The Confederate Defense of Mobile, 1861-1865. (Volumes I-Ii).

Arthur William Bergeron Jr

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THE CONFEDERATE DEFENSE OF MOBILE, 1861-1865. (VOLUME I AND VOLUME II)

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THE CONFEDERATE DEFENSE OF MOBILE, 1861-1865

VOLUME I

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of History

by

Arthur William Bergeron, Jr.
M.A., Louisiana State University, 1972
August 1980
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I owe a special debt to the late Professor T. Harry Williams who encouraged me to pursue this topic and provided valuable assistance while directing the early chapters of the dissertation. I also wish to express my sincere gratitude to Professor William J. Cooper, Jr., for agreeing to direct my dissertation to its conclusion and for the many excellent suggestions he made to improve it. Doctor John L. Loos also read the manuscript while it was in progress and provided particular help with the footnotes.

A number of people assisted me in various phases of my research, but a few deserve special thanks. Mr. Michael Musick of the Navy and Old Army Branch of the National Archives proved invaluable in making available pertinent manuscripts in that repository. Likewise, Mr. Caldwell Delaney of the Mobile Museum Department assisted not only in research in that collection but in suggesting other sources of information. Dr. Thomas McMillan of Mobile graciously allowed me to do research in his personal manuscript collection several years before he deposited it with the Mobile Museum Department.

Finally, I wish to thank my wife, Phyllis, for the many sacrifices she made during the research and writing of this dissertation.
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ABSTRACT

The people of Mobile, Alabama, supported the secession of their state from the Union in January 1861, and thousands of her able-bodied men served in the Confederate army from 1861 to 1865. Recognizing the city's strategic importance as a port and major railroad center connecting the eastern and western sections of the new nation, the Confederate government moved quickly to provide adequate defenses for Mobile. Confederate soldiers occupied and began to strengthen Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines, which guarded the main channels leading into Mobile Bay. The Confederate Navy Department converted several steamers into gunboats and began construction of four ironclads, all designed to support the land defenses of Mobile.

As the war progressed, Union land and naval forces moved into the Gulf of Mexico, and the Confederate authorities realized that Mobile required more defensive works than the two forts at the mouth of the bay. Engineers, using slave labor, designed and constructed earthen forts along the bay shore near the city and on
various islands at the mouths of the rivers which emptied into the bay. They intended all of these batteries to protect the water approaches to Mobile in the event of an enemy naval force running past Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines. To protect the city from a land attack, the engineers erected a series of earthen redoubts connected by infantry entrenchments around Mobile. By war's end, three separate lines of forts and trenches surrounded the city. Mobile undoubtedly possessed fortifications as extensive and strong as almost any city in the Confederacy.

Confederate President Jefferson Davis personally chose for assignment as commanding general at Mobile men whom he knew had the qualifications needed to push the construction of all of these defensive works and whom he could rely on to conduct a successful defense against an enemy attack. Confederate brigades, regiments, and artillery batteries moved in and out of the city throughout the war. Although the garrison at times shrank in size to levels which alarmed its commanders, the Confederate military authorities in Richmond made a commitment to see that enough men manned the fortifications to put up a stiff resistance to an actual enemy attack. The War Department also always made sure that the territorial command to which Mobile belonged, whether a department or a district, had the defense of the city as its objective.
The Union high command did not seriously contemplate an attack against the Mobile defenses until relatively late in the war. While strategic objectives in other areas caused the Union military authorities to delay a move against Mobile, the strength of the defenses around the city played a part in the decision. A naval demonstration against an earthen fort at Grant's Pass in February 1864 resulted in little damage to that work. Admiral David G. Farragut successfully led a squadron of monitors and wooden gunboats past Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines in August 1864 and captured the lower bay defenses. The commitment of land forces elsewhere prevented the Union navy from proceeding at that time in a campaign against Mobile itself. Such a campaign finally got under way in March 1865, but it had defensive works on the eastern shore as its primary objective. After brief sieges, these Confederate fortifications fell. Faced by overwhelming numbers, Mobile's commander evacuated the city on April 12, 1865, and the city's governmental authorities surrendered Mobile to the enemy that same day.
CHAPTER I

"...A SEAPORT SUSCEPTIBLE OF IMPREGNABLE DEFENSE..."

