



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P. O. BOX 5028, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

SEPTEMBER 1973

Vol. 17 No. 1

137th Meeting

DATE: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1973

SPEAKER: MR. WAYNE L. SANFORD

SUBJECT:

SUBJECT: "291-DAYS AT PETERSBURG"

PLACE: G.A.R. HALL, PENINSULA, OHIO

YOU MUST CALL GUY DI CARLO (687-2803)
FOR RESERVATIONS AS THIS IS A JOINT
MEETING WITH THE WESTERN RESERVE CWRT

WAYNE L. SANFORD

Wayne L. Sanford is a native "Hoosier", born in the state of Indiana in 1941. He was graduated from Indiana University prior to entering the U.S. Army in 1963. Sixteen months of this duty was spent with the 392nd Army Band at Fort Lee (Petersburg), Va., during which time he employed much work and energy in studying, mapping and walking the fields and marsh lands that made up the foundation for the siege of Petersburg. Mr. Sanford is currently associated with the Prudential Insurance Company of America in the capacity of Special Agent.

His association with round tables activities in his area has spanned a period of five years. He has served as program chairman, vice-president and president for the Indianapolis CWRT. In addition to these functions he has acted as contributing editor for the organization's newsletter "Hardtack" having written numerous feature articles some of which have been re-published in recent months. His current activities include writing a book and working in the all important area of battlefield preservation.

Mr. Sanford has involved himself with public speaking for a period of ten years. Principle among his talks is the "291 Days at Petersburg," a tape/slide presentation which combines sight, sound and authenticity to the longest siege of the American Civil War. In addition to this are several talk presentations, one being a personal look into the lives of two engineers during the final campaign of the great rebellion.

Our speaker is now involved with producing several tapes which are to be included in a home listening library. These are to be available in the months to come.

Wayne Sanford is married and his wife Kathleen and daughter Julie live in the colonial village of Zionsville which is located northwest of Indianapolis.

CLEVELAND CWRT BULLETIN BOARD

1973-1974 PROGRAMS

Sept. 11 - Wayne L. Sanford - "291 Days at Petersburg"
Oct. 8 - Bernard Drews - Show & Tell
Nov. 13 - Meredith Colket - Meeting to be held at Western Reserve
Historical Society
Dec. 11 - Father Donald Smythe - "Black Jack Pershing"
Jan. 8 - Fred Gill - "Joshua Chamberlain"
Feb. 12 - OPEN
Mar. 12 - Dr. Chester Bradley - "Jefferson Davis at Fort Monroe"
Apr. 9 - Howard C. Westwood - "Joint Committee on the Conduct
of the War"
May 14 - LADIES NIGHT - Tentative plans to show the silent film
THE GENERAL w/ the meeting to be held at
"The Last Motion Picture Company."

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1973 FIELDTRIP

By now you've received the itinerary for the 1973 fieldtrip to the Richmond area. If you intend to make the fieldtrip be sure to send back or phone the fieldtrip committee --, your intentions. The dates are from September 27 (Thursday) thru October 1 (Sunday).

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TWO 'DIXIES' TOO MANY ST VMI?

By David Holmberg

"The Evening Star and Daily News"
Washington, D.C. May 16, 1973

LEXINGTON, Va. - The band played "Dixie" only twice yesterday. It was still too much for Johnny Morton, 20, a junior at the Virginia Military Institute here, was one of 17 black cadets who boycotted the school's annual ceremony honoring 10 VMI corpsmen who died in a Civil War battle at New Market, Va., on May 15, 1864.

While more than 1,000 of the school's white cadets turned eyes right to the flag of the Confederacy at the end of a march along a sprawling parade grounds, all but two of VMI's 19 black cadets sat out the 35-minute ritual. But the open protest that some anticipated did not materialize.

Since 1968, when blacks were first admitted to the fortress-like institution, the New Market Day ceremony has become increasingly controversial. But this year, for the first time, a student-run referendum showed that a majority of VMI students favored changes in the ceremony designed to play down its Confederate symbolism. They said "Dixie" and Confederate flags should be junked in favor of VMI songs and flags, and in separate vote asked that cadets "whose personal beliefs associate this ceremony with the Confederacy" be excused from it.

The VMI Board of Visitors, which runs the 134-year-old school, decided in a unanimous vote, however, to keep the ceremony unchanged.

Some students, both black and white, claim the board caved in to tradition-bound alumni. The board said it was only interested in honoring "the spirit, courage, integrity and devotion to duty" of the men who died at New Market, and pointed proudly at its "record of equal treatment for all cadets. . . ."

About 700 old grads and friends and relatives of the cadets -- and four blacks from neighboring Washington & Lee University who said they come in sympathy for the dissenting corpsmen -- showed up for the cere-

THE COURIER
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THE CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE OF CLEVELAND, OHIO
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THE MONITOR AND THE MERRIMACK

The South had no navy. With her limited industrial capacity she could never hope to match the overwhelming numerical superiority of the United States Navy. But Stephen R. Mallory, Secretary of the non-existent Confederate Navy, had a brilliant idea: "Inequality of numbers may be compensated for by invulnerability." If an unsinkable ship could be built, it could drive the United States Navy off the seas. The task of building an invulnerable warship was given to Lieutenant John M. Brooke, a distinguished naval scientist, and John L. Porter, a naval constructor of Portsmouth, Virginia. To save time, it was decided to make over the steam frigate MERRIMACK, which had been scuttled and partly burned when the United States forces abandoned the Norfolk Navy Yard on April 20, 1861.

