

# ATAA HISTORICAL REVIEW JOURNAL

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*Confederate Pensions*  
A WAR-TORN STATE CARES FOR ITS OWN

*Education  
During Slavery*  
WHAT SLAVES REALLY LEARNED

*CSS Tennessee*  
A VALIANT WARSHIP FACES  
OVERWHELMING ODDS



# **AUM Historical Review**

# 2, Winter 2013

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## Contents

Editor's Note  
*Graydon Rust* 4

Education during Slavery: What Slaves  
Really Learned  
*Tracy Bruce Wilson* 5

From Replacement Limbs to Special Taxes:  
Alabama's Confederate Pension System,  
1867-1891  
*Graydon Rust* 15

Politics and Rehabilitation: Governor George  
Wallace and His Physical Therapist at the 1972  
Democratic National Convention  
*Tracy Bruce Wilson* 25

The C.S.S. Tennessee at the Battle of Mobile  
Bay  
*Brian Wesley* 37

A Conversation with Dr. Keith Krawczynski  
*Katelyn Kidd* 57

A Review of *The Rape of Nanking* by  
Iris Chang  
*Mary Henderson Fukai* 61

Additional contributors 65

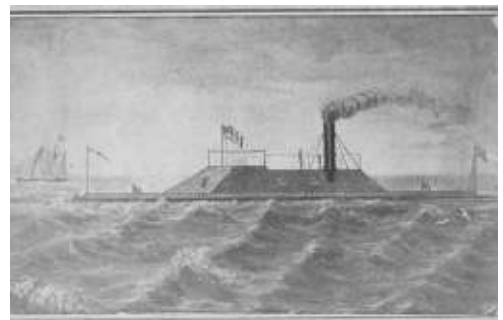
Call for papers 65



**Slaves in South Carolina**



**Gov. Wallace en route to the 1972  
Democratic Convention**



**The C.S.S. Tennessee**

# Editor's Note

Dear readers,

It is with both pride and honor that I present to you the second issue of the *AUM Historical Review*. Our inaugural issue, published in early 2012, received such an enthusiastic reception that a second printing was required to meet the demand, and I believe readers will find this issue even more worthwhile. I want to encourage students, regardless of classification or major, to contribute to future publications by referring to the "Call for Papers" announcement at the end of the volume. While we continue to seek submissions on all areas of history, this year's issue highlights Southern history and features essays on slavery, the Civil War and its aftermath, and George Wallace.

Of course, all of this is entirely reliant on the support and dedication of those involved and, to them, I am grateful. I would particularly like to thank my editorial board, comprised of Ryan Blocker, Kelhi DePace, Jennifer Kellum, Katelyn Kidd, and Tracy Wilson, for the commitment and enthusiasm provided over the last year in all that they have done. I am glad to welcome back our designer, Sam Blakely, for a second year and express my appreciation to him for the professional work that he has done, and to Professor Breuna Baine for her continued assistance during the design process. Thanks also go to Alex Trott for designing this year's cover. My staff and I are grateful to the School of Liberal Arts and the Department of History not only for their financial support, but also for the encouragement given to the Review over the last two years. I would also like to thank the Alabama Department of Archives and History, and specifically Meredith McLemore, for allowing us to use a number of photographs from their collections. Acknowledgement also goes to Dr. Ben Severance, under whose stewardship a number of this year's papers were first written. I also extend my deepest appreciation to all of the students that contributed their writing to this year's journal for undergoing the tedious and often tiresome editorial process. Truly, without their effort, the *AUM Historical Review* would not be possible. Lastly, I thank our advisor, Dr. Steven Gish, both for the opportunity to edit this year's journal and for his constant guidance during the last two years. This journal provided an incredible learning experience unparalleled by any other during my college years and I wish it enduring success. My only hope is that the Review has been, and continues to be, as beneficial to others as it has been to me.

Graydon Rust, Editor

# Education during Slavery: What Slaves Really Learned

Tracy Bruce Wilson

A founding member of the AUM Historical Review editorial board and a senior majoring in history, **Tracy Bruce Wilson** has a fervent desire to educate others about the accomplishments of African Americans. His decision to research slave education grew out of a fascination with the ability of slaves to outwit their oppressors. Tracy is a member of Phi Alpha Theta and Phi Kappa Phi honors societies. He has also received several awards and scholarships: the Fair-Robinson Scholarship for 2008, the Dodd Southern History Paper Prize for 2009, and the Morse Memorial History Paper Prize for 2012.



*Emancipated slaves Wilson Chinn, Charles Taylor, Rebecca Huger, and Rosina Downs pose for a photograph reading books for the Free School of Louisiana in New Orleans, c. 1864. (Library of Congress)*

The Atlantic slave trade, which lasted for more than three centuries and brought over twelve million Africans to the Americas, represents the largest forced migration in history. Upon arrival in the New World, slaves were forced to learn new languages, acquire new skills, internalize new religions, and create new social networks. Being torn away from family and friends, alienated from their homelands, and thrust upon a three-thousand-mile voyage across the Atlantic Ocean was a traumatic experience. Nevertheless, African exiles exhibited a remarkable capacity to adapt to their new environment while retaining elements of their culture and heritage. This blending of African, European, and American customs, known as creolization, best describes what slaves internalized throughout the centuries of their captivity. In the book *Deep Like the Rivers*, historian Thomas L. Webber defines education as “the knowledge, attitudes, values, skills and sensibilities which an individual, or a group, consciously or unconsciously, has internalized. Teaching in this context becomes the deliberate effort, successful or not, to educate.”<sup>1</sup> Although slaveholders went to great lengths to educate their human chattel about the behavior and attitude of “model” slaves, the

strong kinship connections, undaunted spiritual beliefs, and successful literacy attempts evident in slave narratives suggest that the planter class did not wholly succeed in attaining its goal.

After arriving in the Americas, slaves were forced to undergo a disciplinary process known as seasoning, intended to modify their behavior and attitude to make the laborers more effective. While seasoning varied in length from plantation to plantation, the process always involved learning European languages, acquiring new skills, being stripped of African names, and receiving more suitable Christian names as a means of adapting to their new environment. Plantation owners relied on creoles, slaves born in the Americas, and old Africans who had lived in the Americas for some time to teach new Africans how to make the adjustments necessary for survival in the New World. While seasoning proved to be a successful means of “acculturating slaves and breaking them in to plantation routines,” it failed to create ideal slaves, void of culture and identity.<sup>2</sup>

According to Webber, model slaves were capable of “internalizing the knowledge, values, attitudes, skills and understandings of obedient and trustworthy servants.”<sup>3</sup> In other words, ideal slaves were cognizant of their sub-human status and grateful to God and their masters for delivering them from barbarianism and granting them the privilege of serving a noble and civilized race. Realizing that slaves are not born but created, the planter class went to great lengths to establish a system of slavery laws, plantation rules, and social etiquette designed to ensure black inferiority and dependence.

Keeping slaves ignorant of the world beyond the plantation proved essential to the creation of model slaves. For instance, white ministers and doctors visited plantations instead of allowing blacks to travel off the grounds. Likewise, when they allowed slaves to marry, slaveholders insisted that slaves do so within the plantation. The planter class also attempted to prevent the circulation of “incendiary” materials and forged passes by prohibiting anyone, including masters, to teach slaves to read and write. For example, after passing legislation prohibiting the education of blacks, a member of the Virginia House of Delegates asserted, “We have as far as possible closed every avenue by which light may enter their minds. If we could extinguish the capacity to see the light, our work would be completed.”<sup>4</sup> Slave narratives are ripe with examples of slaves being severely flogged, threatened with the dismemberment of limbs, branded, and sold after attempting to learn to read and write. After the slave Titus Bynes was caught writing on the ground, for instance, his mistress threatened to cut off his right arm if she ever caught him writing again. Similarly, the mistress of Douglass Dorsey issued the same threat upon discovering his ability to write. So kindled was her anger, she not only whipped him, but also her eight year old son for teaching him. According to Dorsey, both boys’ backs were so lacerated that their shirts clung to them for two weeks.<sup>5</sup>

Of equal importance in the creation of model servants was an innate sense of inferiority among blacks. To accomplish this, the planter class diligently implemented laws to assure



black dependence upon whites. For instance, legislation disallowed slaves to leave the plantation, assemble in groups, trade, or marry without their masters' consent.<sup>6</sup> Slaveholders also taught slaves from an early age that whites must always receive the utmost respect. While growing up a slave in Tennessee, Jermain Loquen stated, "He had been taught, in the severest school, that he was a thing for others' uses, and that he must bend his head, body and mind in conformity to that idea in the presence of a superior race."<sup>7</sup> Whites also taught slaves that blacks were ugly, their lips and noses malformed, and that they stank. They employed such tactics in an attempt to reinforce black inferiority and keep slaves "happily" dependent on their white superiors.<sup>8</sup>

Still, strict obedience to white rule remained the defining characteristic of ideal slaves and the whip the surest way to guarantee it. Describing the importance of maintaining a joyful countenance, former slave Henry Watson maintained that if slaves appeared to be "in any mood but laughing and singing, and manifesting symptoms of perfect content at heart—they are said to have the devil in them," which could only be driven out with the whip.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, Frederick Douglass listed a number of acts considered improper etiquette for slaves, including having a dissatisfied look, speaking too loudly when spoken to by masters, forgetting to remove one's hat when approaching a white person, and suggesting a different

method of doing things than that commanded by masters.<sup>10</sup> Undoubtedly, the whip played a crucial role in promoting obedience among slaves.

Nevertheless, religious indoctrination remained the key to achieving trustworthy and cheerfully submissive servants. Until the mid to late eighteenth century, masters and slaves alike resisted the conversion of blacks to Christianity. Some whites insisted that blacks, like animals, had no souls; others thought that the message of Christianity would lead to rebellion. Most slaves, on the other hand, embraced traditional African beliefs and had no interest in the religion of their oppressors. However, beginning with the advent of the Great Awakening in the late 1730s and early 1740s, and the evangelical revivals that followed in the 1770s and 1780s, a process of general conversion occurred. Drawn by the evangelical approach of rebirth, singing, dancing, and emotionalism that greatly mirrored African spiritualism, Africans slowly embraced Christianity.<sup>11</sup>

By the early nineteenth century, the majority of southern plantation owners came to believe that slaves who received "proper religious instruction" were harder working and less likely to lie, steal, or attempt to escape. To that end, the message taught by the master class consisted of a "carefully censored version of the Bible and Christianity" that left no room for emotionalism.<sup>12</sup> Taught by white missionaries strategically trained by the southern church to share the

views, feelings, and interests of the planter class, this censored religion used as its foundation biblical passages like the apostle Paul's, "Servants obey in all things your masters according to the flesh," and the apostle Peter's, "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear."<sup>13</sup> The missionaries taught blacks to thank God and their masters for delivering them from the eternal damnation they faced in Africa. Lunsford Lane, a former slave from North Carolina, stated that whites frequently reminded slaves of God's benevolence "in bringing us over to this country from dark and benighted Africa and permitting us to listen to the sound of the gospel." Lane also recalls hearing select portions of the scriptures like, "He that knoweth his masters will and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes."<sup>14</sup> Slaveholders sometimes even allowed enslaved black preachers to preach to their fellow slaves under the watchful eye of whites. Trained by the white clergy, they too preached messages of obedience and submissiveness. Perhaps John Blassingame's list of slave "be attitudes" provide the clearest illustration of what slaves were taught: "Blessed are the patient, blessed are the faithful, blessed are the cheerful, blessed are the submissive, blessed are the hardworking, and above all, blessed are the obedient."<sup>15</sup>

Despite the numerous tactics employed by masters to create model slaves, blacks found strength in their ability to unite around the cause of survival. Although slaves mastered the art of appeasing whites in their presence, they put forth a concerted effort to remain true to their own values, beliefs, and identity in

private. Slave narratives confirm that what slaves actually internalized greatly contradicted what the planter class taught them. Despite constant attempts by masters to pit slaves against one another through a system of rewards designed to elevate those willing to divulge the secrets of the quarter community, slaves established their own plantation hierarchy and elevated those deemed beneficial to the community. The horrors of bondage taught slaves the value of viewing themselves as one family and united them in their struggle to resist the dictates of a system designed to deplete them of all human dignity. Therefore, those members of the slave community who "could be relied upon to put the interests of the quarter community above personal interests and, most importantly, above the interests of whites" rose to the top of the hierarchy.<sup>16</sup> These included conjurers, thought to possess supernatural abilities; preachers, who provided spiritual guidance and hope; teachers, who maintained the culture through oral tradition; entertainers, who sang, danced, and told folktales; and rebels, who possessed the wit to outsmart the system. The quarter community did not highly regard those who shared close relations with whites, such as domestic servants, coachmen, slave drivers, and mulattos, unless they used their positions for the advancement of the community.<sup>17</sup> According to Susan Rhodes, a former slave from Missouri, "People in my day didn't know book learning but dey studied how to protect each other, and save 'em from much misery as dey could."<sup>18</sup> Just as quarter members learned the significance of banding together as

one, they also came to view whites as hypocrites not to be trusted. Even though the planter class taught slaves to perceive whites as morally superior and having their best interest at heart, acts of cruelty such as beating, selling, stealing and lying convinced blacks otherwise. Whether through abduction or free labor, most slaves perceived whites as thieves. Speaking about the hypocrisy of whites, Josephine Howard, a former slave from Texas exclaimed, “Dey allus done tell us it am wrong to lie and steal but why, did de white folks steal my mammy and her mammy?”<sup>19</sup> Likewise, Peter Bruner spoke of slaveholders attending church on Sunday mornings only to whip slaves and make them work in the afternoon.<sup>20</sup>

Nonetheless, it was the quarter community’s ability to discern between the truth of God’s word and the lies preached by white masters and their ministers that proved to be their greatest source of strength. According to narratives, the overwhelming majority of slaves believed that the gospel had as its foundation a message of justice and deliverance. Slaves did not accept that God ordained their enslavement, nor did they consider a Christian anyone who did. Instead, they subscribed to a gospel that offered hope and healing to a wounded people, if not in this world then in the world to come, from a God who executed justice on their behalf.<sup>21</sup> Aaron, a former slave known for his knowledge of the Bible, despite his inability to read, eloquently

proclaimed: “We believe slavery to be a sin—always, everywhere, and only sin . . . because it converts persons into things . . . God’s image into merchandise . . . it constitutes one man the owner of the body and spirit of other men . . . thus striking them out of existence as beings.”<sup>22</sup> Similarly, slaves viewed heaven as a place to finally rest from their labors and receive restitution for having been “buked and scorned.” At the same time, they regarded Hell as a place reserved for the planter class. An ex-slave recalled that upon the death of whites, the slaves pretended to cry and mourn in the presence of other whites, but alone, smiled and said something like: “They going on to hell like a damn barrel full of nails.”<sup>23</sup>

Through secret church services, often referred to as “stealin’ the meetin’,” slaves gained a limited view of Christianity. More importantly though, these services offered temporary relief to their aching souls and enabled them to confront the difficulties that remained ahead. Unlike the sermons of white missionaries, slave preachers used call-and-response and alluded to the tribulations and trials of this life while promising heavenly rewards in the next. Slaves believed true religion should be felt, not just heard. Susan Rhodes recalled how “we use to steal off to de woods and have church, like de spirit moved us, sing and pray to our own liking and soul satisfaction . . . and God met us dere.”<sup>24</sup> These meetings provided the emotional

release needed to handle the demands of slavery. Through shouting, singing, praying, preaching, and testifying, slaves unloaded the week's despair and gained renewed strength. Former slave turned businessman Louis Hughes declared that despite "what their troubles had been during the week—how much they had been lashed—the prayer meeting on Saturday evening never failed to be held. Their faith was tried and true." Hughes further asserted, "Their faces seemed to shine with a happy light—their very countenance showed that their souls had been refreshed and that it had been 'good for them to be there.'"<sup>25</sup>

While these services undoubtedly provided the psychological and emotional therapy essential for survival, they involved great risks. For example, an ex-slave interviewed by the Fisk project recalled that on his plantation, "If they heard women pray, the next morning they would hit them fifty lashes for praying."<sup>26</sup> Similarly, at the beginning of the Civil War, officials jailed slaves in Georgetown, South Carolina, for singing spirituals about freedom. According to William Sinclair, who grew up a slave in Georgetown, after whites prohibited slaves from singing "One of these days I shall be free/ When Christ the Lord shall set me free," they began to hum the song's melody with greater passion than if they had spoken the words.<sup>27</sup> No doubt, the fear of insurrection prompted slaveholders to forbid slaves from holding secret religious meetings and singing forbidden spirituals. Nevertheless, the benefits of "stealin' the meetin'" far outweighed the risks, for these services enabled the slaves to face another day.

