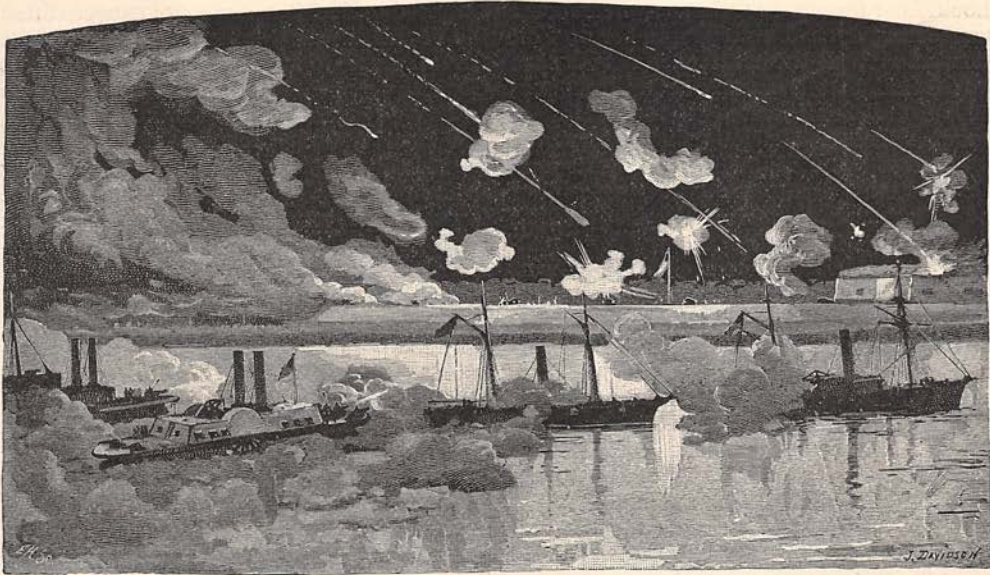
While engaged on this duty I had an excellent opportunity of witnessing the movements of Farragut's fleet, and, by the aid of powerful night-glasses, I could almost distinguish persons on the vessels. The whole scene looked like a beautiful panorama. From almost perfect silence—the steamers moving slowly through the water like phantom ships—one incessant roar of heavy cannon commenced, the Confederate forts and gun-boats opening together on the head of our line as it came within range. The Union vessels returned the fire as they came up, and soon the hundred and seventy guns of our fleet joined in the thunder, which seemed to shake the very earth. A lurid glare was thrown over the scene by the burning rafts, and, as the bombshells crossed each other and exploded in the air, it seemed as if a battle were taking place in the heavens as well as on the earth. It all ended as suddenly as it had commenced. In one hour and ten minutes after the vessels of the fleet had weighed anchor, the affair was virtually over, and Farragut was pushing on towards New Orleans, where he was soon to crush the last hope of Rebellion in that quarter by opening the way for the advance of the Union army.

From what I had seen of the conflict I did not greatly fear for the safety of our ships. Now and then a wreck came floating by, all charred and disabled, but I noted with my night-glass that these were side-wheel vessels, and none of ours.

I must refer here to a gallant affair which took place between the *Mississippi* and the ram *Manassas*. The latter vessel proved the most troublesome of the Confederate fleet. She had rammed the *Brooklyn*, the *Hartford*, and the *Mississippi* at different times during the action.

At early daylight, as the vessels approached the quarantine above the forts, the *Manassas* was seen coming up the river as rapidly as her steam would allow.

As she approached the fleet, Flag-Officer Farragut directed Commander Smith in the *Mississippi* to turn and run her down. The order was instantly obeyed by the *Mississippi* turning and going at the ram at full speed; but when it was expected to see the *Manassas* annihilated, the vessels being within fifty yards of each other, the ram put her helm hard-a-port, dodged the *Mississippi*, and ran ashore, where her crew deserted her. Commander Smith set fire to her, and then so



Clifton and Westfield (altered New York City ferry-boats). Owasco.