The reconstruction of the MERRIMACK was begun in July 1861. Her hull was cut down to just above the water line. She was covered with a sloping roof plated with iron four inches thick. She was equipped with a cast-iron prow to be used as a ram. She was fitted with ten heavy cannon (two 6-inch, two 7-inch and six 9-inch). Her tonnage was 3,200, length 275 feet, beam 32 feet 6 inches, depth 27 feet 6 inches. Loaded, her draft was 22 feet. Her speed was less than 6 knots. She carried a crew of 320 men. Here was a ship, the like of which had never been seen before. Her inventors called her an ironclad, shot-proof, floating, steam battery. Although the Confederates named her the VIRGINIA, she is better known in world history by her original name of MERRIMACK.

News of this fearsome vessel soon reached the North through spies and deserters. Northern sympathizers employed in the Norfolk Navy Yard smuggled out a description of the ship. It was evident that the United States must build an ironclad warship to challenge the Confederate ironclad. The high officers of the U.S. Navy, which was composed entirely of wooden vessels, knew nothing about ironclads. They were bewildered and knew not which way to turn. Precious months slipped by. Finally in October 1861 the U.S. Navy signed a contract for an ironclad warship designed by John Ericsson, a Swedish engineer and inventor, who had been living in the United States for some years. His plan called for a small ironclad steamer set so low that her deck would be only one foot above the water line. This would make the ship hard to hit. Her deck was to be bare except for a small pilothouse and a revolving turret containing two guns. This revolving turret would make it possible to aim the guns in any direction without turning the ship.

So skeptical were the naval officers to whom Ericsson showed his model that they inserted a clause in the contract requiring Ericsson and his associates to refund the cost of the ship, \$275,000, should she

prove unable to destroy the MERRIMACK! But Ericsson, who was a very strong-willed man with complete confidence in his design, accepted this harsh contract without hesitation. The keel of Ericsson's ship was laid as soon as the contract was signed. Ericsson named her the MONITOR, one who admonishes, for he said, she would admonish the Confederate leaders that the batteries on the banks of their rivers would no longer present barriers to the entrance of the Union forces. The MONITOR was built at Greenpoint, Brooklyn, New York, with mechanics working on her day and night until the very hour of her departure. Much smaller than the MERRIMACK, her tonnage was 987, length 172 feet, beam 41 feet 6 inches, depth 11 feet 4 inches. She carried a crew of 62.

The Confederate ironclad MERRIMACK made her long expected appearance on Saturday, March 8, 1862. Emerging from the Elizabeth River about 1:00 P.M., she steamed across Hampton Roads toward Newport News, where two powerful wooden warships lay at anchor: the CUMBERLAND (24 guns) and the CONGRESS (50 guns). These two ships, assisted by the batteries on shore, rained a frantic bombardment on the approaching iron monster, but the projectiles bounced off her sides with "no more effect than peas from a popgun." The MERRIMACK rammed the CUMBERLAND, opening a hole in her side, then drew off and raked the unfortunate ship with her guns until she sank. The captain of the CUMBERLAND was at Fort Monroe when the fight began. He mounted a horse and galloped furiously to Newport News. By the time he arrived his ship had sunk beneath the waves with her flag still flying.

The CONGRESS was the next victim. Her officers ran the doomed ship ashore. They finally surrendered her, but Union soldiers on the shore at Newport News continued to fire on the MERRIMACK, wounding the commander, Captain Franklin Buchanan. "Old Buck," as Buchanan was nicknamed, had the CONGRESS set on fire by shooting hot shot (red-hot cannon balls) into her. More Union ships came hurrying from Fort Monroe to aid their stricken sisters: MINNESOTA (47 guns), ROANOKE (46 guns) and ST. LAWRENCE (52 guns). But these wooden ships were no match for the fierce Confederate ironclad. (The MERRIMACK was accompanied from the Navy Yard by two gunboats, BEAUFORT and RALEIGH, carrying one gun each. After she had destroyed the CUMBERLAND and CONGRESS she was joined by three gunboats from the James River, PATRICK HENRY, JAMESTOWN and TEASER. On the Union side, the large ships were also assisted by a number of gunboats, which included the DRAGON, MYSTIC, WHITEHALL, OREGON and ZOUAVE.) The latter two fell back, but the MINNESOTA stayed stuck in the mud in the north channel. She would surely have been destroyed had not ebb tide prevented the MERRIMACK from getting closer to her. Undisputed mistress of Hampton Roads, the MERRIMACK steamed over to Sewell's Point (present-day Naval base), leaving 241 Union dead.

Where was the MONITOR? The Union ironclad left New York in tow of the tugboat SETH LOW at 11 A.M., Thursday, March 6. Encountering rough weather, she shipped so much water that the crew had difficulty in keeping her afloat. At one time, the engineer and his crew were overcome by suffocating gases and had to be carried up to the deck to be revived. On Saturday, March 8, at 4 P.M., as the MONITOR passed Cape Henry, the crew could hear guns booming in the direction of Hampton Roads. As they came closer, they could see the horizon illumined by the burning CONGRESS. Arrived off Fort Monroe, the commander of the MONITOR, Lieutenant John L. Worden, reported to Captain John Marston of the ROANOKE, who was in command of the fleet in the absence of Commodore Louis M. Goldsborough. Captain Marston had orders to send the MONITOR to Washington, but he wisely disregarded these orders and suggested that the MONITOR go to the assistance of the MINNESOTA, still aground near Newport News. The pigmy size of the MONITOR did not inspire much confidence among the men of the Union fleet, who had witnessed the fearful scenes of that day.