Spirituals represented an equally important teaching tool in slave religion. "Because few slaves could read and fewer still had access to a Bible, much of what they knew" about the Bible was learned through songs. For instance, spirituals about the trials and triumphs of biblical characters like Paul, Silas, Job, and above all, Moses, who led the Hebrew children out of bondage in Egypt, were among the slaves' favorites.<sup>28</sup> Spirituals also served as a means of communing with God. Through songs, slaves expressed their sorrows and fears to the God of their deliverance in exchange for peace. According to ex-slave Hannah Davidson, "When our folks sang . . . Swing low, sweet chariot . . . We could really see the chariot."<sup>29</sup> Like the horrors of slavery, spirituals were both intensely personal and vividly communal. That is to say, the improvisational structure in which worshipers sang allowed individuals to share their slave experiences with the community, providing comfort for all. For instance, after witnessing the beating of a fellow slave by an overseer, friends and family might incorporate the experience into a song that night at the prayer meeting. In this way, slaves used spirituals as a source of validation and acknowledgement of the pain shared among the members of the slave community, as well as to provide an emotional release from the pain.<sup>30</sup>

Slaves also successfully defied the commands of whites by learning to read and write. While narratives include many testimonies of former slaves who desired to become literate but did not have an opportunity to do so during slavery, they also reveal that some did learn to read and

write during their captivity. According to W.E.B. Dubois, about five percent of slaves learned to read by 1860.<sup>31</sup> Despite being aware of the severe penalties involved, blacks remained steadfast in their hunger for education and took advantage of every opportunity to learn. As previously mentioned, the son of Douglas Dorsey's owners taught him to read. Narratives also reveal instances of slaves taught to read by other slaves and even masters. Though few examples exist, some masters took an active role in educating their slaves. For instance, after being baptized, former slave Elijah Marrs said that his master "removed all objections to my learning how to



*Aunt Matt, a former slave, and two African American children in Crenshaw County, AL. In her lap Aunt Matt holds a Bible, which played a crucial role in the education of blacks during slavery. (Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL)*

read, and said he wanted all the boys to learn to read the Bible."<sup>32</sup> Likewise, J.H. Curry claimed that his father learned to read and write from his master, a doctor who needed help recording patient information.<sup>33</sup> Whites who were not slaveholders also taught some slaves to read and write. For instance, John Davenport insisted that his sister learned from "de white women school teachers boarded at Marse Lake's house." Davenport explained that his sister learned "when she was de maid of de house, and she could read and write good."<sup>34</sup> Moreover, Rev. W.E. Northcross confessed that his calling to preach the gospel prompted his urge to learn. While a slave in Alabama, Northcross met "a man who could read a little," and convinced the man to teach him. After secretly meeting his teacher for over a year in the mountains, which he referred to as "the great school," Northcross successfully learned to read from a blue-back speller he managed to secure.<sup>35</sup> Some slaves learned to read from other slaves. For example, "Gate-eye" Fisher of Arkansas learned to read from his mother, who discerned to read by hearing her mistress teach her own children the alphabet.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, Louis Hughes received his initial instruction in writing from his friend Tom, a slave secretly taught by craftsmen whom Hughes referred to as "workmen of the neighborhood."<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, for his determination to teach himself to read, Austin Steward received his

first flogging and a warning that if anyone ever caught him reading again, he would have “every inch of skin” whipped off his back. Like so many slaves, Austin noted that beatings, threats, or even being sold did not quell his desire to learn. In fact, he asserted that his desire to read and write increased with his oppressors’ attempts to eradicate his longing for “that which they thought so essential to themselves.”<sup>38</sup> Comparably, Frederick Douglass contended that the harsh words spoken by his master in forbidding him to learn stirred within him “a rebellion not soon to be allayed.” Douglass further declared that his master’s stern reaction served as a “special revelation . . . that knowledge unfits a child to be a slave . . . and from that moment I understood the direct pathway from slavery to freedom.”<sup>39</sup> The realization that an educated slave is no slave at all was shared by countless blacks and provided the tenacity necessary to risk all to attain an education.

The process of acculturating people of African descent to the behavioral and cultural norms of slave societies began immediately upon their arrival in the New World. Through a long and complex process known as seasoning, Africans were given new names, forced to learn new languages, and adapted to new religious practices. Although seasoning succeeded in producing effective laborers, it did not create ideal slaves. Through tactics such as plantation rules, religious indoctrination, and physical abuse, the planter class sought to create docile, dependent, grateful and obedient slaves—perfect slaves. Slave narratives show that the majority of bondsmen did not internalize the dehumanizing

curriculum of their white instructors. Even though the whip remained the most effective teaching tool employed by slaveholders and promoted a considerable degree of acquiescence among slaves, it proved incapable of reducing slaves to the inanimate objects void of humanity that slaveholders desired. Through their ability to unite as a community brought together by a common experience, blacks gained the strength to survive slavery’s harshest demands while remaining true to their own values, beliefs, and identity. However, to say that white teaching proved ineffective is an exaggeration. Undeniably, the planter class succeeded in producing outward manifestations of cheerful obedience among slaves. It failed, however, in forcing slaves to internalize their outward joy. Perhaps one of the primary reasons for this failure was the inability of whites to conceive that blacks could have a culture of their own. In their estimation of blacks as subhuman savages incapable of possessing thoughts and ideas—customs and values—whites overestimated their power over not just the body, but also the spirit of slaves. What slaves learned during slavery was not what their oppressors had hoped. By entrusting their fate to a power far greater than their own, they internalized the capacity of the human spirit to adapt and survive amid seemingly insurmountable odds.

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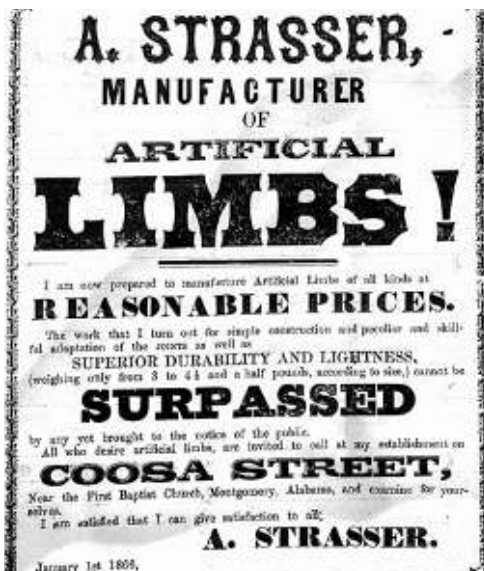


# From Replacement Limbs to Special Taxes: Alabama's Confederate Pension System, 1867-1891

Graydon Rust

**Graydon Rust** is a senior majoring in history.

A founding member of the AUM Historical Review editorial board, this is his second year serving as lead editor. A recipient of the Academic Excellence Scholarship for 2008-2012 and the Fair-Robinson Scholarship for 2011 and 2012, Graydon is a member of the School of Liberal Arts Representatives, Phi Alpha Theta, College Bowl, Omicron Delta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, and the University Honors Program and is a student clerk at the Alabama Department of Archives and History. Graydon's article on Alabama's Confederate pensions won the Dodd Southern History Paper Prize for 2012 and is currently being expanded into an honors thesis.



An advertisement for artificial limbs by A. Strasser in Montgomery, AL. In 1867, Alabama entered a contract with Strasser & Callahan to provide limbs for Confederate veterans within the state. (Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL)

As the Civil War ended, the state governments of the dying Confederacy faced the daunting task of caring for their growing number of disabled veterans. Alabama itself provided 95,000 men to the effort, and an estimated one third returned to the state disabled, many having lost either a limb or their sight, which dimmed their prospects for peacetime prosperity. These veterans, finding themselves on the losing side of the war, could expect no aid from the federal government, as many northerners still viewed them as traitors. Therefore, Alabama and the other Confederate states had to create their own welfare legislation with treasuries depleted by the war effort or prioritized for other projects. As a result, the development of welfare programs for Confederate veterans was slow and evolved as the years passed. Relief began in the years following the war in an effort to assist maimed soldiers by providing them with artificial limbs and basic living expenses. Ultimately, this developed into a major program and an annual tax that is still collected today. Alabama's Confederate pension system played a significant role in the history of the state—encompassing a large part of the state treasury, influencing the cultural cohesion of its citizens, and even setting

a precedent for future welfare programs.

Despite the importance of pension programs in the culture and economics of the South, they have not received a corresponding amount of attention from historians. While some scholars have carried out small studies, notably in Georgia, there is no comparable compilation for Alabama's Confederate pension system. The pension systems from state to state were very similar and generally followed the same timeline, but each state had a number of differences including eligibility requirements and amounts paid. While Georgia paid the most out to its veterans and thus receives the most treatment from scholars, it is necessary to examine each state individually to get a true understanding of not only the variances between each state, but of the history and livelihoods of the veterans within every area. Beyond the South, the area that receives the most attention from historians is the Union pension system, which was not only much larger, but also more coherent and easier to study. James Marten has covered this area most recently and a brief overview is useful in understanding the system as it developed in Alabama.<sup>1</sup>

The federal government created the Union pension system at the beginning of the Civil War with the passage of the General Law in 1861, which established pensions not only for disabled soldiers, but for their widows and orphans as well. This system varied greatly from those implemented by the Confederate states and Alabama in particular, which took much longer to develop. The federal system included a sliding scale that determined the amount paid based

on the injury or condition and the veteran's rank. Privates could receive up to \$8 a month and officers garnered a maximum of \$30 each month. As the years went by, rates increased and the conditions that qualified a veteran for funding expanded. This also happened in the former Confederate states, but at a much slower rate. In addition, Union pensions were much larger than those in the South. Marten notes, "By the 1890s, the average northern recipient was receiving \$160 a year, while the average payment to Confederate veterans was \$40." Moreover, the federal pension rolls eventually contained over 300,000 more men than had even served in the Confederate Army.<sup>2</sup>

By standing up for their state's cause, Alabama's veterans returned home cloaked in heroism and revered by the citizenry. The veterans found themselves in prime position to attain political office, and many of them did just that. It was on the backs of these newly elected veterans in the legislature, and the overwhelming support they received from the public, that the state was able to pass its first act for the relief of maimed soldiers on February 19, 1867, only ten days before the approval of the Congressional Reconstruction Act that placed Alabama under military rule. The law appropriated \$30,000, half in the form of state bonds, to provide artificial legs for any man in need of one, provided that the mutilation occurred while serving in the military of Alabama or any of the Confederate states. Governor Robert Patton soon contracted with Strasser & Callahan of Montgomery to manufacture the limbs, which cost the state \$50 for a limb amputated below the knee, and

\$70 for a limb amputated above the knee. An individual maimed to the point that a limb would not provide relief received \$100 in lieu of the limb. The law was relatively simple and so was the process of application. To receive a limb, the disabled had only to furnish a sworn statement to his probate judge. In this statement, he had to indicate his age; place of residence; company and regiment in which he served; when, where, and how he was wounded; the name of the surgeon that amputated his foot or leg; and proof that he was a resident of the county and intended to remain there indefinitely. The applicant then filled out a form of measurements for the contractor, who would create and send the limb to a central place for pickup by the applicant.<sup>3</sup>

This first law gave relief only to a very specific group of soldiers, those who had lost a leg or foot. This is likely due to the outlook that many southerners held towards welfare programs. Deeply engrained in the southern attitude was a sense of honor, dignity, and independence. These feelings stood in opposition to any sort of relief program, especially one of direct payments similar to the one adopted by the federal government for its soldiers. One veteran explained, "To beg we are ashamed, to except [sic] the charity of friends in case we have them, is humiliating." Nonetheless, the veterans were in need of aid and this law may have found the middle ground. By providing the maimed with

limbs, the act could be seen not as charity, but as an attempt to eliminate the disadvantage that the maimed received while serving the state. Thus, those that accepted the aid could still earn a living and continue to be self-sufficient instead of dependent on the government. In fact, while the legislature allowed for the payment of \$100 to any man too maimed for an artificial limb to be of use, the government did not have any takers. The only soldier to receive \$100 worth of aid between 1867 and 1876 was Private John J. Lyons, a resident of Eufaula who served in Company B of the 10th Georgia Regiment, and he did so because he lost both of his legs at the Battle of Seven Days and received two artificial limbs, which cost the state \$50 each.<sup>4</sup>

It was not long, however, before the state's relief program found itself at a standstill. Only a year after the state began to distribute aid to its disabled veterans, Reconstruction laws excluded the former soldiers and their supporters from public office as Republicans dominated politics. Consequently, the relief provided by the state waned through Alabama's Reconstruction years. While 218 men received limbs in 1867, the number dropped to twelve in 1868, followed by zero for the next three years. It was not until 1872 that the legislature resumed the allocation of aid. With the election of 1870, Democrats regained a majority in the state House of Representatives, but still faced a Republican super-majority in the

Senate. How the Democrats were able to push the act through the Senate remains unclear, perhaps the deals were made with certain Republican factions, but the act passed nonetheless. Due to military Reconstruction beginning shortly after the passage of the first act in 1867, \$15,560 of the \$30,000 allocated still remained in the treasury in 1872. Thus, the legislature passed an act to allow the remaining funds to be used in the same manner as the first. The legislators also recognized that after years of use, a number of the original limbs had worn out and needed replacing. As such, applicants could reapply for replacement limbs.<sup>5</sup>