Mobile on the eve of the Civil War was the leading city of Alabama and one of the most important cities in the South. It was also an old town, the French, under Pierre LeMoyne, Sieur d'Iberville, having established a settlement there in 1711. From then until 1814, when it fell to General Andrew Jackson, Mobile belonged successively to the French, British, and Spanish governments. When the Americans took possession, the population numbered a mere handful, but it grew steadily and stood at 29,258 persons in 1860.¹ One observer described the city in 1861:

...With a population of thirty thousand the city contains many pleasant residences, embowered in shade trees, and surrounded by generous grounds. It is rendered attractive by its tall pines, live oak, and Pride-of-China trees....²


²Albert D. Richardson, The Secret Service, the Field, the Dungeon, and the Escape (Hartford, Conn.: American Publishing Co., 1865), 95.
Located on a sandy plain near the northwest corner of Mobile Bay, the city enjoyed excellent drainage and had no problems with mud. The inhabitants found this sand difficult to cross, however, so they established over the years a system of oyster-shell roads. These roads became a favorite carriage route and were well-known throughout the Gulf South.\(^3\)

Partly because of the various countries which had owned the area and partly due to her status as a major port, Mobile boasted a significant number of foreign born persons in her population. The 1860 census recorded 7,733 foreigners in the city, one-fourth of the total population and 37 percent of the white population.\(^4\) A visitor to Mobile felt that her society was "more cosmopolitan than that of any city in the South, save perhaps, New Orleans."\(^5\) When British correspondent William Howard Russell made a brief inspection of the city in May 1861, he wrote in his diary some interesting


observations on this aspect of Mobile's society. One of the first things he noticed upon his arrival was "a fringe of tall warehouses, and shops alongside [the wharf], over which were names indicating Scotch, Irish, English, many Spanish, German, Italian, and French owners." Later Russell found the market "crowded with Negroes, mulattoes, quadroons, and mestizos of all sorts, Spanish, Italian, and French, speaking their own tongues, or a quaint lingua franca, and dressed in very striking and pretty costumes."  

Two colleges operated in or near Mobile in 1860: the Medical College of Alabama and Spring Hill College. The former was a branch of the University of Alabama, the latter a private school run by the Jesuit order. Mobile had seven public schools and several private academies, all of which had reputations for their fine educational standing. With five hospitals, the city could provide excellent care for its sick. The Protestant and Orphans Asylum, the Catholic Orphan Asylum, the

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7 Ibid., 108.

8 Sister Esther Marie Goodrow, Mobile During the Civil War (Mobile: Historic Mobile Preservation Society, 1950), 11.

9 Ibid.
Female Benevolent Society, the Samaritan Society, and the "Can't-Get-Away-Club" constituted the city's charitable institutions. Twenty-four Christian places of worship and two Jewish synagogues ministered to the spiritual needs of the populace. Mobile also had one of the finest fire departments in the South, consisting of eight engine companies and one hook-and-ladder company.\(^{10}\)

Mobile was a prosperous city primarily because of its status as a center for trade and commerce. As a port, Mobile stood second only to New Orleans in the South. More than 330 vessels cleared and over 200 vessels entered the port in 1860. The value of articles exported totalled $38,670,183. Foreign imports amounted to $1,050,310.\(^{11}\) Much of Mobile's trade moved up and down the rivers which converged on the city, primarily

\(^{10}\)Ibid., 11-12; "Mobile--Its Past and Present," DeBow's Review, XXVIII (1860), 310-11. The "Can't-Get-Away-Club" was the most famous of the city's charitable organizations. Formed in 1839, it had as its goal the aiding of victims of yellow fever epidemics. The name derived from the fact that the original members were citizens who could not get away from the city during the 1839 epidemic. Frances Annette Isbell, "A Social and Economic History of Mobile, 1865-1875" (unpublished master's thesis, University of Alabama, 1951), 75; Mobile Press Register, Oct. 17, 1948.

the Tombigbee and Alabama river systems. Alabama is said to have had "more navigable river miles than any state in the nation," and most flowed into Mobile Bay. Alabama produced more cotton than any other Southern state except Mississippi by 1860, and the majority of these bales were sold in Mobile. In exchange for this cotton coming down the rivers, Mobile's merchants sent to the planters and farmers of the interior such goods as pork, corn, flour, and whiskey.12

Mobile was never a center of Southern radicalism during the antebellum period. Her commercial ties with the North and her fairly large population of foreigners seemed to argue for continued ties with the North. In the presidential election of November 1860, Mobile County voters cast 1,823 votes for Stephen A. Douglas; 1,629 for John Bell; and 1,541 for John C. Breckinridge: a better than two-to-one majority against the secessionist candidate.13 Apparently the election of Abraham Lincoln pushed Mobilians toward the secessionist camp.