Harriet Lane.

MORTAR-STEAMERS ATTACKING THE WATER BATTERY OF FORT JACKSON.

riddled her with shot that she was dislodged from the bank and drifted below the forts, where she blew up and sank.

Previous to this a kind of guerrilla warfare had been carried on, and ten of the enemy's river boats had been run ashore or otherwise destroyed, while the *Varuna* lay sunk at the bank with two of her adversaries wrecked beside her, a monument to the gallantry of Commander Boggs.

When the fleet had passed the forts, and there was no longer any necessity for me to hold my position, I dropped down the river with the steamers to where the mortar-boats were anchored, and gave the signal to cease firing. I knew that our squadron had failed to destroy all of the enemy's fleet. The iron-clad *Louisiana* lay at the bank apparently uninjured, the *McRae* was at anchor close to Fort Jackson, and three other vessels whose character I could not make out were moving back and forth from one shore to the other. This looked serious, for such a force, if properly handled, was superior to mine; and I had to provide immediately against contingencies. There were now seven efficient gun-boats under my command, and I at once prepared them to meet the enemy. My plan was to get as many of my vessels as possible alongside of the *Louisiana*, each one to make fast to her, let go two anchors, and then "fight it out on that line."

Meantime Farragut was speeding on his way up the river with all his fleet except the

*Mississippi* and one or two small gun-boats, which were left to guard the lazaretto. On his way up the flag-officer encountered more Confederate batteries at Chalmette, the place made famous by the battle of January 8th, 1815.

The Chalmette batteries on both sides of the river mounted twenty heavy guns, and were all ready to meet our fleet, which was advancing towards them in two lines as rapidly as the swift current would permit. Farragut made short work of them, however, and our fleet, meeting with no further resistance, passed on and anchored before New Orleans. The *Queen City* of the South lay at the conqueror's feet, unable to do anything in the way of defense, as the Confederate General Lovell had retreated, leaving the city in the hands of the civil authorities.

At noon of the 25th instant I sent Lieutenant-com'g Guest with a flag of truce to Fort Jackson, to call on the commanding officer to surrender the two forts and what was left of the Confederate navy into the possession of the United States, telling him that it was useless to have any more bloodshed, as Farragut had passed up the river with very little damage to his fleet, and was now probably in possession of New Orleans. I also took advantage of the occasion to compliment the enemy on his gallant resistance, and further to inform him that, if his answer was unfavorable, I would renew the bombardment. General Duncan sent me a very civil

reply, but declined to surrender until he should hear from New Orleans; whereupon I immediately opened a very rapid fire on Fort Jackson with all the mortars, and with such good effect that a mutiny soon broke out among the Confederate gunners, many of whom, refusing to stay in the fort and be slaughtered uselessly, left their posts and went up the bank out of range of our shell. Those who remained declined to fight any longer. They had borne without flinching a terrible bombardment, and their officers had exposed themselves throughout the trying ordeal with great courage; but it was now the opinion of all that the fort should be surrendered without further loss of life. The mortars kept up their fire until late in the evening, when their bombshells were all expended. On the 26th instant I ordered the schooners to get under way, proceed to Pilot Town, and fill up with ammunition. Six of them were ordered to cross the bar and proceed to the rear of Fort Jackson, and be ready to open fire when signaled.

In the mean time we kept a lookout on the *Louisiana* and the Confederate gun-boats. On the 27th instant five mortar-vessels appeared in the rear of Fort Jackson, and the U. S. steamer *Miami* commenced landing troops close to Fort St. Philip. The garrison of Jackson was still mutinous, refusing to do duty, and General Duncan at midnight of the 28th sent an officer on board the *Harriet Lane* to inform me of his readiness to capitulate. On the following day I proceeded with nine gun-boats up to Fort Jackson, under a flag of truce, and upon arrival sent a boat for the commanding officer of the river defenses, and such others as he might think proper to bring with him.