Beginning in 1874, the Democrats regained complete control of state politics and the relief of Confederate veterans continued uninterrupted. Veterans were also able to retake their positions as public officials. Historian William W. White argues that the years 1877 to 1900 were the “Confederate Veteran Era” in southern politics with veterans holding the majority of the best offices. That era began even sooner in Alabama, as Democrats regained control sooner than in other southern states. White also notes that the veteran vote itself was important in the shaping of southern politics, not just because of the large number of votes the veterans themselves represented, but also because of the influence that they had on their families and admirers. Accordingly, in order to receive the support of this vast voting bloc, politicians, both veterans and non-veterans alike, needed to make concessions to veterans, which they gave in the form of aid.<sup>6</sup>

The concessions showed themselves again in 1875 as the original funds had still yet to be

distributed and the legislature passed an additional act to continue their allocation. Also in 1875, Governor George Houston contracted with a second limb manufacturer, William M. Hawkins. Hawkins, a wounded veteran himself, had served in Company C of the 18th Mississippi and lost his leg at the Battle of the Wilderness. Having received a limb from Strasser & Callahan in 1867, Hawkins disapproved of the quality, and being a shoemaker by trade, began improving the limb. He eventually developed a new patent, allowing him to provide limbs more satisfactory to veterans.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, by 1876, the original \$30,000 fund emptied. It remained clear, however, that veterans were still in need of relief and in March, the legislature passed a new act allocating an additional \$5,000 for the purchase of artificial legs. The legislature again acknowledged that some limbs were worthless and all were of limited durability. With this second mention, it is clear the impermanence of limbs proved to be a turning point in the shift from the distribution of artificial limbs to a more regular system of direct payment. While the state had meant to provide relief to each veteran one time, it found itself paying for new limbs with each successive act. William M. Hawkins exemplified this, not only through his development of an enhanced limb, but also by submitting applications for his own artificial limbs in 1867, 1872, 1875, and 1876. As such, the aid became a pension in all but name and regularity. Nonetheless, in 1877 the legislature again appropriated \$5,000 for the distribution of limbs to maimed veterans, this time to replace amputated arms. These limbs were to cost the

state \$50 each and any soldier too maimed for the limb to be of use received a cash payment of \$75.<sup>8</sup>

By the mid to late 1870s, at the end of Reconstruction, the apparent rejection of state relief by southerners waned. While the first \$30,000 had taken almost a decade to disperse, the applicants collected \$7,455 in 1876 alone. In addition, maimed soldiers also collected \$4,850 of the \$5,000 allocated in 1877 by the end of the fiscal year, only eight months later. This, coupled with the impermanence of artificial limbs, finally caused a shift to the regular pension system that the state adopted in 1879. In addition, the distribution of limbs only aided a portion of disabled veterans. A study of the applications recorded by the U.S. government shows that only about 25% of the Union soldiers who received pensions before 1888 received their disability for gunshot or shell wounds. The majority of disabilities arose from a myriad of other diseases and injuries. These numbers are for Union pensions, but one could expect similar results from a study of Confederate veterans. As a result, with a second act in 1879, the legislature expanded the eligibility requirements to include veterans who had lost their sight serving for the CSA. This development was small, but an improvement nonetheless.<sup>9</sup>

The legislature appropriated \$10,000 with the first act and gave applicants six months to apply for a direct payment of up to \$75 each. In the second act, the state allocated \$1,800 for the

relief of blind veterans, with \$150 given to each applicant. These funds, like the ones allocated in 1876-1877, quickly depleted. Of the \$10,000 allocated with Act No. 23, the state distributed \$9,939.60 of the fund by the end of 1880. Due to such a large amount of veteran applicants, 330 in all, the state was unable to allot the maximum \$75 to each pensioner. These men received only \$30.12 each, less than half of the maximum. Comparatively, the Union pension system adopted in 1861 offered privates \$8 a month for total disability, with an increasing pay scale for higher-ranking veterans. Thus, the lowest ranking veteran in the Grand Army of the Republic in 1861 received more than three times the amount of any Alabama veteran, excluding the blind, in 1879, eighteen years later. Furthermore, the Union pensions were annual and increased throughout the years, while Alabama distributed pensions only in the years that the state allocated funds, with no permanent structure for over a decade longer.<sup>10</sup>

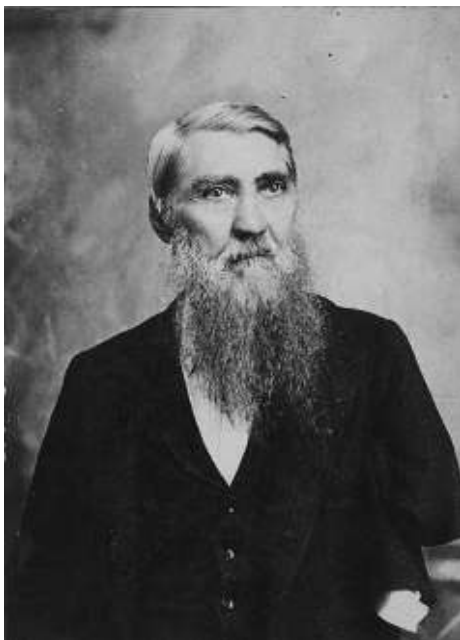
Although the state had expanded the number of applicants eligible for relief to include both those who had lost an arm and the blind, it had still not recognized the problem associated with the mass of soldiers whose wounds were not as obvious. This was a problem throughout the country, as citizens struggled to accept disabilities that did not directly correlate with common injuries sustained during war. Even the medical profession, in addition to regular citizens, was

unable to define the ailments of the increasing number of men who began to apply for pensions based on vaguely described conditions. This problem continued to show itself in Alabama even with the passing of yet another act. In 1881, the state allocated an additional \$15,000 to anyone who had lost a limb and those “materially disabled by wounds,” a blatant dismissal of any veterans who suffered from vague disabilities that could not be directly attributed to their service in the war. Even with this exclusion of a large number of veterans, the number of applicants continued to rise. That year, 1,014 veterans received a share of \$14.77 each. While the federal government increased the amount of each pension throughout the years, Alabama’s pensions were actually losing value. In just two years, the number of applicants had tripled, causing the payment to decrease by more than half.<sup>11</sup> With this increase in applicants, the attempt by the state to exclude many veterans who were not in dire need of aid had failed. As a result, the state once again changed the wording of the eligibility requirement two years later. With an appropriation of \$15,000, the legislature wrote that any veteran who had lost an arm or leg, the use of an arm or leg, or received a wound that rendered him physically incapable of making a living through labor was eligible for payment. Furthermore, in order to curtail what must have appeared to the legislature as fraudulent applications, the state required for the first time a certificate from a physician to prove the authenticity of the applicant’s condition. In 1883, each of the 835 applicants, less than there were

only two years earlier, received \$17.96. The state followed the same format again in 1885 with an appropriation of \$25,000. Of this, the legislature allotted \$1,500 specifically for the blind. The applicants this year gained an average of \$15.03 each, even with the blind factored in, who received more than the regular veteran did. By this year, the allocation of pensions constituted approximately 3% of the entire state budget. The state did not completely ignore the issue of eligibility, but added an additional requirement to the applicant. In an attempt to give funds to those who needed it most, the legislature limited the funding only to those with less than \$2,000 of property in either their or their wife’s name, after deducting encumbrances. It appeared that the state was attempting to limit the number of applicants and increase the value of the pensions, but all of that changed again two years later.<sup>12</sup>

Beginning in 1887, the state increased the eligible pool of veterans to include a completely new group—those who were killed during the war. For the first time, Alabama allowed widows to collect pensions as long as their husband died in combat or of disease or wounds contracted during the war, up to twelve months after the war ended. These widows qualified for the pension if they did not remarry and their taxable property did not exceed \$1,000. The legislature allocated \$30,000 to the widows and the veterans previously eligible, with \$1,500 allotted for the blind. The number of widows who applied is evident in the increased number of applicants, more than five times the amount only four years earlier. As a result, the veterans and widows gained an even

smaller amount. The 4,258 applicants received \$6.69 each, excluding the blind, who gained \$78.94 each. This \$6.69 was less than the \$8 that the lowly private gained from the federal government 1861, twenty-six years earlier, and the private received his funds monthly. The state followed this same format again in 1889 with an appropriation of \$50,000 to veterans and widows. That year, all were eligible only if they owned less than \$400 in taxable property. Widows, however, were now qualified if their husband died within five years of the end of the war. With this act, \$1,200 of the funds went to the blind, as long as their gross income per year did not exceed \$1,000. With the increased funds, the amount given to



Captain James M. K. Guinn served in Company K of the 13th Alabama Infantry, C.S.A. Guinn enlisted out of Montgomery and lost his left arm during the Battle of Gaines's Mill on June 27, 1862. (Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL)

each applicant increased by nearly double to \$12.16, with the blind receiving \$48 each. The amount of funding allocated, while it increased every year, did not constitute a higher percentage of the budget, but decreased to only 1.8%.<sup>13</sup>

Starting in 1891, thirty years after the start of the war and the creation of the Union pension system, the format of the pensions in Alabama again considerably changed. While the system had developed into a form of direct payments instead of the distribution of limbs, it was still not permanent and only allotted to the veterans when the legislature passed a new act, which occurred every two years. This required an unwarranted amount of work by the legislature and an obligation to obtain the funds every other year when the chambers met. With the passing of the 1891 act, however, all of this changed. From this point on, the application would be renewable on an annual basis. While the veteran or widow still had to apply yearly, the legislature passed the act for the duration of six years. All veterans who had lost a limb, the use of a limb, or received a wound that rendered them unable to earn a livelihood through labor were qualified, as well as widows whose husbands died within five years of the war, as long as their taxable property did not exceed \$600. Furthermore, the legislation enacted a special tax to fund the revised pension system. The tax was on property and constituted one-half of one mill on each dollar annually. Of

this tax, \$1,200 would be set aside annually for the relief of the blind. This tax eventually developed into a permanent tax and is still collected even today. The first year after its passage, the state collected \$135,879.04 in special taxes, which constituted 8.4% of the receipts collected that year, a tremendous increase in the percentage of the budget now available for use as pension payments. The first distributions of the new tax went out to 4,982 pensioners in 1892. The new legislation, while improved, remained imperfect. One issue with the new tax was the amount of work required by the state auditor. As Alabama's first large special tax, the law was rough and not well thought-out, requiring that the state auditor write out separate warrants for each of the almost 5,000 applicants. As such, the pension program continued to evolve for decades more.<sup>14</sup>

Alabama residents continue to pay the property tax established to fund pensions for disabled veterans in 1891 even though the last Confederate widow, Alberta Martin, died in 2004. Today, these taxes maintain the Confederate Memorial Park. The park is at the site of the Confederate Soldiers Home, founded in 1902 as a residence for disabled and aging veterans who could not care for themselves. The Home closed in 1939, but the site remains as a memorial for the state's Confederate veterans. Annually, the tax still raises \$400,000, an extraordinary amount for a historical park to collect, especially with the recent budget cuts that have stripped many historical sites of crucial funding. In 2011, a controversy emerged as State Representative Alvin Holmes began an ultimately unsuccessful

drive to allocate the funds away from the park. When the Director of the Confederate Memorial Park, Bill Rambo, heard of the news, he argued that the park should continue to receive the pension money because "If it wasn't for the way we're funded, this story wouldn't be told. The kids in school are only getting one side—the winner's side." Whether this statement is true or not, the story of the Confederate veterans and that of the welfare programs that supported them after the war live on through the park and the taxes that support it.<sup>15</sup>



## Notes

- 1 Kathleen Gorman, "Confederate Pensions as Social Welfare," in *Before the New Deal: Social Welfare in the South, 1830-1930*, ed. Elna C. Green (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1999), 25-39.
- 2 James Marten, *Sing Not War: The Lives of Union & Confederate Veterans in Gilded Age America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 16-17.
- 3 William W. White, *The Confederate Veteran*, (Tuscaloosa: Confederate Publishing Company, 1962), 72; Clyde E. Wilson, "Report on Artificial Limbs," November 4, 1937, State Auditor, Confederate Pensioners' Records, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL; Acts of Alabama, 1866-1867, No. 643.
- 4 R. B. Rosenburg, *Living Monuments: Confederate Soldiers' Homes in the New South*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), p. 14, 31; Wilson, "Report on Artificial Limbs"; Auditor's Files, "Application for Artificial Limb," Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL.
- 5 Wilson, "Report on Artificial Limbs"; Sarah W. Wiggins, *The Scalawag in Alabama Politics: 1865-1881*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1977), 66-67; Acts of Alabama, 1872, No. 17.
- 6 William W. White, *The Confederate Veteran*, 80-86.
- 7 Acts of Alabama 1875, No. 53; Auditor's Files, "Application for Artificial Limb," Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL; Wilson, "Report on Artificial Limbs."
- 8 Acts of Alabama 1876, No. 149; Auditor's Files, "Application for Artificial Limb;" Acts of Alabama 1877.
- 9 Alabama State Auditor, Annual Reports, 1870-1892. Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL; Marten, *Sing Not War*, 82; Acts of Alabama 1879, No. 23-24.
- 10 Acts of Alabama 1879, No. 23-24; Alabama State Auditor, Annual Reports, 1870-1892; Marten, *Sing Not War*, 16.
- 11 James Marten, *Sing Not War*, 84; Acts of Alabama 1881, No. 20; Alabama State Auditor, Annual Reports, 1870-1892.
- 12 Acts of Alabama 1883, No. 109 and 1885, No. 95; Alabama State Auditor, Annual Reports, 1870-1892.
- 13 Acts of Alabama 1887, No. 23 and 1889, No. 96; Alabama State Auditor, Annual Reports, 1870-1892.
- 14 Acts of Alabama 1891, No. 286; Alabama State Auditor, Annual Report 1891, p. 6-35; Alabama State Auditor, Annual Report 1892, 3-25. The figures found in the Auditor's Annual Reports are often contradictory and confusing. As such, the most logical numbers are chosen and the overall thesis of this essay is not affected.
- 15 "Confederate History Park Unscathed in Budget Battle," *Anniston Star*, March 31, 2011.



# Politics and Rehabilitation: Governor George Wallace and His Physical Therapist at the 1972 Democratic National Convention

Tracy Bruce Wilson



Judith Cantey working with Governor George Wallace after the 1972 assassination attempt. The August 28, 1972 issue of Newsweek featured a similar photograph in an article about Wallace's physical therapy titled "Why Wallace's Recovery Lags." (Roy Smith, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL)

On June 11, 1963, when Governor George Corley Wallace made his famous "Stand in the Schoolhouse Door" in an attempt to prevent two black students from enrolling at the University of Alabama, Wallace was well on his way to fulfilling a vow that he made some five years earlier to never be "out-niggered again."<sup>1</sup> Following his defeat by John Patterson in Alabama's 1958 gubernatorial election, Wallace adopted a hard-line segregationist stance that would assure his election as the state's forty-fifth governor in 1962. So strong was Wallace's appeal among Alabamians that he was elected governor three more times: in 1970, 1974, and 1982. When term restrictions prohibited him from seeking re-election in 1966, he offered his wife Lurleen, who became the state's forty-sixth and only female governor, as his stand-in. Hence Wallace dominated Alabama's political scene for nearly twenty-five years.