The MONITOR anchored alongside the MINNESOTA. The night was illumined by the CONGRESS, which was still burning. Not far away lay the

CUMBERLAND at the bottom of Hampton Roads with her crew of brave men, who had died firing their guns as their ship went down. At 12:30 A.M., the fire on the CONGRESS reached her magazine. She blew up with an ear-splitting blast and a tremendous shower of sparks. When the sun came up the men of the MONITOR could see the MERRIMACK and her accompanying gunboats at Sewell's Point. It was Sunday morning March 9, 1862. The shores of Hampton Roads were lined with awe-struck crowds watching what may truly be called the naval battle of the century. At Fort Monroe the garrison stood on the ramparts, their eyes trained on the horizon between Sewell's Point and Newport News. They knew that if the Monitor were defeated, Fort Monroe could be starved into surrender. The MERRIMACK was now commanded by Lieutenant Catesby Jones, replacing Captain Buchanan, wounded the day before. To the spectators on shore the MERRIMACK looked like the roof of a house. The MONITOR'S odd appearance caused many to compare her to "a cheese box on a raft."

The MERRIMACK was larger, but the MONITOR was more agile. The great draft of the MERRIMACK (22 feet) caused her to scrape bottom of Hampton Roads. Besides, she was slow moving. The MONITOR was faster. Her draft was only 10½ feet. She could, therefore maneuver freely. If pressed too closely by her more powerful antagonist, she could glide into shallow water. The two 11-inch guns in the turret of the MONITOR fired every eight minutes. The ten guns of the MERRIMACK fired much oftener, but the MONITOR presented a very small target because of her low deck, which was barely above the level of the water. The MERRIMACK attempted to ram the MONITOR, as she had done the CUMBERLAND, but the nimble little vessel eluded the blow, which inflicted only a small dent in her hull. A boarding party was assembled, but the wary MONITOR, slipped away before men from the MERRIMACK could get aboard her. After pounding the MONITOR'S turret without effect, the MERRIMACK directed her fire on the pilothouse. The bursting of a shell blinded Lieutenant Worden, who had to relinquish command to Lieutenant Samuel D. Geesee.

After about four hours of battle the fighting between the MONITOR and MERRIMACK ceased. The MONITOR took up a position over the Middle Ground, which is a shoal between Newport News and Sewell's Point from where she soon went back up the Elizabeth River. Ericsson's little MONITOR had saved the day in Hampton Roads, but she had not destroyed the MERRIMACK. In the next encounter the MONITOR might be disabled or destroyed, and the Union fleet would again be at the mercy of the MERRIMACK. On March 10, Secretary of the Navy Welles sent this telegram to Assistant Secretary of the Navy Fox, who was at Fort Monroe: "It is directly by the President that the MONITOR be not too much exposed; that in no event shall any attempt be made to proceed with her unattended to Norfolk." (Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, series I, volume 7, page 83).

Additional warships were rushed to Fort Monroe. By April 1, Commodore Goldsborough had twenty-four vessels with a total of about 150 guns in Hampton Roads waiting for the MERRIMACK to come out. In addition, Goldsborough had a half-dozen or so merchant vessels plus the mighty steamer VANDERBILT (donated by Cornelius Vanderbilt), which had been fitted up to act as rams should the MERRIMACK come down to Fort Monroe on her next sortie.

The MERRIMACK was in dry dock at Norfolk Navy Yard from March 11 to April 4, 1862. The metal prow, which had been wrenched off when she rammed the CUMBERLAND, was replaced. Port shutters were fitted. Her engines were worked on. During the MERRIMACK'S absence, McClellan's Army of the Potomac was landed at Fort Monroe.

Early on the morning of April 11, the MERRIMACK made her second appearance in Hampton Roads, this time commanded by Commodore Josiah Tattnall. One of the gunboats accompanying her seized three small merchant vessels and towed them off to Craney Island without interference from the Union fleet. The MERRIMACK remains off Sewell's Point all day. About 4 P.M., she steamed toward the MONITOR, which lay in shallow

water off Hampton Creek and fired a shot toward her. This was answered by the STEVENS, a gunboat lying alongside the MONITOR. The MONITOR, however, made no move, for she had been ordered to stay strictly on the defensive. The MERRIMACK then turned around and steamed back to Sewell Point. On April 14 she was no longer visible, having gone up the river to Norfolk. On May 1 the MERRIMACK was again seen anchored to the buoy off Craney Island. On May 4 she was anchored just inside Sewell's Point. On May 5 she was seen off the north end of Craney Island.

Commodore Goldsborough was forbidden by his superiors to send the MONITOR up to Sewell's Point to engage the MERRIMACK. The MERRIMACK, on her part, refrained from coming down to Fort Monroe where Goldsborough's rams could be used against her and where she would be within range of the heavy guns of Fort Monroe and Fort Wool. Naval operations in Hampton Roads were stalemated. The MERRIMACK and her accompanying gunboats hovered around Sewell's Point. The MONITOR and the rest of the Union fleet stayed close to Fort Monroe. As long as this stalemate persisted, Commodore Goldsborough refused to send adequate naval support to Major General George B. McClellan as he advanced from Fort Monroe to Yorktown. Consequently, McClellan spent one month before Yorktown (April 5 - May 4). Even after the Confederates evacuated Yorktown and withdrew toward Richmond, Goldsborough refused to send any significant amount of naval support to McClellan. Goldsborough maintained that his prime duty was to watch the MERRIMACK and to prevent her from breaking out of Hampton Roads into Chesapeake Bay, from where she could attack Washington or the cities of the Atlantic seaboard.