I received these officers at the gangway, and treated them as brave men who had defended their trusts with a courage worthy of all praise; and though I knew that they felt mortified at having to surrender to what they must have known was in some respects an inferior force, their bearing was that of men who had gained a victory, instead of undergoing defeat.

I knew nothing of the mutiny in the forts, or the inconvenience to which the people there were subjected; I was in total ignorance of what was happening up the river, whether Farragut had sustained much damage in passing the forts, or whether he had been able to get by the formidable batteries at English Turn. In any case I knew that it was important to obtain possession of the forts as quickly as possible, and had prepared terms of capitulation, which were accepted by General Duncan and Lieutenant-Colonel Higgins.

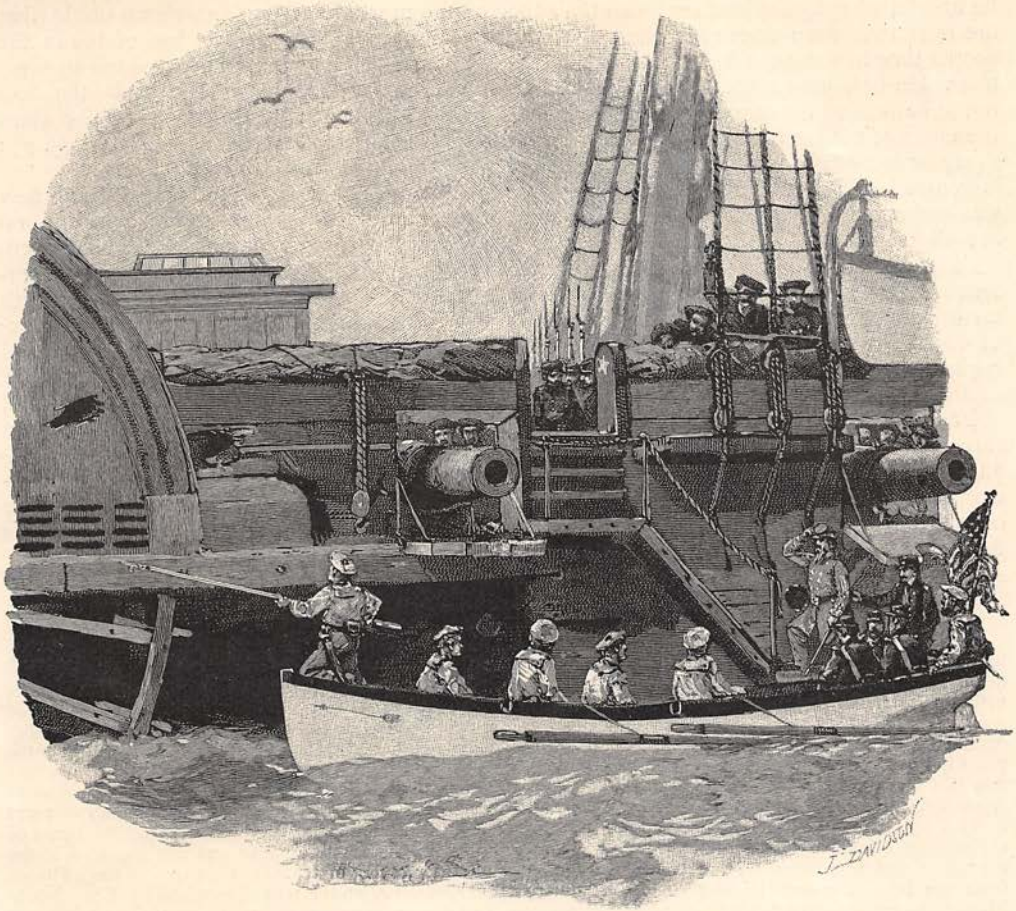
As we were about to sign the terms, I was quite surprised to find that it was not expected that the vessels of war were to be included in the terms agreed to by the Confederate officers. General Duncan told me that he had no authority whatever over the naval vessels, and that, in fact, Commander Mitchell, of the regular naval forces, had set the military authorities at defiance. So I waived the point, being determined in my own mind what I would do when the forts were in our possession.