Unlike most southern demagogues, whose racist rhetoric kept them bound to a southern audience, Wallace possessed the unique ability to appeal to the masses by skillfully exploiting

fears and prejudices that were common among white conservatives throughout the nation. By combining controversial issues like integration, communism, and anti-war sentiments—all considered threats to the country’s moral fiber—Wallace succeeded in broadening his political influence beyond the South. Armed with fierce determination to rescue the country from moral decline and ignite a return to “traditional” American values, Wallace mounted four campaigns for the United States presidency. Although he lost all four bids, earning the distinction “the most influential loser in twentieth century American politics,” historian Dan Carter maintains that it was Wallace’s “manipulation of racial and social issues in the 1960s and 1970s that laid the foundation for the dominance of the Republican party” in the years that followed.<sup>2</sup>

On May 15, 1972, while campaigning in Laurel, Maryland, during his third presidential bid, Wallace was shot five times by deranged gunman Arthur Bremer, leaving him paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. By the time of the assassination attempt, the major civil rights legislation had been passed and Wallace had re-crafted his message to appeal to voters all over the country who did not like the changes coming about as a result of forced integration. By capitalizing on the busing issue, which involved transporting students away from neighborhood schools in an attempt to desegregate school districts, Wallace won favor with a segment of the white population which came to be known as “the silent majority.” At the time he was shot, Governor Wallace

had won an impressive victory in the Florida primary and made a good showing in the overall popular vote. He won primaries in Maryland and Michigan the day after the assassination attempt. His strength as a serious presidential contender had been demonstrated, but his inability to campaign after being shot effectively ended his bid for the presidency in 1972.<sup>3</sup>

Despite having been shot in mid-May, Governor Wallace was able to attend the 1972 Democratic National Convention in Miami, Florida during the second week in July. Among the team of medical professionals called upon to accompany the Alabama governor to the convention was physical therapist and Montgomery native Judith Cantey. On May 15, 2012, forty years after the assassination attempt, I had the honor of talking with Ms. Cantey concerning her role as Governor Wallace’s therapist and its impact on her life.

### **Tracy Wilson’s interview with Judith Cantey, May 15, 2012**

**TW:** I am sitting here with Judith Cantey who had the opportunity to be the late Governor George Wallace’s physical therapist in 1972 following the assassination attempt on his life. We are going to talk about her experience with Governor Wallace and she is going to share with us details of that time. I think that it is significant that we are sitting here forty years later to discuss how the assassination attempt impacted Judith’s life. Judith, I’d like to begin by asking you to tell us a bit about yourself—

where you are from and things of that nature.

**JC:** I am a native Alabamian born in Montgomery. After high school I went away to college, first to Duke University and then to Columbia University, where I studied physical therapy and became a physical therapist fifty years ago. After college I worked as a physical therapist at Duke Hospital and earned my master's degree in public health from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. I worked in a large rehabilitation center in California before coming back to Alabama as the Director of Physical Therapy Clinical Services at the University of Alabama Hospitals and Clinics in January 1972. I was in my office at Spain Rehabilitation Center forty years ago on the afternoon of May 15, 1972, when I heard the news that Governor Wallace had been shot at a shopping center in Laurel, Maryland while he was campaign for president.

**TW:** Fascinating. Judith, you grew up in Montgomery and lived through the racial tensions of the 1950s and 60s here in the Deep South and were very familiar with Governor Wallace's bold stand against racial equality. Would you mind talking about how you felt when you would hear some of his bold statements and see some of his actions during the 1960s?

**JC:** I went to high school in the fifties and graduated in 1958, so I was in Montgomery at the time of the bus boycott, but that was before George Wallace became governor. I lived in North

Carolina during most of the sixties. Of course I was very aware of who Governor Wallace was from the national news and from frequent trips home to visit my parents. I remember that the first thing people would say when they found out I was from Alabama was "so you are from George Wallace's state?" Alabama was on the map as the most volatile state in resisting integration and Governor Wallace carried the torch for the most inflammatory rhetoric on the subject. His words unleashed some very cruel and ugly things in Alabama whether or not he issued direct orders related to the brutality of those events. Everyone is familiar with the images of the church bombing in Birmingham where four little girls were killed, the state troopers using brutal force against the Selma voting rights march at the bridge, and the dogs and fire hoses turned on the children and young people marching for civil rights in Birmingham. George Wallace opened his tenure as governor in 1963 with his "segregation today, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever" speech. I was ashamed for my state. I cannot say that I was a political activist, but I knew that the time had come to face up to the fact that segregation was wrong. It was plain to see when I was growing up in Montgomery that "separate but equal" was not the way things were. I was inspired by Martin Luther King's message about God's justice that came straight from the Bible. It was time to live up to our country's claims of

justice and equality for all. Governor Wallace used his political gifts and talents to stir up hate and to resist full equality for black citizens.

**TW:** So when did you find out that you would be involved in caring for Governor Wallace?

**JC:** The thought ran through my mind when I first heard the news that Governor Wallace had been shot in the abdomen. From my experience in working with patients with spinal cord injuries, I was aware that gunshot wounds to the abdomen, especially at close range, can result in serious injury to the spinal cord. As the news unfolded, it came out that Governor Wallace had suffered a spinal cord injury and was paralyzed from the waist down. Spain Rehabilitation Center had just received a federal grant to become a regional spinal cord injury treatment center. So it did occur to me that the governor could end up coming to Spain for rehabilitation and that I would be involved in some way. It was late in June before I found out that a physician, one of the physiatrists from Spain Rehabilitation Center, and I would be flying to Maryland to be part of the medical team accompanying Governor Wallace to the 1972 Democratic Convention in Miami in early July.

**TW:** So Governor Wallace was actually never treated at the University Hospital in Birmingham?

**JC:** Not until after the convention.

**TW:** O.K.

**JC:** When he left the convention, he came straight to Birmingham where he entered Spain Rehabilitation Center soon thereafter.

**TW:** So you and the physician from Spain Rehabilitation Center were chosen to go to him.

**JC:** Yes. After Governor Wallace had been in

the hospital in Maryland for six or seven weeks, he wanted to go to Miami and be part of the convention in some way. He held some strong political cards from impressive wins in the primaries before and after he was shot. His effort to go was remarkable considering how sick he had been and that he had sustained an injury that had drastically and permanently changes his life. The physiatrist and I were flown to Maryland on the state jet along with some of Governor Wallace's staff members and a few Wallace family members, including his youngest child and daughter Lee, who was only eleven years old at the time. We arrived in Maryland in the evening and were taken to the motel where the state troopers who served as the governor's security team had been staying for over a month. We were to leave the following morning with Governor Wallace and his large entourage. There were eight on his medical team alone, including three nurses and the governor's surgeon and cardiologist from Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, Maryland, the physiatrist and me from Spain Rehabilitation Center in Birmingham, and his personal physician from Montgomery. The plan was to make a touch down in Montgomery and then fly on to Miami.

**TW:** So you actually did not meet Governor Wallace until the following day when you traveled to Miami?

**JC:** That's right, but I had an encounter with the governor's security team that first night. It was late as I was settling into my room when I received a phone call from a man from Governor Wallace's security team telling me to come to a certain room number for a security check. I was

skeptical and wondered why I would need a security check, but I dutifully got myself together and went to the room. The room was full of the governor's security guards and one reporter whom I recognized from ABC network news. It looked as if they had been camped out there for weeks. There were old liter size Pepsi bottles, half empty peanut butter jars, and loaves of bread in the room. One of the men asked to see my driver's license. I became worried as I had been living in Alabama for over six months and still had a California driver's license. There I was, a young woman with long red hair and a California driver's license who was supposed to be the Director of Physical Therapy Clinical Services at the University Medical Center in Birmingham.

**TW:** (Laughs)

**JC:** I got kind of scared thinking that they may really be suspicious of my credentials, although I suspected that they were enjoying teasing me. It was near midnight and the ABC news reporter broke in and said, "It's late and we all have to leave early in the morning. Miss Cantey needs to go and get some rest."

**TW:** That's funny. So what was it like the next day when you met Governor Wallace for the first time? Do you remember?

**JC:** I remember it perfectly. He was still in bed in his hospital room when we met. Even though he had been so sick, I was impressed with how quickly he summoned his energy and projected

a forceful presence to meet his physical therapist. I vividly remember something that he said to me. He looked straight at me and said, "Don't ever marry a politician." I knew he was thinking of his own situation. He was married to Cornelia, his second wife, at that time. She was one year older than me and twenty years younger than Governor Wallace. She and I were in high school at Sidney Lanier at the same time. His first wife Lurleen, the mother of his four children, died in 1968 while she was serving as governor of Alabama.

**TW:** Interesting. So after meeting Governor Wallace, you were off to the 1972 Democratic Convention in Miami. Was it an exciting time?

**JC:** I spent most of the time in Miami in the suite that I shared with the three nurses from Maryland. I had always thought that having room service was a luxury, but after a week of meals from room service, I had had enough to last a lifetime. There was not even 24-7 cable news back then for keeping up with what was happening hour by hour in the world outside, so I was more or less in the dark about what was going on at the convention.

**TW:** Tell me about the trip to Miami.

**JC:** The trip to the convention started when we all boarded an Air Force ambulance plane that President Nixon had made available for Wallace. I guess that Nixon was no longer worried that Governor Wallace would be a threat to his reelection. We had to touch down in Montgomery for Wallace to resume the governorship because

he had been out of the state for over twenty days and by law, the lieutenant governor had assumed the role of governor. When we landed at Dannelly Field I could see a big crowd gathered around a platform on the tarmac. I wondered how Governor Wallace would muster the strength to speak to this crowd. It took four men to carry him down the steps of the plane in his wheelchair and lift him onto the platform. I could see him through the window of the plane. He was dressed in a suit and sitting very erect in his wheelchair. Then I began to hear his voice over the loud speaker. He sounded like his old self, but you could hear the emotion in his voice. I think that he was a person who drew energy from his audience, from his supporters. He was rallying for the occasion.

**TW:** What was the atmosphere like when you landed in Miami?

**JC:** It felt like I was entering an armed camp. I had never seen so much security. It was easy to spot the Secret Service agents in their dark suits and sun glasses. A man with a walkie-talkie came up and told me to proceed to the green Mercury. Not being a person who recognized car makes and models easily, I just headed for the first green car that I saw and it turned out to be the right one. So the three nurses from Maryland and I and Governor Wallace's chief of staff, who was driving, took off lickety-split as the motorcade suddenly headed for the freeway. Helicopters were hovering over every overpass. Police motorcycles were whizzing beside us. I felt like I was in a high stakes chase scene from a movie. The eyes of the world were starting to focus on Miami and there was a lot of tension in

the air. It was a turbulent time in our country. The protest movement against the war in Vietnam was getting stronger by the day. Being in that motorcade made me realize that I was involved in something that was playing out on a very big stage that I had never experienced before.

**TW:** At such an early stage in your career, to be considered to provide physical therapy services to the governor of the state must have been intimidating as well as perhaps flattering. Can you elaborate on how you handled this? Were you nervous? How did you feel being in that role?

**JC:** Before I moved back to Alabama I worked in an excellent spinal cord injury program at a rehabilitation center in California, so I had a lot of experience working with patients who were paralyzed from spinal cord injuries. After my initial encounter with Governor Wallace, I felt more relaxed. I was able to see a more personal side of him, not the menacing public persona I knew from the news. This was a health care situation and I was in the role of Governor Wallace's physical therapist. My professional code of ethics states that I not allow any personal biases, including my political views, to interfere with the patient care that I provide. Our code of ethics is also clear about confidentiality. Honoring the confidentiality of my patient/therapist relationship with Governor Wallace is very important to me, including what I say in this interview.

**TW:** So how did you proceed when you first got to Miami?

**JC:** I was responsible for setting up a treatment area in the governor's suite and initiating his physical therapy program. I called around and



was able to borrow some equipment from a local physical therapy clinic. I needed a large treatment mat to use for mat exercises and transfer training activities. Two men from the Wallace campaign had a truck and they went out to pick up the mat. When they got back to the hotel and were trying to put the big mat on the freight elevator, all of a sudden they were surrounded by Secret Service agents who said, "This thing has to go to the bomb room for screening." Of course, no bomb was found, but the episode showed me how much tension there was around me. A 72-man contingent of Secret Service agents, basically twenty-four per eight hour shift, was assigned to Governor Wallace alone. Remember, by 1972 the United States had experienced three political assassinations in less than a decade, not including the attempt on Governor Wallace's life.

**TW:** At the time when you were providing physical therapy services for Governor Wallace, what did you think his chances were of ever regaining the use of his legs?

**JC:** I think that the physicians in Maryland had more or less told him that there was little chance that he would regain the use of his legs. But there is always hope in every case, and especially early on. I think that Governor Wallace turned his focus to returning to the political arena and sort of put coming to grips with the possibility of being a paraplegic for the rest of his life on hold, which in a way was a kind of denial that is very often

associated with this kind of devastating injury in the beginning. In the time we worked together in Miami, I felt that we needed to emphasize the training that was important for him to be able to function independently from a wheelchair such as arm and trunk strengthening, sitting balance, lower extremity flexibility, and transfer training. The governor was fitted with long leg braces when he was in Maryland, but gait training was deferred until he started his physical therapy program at Spain Rehabilitation Center. For a patient without muscle control or sensation from the hips down, walking with braces is extremely difficult and energy consuming. For most patients with the same level of paralysis as Governor Wallace, walking with braces and crutches is not a feasible functional goal. We did have daily therapy sessions during the time we were in Miami. Governor Wallace was very motivated; he worked hard on the therapy program. I doubt that there were many other politicians at the convention who were working out a couple of hours a day. However, as the days wore on, his stamina declined and he admitted that he was not feeling well. The attending doctors thought that the governor was worn out from all the activity related to the convention.

**TW:** How old was Governor Wallace when he was shot?

**JC:** He was 52 and in excellent shape. His surgeon said he had the cardiovascular system

of a man in his thirties. Governor Wallace had always been athletic. He was a competitive boxer when he was young. Unfortunately, when I worked with him in Miami he was already beginning to have the pain in his flank that would plague him until the day he died. This kind of pain develops in some patients as a result of scar tissue, especially in patients like Governor Wallace who were shot in the gut. I read years later that Governor Wallace said, "If only I could get rid of the pain, I can take the paralysis."

**TW:** Wow. I've seen footage of the demonstrations surrounding the 1972 convention, mainly the anti-war protests. Were you aware of what was happening outside the convention?

**JC:** The truth is that from the time I entered the situation in Maryland until I got back to Birmingham over a week later, I was more or less in a bubble. But I will say that I was aware of a lot of activity in our hotel lobby that was indirectly related to the convention. There were vendors showing off new model wheelchairs and other equipment for paraplegics and quadriplegics. The most outlandish item that I saw was a huge upholstered chair, covered with gold lame vinyl and mounted on a frame with wheels. It was a tacky, faux gold



George Wallace giving his speech at the 1972 Democratic National Convention in Miami less than two months after an assassination attempt left him paralyzed from the waist down. (Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, AL)

throne that rolled! Members of the press were everywhere in the hotel waiting to find someone who would give them a scoop on Governor Wallace's condition. I saw the author Norman Mailer, who was on assignment from Life magazine, sitting on the bench beside the elevator on our floor and watching the politicians come and go from the Wallace suite. The one time that I did leave the hotel was when the physiatrist and I were asked to come to the convention center to offer suggestions for the height of the platform that they were building so that Governor Wallace could be seen from behind the podium when he addressed the convention. I was watching television the night of the governor's speech and saw him lose his balance and lunge forward as the Secret Service agents and state troopers lifted him onto the platform, but Governor Wallace had on a seat belt and was quick enough to catch himself on the podium. I could see that the platform was too high. It's a good thing that he never needed notes because he was too far up to be able to

read anything on the podium. Governor Wallace did not lose a beat and launched into his speech warning that the party would lose the election if it did not change its platform to be more in line with the concerns of the majority of the

American people.