The naval deadlock in Hampton Roads was so serious that President Lincoln made a special trip to Fort Monroe, arriving May 6, 1862. In conference with Commodore Goldsborough and Major General John E. Wool, commanding Fort Monroe, it was decided that the only way to eliminate the MERRIMACK from the situation was to capture the city of Norfolk, which was the MERRIMACK's base. On May 8, the MONITOR and the other Union ships shelled the Confederate batteries on Sewell's Point in an effort to put them out of action so a landing of troops could be made. During this bombardment the MERRIMACK came out of the Elizabeth River and, placing herself in front of Sewell's Point, prevented the landing of troops. It was evident that in Norfolk was to be captured, it would be necessary "to seek another landing place out of reach of the MERRIMACK," to use the words of Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase, who had accompanied Lincoln to Fort Monroe.

Ocean View on the Chesapeake Bay shore was finally selected as a landing place for the troops. From there a road led to Norfolk. The MERRIMACK could not reach Ocean View without running past Fort Monroe and Fort Wool. With a speed less than six knots she would most certainly be seriously damaged by the heavy guns of the two forts. If the MERRIMACK left Hampton Roads, the MONITOR would be free to sail up the Elizabeth River and attack Norfolk. Consequently, the MERRIMACK remained off Sewell's Point during the landing of General Wool's troops at Ocean View on May 9 and 10. Norfolk was surrendered by her mayor on the 10th, the Confederate troops having evacuated the city after setting fire to the Navy Yard. Deprived of his base of operations, Commodore Tattnall prepared to take the MERRIMACK up the James River to Richmond. However, the pilots insisted that the ship's draft was too deep to get her past the Jamestown Flats. To prevent capture, Tattnall reluctantly blew up the MERRIMACK off Craney Island early on the morning of May 11, 1862. The MONITOR did not long survive her Confederate antagonist. She sank in a storm off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, on December 31, 1862.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Taken from "TALES OF OLD FORT MONROE" as published by The Fort Monroe Casemate Museum, Box 341, Fort Monroe, Virginia.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S CAMPAIGN
AGAINST THE MERRIMACK

Abraham Lincoln was worried! The great campaign to win the war had been stalled. Lincoln had always been against Major General George B. McClellan's plan to capture Richmond by landing the Army of the Potomac at Fort Monroe and advancing up the Virginia Peninsula. And now McClellan's mighty army had been sitting before Yorktown for a full month. The incessant calls of this glamorous general for reinforcements did not reassure the uneasy President. Casting an ominous shadow over the whole picture was the MERRIMACK. Although checked by the MONITOR in the historic battle of March 9, 1862, the dreaded Confederate ironclad was still afloat and lurking around Sewell's Point (today the Naval Base). So long as the MERRIMACK was a factor to be reckoned with, Commodore Louis M. Goldsborough, in command of the Union fleet in Hampton Roads, refused to send adequate naval support to General G. B. McClellan. Without the support of the guns of the fleet, McClellan would not make an assault on the Confederate fortifications. So here was the situation: the army, some twenty miles up the Peninsula, at a standstill before Yorktown; and the fleet, at the tip of the Peninsula, clustered around Fort Monroe, watching the MERRIMACK in Hampton Roads. Truly a stalemate!

Lincoln decided to go down to Fort Monroe "to ascertain by personal observation whether some further vigilance and vigor might not be infused into the operations of the army and navy." Just as he was about to leave Washington, news came from McClellan that the Confederates had unexpectedly evacuated Yorktown and were with drawing toward Williamsburg. Accompanied by Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, and Brigadier General Egbert L. Viele, Lincoln left Washington just before dusk, Monday, May 5, 1862. Ten or fifteen miles below Alexandria, their ship the revenue steamer MIAMI, cast anchor because it became too dark for the pilot to see his course. At 3 A.M., Tuesday, May 6, they were again on their way. At noon they were tossing on Chesapeake Bay.

The President tried to eat lunch, but soon gave up, saying he was too uncomfortable. He stretched out on a locker. The rest of the party kept on eating although the plates slipped here and there and the glasses fell over and rolled about. The MIAMI now had all its sails set and with the help of wind and steam was moving along at twelve knots. As night began to fall, the wind died away. For some reason the fires burned low under the boilers. The travelers were irked by the slackened speed. It was not until between 8 and 9 P.M., that the MIAMI reached Fort Monroe. Stanton sent for Major General John E. Wool, commanding Fort Monroe, who soon came on board with members of his staff.

Although it was now late, it was decided to confer at once with Commodore Goldsborough. It would have been difficult to bring the MIAMI alongside the flagship MINNESOTA in the darkness, so the party went in a tug to where the great ship lay just off Fort Monroe. The President went up the gangway first. Chase, who was senior to Stanton in the cabinet, climbed up next. They were received cordially by Commodore Goldsborough, who asked Chase about his daughters Janet and Katie. The group conferred earnestly about the dreaded MERRIMACK, whose presence was immobilizing the Union fleet in Hampton Roads. It was late when the President and his party returned to the MIAMI.

The next morning, Wednesday, May 7, the party arose early. They were not due to breakfast with General Wool until 9 A.M., Stanton proposed that they visit the VANDERBILT before breakfast. So the MIAMI's boat was lowered and they were rowed over to where the great steam yacht lay at anchor. Her bow had been strengthened with heavy timbers plated with iron so that she could ram the MERRIMACK should the Confederate ironclad venture down to Fort Monroe. Lincoln and his companions stood in the VANDERBILT's wheelhouse and looked through one of her

great sidewheels. Made of wrought iron, it was forty-two feet in diameter and weighed over one hundred tons. On the way back they were rowed around the MONITOR and the STEVENS that they might have a look at these two Union ironclads.