13 Clarence P. Denman, The Secession Movement in Alabama (Montgomery: Alabama State Department of Archives and History, 1933), 120.
On December 7, 1860, the city's leading newspaper stated: "The rapid progress of events within the last few weeks leaves little ground for hope that the Union can be preserved upon any basis, just, equitable, and satisfactory to the Southern people." This article expressed the hope that the separation would be peaceful.  

Mayor Jones M. Withers of Mobile issued a proclamation on December 8 in which he stated: "We are in the midst of a revolution, and are invoking the sovereignty of our State against wrong and oppression." Two days earlier Governor Andrew B. Moore had issued a call, in accordance with a resolution of the General Assembly, for an election of delegates on the twenty-fourth to a state convention to consider the course Alabama would follow. In meetings at Temperance Hall, the secessionists nominated their delegates, and the cooperationists met at Odd Fellows Hall to select their slate. The news of the secession of South Carolina reached Mobile late on December 20 and, "though not unexpected, caused

15 Ibid., Dec. 9, 1860.
considerable excitement, and a salute of 100 guns was fired...in honor of the event." Clarence P. Denman, in studying the secession of Alabama, wrote: "The returns [of the state convention delegates election] from Mobile County came as quite a surprise to those who regarded the cooperationist party as the successor of the Bell and Douglas parties;..." Those returns showed 2,297 votes cast for the secessionists and 1,229 for the cooperationists: a majority of 1,068 for the former. In analyzing these results, Denman concludes:

...The cooperationists of the county had advocated a method of withdrawing so closely akin to straight-out secession that they should have received the votes of all those not strongly in favor of separate state action; therefore, the large majority for the straight-outs indicates that the people of Mobile County were in harmony with the interior of the state.

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17 Mobile Daily Advertiser, Dec. 21, 1860.
18 Denman, The Secession Movement in Alabama, 120.
20 Denman, The Secession Movement in Alabama, 120.
The Alabama convention began its meetings in Montgomery on January 7, 1861. Four days later the delegates voted sixty-three to thirty-nine to take the state out of the Union. Business establishments in Mobile had closed down awaiting the decision of the convention. During the afternoon of the eleventh, the news of secession reached the city. Widespread celebrations broke out in Mobile. The militia fired one hundred guns in salute, and bands struck up joyful tunes. All of Mobile's military companies turned out to parade through the streets. That night the citizens lit lamps and candles in homes and businesses and tar barrels along Government Street so that the revelry might continue. A huge fireworks display in Bienville Square highlighted the night celebration. A large element of the populace obviously supported secession. 21

The city's newspapers picked up the popular enthusiasm. The leading daily, anticipating the formation of a Southern nation, recommended that Mobile be established as the capital of the Confederacy. The article expressed the view that the Confederacy would expand in time to Mexico and the West Indies. If this

21 New Orleans Daily Picayune, Jan. 13, 1861; Caldwell Delaney, The Story of Mobile (Mobile: Gill Printing Co., 1953), 111; Goodrow, Mobile During the Civil War, 16.
occurred, the reasons for placing the center of government at Mobile would be obvious:

...Mobile is, to a degree, the convenient center of the present and the geographical center of the future, is a seaport susceptible of impregnable defence, is healthful, and in every respect eligible for the honor of being elected the capital city of the South.... 22

Should Mobile not be chosen, the Daily Advertiser article stated that Montgomery would be the next logical choice.