**TW:** Did you continue to work with Governor Wallace when he was at Spain Rehabilitation Center?

**JC:** When we got back to Birmingham, the governor was diagnosed with an acute abdominal abscess. This explained why he had started to feel bad and experienced a decrease in stamina while we were in Miami. He had to have surgery related to the abscess. After he recovered from the surgery, he began his rehabilitation program at Spain. I resumed my administrative duties and Governor Wallace's daily therapy was turned over to my colleagues on the physical therapy clinical staff. I noticed a very sensitive side of Governor Wallace while he was at Spain Rehabilitation Center. When he met the young patients who were also paralyzed from spinal cord injuries—some from the neck down—it disturbed him to think that they had become disabled so young and would miss out on so much in life. When he returned to Montgomery, he lost no time in making sure that provisions were made for patients in the state with spinal cord injuries to receive all of the equipment and supplies that they needed for their care. He maintained a lifelong friendship with some of the young people he met at Spain.

**TW:** So you were able to see a different side of Governor Wallace?

**JC:** Yes, totally.

**TW:** Did it change your opinion of him?

**JC:** I had seen a tender side of him in his interactions with his family. It underscored for me that people can wear many masks; the public and the private face can be so different in some people that it hardly seems possible that it could be the same person.

**TW:** This helped you to be able to render the services that you were called upon to do, to be able to realize that Governor Wallace was not the monster that he showed himself to be to the public.

**JC:** That's true. It's a privilege to be a physical therapist because you often have the opportunity to help someone when they are at their most vulnerable. In Governor Wallace's case, he was a strong, vibrant man at the peak of his political power when he was shot down. I saw the governor on several occasions after his initial rehabilitation. Life did not get easier for him, but I believe that he truly found peace in his soul. He lived for twenty-six more years after the assassination attempt. I recently went to hear Governor Wallace's son talk about the book he has written about his father, Governor George Wallace: *The Man You Never Knew*. He says that his father's brush with death and the suffering he endured from the effects of the gunshot wounds changed his father in profound ways. He said that his father's faith in God was strengthened and he sought forgiveness from some of the many who had been harmed by the politics he espoused in the sixties. Governor

Wallace even wrote a letter to his would-be assassin, Arthur Bremer, telling him that he had forgiven him, but he never got a response. Being Governor Wallace's physical therapist was a once in a lifetime kind of experience for me. His story can be an inspiration to all who look at the full arc of Wallace's life, beyond the years of what historian Dan T. Carter aptly called Wallace's "politics of rage," to the long and often painful journey after the assassination attempt which eventually led George Wallace to experience the power of forgiveness and the wisdom of humility. TW: You seem to have taken many valuable lessons from this experience and I'm honored to have you share them with us. Students preparing to enter the workforce can definitely benefit from your example of professionalism, which is truly commendable. Thank you so much.



AUM student Tracy Wilson speaking with Judith Cantey forty years after she accompanied Governor George Wallace to the Democratic National Convention in Miami. (Ryan Blocker)

## Notes

1 Dan Carter, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, The Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 96.

2 Carter, 468; John Anderson, "Former governor shaped politics of Alabama, nation," *Huntsville Times*, September 14, 1998.

3 Carter, 415-448.

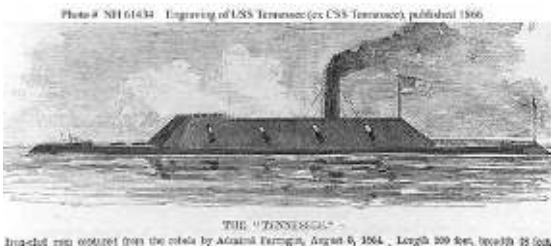


# The C.S.S. Tennessee at the Battle of Mobile Bay

Brian Wesley

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A Summer 2012 graduate of AUM's History Department, **Brian Jameson Wesley** attributes his interest in history to the insight it offers into cultures and periods that are not our own. He wrote this paper for Dr. Ben Severance's Historical Methods class, in which students learn the correct process by which to write an historical essay. Brian chose his subject due to his interest in armored warfare and the importance of the ironclad warship.



THE "TENNESSEE" -  
Iron-clad war vessel from the photo by Admiral Farragut, August 5, 1864. Length 309 feet, breadth 35 feet.  
C.S.S. Tennessee (Library of Congress)

On the afternoon of August 5, 1864, the future of naval warfare came face to face with its past. That day, the Confederate ironclad C.S.S. Tennessee single-handedly engaged more than a dozen Union ships in the great naval showdown at Mobile Bay, Alabama. The Tennessee was a vital part of the Confederate attempt to defend Mobile Bay. As a prime example of the Confederacy's naval ingenuity, the Tennessee was far superior to traditional wooden ships. The ironclad's innovative technology, however, proved ineffective due to several design flaws that limited its potential. Despite these flaws, and its eventual defeat, the Tennessee validated the superiority of iron vessels over wooden ones, and introduced a new era in the design of warships.

In the years leading up to the American Civil War, the economic systems of the northern and southern regions of the United States differed considerably. The North based its economy primarily on the manufacturing of goods, while the South focused on cotton agriculture. When war broke out, the Confederacy faced a tremendous disadvantage in the manufacturing of war material. To prevent the Confederacy from importing necessary resources, the Union devised a plan to strangle the southern and eastern coasts of the continent.

Dubbed the Anaconda Plan, it called for a blockade of southern ports from the Chesapeake Bay to the Mississippi River, hoping to prevent war materials from other countries entering the South. Up until August 5, 1864, the plan had succeeded and after the fall of New Orleans, Mobile Bay became the South's last remaining port in the Gulf of Mexico, setting the stage for a final standoff between the two rival navies.<sup>1</sup>

The port at Mobile Bay was a major center for blockade running. Ships, whether part of the Confederate Navy or freelance, made the three-hour trip from Mobile to Havana, Cuba, exchanging cotton for military and civilian supplies. This trip was no pleasure cruise to begin with and the Union blockade only increased in strength as the war continued. While dangerous, the risk was well worth the reward and the money made from blockade running brought a diverse array of crews to Mobile. "Some of the blockade runners were patriots who wished to aid the Confederacy, but many were in the business only for money, and the made profits equal their risk." Despite numerous successful attempts in breaking past the Union blockade, the Confederacy gained very little. The blockade-runners' designed their ships for speed, not cargo capacity, so even when a ship slipped past the blockade it only returned with a small amount of cargo. Thus, if the Confederacy was to import more material, the Union blockade needed to be broken or partially opened.<sup>2</sup>

The Confederacy hoped to use the ironclads to break the Union blockade. The C.S.S. Tennessee was a prototype vessel developed to

help balance the numbers deficit between the Union and Confederate navies. Having little hope of matching Union shipbuilding, the Confederacy saw the ironclad as its best chance to break the blockade and defend its coast. Confederate Secretary of the Navy Stephen Mallory said, "I regard the possession of an iron-armored ship as a matter of the first necessity. Such a vessel at this time could traverse the entire coast of the United States and prevent all blockades." Along with breaking the blockade, Mallory wanted the ironclads to play a major role in river defense. On May 10, 1861, the Confederate Congress set aside two million dollars for purchasing and building ironclad warships in England. Later in 1861, Mallory convened with Confederate naval officers Lieutenant John M. Brooke, Chief Engineer William P. Williamson, and Constructor John L. Porter to discuss how the Confederates could begin constructing ironclads for river and harbor defense. The Confederates built their first, the C.S.S. Virginia, from the remains of the U.S. frigate Merrimack. When Union forces fled Norfolk, Virginia in the spring of 1861, they set the Merrimack on fire, hoping to make it useless to the Confederates. The ship, however, only burned to the waterline and its boiler remained intact. Recommissioned as the C.S.S. Virginia, the ironclad fought in the famous Battle of Hampton Roads, Virginia on March 8, 1862. The day before her clash with the U.S.S. Monitor, the Virginia proved the superiority of ironclads over wooden ships by destroying the U.S.S. Cumberland and U.S.S. Congress and badly damaging the U.S.S. Minnesota.<sup>3</sup>



With the success of their ironclad at Hampton Roads, the Confederacy began building more of the ships. They built the hull of the C.S.S. Tennessee near Selma, Alabama. Selma provided a good location for shipbuilding because of its proximity to the Alabama River and by this time had become a large navy shipyard. While the ship had iron armor, the hull was made of wood (oak and yellow pine) cut from the area surrounding Selma. The dimensions of the Tennessee measured 209 feet long by 48 feet wide and a shield provided protection for her gun batteries and crew. The shield was 78 feet 8 inches long and 8 feet high, and of an advanced design. Instead of angling the shield at 90 degrees, straight up and down, it was set at an angle of 33 degrees, exponentially increasing the armor's effectiveness. When hit by a projectile, the shield deflected it up and away, redirecting its energy and thus causing less damage to the vessel. This defensive capability later proved vital in the Tennessee's efforts during the Battle of Mobile Bay. Efforts to armor the Tennessee, however, were arduous. Iron was both a precious and scarce wartime commodity. The Confederates used two methods for armoring their vessels. The first method involved rolling iron into 2-inch thick sheets, which were then stacked in layers up to three deep. Another method entailed attaching railroad ties to the side of the ship. Although not as effective as plate

armor, the material was easier to find. In 1863, iron was so scarce that the Confederacy had to choose which ironclad to give armor. They gave the Tennessee priority over another planned ironclad, C.S.S. Nashville, because it was closer to completion and available for action sooner.<sup>4</sup>



7-Inch Brooke Rifle (City of Selma Historical Site; Photograph by Tim and Renda Carr; HMdb.org)

The weapon systems of the Tennessee were just as impressive as its armor. Designers armed the vessel with two 7-inch Brooke guns, one positioned on the bow of the vessel and the other on its stern. Furthermore, the Tennessee had four 6.4-inch rifled guns on each broadside. Also manufactured in Selma, Alabama, the Brooke rifle was an impressive weapon. In one test, the cannon “fired a projectile through an iron target eight inches thick.” This muzzle-loading weapon was “made of wrought iron or semi-steel and double-hooped with tremendous external bands from breech to trunnions. The bores of the rifled guns were cut with a system of spiral ‘inclined planes,’ a cross-section of which was something like saw teeth, instead of the usual lands and grooves in

rifled guns.” This meant that the guns were both accurate and very strong. John M. Brooke, head of the Southern Ordinance and Hydrographic Bureau, designed these guns. Having served on the ironclad *Virginia*, as well as commanding the vessel after the battle at Hampton Roads, Brooke was well qualified to design weapons that best served the needs of an ironclad warship. Under Brooke’s supervision, Selma produced seventy-three rifled and smoothbore Brooke guns and sent fifty-three of these to Mobile, Alabama. While there is no record showing its use, the *Tennessee* also had the capability of venting hot steam from the boiler onto its deck, an excellent way to repel any unwanted boarders on the ship.<sup>5</sup>

Even though the ship’s armor and guns were first-rate, the propulsion systems of the *Tennessee* were severely inadequate. This deficiency was one of this ironclad’s greatest flaws. As with most other Confederate ironclads, high pressure, reciprocating steam engines powered the *Tennessee*. A fire boiled water into steam, which then turned the ship’s screw propellers. The engine and fire room for the engines was poorly ventilated, and therefore extremely hot. The *Tennessee* was also extremely slow due to its underpowered propulsion system. Her maximum speed was about six knots, painfully slow when compared to the thirteen knots of her nemesis, the Union flagship *Hartford*. When confronted with this problem, designer Constructor Porter simply said “. . . [His] model was not calculated to have much speed, but it was intended for harbor defense only.” However, this lack of speed was an Achilles heel for the *Tennessee* as

its main purpose was to be a ramming vessel.<sup>6</sup>



Admiral Franklin Buchanan (Library of Congress)

The man in charge of the Confederate defenses in Mobile Bay was Admiral Franklin Buchanan. Buchanan, like many other officers in the Confederacy, began his military career with the Union. In 1815, he enlisted in the United States Navy at the age of fifteen. He started out as a midshipman but soon earned a promotion to lieutenant and later to commander. Buchanan helped organize the U.S. Naval Academy and served as its first superintendent in 1845. After two years in this position, Buchanan participated in several naval expeditions around the world. In the Mexican-American War, he served as commander of the *USS Germantown*. In 1853, in an attempt to open trade between Japan and the United States, Buchanan accompanied Matthew Perry, serving as commander of the fleet’s flagship, the *U.S.S. Susquehanna*. On the eve of the Civil War, however, Buchanan assumed that his home state of Maryland would soon secede from the Union. In anticipation of this,

Buchanan offered his resignation to Secretary of the Navy Gideon Wells on April 22, 1861. He described it as “the most unpleasant duty I have ever performed.” It turned out that Maryland did not secede and Buchanan attempted to withdraw his resignation, but Secretary Wells rejected his request. Thus, in August 1861, Buchanan entered the Confederate States Navy.

Buchanan initially served as flag officer overseeing the defense of the James River and Chesapeake Bay. The flagship of these forces was the ironclad C.S.S. Virginia, which Buchanan skippered personally. On the day the Virginia sank the U.S.S. Cumberland and Congress, a rifle ball seriously wounded Buchanan during the battle. After the Congress ran aground, her captain surrendered. Union troops began firing on the Virginia from the shore. Believing that the U.S.S. Congress had fired at Confederate forces after surrendering, Buchanan “seized a musket from the ship’s small arms locker, put the weapon to his shoulder and fired at the offending Yankee infantry, particularly the officers who had ordered the gross breach of the rules of war.” Buchanan continued to fire at the Union infantry on into the evening until return fire struck Buchanan in the left leg, preventing him from actively participating in the battle against the Monitor the next day. It was clear that Franklin Buchanan was not a man worth trifling with. In August 1862, Buchanan earned a promotion to

full admiral, making him the highest-ranking officer in the Confederate States Navy. The next month Buchanan took command of the Mobile Squadron with the Tennessee as his flagship and for two months worked to make improvements.<sup>7</sup>



Admiral David Glasgow Farragut  
(Library of Congress)

The commander of the Union Navy at the Battle of Mobile Bay was Admiral David Glasgow Farragut. Farragut was born in Tennessee in 1801 and enlisted in the Union Navy very early in his life. Much like his Confederate counterpart, Farragut earned a promotion to midshipman at a young age. At less than ten years of age, Farragut served aboard the U.S.S. Essex. Two years later, he fought in the War of 1812 against Great Britain. Later, he spent several years serving in the Mediterranean. When the Civil War broke out, Farragut stayed loyal to the Union, but as a southern man, had his loyalty indirectly questioned. Thus, his only job in the first few

months of the war was serving on the Navy's retirement board. Eventually, in 1862, Farragut gained control of the Union Navy's West Gulf Blockading Squadron. Capturing New Orleans and Vicksburg, the main fortifications on the Mississippi River, was his principal task. His style was bold but calculated. Biographer A.T. Mahan describes Farragut as "always sanguine and ready to take great risks for the sake of accomplishing a great result, he had a clear appreciation of the conditions necessary to success and did not confound the impracticable with the merely hazardous." This quality of taking calculated risks would serve him well in the Battle of Mobile Bay.<sup>8</sup>



Fort Morgan State Historical Site  
(National Park Service)

The strength of the opposing navies was overwhelmingly in favor of the Union. Farragut's fleet consisted of fourteen wooden vessels and four ironclads that housed approximately 5,500 sailors. The Mobile Squadron, on the other hand, had only three small wooden gunboats, the *Gaines*, *Selma*, and *Morgan*, to accompany the *Tennessee*. The number of Confederate sailors in the fleet was approximately 1,500. Thus, the Union navy outgunned the Confederate navy 177

to 22, and outmanned it 11 to 4 [see Appendix A].