The President and his party landed at the Old Point Comfort Wharf (no longer standing). As they approached the Main Sallyport of the fort, the guard was turned out and a salute of twenty-one guns was fired from the distant Water Battery. On the beautiful parade ground studded with ancient live oak trees, the Fort Monroe garrison was in formation. When Lincoln came into view the band struck up "Hail to the Chief." The troops presented arms and the bystanders cheered. The party then had breakfast with General Wool in Quarters No. 1, the graceful old house which stands just inside the East Gate of Fort Monroe. After breakfast they were taken on board the MONITOR and the STEVENS, then over to the island fort on the south side of the channel known as the Rip Raps, or Fort Wool. Then they returned to Fort Monroe where another conference was had with Commodore Goldsborough, who had come ashore for that purpose.

The MERRIMACK was now seen around Sewell's Point and it was thought that she might engage the MONITOR. The military review, which had been ordered at Camp Hamilton (present-day borough of Phoebus) was called off. But the MERRIMACK did not give battle. General Wool then proposed that the President and his companions ride over to Camp Hamilton anyway. Lincoln and Chase rode horseback. Stanton rode in a carriage. General Wool and his staff in their blue uniforms formed the most brilliant part of the cortege. As they rode through Camp Hamilton General Wool gave orders to get the regiments ready for a review. In the meantime the party rode on to the ruins of Hampton, which had been burned by the Confederates in 1861. They were saddened by the bare, blackened and crumbling walls. They viewed the ruins of the Court House and St. John's Church. Crossing back over Hampton Creek, they saw the summer home of ex-President John Tyler and some other fine houses, which were intact, as the Confederates had not crossed the creek when they set fire to the town.

Arriving back at Camp Hamilton, they saw the troops drawn up in formation. The troops passed in review, cavalry first, then regiment after regiment of infantry. After the review, the party rode on toward the fort, but one regiment had drawn up in line. The colonel and his men were pleased when the President rode along the line with his head uncovered. This inspired great enthusiasm.

Returning to Quarters No. 1, a conference was held. It was decided that an attempt must be made to capture Norfolk, the base of the MERRIMACK. Deprived of her base, the MERRIMACK would be forced to withdraw up the James River to Richmond or else attempt to run past Forts Monroe and Wool and Goldsborough's fleet into Chesapeake Bay. Lincoln also issued an order to Commodore Goldsborough to send the GALENA and two gunboats up the James River toward Richmond to support General McClellan who was now pressing after the Confederates northwest of Williamsburg. Lincoln and Stanton remained at Quarters No. 1 while Chase and General Viele went back to the MIAMI to spend the night.

The next morning, Thursday, May 8, President Lincoln summoned Commodore Goldsborough to a conference at Quarters No. 1. It was determined to attack the batteries on Sewell's Point, and, under cover of the bombardment, troops from Fort Monroe would be landed for a march on Norfolk. Lincoln, Chase and Stanton went over to Fort Wool to watch the action. The SEMINOLE, SAN JACINTO, DAKOTA, SUSQUEHANNA, MONITOR and STEVENS opened fire on Sewell's Point. In this they were joined by the large guns on Fort Wool. Before long the small battery at the extreme end of Sewell's Point was silenced. The fire was then directed on a battery inside the Point. While this was going on, smoke was seen curling over the woods on Sewell's Point five or six miles from its termination. The men on Fort Wool said, "There comes the MERRIMACK!"

The President and his party left the island fort. Just as they were stepping ashore at Fort Monroe, the MERRIMACK came out from behind Sewell's Point. Although the troops had already been embarked at Fort Monroe, it was obviously no use to attempt a landing on Sewell's Point while the MERRIMACK lay protecting it. The soldiers were, therefore, removed from the transports.

It was only too apparent that the landing must be attempted at a place where the MERRIMACK could not interfere. This would have to be east of Sewell's Point on Chesapeake Bay. Since the channel from Hampton Roads into Chesapeake Bay lay between Fort Monroe and Fort Wool, it was not likely that the MERRIMACK would try to run past the forts. With her slow speed, the Confederate ironclad would be subjected to a murderous cross-fire from the big guns of the forts, which could very well cripple her. In addition to the regular armament of the two forts there was a 15 inch Rodman gun on the beach at Fort Monroe which had been specially made for use against ironclad ships. It was known as the Lincoln Gun and stood in battery with a 12-inch rifled piece known as the Union Gun. Another consideration which could be expected to hold back the MERRIMACK was that her departure from Hampton Roads would leave the city of Norfolk at the mercy of the Union ironclad MONITOR.

The question was just where on the Chesapeake Bay shore should the landing be made? The next day, Friday, May 9, Chase, General Wool and Colonel Thomas J. Cram set out with the MIAMI and a tug to make a reconnaissance of the shore line east of Sewell's Point. They arrived at a place called Ocean View, the MIAMI going in to within 500 yards of the shore, the tug to 100 yards. Some boats were sent out to ascertain the depth of the water. When they were very near the shore they suddenly pulled away. The men said they had seen an enemy picket, and fearing an ambush, they pulled off to avoid being fired at. The order was given to return to Fort Monroe, but just as they were moving off, a white flag was seen waving over the sand bank on shore. General Wool ordered that it be answered at once, which was done by fastening a bed sheet to the flag line and running it up. Thereupon, some Negro women and children appeared on the shore.

Fearing a ruse, Chase sent two boats ashore with armed crews. Chase saw Colonel Cram talking with these people while some of the men were walking about on the beach. Presently one boat came back to the ship. Chase saw that the Negroes were going back up the sand bank, and Colonel Cram was preparing to return with the other boat. Thinking that these people might have desired to go to Fort Monroe and had been refused, Chase went ashore in the boat that had just returned. It turned out that none of these persons, one of whom was a white woman living nearby, desired to go to Fort Monroe. So Chase and the others returned to the ship. At any rate, they had discovered a good landing place, no more than five or six miles from Fort Monroe, capable of receiving any number of troops and communicating with Norfolk by passable roads.