Before the secession convention met in Montgomery, Governor Moore had begun seizing federal installations and property near Mobile. On January 3 he called out six Mobile companies of the First Alabama State Troops for this purpose. Two companies moved by steamer on January 4 to seize Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines at the mouth of Mobile Bay, while four companies moved at the same time against the Mount Vernon Arsenal, thirty miles north of Mobile. Ordnance Sergeant S. Patterson turned over all of the property under his supervision at Fort Morgan to Colonel John B. Todd. Not until January 18, however, did Colonel Todd take formal possession of Fort Gaines from Lieutenant C. B. Reese of the United States Corps of Engineers. Both forts were still in an unfinished state, and United States engineer troops had worked to

22Mobile Daily Advertiser, Jan. 11, 1861.
strengthen them. The property seized included some 5,000 shot and shell.23

Captain Jesse L. Reno, commanding at Mount Vernon Arsenal, reported that he surrendered his post after being surprised and overwhelmed by the Mobile soldiers. He had only seventeen men under his command and could not have resisted. The arsenal's stores included twenty thousand stands of arms, fifteen hundred barrels of powder, a few cannon, and other munitions.24 In reporting the seizure of all this property to President James Buchanan, Governor Moore explained that he had acted in self-defense, as he had information that the Federals intended to reinforce the forts and place a


24 Captain Jesse L. Reno to Captain William Maynadier, Jan. 4, 1861, O.R., I, 327; Montgomery Weekly Post, Jan. 9, 1861; Irwin Memoirs.
strong guard at the arsenal. He hoped, he said, to avoid bloodshed and hostilities. Moore closed his letter by stating:

An inventory of the property in the forts and arsenal has been ordered, and the strictest care will be taken to prevent the injury or destruction of it while peaceable relations continue to subsist, as I trust they will. The forts and arsenal will be held by my order only for the precautionary purpose for which they were taken,...

After the seizure of the forts, Mobile's citizens continued to form military companies, and the newspapers urged them to begin thinking about the possibility of war. At least one paper suggested that the city's fire companies follow an example set in Charleston and organize themselves for military duty. This would not be difficult to do since the companies were already enlisted, were accustomed to obeying orders, and could adapt quickly to drill. These companies would act primarily as a home guard, maintaining their present uniforms. The paper expected that no more than one-third of the men would be used for duty outside the city at one time. The firemen took these suggestions to

\[25\] Moore to Buchanan, Jan. 4 [?], 1861, O.R., I, 328.

\[26\] Mobile Daily Advertiser, Jan. 9, 1861.
heart and did organize for home defense. A Fire Brigade formed and used the engine houses as armories.\(^27\)

Governor Moore acted quickly after Alabama seceded to provide for the defense of Mobile. On his own authority he gave permission to his assistant quartermaster, Colonel Duff C. Green, to make a draft of $10,000 against the Executive Department. The money would be used to strengthen the forts below the city. At the time neither the General Assembly nor the secession convention had appropriated funds for that purpose. Green wrote to Moore that the people of Mobile intended to raise $100,000 for the same purpose. This money could later be reimbursed by the State. Moore wrote that "Mobile must be defended at whatever cost," but he urged his military subordinates to use public monies economically and efficiently.\(^28\)

The four Mobile companies which had seized Fort Morgan remained there under Colonel Todd to garrison and strengthen the post. In a short time, however, new companies from the city and companies from the interior and Mississippi would take turns of duty at Morgan. A tug boat steamed back and forth from Mobile to keep the men

\(^{27}\)Ibid., Jan. 22, 1861.

\(^{28}\)Moore to Colonel Duff C. Green, Jan. 12, 1861, _O.R._, LII, Pt. 2, p. 5.
supplied with fresh food and other goods. As the force in Morgan grew in size, the men boarded up some of the casemates and converted them into barracks rooms. The officers drilled the men and gave some artillery instruction. The men's health remained good, and their spirits were high. They usually took twenty-four to forty-eight hours to adjust to the new military routine.²⁹

trenches from the soil and added a little to the defensive posture of the fort. Much more work needed to be done, however, to ready Morgan for an attack.

Throughout the remainder of January and much of February 1861, military companies from Mobile and elsewhere shuffled in and out of Fort Morgan. Some of Mobile's volunteers went to Pensacola, Florida, to help garrison that town. As all of these military companies moved through Mobile, the businessmen of the city did what they could to help the men. The owners of the Battle House Hotel made rooms available at moderate rates and gave the soldiers as much attention as possible despite boarders who objected to the hotel being used as a barracks. Citizens continued to rejoice as news of the secession of other Southern states arrived. When Louisiana left the Union, the soldiers fired an artillery salute, but there had been too much previous celebrating for the city to be illuminated again. One newspaper stated: "The rejoicing on the part of our people is, however, just as deep, sincere and pervading as if the

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30 Daily Picayune, Jan. 24, 1861.
demonstrations were of the most extensive and noisy character."\textsuperscript{33}