The severely overmatched Confederate forces had several advantages they hoped would even the odds. Along with the C.S.S. *Tennessee*, three island fortifications, Forts Morgan, Gaines, and Powell, guarded the bay's entrance. The most formidable of the three was Fort Morgan. Built in 1834, Alabama governor Andrew B. Moore seized the star-shaped fort, designed after the style of Michelangelo and named after Revolutionary War hero Daniel Morgan, in 1861, just before Alabama formally seceded. The multi-story structure had sections cut out of its walls with cannons positioned inside with a building in the center that housed the soldiers living in the fort. The firepower of the fort was very impressive: seven 10-inch, three 8-inch, and twenty 32-pounder smoothbore cannons. There were also two 6.5-inch and four 5.8-inch rifled cannons. To augment these defenses, twenty-nine additional guns were mounted on floating batteries outside of the fort, so that in total, there were sixty-seven cannons at Fort Morgan's disposal. In the months leading up to the Battle of Mobile Bay, the Union discovered through several Confederate deserters that there were supposedly 120 to 125 cannons in the fort. This led Farragut to believe the fort was stronger than it actually was, further delaying the upcoming battle. The Confederate garrison under the command of Brigadier General Richard Page consisted of the 1<sup>st</sup> Alabama Battalion of Artillery, which included one company each from the 21<sup>st</sup> Alabama and the 1<sup>st</sup> Tennessee.<sup>9</sup>

The final line of defense at Mobile Bay was the use of underwater torpedoes. These were not like modern torpedoes, but were early and primitive sea mines. Specifically, the ones used at Mobile Bay were friction torpedoes, meant to explode whenever one made contact with a ship's hull. The torpedoes were wooden barrels filled with gunpowder that were sealed on the inside with pitch and with tar on the outside, which allowed prolonged underwater exposure while preventing the gunpowder from becoming wet. The trigger for the torpedoes was a mixture containing chlorate of potassa, sulphurets of antimony, and pulverized glass. When the trigger was struck, these ingredients mixed, causing a spark. This spark then moved to the gunpowder through a solution made of dissolved gunpowder in alcohol. The triggers were so sensitive that "a light blow with a small hammer, a stick of wood, & c., is sufficient to explode it." Two cones made of wood also attached to the barrel and helped stabilize the torpedo's position in the water, keeping the torpedo hidden from the surface. Nevertheless, Admiral Farragut knew well of the Confederate torpedo fields and ordered his



Friction/Percussion Torpedo (Library of Congress)

men to fit iron cutters on the bows of his ships.<sup>10</sup>

After capturing both New Orleans and Vicksburg, Farragut shifted his focus to Mobile Bay. Farragut's goal was to force his way into Mobile Bay with the intention of capturing the city's main forts, Morgan and Gaines. He was aware of the Confederate construction of ironclad warships and wanted to attack the forts before the enemy completed the vessels. Standing in his way, however, was Admiral Buchanan's Mobile Squadron. Farragut watched from a distance while the Confederates prepared their defenses. On May 26, 1864, he wrote to Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles:

I am watching Buchanan in the ram Tennessee; she is a formidable-looking thing. There are 4 others and 3 wooden gunboats. They say he is waiting for the 2 others to come out and attack me, and then raid upon New Orleans. Let him come; I have a fine squadron to meet him, all ready and willing. I can see his boats very industriously laying down torpedoes, so I judge that he is quite as much afraid of our going in as we are of his coming out, but I have come to the conclusion to fight the devil with fire, and therefore shall attach a torpedo to the bow of each ship and see how it will work on the rebels if they can stand blowing up any better than we can.<sup>11</sup>

In June 1864, Union General Edward Canby arrived at Mobile Bay to discuss an attack on the Confederate positions. Canby held correspondence from General William Tecumseh Sherman calling for a “strong feint or real attack [to] be made on Mobile Bay from Pascagoula in connection with Admiral Farragut’s fleet.” General Grant supported this decision and gave Canby ten thousand troops to participate in the attack. Canby and Farragut then began making plans for the joint army-navy operation. They organized teams with the mission of obtaining “detailed information concerning the various approaches to Mobile: landing sites, road conditions, availability of water, and so on.” From this information, they devised a battle plan. Farragut studied the Confederate defenses and decided to attack through a narrow passage between the minefield and Fort Morgan, a clear lane of almost five hundred yards that the Confederates used for blockade-runners entering the bay.<sup>12</sup>

Even though Farragut now had his battle plan in order, he was unable to begin the attack because his requested reinforcements had not yet arrived. Farragut needed troops to support his naval attack in order to put greater pressure on Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines as they faced invasions from both land and sea. Moreover, Farragut also wanted ironclads of his own to supplement his wooden vessels and give the attack a greater chance of success. Neither request was granted in the timeframe Farragut hoped for, however, delaying the attack until August. This gave the Confederates precious time to improve the bay’s defenses. John Coddington Kinney, a

First Lieutenant in the 13<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Infantry, served as a signal officer in Farragut’s fleet and believed that an earlier attack on Mobile Bay would have succeeded with fewer casualties.<sup>13</sup>

A few months before Canby met with Farragut, Admiral Buchanan was busy making his own preparations. The Tennessee had not yet arrived in Mobile Bay. After leaving from Selma, and in order to reach the bay, the vessel had to pass over the Dog River Bar. There was a major problem in crossing the sandbar, as the Tennessee sat thirteen feet under the waterline and the Dog River Bar was only nine feet deep. To get in the waters of Mobile Bay, the Confederates had to float the Tennessee over this obstacle. “Naval Constructor Thomas Porter conceived the idea of building heavy camels or floats, to be made fast to the sides of the ram; the surfaces in contact with the ram to conform to the model of the hull; and the camels were to contain a sufficient weight of water to counterbalance in part the weight of the vessel.” This plan, however, did not work smoothly, as workers had to ship timber for the camels ten miles upriver. The problem worsened when an accidental fire then destroyed these camels. Despite these setbacks, Admiral Buchanan, not deterred, ordered new camels built by the middle of May, and the Tennessee, with the help of two steamboats, finally arrived in the waters of Mobile Bay.<sup>14</sup>

Once the Union met Farragut’s request for reinforcements, the attack on Mobile Bay was ready to begin. On the morning of August 5, 1864, Admiral Farragut issued his battle plan and final orders to his fleet. “Strip your vessels

and prepare for the conflict. Send down all your superfluous spars and rigging. Trice up or remove the whiskers.” Farragut wanted his ships as light and fast as possible. The wooden ships placed sandbags on the deck and hung chains over the side of their ships to offer some protection from Confederate fire. The wooden ships would pair up and, with the fleet’s smaller ships on the left, attempt to pass the forts. The four monitors would move alongside the wooden ships and guard the fleet’s right flank [see Appendix B]. All vessels would wait until in range of the fort before opening fire. Once in range, the men would fire grapeshot high above Fort Morgan, raining down hot lead on the men operating its cannons. Grapeshot differed from traditional solid cannon shot, as multiple, smaller projectiles were placed in a canister, turning the cannon essentially into a large shotgun. This type of round was a very effective anti-personnel ordinance. Farragut ordered the fleet to race past Fort Morgan, traveling east of the buoy marking the Confederate torpedo beds.<sup>15</sup>

Around 6 a.m. on August 5, lookouts informed Admiral Buchanan that the Union fleet had begun stripping down its ships, a clear signal of the imminent attack. Buchanan immediately prepared the ship for battle. Fleet surgeon Daniel B. Conrad described the scene:

Jumping up, half asleep, we came on deck, and sure enough, there was the

enemy heading for the “passage” past the fort. The grand old admiral, of sixty years, with his countenance rigid and stern, showing a determination for battle in every line, then gave his only order, “Get under way, Captain Johnston; head for the leading vessel of the enemy and fight each one as they pass us.”

Buchanan’s plan was to place his Mobile Squadron on the northern side of Fort Morgan and wait for Farragut’s fleet to come near. He would then maneuver as to deliver devastating fire at the oncoming Union ships, and when close enough, ram the lead ship. Buchanan’s previous engagement at Hampton Roads showed him the strength of the ram, and he planned to repeat the maneuver against Farragut. Once in position Buchanan addressed his men, saying,

Now men, the enemy is coming, and I want you to do your duty; and you shall not have it to say when you leave this vessel that you were not near enough to the enemy, for I will meet them, and then you can fight them alongside side of their own ships; and if I fall, lay me on one side and go on with the fight, and never mind me—but whip and sink the Yankees, or fight until you sink yourselves, but do not surrender.

As the Mobile Squadron moved into position, Buchanan got his first look at the oncoming enemy fleet. The stage was set for the Battle of Mobile Bay.<sup>16</sup>

August 5, 1864, saw clear skies and an ocean that was “smooth as glass.” Admiral Farragut’s fleet, underway since 5:45 a.m., finally reached position by 6:45 a.m. Union Army signal corps officer John Coddington Kinney later described the apprehension of the coming battle. “Nearly every man had his watch in his hand awaiting the first shot. To us, ignorant of everything going on above, every minute seemed an hour, and there was a feeling of great relief when the boom of the Tecumseh’s first gun was heard.” Within a half hour both the Union fleet and Fort Morgan steadily fired shot after shot at each other from long range as the Union fleet continued its race past the fort in its predetermined order of sailing [see Appendix C]. Twenty minutes later, army signal officers gathered on the bridge of Admiral Farragut’s flagship, the Hartford. The wide formation of the Union fleet slowly entered into the Confederate defenses. These defenses, with the torpedo beds to the west and Fort Morgan to the east, essentially funneled the Union fleet into a narrow corridor of water. James Alden, the captain of the lead ship, the Brooklyn, grew worried as his ship sailed dangerously close to the torpedo beds. Furthermore, the defenses also funneled the Union monitors, which now threatened to collide with the Brooklyn. “The monitors are right ahead; we cannot go on without passing them.” Farragut immediately ordered Alden to send the monitors ahead first and then follow them into the narrow corridor.

Kinney writes, “But still the Brooklyn halted, while, to add to the horror of the situation, the monitor Tecumseh, a few hundred yards in the advance, suddenly careened to one side and almost instantly sank to the bottom, carrying with her Captain Tunis Craven and the greater part of his crew, numbering in all 114 officers and men.” Confederate surgeon Daniel Conrad watched these events unfold:

Just at that moment we expected the monitors to open fire on us, there was a halt in the progress of the enemy’s fleet. We observed that one of the monitors was apparently at a stand-still; she “lay to” for a moment, seemed to reel, then slowly disappeared into the gulf. Immediately immense bubbles of steam, as large as cauldrons, rose to the surface of the water, and only eight human beings could be seen in the turmoil.

At first, the Union sailors believed that the Tecumseh had sunk the Tennessee and began to cheer, only to discover the truth when the smoke from the cannon fire cleared—the Tecumseh had sunk, not by fire from the Confederate fleet or Fort Morgan, but from striking an underwater torpedo. The loss of the Tecumseh rests on the shoulders of its captain, Tunis Craven. Farragut’s General Order No. 11 clearly stated the fleet should enter the bay east of the buoy that marked the torpedo beds. Craven, in an attempt to engage the Tennessee before the Brooklyn cleared the narrow pass, ordered the Tecumseh to steer into the torpedo bed. Regardless, the Confederates



struck the first blow of the battle.<sup>17</sup>

“It was the supreme moment of his life, in which the scales of his fortunes wavered in the balance.” These words, written by David Farragut’s biographer A.T. Mahan, sum up the situation following the sinking of the *Tecumseh*. Farragut was in danger of losing the initiative, and his next move would not only decide the fate of his forces at Mobile Bay, but would also affect the Union war effort. As Captain Alden watched the *Tecumseh* sinking to the bottom of the gulf, he realized how close the *Brooklyn* was to the torpedo beds. Unable to maneuver east of the buoy, Alden immediately ordered the *Brooklyn* to reverse engines. Not only had the *Brooklyn* stopped, but it also now backed up into the rest of the oncoming fleet. This decision cost the Union fleet dearly. Fort Morgan and the Mobile Squadron fired mercilessly at the stationary ships, where “the most fatal work of the day was done to the fleet.” Kinney recounts the bloodbath:

The sight on deck was sickening beyond the power of words to portray. Shot after shot came through the side, mowing down the men, deluging the decks with blood, and scattering mangled fragments of humanity so thickly that it was difficult to stand on the deck, so slippery as it was. . . . One poor fellow lost both legs by a cannon-ball; as he fell he threw up both arms, just in time to have them

also carried away by another shot. Farragut needed to make a decision immediately, or the battle would be lost:

Finding that the *Brooklyn* had failed to obey his orders, the admiral hurriedly inquired of the pilot if there was sufficient depth of water for the *Hartford* to pass to the left of the *Brooklyn*. Receiving an affirmative reply, he said, “I will take the lead,” and immediately ordered the *Hartford* ahead at full speed. As he passed the *Brooklyn* a voice warned him of the torpedoes, to which he returned the contemptuous answer, “Damn the torpedoes!”