Back at Fort Monroe, Chase found Lincoln talking to a pilot and studying a map. The President thought there was a nearer landing place, and wanted to go to see it. They started out again, taking with them a large boat and about twenty armed soldiers from Fort Wool. Lincoln and Stanton went on the tug and Chase on the MIAMI. When they came to the place Lincoln wished to see, the boat from Fort Wool and a boat from the MIAMI were filled with armed men and sent toward the shore. All of the guns of the MIAMI were trained on the shore. Before the boats could land, several Confederate horsemen appeared on the beach. Chase sent a message to Lincoln asking if the MIAMI should fire on the horsemen. Lincoln said no. After their return to Fort Monroe, it was decided that an advance should be made from one of these two landing places. General Wool preferred the one that he himself had visited, so Ocean View was selected as the landing place. Four regiments were loaded at once into transports at Fort Monroe.

The troops landed without interference. Lincoln, Chase, Stanton and General Wool went to Ocean View next morning Saturday, May 10. They found the troops had already gone forward. Chase and General Wool followed the troops. Lincoln and Stanton returned to Quarters No. 1 at Fort Monroe to await results. Led by General Wool, the troops advanced overland to Norfolk, where they were met by Mayor William W. Lamb, who formally surrendered the city. The Navy Yard was found in flames, fired by the Confederates just before they had evacuated the city. Late that evening, almost midnight, Chase and General Wool returned to Fort Monroe. They went straight to the President's room at Quarters No. 1 with the good news, "Norfolk is ours!" Stanton was so delighted that he hugged the dignified General Wool.

All got up early the next morning, Sunday, May 11, for Lincoln had decided to return to Washington at 7 o'clock. As the party was sitting in the parlor of Quarters No. 1, Commodore Goldsborough came in with the electrifying news that the Confederates had blown up the MERRIMACK just off Craney Island at 5 A.M. After two months of terror, the Confederate monster was no more! Lincoln wanted to see the site of the destruction for himself. He also wanted to go up the Elizabeth River to make sure that the channel to Norfolk was not obstructed. The U.S.S. BALTIMORE, on which the party was to return to Washington, took them over to Craney Island, then up the Elizabeth River. At Norfolk they found that the MONITOR, STEVENS and SUSQUEHANNA had preceded them.

Now that the MERRIMACK was no more, the entire Union fleet could be sent up the James and York Rivers to support General McClellan's campaign against Richmond. After a very brief stop at Fort Monroe, the BALTIMORE carried the President back to Washington. "So ended a brilliant week's campaign by the President," as Chase wrote to one of his daughters.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For a more extensive account of this interesting episode in the life of Abraham Lincoln, read Chester D. Bradley, "President Lincoln's Campaign against the MERRIMACK," JOURNAL OF THE ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Spring of 1958, Vol. LI, No. 1, pages 59-85.

This article is No. 9 in a 15 article series entitled TALES OF OLD FORT MONROE. The whole series is available for 10 cents each, three for 25 cent, seven for 50 cents or all 15 for 1 dollar. Write to The Fort Monroe Casemate Museum, Box 341, Fort Monroe, Virginia.

TALES OF OLD FORT MONROE

1. Robert E. Lee at Fort Monroe
2. Black Hawk at Fort Monroe
3. Edgar Allan Poe at Fort Monroe
4. General Simon Bernard: Aide to Napoleon, Designer of Ft. Monroe
5. Is it a Fort or a Fortress?
6. Fort Monroe in the Civil War.
7. Short History of the Civil War
8. U.S. Grant Comes to Fort Monroe.
9. Abraham Lincoln's Campaign Against the MERRIMACK.
10. Old Point Comfort: America's Greatest Bastion.
11. THE FANNY: First Aircraft Carrier (1861).
12. THE MONITOR and THE MERRIMACK.
13. Jefferson Davis: Brief Biography.
14. On to Richmond! General McClellan's Peninsular Campaign.
15. Abraham Lincoln at the Hampton Roads Peace Conference (1865).

The Fort Monroe Casemate Museum consists of the Jefferson Davis Casemate, the MONITOR and MERRIMACK Casemate, and the Old Fort Monroe Casemate (a casemate is a chamber in the wall of a fort). The museum is open every day of the year from 8 AM to 5 PM. Admission is free, the museum being commemorative and educational.

THE FIRST SUBMARINE OF THE CONFEDERATE NAVY
By Harlowe R. Hoyt
CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER, November 16, 1939

Submarine warfare plays a tremendous part in the present hostilities of Europe. How many of these monsters the German navy possesses is not certain but it would seem their work of destruction is comprehensive. Far different was the story of the first submarine employed by the Confederate navy in the Civil War. This is the first of two articles.

IN 1864

Feb. 17, 1864, was the day when the HOUSATONIC, a United States federal steam sloop of sixteen guns, went to the bottom of the ocean off Charleston, S.C. The city, hotbed of rebellion during the pre-war days, was destined to register first in much that brought about the Civil War. It was Charleston's delegation to the Constitutional Convention that insisted that slavery be left alone which precipitated the hostilities of '61. It was on Fort Sumter in that spot that the first gun was fired to open actual warfare. And it was off the harbor that the first vessel was sunk by underwater craft--inaugurating the reign of the submarine.