The new Confederate government became involved in the defense of Mobile almost immediately after its formation. Secretary of War Leroy Pope Walker telegraphed Colonel John H. Forney at Barrancas Barracks, Florida, on February 26 and asked if any columbiads (large siege artillery pieces) could be spared from Fort McRae to be used in Fort Morgan. When Forney replied that two such guns could be spared, Walker informed him to make the transfer "without delay, so as not to excite suspicion and report."\textsuperscript{34} Forney reported on March 4 that two eight-inch columbiads, with complete carriages, chasis, equipment, and implements, had been sent to Morgan that day.\textsuperscript{35} Several days later, on March 7, the military authorities at Mobile received by rail two ten-inch columbiads from the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond, Virginia. These guns also had Morgan

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., Jan. 27, 1861.


as their destination. Their mile and a half range made these columbiads the most powerful guns at the fort. 36

On March 18, 1861, the Confederate War Department assumed supervision of Fort Morgan by assigning Colonel William J. Hardee to command of the post. Hardee, author of the standard text on infantry tactics, would have the services of two artillery officers to help train the men. 37 Nine and a half companies, about 800 men, comprised the garrison. Hardee found that the officers and men alike lacked discipline and had had little instruction. He began a program but could do little by himself. On March 28 he wrote to Secretary Walker to request officers capable of conducting both infantry and artillery instruction, warning that if such instructors were not provided the Alabama volunteers would in battle "disgrace themselves and the Confederacy." 38 A visitor to the fort reported shortly

36 Mobile Daily Advertiser, Mar. 8, 1861; Mobile Daily Tribune, March 8, 1861.


38 Major General Jeremiah Clemens to Secretary of War, Apr. 4, 1861, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 35; Colonel William J. Hardee to Walker, Mar. 28, 1861, ibid., 30-31.
afterwards, however, that Hardee seemed to have put the place "in thorough repair and readiness."  

As Hardee's force at Fort Morgan grew, crowded conditions compelled him to move most of the men outside the fort into tents. He did this for fear that yellow fever or some other epidemic sickness might strike in the close quarters. The troops still faced problems in their new situation, however. The only tents available were small, and the men had to remain out in the hot sun much of the time. Hardee had ordered the sand hills leveled and the few trees around cut down for defensive reasons. This action resulted in what an observer called "a huge, unbroken waste of sand, nearly as white as snow and intensely hot." By this time most of the south Alabama companies had been relieved by units from the northern part of the state. These men were not accustomed to such exposure. The observer mentioned above recommended that the government provide larger tents equipped with flies to allow the sea breeze to blow through.

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39 DeLeon, *Four Years in Rebel Capitols*, 73.
41 Ibid.
Mobile's defenses suffered other problems at this time. Some people thought Fort Morgan capable of repelling an attack by enemy vessels but not a land assault. More serious than this weakness, however, the approaches to Mobile from Mississippi Sound through Grant's Pass stood completely unprotected. The closest work to the pass, Fort Gaines, had no garrison and could not have prevented vessels of light draft from using the approach anyway. Some of the citizens in Mobile expressed understandable concern. Robert H. Smith, Mobile's representative in the Confederate Congress, suggested that Hardee's command be extended to include Fort Gaines, Grant's Pass, and all other approaches to Mobile.  

About this same time, Major General Jeremiah Clemens of the Alabama militia suggested a further measure for the defense of Mobile. He recommended that guns from Fort Morgan be placed in defensive works on Dauphin Island and Sand Island at the mouth of the bay and at Spanish River and Choctaw Point near the city. The Confederate authorities responded quickly to these requests. Major Danville Leadbetter, a noted engineer officer, received orders to inspect the defenses and make