We were all sitting at the table on board the *Harriet Lane*, with the terms of capitulation before us; I had signed it, as had also Commander Renshaw, of the *Westfield*; and Lieutenant-commanding Wainwright, of the *Harriet Lane*, was about to follow our example, when he was suddenly called on deck by one of his officers. He returned immediately, and informed me that the iron-clad *Louisiana* was in flames and drifting down the river towards the mortar flotilla (steamers), through which there was not room for her to pass, as our vessels were anchored within thirty yards of each other.

"This is sharp practice," I said to the Confederate officers, "but if *you* can stand the explosion when it comes, we can. We will go on and finish the capitulation." At the same time I gave Lieutenant Wainwright orders to hail the vessel next to him and pass the word to each of the others to veer to the end of their chains and be ready, by using steam, to sheer out of the way of the *Louisiana* if necessary, but not to leave their anchorage. Then I handed the pen to General Duncan and Colonel Higgins, who coolly signed their names in as bold a hand as if they were not momentarily in danger of being blown up. Then we all sat quietly awaiting the result. In a few moments an explosion took place that fairly shook us all out of our seats and threw the *Harriet Lane* over on her side, but we finished with the terms of capitulation. The *Louisiana* had blown up just before reaching the flotilla. The Confederate officers severely condemned this performance, and assured us that they did not feel responsible for anything that the navy did, as it was entirely under Commander Mitchell's control.

When I went on deck the *Louisiana* was nowhere to be seen, and not even a ripple showed where she had gone down. Thus we lost a powerful vessel, which would have been of much use to us in our future operations.

General Duncan and his companions now left the *Harriet Lane* and went on shore. In less than ten minutes afterwards the Confederate flags were hauled down, and both forts delivered over to the officers appointed to



COMMANDER PORTER RECEIVING CONFEDERATE OFFICERS ON THE "HARRIET LANE."

take possession of them. Our victory was not yet complete, however, for the enemy's flag still floated on the river, and my next duty lay in this direction. When Commander Mitchell set fire to the *Louisiana*, he transferred his officers and men to a river steamer and ran over to the opposite shore, a mile above the forts. His movements had been reported to me, and as soon as General Duncan had left the ship I gave orders for the *Harriet Lane* to weigh anchor and beat to quarters. We steered directly for the vessel carrying Mitchell's flag, and the order was given to fire at the flag-pole; but the smoke was not out of the gun before the Confederate flag was hauled down. Lieutenant Wainwright was sent on board the enemy to take possession, and was met by Commander Mitchell, who demanded the same terms as the officers of the forts had received. Wainwright informed him that no terms would be granted him or his officers, that he

and they would be held as close prisoners to answer for violating the sanctity of a flag of truce, and that they would all be sent to the North. Mitchell at once wrote me a letter relieving all the officers (except three or four) from the odium of having set fire to the *Louisiana*, and thus endangering the Union vessels while under a flag of truce.

I sent all the prisoners up to Flag-Officer Farragut, to be disposed of as he thought best, and that was the end of the affair. The forts were ours, the city was ours, and the river was open and free all the way up to New Orleans.

After the battle the officers of the Confederate army complained greatly of Commander Mitchell's behavior, saying, first, that he had failed to cooperate heartily with the land forces; secondly, that he had not made good use of the *Louisiana* (as far as I can learn she was not ready for action when the fleet passed up, and I am of the opinion that had she been properly managed, she might have

thrown our fleet into confusion); thirdly, that he had failed to ignite and send down all the fire-rafts that were under his charge, at the proper time to meet our fleet as it came up the river. He had quite a number of these tied up to the bank, and it can well be imagined what the effect of millions of burning pine-knots on thirty or forty rafts would have been, when it is remembered how seriously the *Hartford* was endangered by one of those which were actually sent.\*

After all the defenses were in our power, I sent a steamer down to the bar and brought up one of General Butler's ships, on board of which was General Phelps with one or two regiments of infantry, who took possession of the forts.