Farragut’s swift and bold decision to enter the torpedo beds certainly saved the battle for the Union. This decision could easily have led his fleet into disaster, but as his luck would have it, most of the Confederate torpedoes were duds. His fleet passed the forts and moved further into the bay, leaving only one obstacle between him and victory, Admiral Buchanan and his Mobile Squadron.<sup>18</sup>

Buchanan’s torpedo beds and the guns of Fort Morgan failed to prevent Farragut from entering Mobile Bay. It was now up to his Mobile Squadron to defeat Farragut or force him to leave the bay. Watching Farragut crossing the torpedo beds, Buchanan attempted to put the *Tennessee* in position to ram the enemy flagship should it survive its journey, but the attempt

failed and the Tennessee proceeded to chase the Hartford into the bay. The Tennessee's lack of speed, however, prevented her from catching the Hartford and forced her to abandon the chase. Buchanan instead chose to attack each pair of Union ships as they passed north into the bay. The Brooklyn and Octorara were the first engaged. The ships exchanged fire, but due to the Confederate ram's armor, only the Union ship received damaged. With the ships so close to each other, the Union sailors fired into the Tennessee's portholes with small arms. The exchange of cannon fire continued as each pair of Union ships passed the Tennessee. Again, due to its slow speed, the Tennessee was unable to ram any of the Union ships. She was, however, able to inflict heavy damage to the enemy fleet.<sup>19</sup>



C.S.S. Tennessee exchanging fire with U.S.S. Oneida  
(Library of Congress)

Meanwhile, the wooden Union vessels, tied together, cut their tethers. One of these, the Metacomet, gave chase to the smaller Confederate gunboat Selma. The Metacomet easily overtook the Selma and after a brief struggle, forced her captain, Lieutenant P.U. Murphy, to surrender. The gunboat Gaines fared only slightly better as she ran aground at Fort Morgan. Having taken several shots to the hull right below the waterline, she was in danger of sinking. The swift thinking of her commander, Lieutenant John W. Bennett, saved the lives of most of her crew and these men occupied Fort Morgan until the battle was over. The Morgan narrowly escaped capture by the Union fleet and retreated further north into Mobile. Captain James Johnston of the Tennessee notes that the Morgan would later “render good service in the defense of the city.”<sup>20</sup>

With his three gunboats no longer in the fight, Admiral Buchanan's flagship, Tennessee, stood as the only hurdle in the way of Farragut's capture of the bay. Surgeon Daniel Conrad asked Buchanan of his intentions: “Are you going into that fleet, admiral?” “I am sir!” was his reply. Without intending to be heard by him, I said to an officer standing near me, “Well, we'll never come out of there whole!” But Buchanan had heard my remark, and, turning round, said sharply, “That's my lookout sir.” Buchanan was fully prepared to sacrifice the Tennessee in order to defend Mobile Bay from Farragut. Conrad later defends Buchanan's decision to leave the protection of Fort Morgan in order to engage the Union fleet. “He had only six hours' coal on board and he intended to expend that in the fighting.

He did not mean to be trapped like a rat in a hole, and made to surrender without a struggle.”<sup>21</sup>

At this point in the battle, there was a short period when no fighting took place and Buchanan used the time to inspect the damage done to the Tennessee and allow the crew to eat breakfast. Buchanan noted that the smoke stack of his ship had taken damage, but for the most part, the Tennessee was intact. He soon gave the order to pursue Farragut, and Captain Johnston aimed the Tennessee straight for the enemy fleet with all haste, having been forced to steer the ship personally after its pilot sustained a wound. The Union fleet, in the process of laying anchor, spotted the Tennessee moving towards them with “hostile intent” and moved to intercept her.

Upon this apparently unexpected challenge the fleet was immediately put in motion, and the heavier vessels seemed to contend with each other for the glory of sinking the daring rebel ram, by running themselves up on her decks, which extended some thirty feet at each end of the shield, and were only about eighteen inches above the surface of the water. So great was their eagerness to accomplish this feat that the Lackawanna, one of the heaviest steamers, ran bows on into the Hartford, by which both vessels sustained greater damage than their united efforts in this direction could have inflicted upon their antagonist.

Each Union ship was so intent on sinking the Tennessee they collided with each other. Farragut, aware of the Confederate ironclad in Mobile Bay, ordered the bows of the larger ships in his fleet outfitted with an iron prow, a device he hoped would strengthen the bow of each ship enough to enable them to ram the Tennessee.<sup>22</sup>

As the Tennessee approached the Union fleet, Farragut mobilized the remainder of his fleet. The monitors Chickasaw and Winnebago began pounding the ship with 11-inch solid shot, while the wooden ships positioned themselves to ram the Tennessee. Fleet Surgeon Conrad writes, “Captain Johnston in the ‘pilot-house,’ gave the word to officers and men: ‘Steady yourself when she strikes! Stand by and be ready!’ Not a word was heard on the deck under its shelving roof, where the officers and men, standing by their guns appeared silent and rigid, awaiting their fate.” The Union ship Monongahela rammed the Tennessee, inflicting negligible damage, but “emerged from the encounter badly damaged, including the loss of her iron prow and cutwater.” The Lackawanna tried a similar maneuver but encountered the same results. “No more damage was done the ram by this tremendous blow than if a lady had laid her finger upon the iron sheathing.”<sup>23</sup>

Buchanan, after surviving two ramming attempts, ordered the Tennessee after Farragut’s flagship Hartford. Once again, the 9-inch Dahlgren guns of the Hartford did little to hurt

the Tennessee, but suffered great damage from the Tennessee's 6.4-inch Brooke rifles. With his guns unable to damage Buchanan's flagship, Farragut attempted to ram it. This futile decision did little to damage the Tennessee, but, coupled with continuous fire from the Chickasaw and Winnebago, began to wear down the rebel ram. "With many of the Tennessee's plates started, her smokestack perforated in numerous places, and both her aft quarter ports jammed, she was rapidly becoming unmanageable." Eventually, the sustained fire jammed the pivoting gun ports on the ram, disabling them. The Tennessee was in serious danger. Fleet Surgeon Conrad writes, "Soon the wounded began to pour down to me. Stripped to their waists, the white skins of men exhibited curious dark-blue elevations and hard spots." The men suffered injuries, not by cannon fire or shrapnel, but by powder burn due to the short distances from which the enemy fired. The Tennessee was now unable to steer in any meaningful fashion—her exposed rudder chains had been shot away. "The steering apparatus had been completely destroyed, as it had been plainly visible on the after deck, and the smokestack had fallen, destroying the draught in such a degree as to render it impossible to keep steam enough to stem the tide, which was running out at the rate of over four miles an hour."<sup>24</sup>

To make matters worse, during the exchange of fire, Admiral Buchanan received a serious injury to his leg. Captain Johnston, realizing that continuing to fight was hopeless, went to the injured admiral and explained the situation. "I went to the lower deck and informed

the admiral of her condition, and that I had not been able to bring a gun to bear upon any of our antagonists for nearly half an hour, to which he replied 'Well, Johnston, if you cannot do them any further damage you had better surrender.'" Johnston did exactly that, emerging from the pilothouse with a white flag of truce. The Battle of Mobile Bay was effectively over.<sup>25</sup>

After the battle, the Union forces took the wounded Admiral Buchanan to a naval hospital at the Pensacola Naval Yard, where he received gracious treatment from Admiral Farragut. Luckily for Buchanan, his badly injured leg did not require amputation. His health improved, and after two months, forces moved Buchanan to a prison in New York. He was later part of a prisoner exchange in March 1865. When he returned to Mobile, Buchanan received news of the Confederate surrender at Appomattox Courthouse.<sup>26</sup>

The performance of the crew of the C.S.S. Tennessee at the Battle of Mobile Bay was exemplary. The crewmembers, many of whom were not in the navy, but ordinary infantry soldiers turned sailors, displayed commendable bravery in the face of overwhelming odds. Despite their unfavorable odds, their efforts inflicted a serious toll on Farragut's fleet. The Mobile Squadron suffered only 32 casualties compared to the Union fleet's 315 [see Appendix C for breakdown]. The Tennessee itself also performed admirably, as it single handedly engaged fourteen Union vessels, but ultimately its lack of speed and exposed rudder chains proved fatal. Nonetheless, the ship performed so well, the U.S. Navy commissioned

it as the U.S.S. Tennessee after the battle. The Battle of Mobile Bay proved a significant turning point in the American Civil War. Just a few weeks earlier, the city of Atlanta fell to General William Sherman, which coupled with the Confederate defeat at Mobile Bay, rendered two supply hubs useless and greatly diminished the South's supply and logistics framework. Likewise, the Battle of Mobile Bay caused a turning point in the evolution of ship design. The ironclad design signaled an end to the supremacy of wooden vessels and ushered in a new era of armored warships.<sup>27</sup>

## Notes

- 1 Terrence J. Winschel, *Triumph and Defeat: the Vicksburg Campaign*, (New York, NY: Savas Beatie, 2004), 1-2.
- 2 Arthur W. Bergeron, *Confederate Mobile* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 115-17.
- 3 William Still, Jr., "Confederate Naval Strategy, the Ironclad," *The Journal of Southern History* 27, no. 3 (August 1961); Dudley Knox, "River Navies in the Civil War," *Military Affairs* 18, no. 1 (Spring 1954).
- 4 James D. Johnston, "The Ram 'Tennessee' at Mobile Bay," in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, (New York: The Century Co., 1884), 4: 401-5; William N. Still, Jr., *Iron Afloat: the Story of the Confederate Armorclads* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971), 187-211.
- 5 Walter W. Stephen, "The Brooke Guns from Selma," *The Alabama Historical Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (Fall 1958).
- 6 John C. Waugh, *Last Stand at Mobile* (Abilene, Texas: State House Press, 2002), 93; Still, *Iron Afloat*, 187-211; David, D Porter, *The Naval History of the Civil War* (New York City, New York: The Sherman Publishing Company, 1886), 595.
- 7 Waugh, *Last Stand at Mobile*, 49-52; Craig, L. Symonds, *Confederate Admiral* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1999), 168-69.
- 8 A. T. Mahan, *Admiral Farragut* (New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1968); Waugh, *Last Stand*, 14-15.
- 9 Chester G. Hearn, *Mobile Bay and the Mobile Campaign: The Last Great Battles of the Civil War* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co Inc Pub, 1998), 41-45; Waugh, *Last Stand*, 90.; Paige, R.L., "The Defense of Fort Morgan," in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, (New York: The Century Co., 1884), 4:408-9.
- 10 Viktor Ernst Karl Rudolf von Sheliha, *A Treatise On Coast-Defense: Based On the Experience Gained by Officers of the Corp of Engineers of the Army of the Confederate States, and Compiled from . . . 1861-1865* (London, England: Charing Cross, 1868), 231-33; U.S. Navy Department, *War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies*, 30 vols. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1894-1922, Series I, vol. 22, 298. Hereafter cited as ORN; all references are to Series I unless otherwise noted.
- 11 ORN, 21:299. Farragut is referring to a spar torpedo, not the underwater torpedoes in the bay. The spar torpedo was essentially an explosive attached to the end of a long beam on the bow of the ship.
- 12 Jack Friend, *West Wind, Flood Tide: The Battle of Mobile Bay* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 37-39.
- 13 John Coddington Kinney, "Farragut at Mobile Bay," in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, (New York: The Century Co., 1884), 4:379-412.
- 14 Johnston, *Battles and Leaders*, 4:401.
- 15 ORN, 21:397; Raimondo Luraghi, *A History of the Confederate Navy* (Annapolis, MD.: US Naval Institute Press, 1996), 324.
- 16 Conrad, Daniel B. "What the Fleet Surgeon Saw of the Fight in Mobile Bay, August 1864 Whilst On Board the Confederate Ironclad 'Tennessee.'" *The United Service: A Monthly Review of Military and Naval Affairs* 8 (1892): 262; Symonds, *Confederate Admiral*, 209.
- 17 Kinney, *Battles and Leaders*, 4:386-88; Hearn, *Mobile Campaign*, 87-88; Symonds, *Confederate Admiral*, 208-210; Conrad, *What the Fleet Surgeon Saw*, 262; ORN 21:398.
- 18 Mahan, *Farragut*, 275-276; Kinney, *Battles and Leaders*, 4:389-391; Friend, *West Wind*, 183-84.
- 19 Friend, *West Wind*, 195-97.
- 20 Johnston, *Battles and Leaders*, 4:402-3.

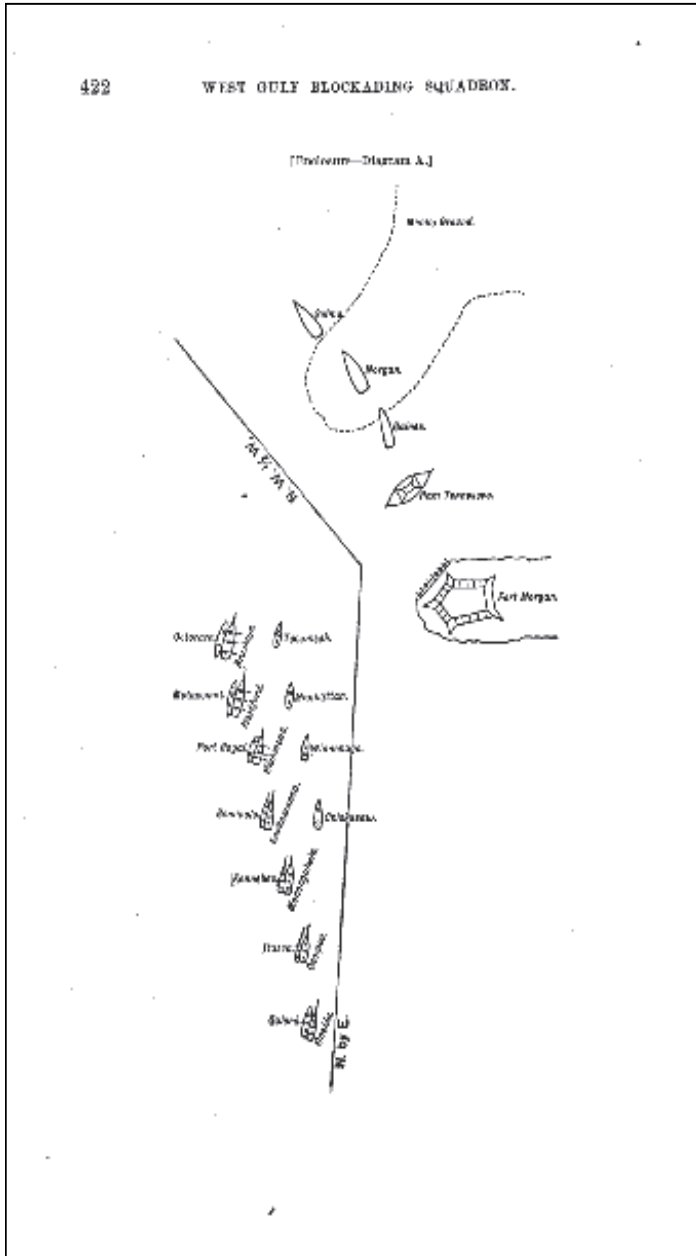
- 21 Conrad, *What the Fleet Surgeon Saw*, 264;  
Johnston, *Battles and Leaders*, 4:403-4.
- 22 Johnston, *Battles and Leaders*, 4:404.
- 23 Friend, *West Wind*, 213-214; Conrad, *What the Fleet Surgeon Saw*, 264.
- 24 Friend, *West Wind*, 218; Conrad, *What the Fleet Surgeon Saw*, 265; Johnston, *Battles and Leaders*, 4:404.
- 25 Johnston, *Battles and Leaders*, 4:404.
- 26 Symonds, *Confederate Admiral*, 220-21.
- 27 Kinney, *Battles and Leaders*, 4:398; Waugh, *Last Stand at Mobile*, 93.