It was an unfortunate vessel, that submarine. It brought its crews to their death, from start to finish, and despite the fact it proved theoretically successful, it was a mantrap of the first degree. Ira McClintock was the builder, aided by Horace L. Hunley. Even with their previous experience--McClintock had tried twice to attain his ends--they found the going hard. His first two craft never saw action. They sank during experimental trials and their crews escaped by a hair. Then came the third boat--the fatal submarine. The Confederate navy called it the "water coffin." It lived up to its name.

With little resource in a manufacturing way, the south was put to it hard to secure materials of any character. McClintock and Hunley found this to be the case when they undertook to build their submarine.

They had at their disposal little material. They took an iron boiler discarded from one of the sorghum mills and used this for their base. It was 25 feet long and four feet in diameter. In addition, there was boiler plate. They sliced the boiler from end to end and added a foot of iron to enlarge it. Bulkheads were placed at either end and bow and stern riveted to them. These compartments, like a rounded wedge, held the ballast tanks by which the boat was raised and lowered. A valve controlled the inflow of water and hand pumps served to empty the craft. The speed of the odd boat was about four miles an hour.

From the start, her crew was cagy. Officers in command knew that she would sink with or without reason and objected strenuously to the ruling of the designers that iron ballast be carried. Filled with enthusiasm and certainty of success. McClintock and Hunley stood on the dock at Mobile and watched the invention head out for her trial. She went down. That much was a success. But, unfortunately for all concerned, she failed to come to the surface. When they finally raised her, the crew of nine were as dead as doornails. They placed the boat on flatcars and hauled her to Charleston for another try.

As a prize fighter's manager insists, "He can't lick us," so McClintock and Hunley insisted that their submarine was not a bust. But they remained on shore--discreetly enough--and took no chances themselves. Perhaps they figured, as does a general, that brains are more valuable than brawn. But after plenty of tinkering, they were ready for another try.

Lieut. John Payne, who had more courage than sense, volunteered to take out the boat with his crew of eight men. They sailed out from Charleston with their hatches open. The swell from a passing steamer filled the boat. Six men were drowned. Undaunted, Payne replaced his volunteers and tried again. They took the boat to Fort Johnson and

moored it beside a vessel. The vessel, unfortunately, moved away without signal. The submarine went down. Eight men were the victims. Total casualties to date: 23 drowned and no boats sunk.

By this time, the submarine was a hoodoo. Fayne learned his lesson. He quit. McClintock, still in the background, induced Hunley to take charge which he did with Thomas Parks as his right hand man. It was a fatal mistake for Hunley. He should have remained on land with his associate. Off Fort Johnson, the boat submerged. After two weeks they managed to bring her to the surface. Mr. Hunley, Mr. Parks and the remaining seven who made the crew were, of course, like drowned rats. The boat had nosed down into the mud due to the inlet fouling. The handle that controlled the valve had fallen off. Hunley held a candle in his hand--evidently seeking to retrieve the lost mechanism when death came. Total to date: 32 drowned and nothing to show for it.

November 23, 1939

Mr. Ira McClintock was nothing if not persistent. His crude underwater craft had proven anything but successful. His associate, Horace L. Hunley, met his death trying to navigate the submarine. In three attempts, the boat submerged with a net result of 32 of the Confederate navy drowned like rats in a trap. There was no proof that the vessel would prove effective as a medium of destroying federal shipping. But experiments continued and work went on.

They fished the submarine from the depths of the ocean off Fort Johnson and recovered the bodies of Hunley, Thomas Parks and the crew of seven. The honored dead were carried to Charleston and buried with full military honors. And they found another crop of daredevils and started out on their fourth cruise. This was a different sortie, however, for they picked a receiving ship in the Cooper River and tried diving beneath it, dragging a torpedo on a float. The theory was that the submarine would be free and away before the charge exploded. This time the boat fouled in a rope hanging overboard and the crew suffocated. Total to date: 41 dead and no results.

To this time, the general scheme had been to attack the ironclad MONITOR. Consideration brought the conclusion that this was impractical and attention was turned to the wooden blockaders. A torpedo on the end of a long spar was to be the medium of attack.

It was Oct. 15, 1863, when Hunley and his crew drowned. Before the end of that month, the submarine made an attack upon the New Ironsides. This time the torpedo exploded but the shock damaged the vessel so badly that the crew deserted her and took to lifeboats. Luckily all were saved. The boat was recovered and towed back to Charleston for repairs.

It was Feb 17, 1864, that the submarine made its last voyage. By this time, the Confederates had chosen a name for her. She was known as a David. The title, stemming from the Bible, recalled the doughty fighter of the sling who dealt Goliath a fatal blow. The comparison was appropriate except for one thing. To the present, little David's sling had sent the stone in the wrong direction and he was the one who had suffered.

Lieut. George Dixon was in charge of the crew on this attempt. The HOUSANTONIC, a steam sloop of sixteen guns, was picked for the victim. Dixon and his trusty eight were better prepared than had been their predecessors. A spar torpedo carried 100 pounds of gunpowder. It was to be discharged by a lanyard. The DAVID was able to sail up under the warship's guns which could not be depressed to train on her. Lieut. F.J. Higginson was on watch on the HOUSANTONIC. He sighted the little craft and gave an alarm. The crew was summoned to the deck but before they were assembled, Dixon planted his torpedo beneath the magazine and discharged it. The ship listed and started to sink rapidly. It was each for himself and the sailors launched lifeboats and leaped into the ocean. Down went the HOUSANTONIC in a brief time but only five of her crew were lost.

Dixon and his crew were wary. They feared being sent to the bottom in an iron boiler and so approached the HOUSATONIC with their hatches wide open. When the water cleared, the DAVID had vanished once again. And the death toll of the submarine had reached the mark of 50 --ten times the number of deaths inflicted upon her enemies and with a single vessel sunk as the result of it all.