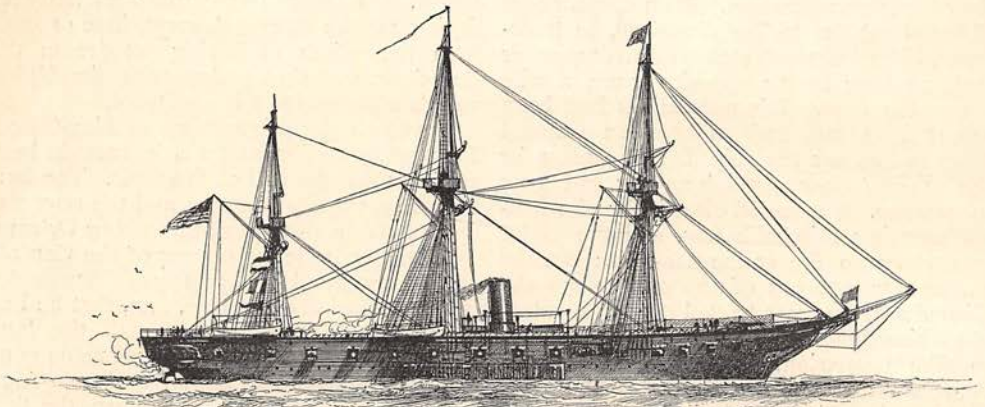
Farragut's vessels were only struck twenty-three times in their hulls by shots from Fort Jackson, while they received their great damage from Fort St. Philip, as appears from the official reports. This shows how difficult it was for the Confederate gunners in the former work

to fight while enduring the terrible pounding of the mortars. There can be no doubt that its fire prevented a greater loss of life in the Federal fleet and materially assisted towards the final result. Our total loss in the fleet was—killed, 35; wounded, 128. The ships which suffered most were the *Pensacola*, 37; *Brooklyn*, 35; and *Iroquois*, 28.

When the sun rose on the Federal fleet the morning after the fight, it shone on smiling faces, even among those who were suffering from their wounds. Farragut received the congratulations of his officers with the same imperturbability that he had exhibited all through the eventful battle; and while he showed great feeling for those of his men who had been killed or wounded, he did not waste time in vain regrets, but made the signal, "Push on to New Orleans." The fact that he had won imperishable fame did not seem to occur to him, so intent were his thoughts on following up his great victory to the end.

David D. Porter.

\* It is but just to say that Commander Mitchell and the other Confederate naval officers denied that they had any intention of endangering the Union vessels, or that they were guilty of any "sharp practice" in destroying the *Louisiana*. They were put in close confinement at Fort Warren, Boston Harbor; but on making the above representations to the Secretary of the Navy they were treated as ordinary prisoners of war. A Confederate naval court of inquiry afterward investigated and approved the conduct of Commander Mitchell. The following extract from the letter from Lieutenant Whittle quoted on page 938, bears on the point in question: "On the morning of the 24th, when Farragut's fleet passed, the work on the propellers was still incomplete, and so our vessel was only an immovable floating battery. When, on the morning of April 28th, the work was finished, and we were about to test the efficiency of the motive power, we were notified by General Duncan, commanding Forts Jackson and St. Philip, that he had accepted the terms of capitulation offered by Commander Porter and before rejected. As the *Louisiana* was not included in the surrender, and Commander Porter's fleet was coming up under a flag of truce, in answer to a flag of truce from the forts, a council of war decided to destroy the *Louisiana*, and I was dispatched by Commander Mitchell to notify Commander Porter that although we had done what we could to drown the magazine and the charges in the guns, our hawsers might burn, and the *Louisiana* drift down among his vessels. While on my way to deliver this message the *Louisiana* blew up. I continued, however, and delivered the message in person to Commander D. D. Porter on board his flag-ship, the *Harriet Lane*."—Ed.



THE FLAG-SHIP "HARTFORD." (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.)