## Appendix A

<b><u>Union Forces</u></b>		
<b>Vessel</b>	<b>Weight (tons)</b>	<b>Armament</b>
<i>Ironclads</i>		
<i>Tecumseh</i>	1,034	2 guns (15-inch)
<i>Manhattan</i>	1,034	2 guns (15-inch)
<i>Winnebago</i>	970	4 guns (11-inch)
<i>Chickasaw</i>	970	4 guns (11-inch)
<i>Wooden Ships</i>		
<i>Brooklyn</i>	2,070	24 guns
<i>Octorara</i>	829	6 guns
<i>Hartford</i>	2,900	24 guns
<i>Metacomet</i>	974	9 guns
<i>Richmond</i>	2,700	20 guns
<i>Port Royal</i>	805	8 guns
<i>Lackawanna</i>	1,533	14 guns
<i>Seminole</i>	801	8 guns
<i>Monongahela</i>	1,378	8 guns
<i>Kennebec</i>	507	5 guns
<i>Ossipee</i>	1,240	11 guns
<i>Itasca</i>	507	6 guns
<i>Oneida</i>	1,032	9 guns
<i>Galena</i>	738	10 guns



Appendix B  
ORN, 21:422.



Appendix C

ORN, 21:407.

<b>Vessel</b>	<b>Killed</b>	<b>Wounded</b>
Hartford	25	28
Brooklyn	11	43
Lackawanna	4	35
Oneida	8	30
Monongahela	-	6
Metacomet	1	2
Ossipee	1	7
Richmond	-	2
Galena	-	1
Octorara	1	10
Kennebec	1	6
Tecumseh	93	-
Totals	145	170

# A Conversation with Dr. Keith Krawczynski

Katelyn Kidd

**Katelyn Kidd** is a junior majoring in history with a minor in art. She received the Patricia J. Bradley Memorial Scholarship for 2012-2013 and is an editor of this year's AUM Historical Review. History fascinates Katie because it incorporates every discipline of academia, and in so doing, paints a portrait of all humanity.



Dr. Keith Krawczynski, Associate Professor of History at AUM. (Graydon Rust)

The first night I sat in Dr. Krawczynski's class I got the distinct impression that this guy and I were not going to be getting along and, with two of his classes lined up per night, I was in for a long semester. Outspoken and disenchanting, he taught a version of our nation's history that challenged every apple pie and cherry tree story I'd ever been told. It was uncomfortable, but after a few classes I began to see something else in his lectures. The story he told was about humanity. It was the story of the people rather than the legends. It was my America from the ground up – no apologies. Thus, it is my hope that this interview will allow us a brief introduction to Keith Krawczynski and his particular view on being a participant in history.

**A book review of *William Henry Drayton: South Carolina Revolutionary Patriot* said that you sought to rescue Drayton “from the ash heap of history.” In your classes as well you seem motivated by a desire to breakdown the mythology surrounding the American story. Is this desire to reveal and memorialize the forgotten participants of the past what inspired you to become a historian?**

Not in the beginning. At first I just had a general interest in the past but as I delved deeper I became more and more interested in stripping away the veneer of mythology surrounding American history. I wanted to strip away the candy-coated version of American history that is essentially force fed to students nowadays. I believe that the candy-coated version doesn't do them any good; it doesn't help to explain the present and its circumstances. That candy coating only serves the establishment—the ruling class. I try to present the past from a perspective that I hope will inspire students to play a larger and more active role in society—to be active participants in the making of history. I want students to know that if they are passionate about something, if they want to effect the change that history shows us, we must agitate in order to do that and grab hold of the ruling class's attention. Any positive changes that have been made have occurred because people agitated for that change. One of my favorite quotes that I frequently tell my students was made by Frederick Douglas, the former slave and abolitionist, who said, "Without struggle there is no progress."

**You've mentioned in your lectures that you grew up during a period of the Cold War when you thought you might be part of the last generation on Earth. How did this affect you and did it affect your decision to study history?**

It did have a rather powerful psychological impact on me growing up. I believed, as many did during that period, that the human

race faced impending annihilation by nuclear holocaust. This played a role in some of the decisions I've made in my life, but not necessarily my decision to study history.

**You've also mentioned growing up with some of the most iconic so-bad-it's-good science fiction movies in Hollywood history. Movies like *Godzilla* and *The Thing from Another World*. Are you a big sci-fi fan?**

I love science fiction. When I was about eleven years old, I read my first science fiction book, Arthur C. Clark's *2001 Space Odyssey*. Ever since then I've been hooked. However, since starting college and my professional career, the amount of time I can devote to reading sci-fi has diminished considerably. These days I'm lucky to squeeze in about one book a year, but I do try to read more short stories and I have a collection of science fiction magazines numbering in the thousands.

**Favorite sci-fi author?**

I like Robert Heinlein and Andre Norton best.

**Star Trek or Star Wars?**

I prefer the original Star Trek because that series dealt with important contemporary issues like race, war, and human nature.

**People have left many legacies and fragments of culture throughout the ages, from art and literature to political documents. In your opinion what type of artifact is most illuminating to the historical record?**

The best history is one that is interdisciplinary—one that goes beyond the traditional paper document in trying to understand the past. In order to understand any historic group best, a historian needs to look not only at the documents but also at the art, the archeological remains of villages, and all artifacts. There's also something to be gained from actually utilizing artifacts if that's possible. In the past, I've taken a scythe and gone out cutting down tall grass and corn stalks and you realize firsthand how labor intensive work was back then.

**Ever done learning? Is there any subject in particular you would like to know more about?**

A true scholar should never stop learning—in fact, no one should ever stop learning no matter who they are or what they do. To stop learning is essentially to die. Currently I've become very interested in sociology. It's an area that has a very close relationship to history because history is all about understanding people and sociology helps us to understand the group and the forces that help to shape its behavior. Interestingly enough, when I was an undergrad I took a class in sociology and disliked it so much that I dropped the class. It's funny sometimes how things turn out.

**What was the toughest part of college for you?**

The longevity! My goal from the beginning was to get a PhD and it took me sixteen years. If I had known it would take me that long I might have chosen a different path, but by the time I received my master's degree I figured, "I'm almost there, it's too late to stop now." Plus, it was my goal in life.

**Are you the first PhD in your family?**

First college graduate actually, even in my extended family.

**What do you think is the greatest obstacle facing history students and amateur historians today?**

The same obstacles that have always faced students in every academic arena: that of simply being committed and taking what life throws at you without giving up or letting it derail you permanently. I truly feel that a person can accomplish any goal if they really want it and if they try hard enough. From a professional perspective, an enormous amount of frustration is caused by a lack of evidence. Time has a way of destroying historical records through wars, fires, and general mishaps. The record that is left is only a piece of what once existed and often there are large gaps that we are left to speculate about and that lead back to the need to take an interdisciplinary approach to research.

**“Krawczynski” is a name that certainly hails back to the motherland. Have you ever traced your genealogy?**

I have not, not on my own family. I've done genealogical work in my research but it's very tedious and time consuming. Other family members have looked into it and traced the family tree back to Poland, of course, but only to about the turn of the twentieth century when they arrived in America. I actually had the fortune of knowing my great grandmother, who emigrated from Poland in the early 1900's when she was seventeen. There's been more research done on my mother's side. She's also Polish—her maiden name was Kiolbassa and in her family line there was a minor political figure in Chicago named Peter Kiolbassa in the late 1800's who was the subject of a master's thesis.

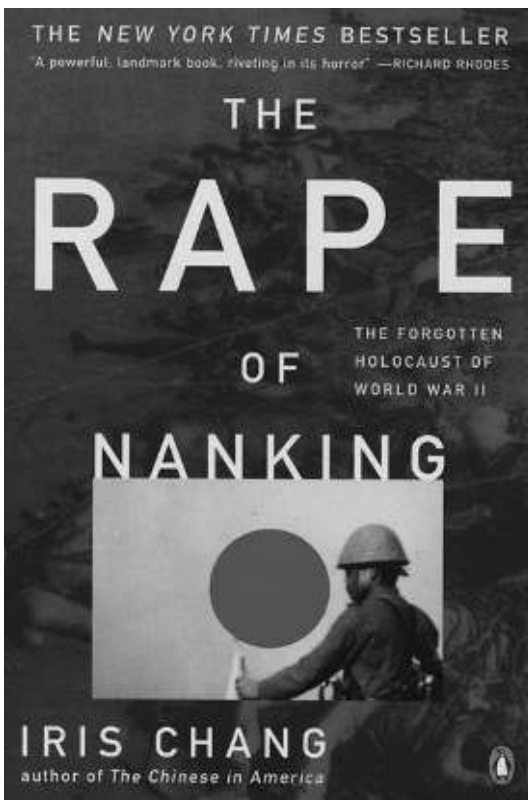
**What is a historian's greatest responsibility to his or her audience?**

A historian should tell an interesting story but, most especially, one that is relevant to the present. They should present the part of history that can help influence people to make a positive change.

# A Review of *The Rape of Nanking* by Iris Chang

Mary Henderson Fukai

**Mary Henderson Fukai** is a graduate student focusing on secondary history education. She wrote her review of *The Rape of Nanking* for a recent history class taught by Dr. Qiang Zhai. Mary earned her bachelor's degree in History and Cultural and Religious Studies from Huntingdon College, graduating summa cum laude, and is a member of several honors societies. Having always loved history, Mary decided she needed to further study the subject in order to teach her passion to others.



*The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* is a powerful, moving account of one of the most horrific incidents in modern history. Iris Chang methodically and thoroughly researched this period in Japanese and Chinese history, providing the reader with a commanding description of the thoughts, motivations and actions involved in “the Chinese Holocaust.” *The Rape of Nanking* depicts both the atrocities committed during the massacre and the reaction to and cover-up of the killing following World War II. Chang divides her book into three main sections. The first section chronicles the massacre from the perspectives of the Chinese victims, the Western witnesses and the Japanese military. The second section discusses the reaction of Western governments to the slaughter and the third scrutinizes why this horrible incident did not and has not become a matter of public discussion.

The first section of this book is by far the most stirring. Chang does not spare the reader from details of the brutal rapes, murders and tortures that occurred. One paragraph in Chang’s introduction sums up the violent acts:

Chinese men were used for bayonet practice and in decapitation contests. An estimated 20,000–

80,000 Chinese women were raped. Many soldiers went beyond rape to disembowel women, slice off their breasts, nail them alive to walls. Fathers were forced to rape their daughters, and sons their mothers, as other family members watched. Not only did live burials, castration, the carving of organs, and the roasting of people become routine, but more diabolical tortures were practiced, such as hanging people by their tongues on iron hooks or burying people to their waists and watching them get torn apart by German shepherds. So sickening was the spectacle that even the Nazis in the city were horrified, one proclaiming the massacre to be the work of 'bestial machinery.'<sup>1</sup>

In the pages that follow, Chang provides even more gory details gathered from witnesses and victims of the violence. The complete lack of humanity displayed by the Japanese soldiers is horrifying. As if it were not enough to take the lives of their Chinese victims, the Japanese seemed determined to take their dignity as well. Chang does include an account of the Nanking Massacre from the Japanese military perspective. However, this explanation does little to diminish the impact of other descriptions, leaving the reader overwhelmed by account after account of the most severe cruelty.

One hero emerges in *The Rape of Nanking*—John Rabe. A German businessman and Nazi who saved hundreds, if not thousands, of lives during the massacre, Rabe worked with several

other foreign nationals to create a “safety zone” in Nanking and attempted to assuage the violence in the city. Rabe was in charge of administering the safety zone and organized the feeding, clothing and sheltering of thousands of displaced Chinese during the six weeks of torture. He kept a journal of the events in Nanking and Chang draws heavily from his words. Rabe detailed both the brutal assaults he witnessed and his appeals to Hitler to stop the Japanese. Were it not for the efforts of Rabe and his associates, the death and rape toll of the massacre might have been significantly higher.

Chang argues that there was an opportunity for the West to react to what was happening in Nanking. She highlights American journalists and newsreel men who witnessed and documented many atrocities, even showing their footage at movie theaters across the United States and outraging many who viewed them. Chang, however, quickly focuses on the favorable propaganda the Japanese planned to spread in the United States. She writes, “Instead of bringing a measure of discipline to their forces in Nanking, the Japanese marshaled together their resources to launch a blitz of propaganda, which they hoped would somehow obscure the details of one of the greatest bloodbaths of world history.”<sup>2</sup> Therefore, Chang implies that the Japanese propaganda efforts, along with other distractions, contributed to the lack of reaction by Western governments.

Chang expresses obvious outrage that so little, in her opinion, has been done to bring justice to the people responsible for committing the massacre. In her section on the West's



reaction to the bloodshed, Chang explains why she believes the West largely ignored the actions of the Japanese in China during World War II. She notes that after the war, General Douglas MacArthur negotiated agreements with the Japanese government on behalf of the United States and was willing to overlook the crimes the Japanese committed against the Chinese and other Asian nations in exchange for information on experiments in germ warfare the Japanese had conducted. Chang summarizes the 1946 International Military Tribunal for the Far East but laments that “many of the chief culprits of the Rape of Nanking never spent a day in court.”<sup>3</sup> Chang also argues the Japanese government has still not done enough to correct the harm it caused and should issue both reparations and a public apology.

One shortcoming of Chang’s account is the lack of information gathered from Japanese sources. Because she fails to cite sources from Japan, Chang’s detailing of the massacre is skewed towards the Chinese and Western perspectives with little regard for voicing the Japanese estimation of events. Despite this major flaw, Chang accomplishes a great feat in this text. She brings attention and voice to one of the saddest examples of human cruelty in the modern era and she does so with comprehensible, clear and emotionally provoking prose. *The Rape of Nanking* is

utterly haunting and leaves one with a sense of devastation. Without Chang’s efforts in researching and writing this book, the Nanking Massacre may never have received the attention it deserves.

Notes

1 Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (New York, NY: Penguin Group, 1998), 6.

2 Chang, 149.

3 Chang, 175.

# Additional Contributors

A junior majoring in history with a minor in sociology, **Ryan M. Blocker** is a part-time student working full time at the Alabama Department of Archives and History as the Museum Collections Assistant. Specializing in eighteenth and nineteenth century clothing, Ryan's fascination with clothing and textiles began as a child and sparked a passion for historical investigation that continues to this day.

**Kelhi Diane DePace** is a sophomore double-majoring in history and English. Serving as Vice President of the University Honors Assembly, Kelhi has also contributed to the *Filibuster* and is a recipient of the Academic Excellence Scholarship for 2011-2015. Her desire to study history and English stemmed from her love of stories, both historical and fictional. A student employee at the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Kelhi works as a tour guide and enjoys constantly learning about Alabama history.

**Jennifer Kellum** is a junior majoring in history and has worked on the AUM Historical Review since its founding. A recipient of the AUM Textbook Scholarship for 2012-2013, she is also

a member of Phi Alpha Theta and the AUM Secular Student Alliance. Jennifer attributes her interest in history to her drive to understand human motivations, noting that we must study past cultures and societies to prepare for the future.

A senior majoring in graphic design with a minor in marketing, **Samuel Blakely** designed the layout for this and last year's publications. The editorial board selected Sam's layout for the 2012 issue from more than a dozen submissions from Professor Breuna Baine's Typography 2 class and requested that he return again this year. He also won an ADDY Award in 2012. Sam chose to study graphic design because it is an in-demand career that fits well with his passion for art and drawing.

**Alex Trott**, the designer of this year's cover, is a sophomore majoring in graphic design. Alex is the President of the University Honors Assembly, Vice President of the Student Art Association, and is a Resident Assistant in the North Commons. His interest in graphic design stems from his understanding that graphic design creates popular culture.

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[historicalreview@aum.edu](mailto:historicalreview@aum.edu).