It was not until after the war that the DAVID was brought up from the depths of Charleston Harbor. It would seem that the undertow had sucked the little DAVID along with the HOUSATONIC and brought death to all. The crew, as usual, was given all military honors of burial but it was generally accepted that as a medium of attack, the submarine was a dud. Years were to pass before the submarine would be considered anything but a dangerous experiment. And not until the World War did this mode of undersea warfare prove itself truly effective.

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SURRENDER OF THE C.S.S. SHENANDOAH

The following is a description of the surrender of the C.S.S. SHENANDOAH. It was written by Dr. McNulty, of the ATLANTA CONSTITUTION, and is taken from the book DIXIE RAIDER, as follows:

"Pilot asks us to show our flag. We say we have no flag. Then answers the servant of the nations, 'Cannot go on board your shp.' Hurried consultation, an anxious exchange of inquiring looks--what shall we do now--we have but one flag--shall we raise it?

It was the flag to which we had sworn allegiance. Shall we lift it once more to the breeze, in defiance of the world--if needs be--and defying all, be constant to that cause which we had sworn to maintain until we knew there was no Confederacy, and that ours was in truth a Lost Cause? We will, say all hearts with one acclaim. And let this pilot, or any other, refuse to recognize us if they will.

Then, for the last time, was brought up from its treasured place below the sacred banner of the fair South, to wave its last defiant wave and flap its last ensanguined flap against the winds of fate, before going forever upon the page of history. Out upon the free day it flashed, and the far shores of England seemed to answer its brave appeal that the banner that had led 1,000,000 men to many victorious battles should now have one more and final recognition, should oncemore be recognized a flag among the flags of nations. The grim old sea-dog tossing his boat at stern beholds go up the outlawed banner! He sees it floating in the wild, free air and anticipates his England's decision that it shall be recognized for this last time. He calls for a line, swings himself over the old warship's side, and up noble Mersey, thirteen months after departing from the Thames and just six months lacking four days after the war ended, sailed the Confederate ship of war SHENANDOAH."

EDITOR'S NOTE: From the newsletter of THE HONORARY SOCIETY OF CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA, Vol. II, Sept., 1966 #7

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CIVIL WAR IN ST. LOUIS

It was from the ways of Eads' shipyard in Carondelet that came the famous gunboats that reduced Fort Henry and defied the batteries of Vicksburg. Strangely enough when the gunboats engaged the Confederates at Forts Henry and Donelson in February, 1862, they were in effect Eads' property, not having been paid for by the Confederate Government.

EDITOR'S NOTE: From the newsletter of the St. Louis CWRT, THE BUSH-WHACKER, February, 1965.

mony yesterday on a sunny and breezy spring day that made the campus sparkle.

Their sentiments were sometimes visible: An elderly man got up from a bench and stood at attention as the band came by playing "Dixie," and others applauded. A middle-aged women took a picture of her three sons in front of the Confederate flag after the ceremony, a young man in the crowd eyed the four blacks -- who wore the initials of a campus organization, S.A.B.J., on their jackets -- warily: "I bet they might do something (to disrupt the parade)," he said. "Those initials sound like something out of darkest Africa."

But despite the board's decision, there seemed to be some minor alterations in the ceremony. Morton and other blacks noted that the band played "Dixie" several times at past ceremonies, and only did it twice yesterday. And they said the Confederate flag also was less visible. (It flew in front of a statue of "Virginia Mourning Her Dead" along with U.S., Virginia and VMI flags.)

There was something else new: VMI chaplain R.L. Wilson mentioned in his prayer that "many of the cadets (who fought at New Market) and their families felt a deep abhorrence to the "institution of slavery."

Wilson said he had inserted that on his own, without consulting the board. He said he is from Kentucky, had one grandfather who fought for the Union and one for the Confederacy, and has a "deep appreciation for both sides of the issue."

Morton, a native of South Carolina, said he wasn't much impressed with any of the changes in the ceremony, though he conceded that "we're on higher ground now, just because the board considered the thing at all. But we've got a long way to go."

He said that for himself and the other protesters it was a question of "being a cadet or being black. We first and foremost have to be black." He said the two blacks who had marched "didn't think it was necessary to separate the school and being black," and that they felt they could "gain more by participating." There was no antagonism between the two marchers and the other blacks, Morton said.

The cadet said the blacks had turned down offers from students at Washington & Lee and other schools to join them in a demonstration during the ceremony. But next year, he said, such offers probably would not be refused if the board sticks to its guns on the ceremony.

"We didn't want to cause any disturbance this year," he said, "but next year I think there will be demonstrations. This is the last time they are going to get off that easy."

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CHARLES WILLIAM READ
Mississippi's Greatest Confederate
Naval Hero

In October, 1972, the Jackson, Mississippi CWRT enjoyed a talk on CSN Midshipman Charles W. Read, as given by Mr. M. James Stevens.

Read fired the first cannon shot in defense of Mississippi from Ship Island on July 9, 1861, and stirred up fears of Yankee defenders on that same island four years later in his last escapade.

Born May 12, 1840, in Yazoo County, barely 16 years old when appointed to Annapolis, Read was but 21 when he joined the Confederate Navy. Following his Mississippi Sound activity, Midshipmen Read served along 1,000 miles of fighting in the Mississippi River, broke through the Union naval blockade at Mobile on the C.S. commerce raider FLORIDA with Capt. John Maffitt and then took command of his own raider off Brazil.

Up the Atlantic seaboard he left a trail of burning ships. Three times he was captured and escaped from Fort Warren Prison in Boston Harbor before being paroled. He closed his adventuresome war career below New Orleans. Read was then a First Lieutenant. (REBEL YELL)