42 Robert H. Smith to Jefferson Davis, Apr. 13, 1861, ibid., 45-46.
43 General Samuel Cooper to Hardee, Apr. 17, 1861, ibid., 52.
a full report. General Samuel Cooper, Adjutant General of the Confederacy, authorized Hardee to transfer guns to the points suggested by Clemens, saying that the guns would be replaced by others from the arsenal at Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Finally, Cooper extended Hardee's command to include Fort Gaines, Grant's Pass, and all approaches to Mobile. Hardee would also have the services of the revenue cutter Lewis Cass.\footnote{John Tyler, Jr. to Percy Walker, Apr. 16, 1861, Letters Sent by the Confederate Secretary of War, 1861-1865, Chap. IX, Vol. 1, p. 196, RG 109, National Archives; Cooper to Danville Leadbetter, Mar. 19, 1861, Letters and Telegrams Sent by the Confederate Adjutant and Inspector General, 1861-1865, Chap. I, Vol. 35, p. 8, RG 109, National Archives; Cooper to Hardee, Apr. 17, 1861 (two communications), O.R., LII, Pt. 2, pp. 52, 53; Hardee to Walker, Apr. 21, 1861, ibid., 60; Walker to Hardee, Apr. 22, 1861, ibid., 61; Walker to Captain J. J. Morrison, Apr. 22, 1861, ibid.; Morrison to Walker, Apr. 22, 1861, ibid.}

In Mobile itself the war spirit rose to a fever pitch. This was especially true following the fall of Fort Sumter to Confederate forces. The news reached the city by telegraph and spread quickly. Bells rang, artillery salutes echoed over the bay, and the citizens turned out into the streets to celebrate.\footnote{Richardson, The Secret Service, 97-98.} Five days later word of the secession of Virginia reached Mobile. This created even more excitement among the people. As one newspaper put it, the tidings "rose from the lips of
the few who had first caught the news" and "was taken up and re-echoed by the voices of hundreds and thousands." There were speeches, the clanging of bells, artillery salutes, and fireworks. Most proprietors closed their stores. That night the people burned lights and candles in every window. Crowds gathered for a two-and-one-half hour fireworks display, and the celebration continued until after eleven o'clock.

All of this excitement led to an increased militancy among the city's male population. Several visitors in Mobile commented on the phenomenon. A correspondent of the New York Tribune noted: "Hand-bills, headed 'Soldiers wanted,' and 'Ho! for volunteers,' met the eye at every corner; uniforms and arms abounded, and the voice of the bugle was heard in the streets." Captain Raphael Semmes, who passed through the city about this time, recalled later that "the young merchants had dropped their daybooks and ledgers, and were forming, and drilling companies, by night and day,..."

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46 Mobile Daily Advertiser, Apr. 20, 1861.
47 Ibid.; Rix, Incidents of Life, [5].
49 Admiral Raphael Semmes, Memoirs of Service Afloat During the War Between the States (Baltimore: Kelly, Piet, & Co., 1869), 95.
DeLeon reported that "the mechanics, the stevedores and men of every class" followed the example of the upper classes in volunteering.  

The Confederate War Department detailed First Lieutenant Edward Ingraham for recruiting duty at Mobile and ordered him to report there immediately. His recruits would receive orders for Fort Morgan after enlistment. Under his instructions, Ingraham was to issue to the volunteers the following clothing items: "one blue shirt (to be made into a blouse), three undershirts, two pairs of overalls, two pairs of drawers, two pairs of stockings, one pair of booties, one blanket, one leather stock." While DeLeon exaggerated in commenting that more than two regiments were recruited, it may well have seemed, as Semmes put it, that the city "was thronged with young men in military costume, and all seemed going 'as merrily as a marriage-ball.'"

On April 16 President Jefferson Davis issued a call for volunteers, and four Mobile companies—the Mobile Cadets, Gulf City Guards, Mobile Rifles, and Washington

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50 DeLeon, Four Years in Rebel Capitals, 72.


52 DeLeon, Four Years in Rebel Capitals, 72; Semmes, Memoirs of Service Afloat, 95.
Light Infantry--offered their services to Governor Moore. He accepted the offer and notified the companies on April 23 to move to Montgomery for formation into a regiment. Crowds of people filled the streets, balconies, wharves, and boats in the harbor to watch the young soldiers march off to war. Late in the afternoon the first two companies paraded through the streets to the wharf. Rather than the bright uniforms they had worn in the past, the men now "were clad in a stout, serviceable gray, specially selected for a rough campaign."  

The men enjoyed a brief halt at the wharf to rest. One of the soldiers recalled later:

...then came the last leave-taking of mothers, sisters, sweethearts, wives; the hand-shakings of friends and companions, the blessings of old men, the final exhortation of father to son, the sobs and tears of agonized women. Then the two companies boarded the steamer St. Nicholas for the journey up river to Montgomery. As the vessel pulled out into the stream, church and ships' bells rang, an artillery unit fired a salute, and the crowds cheered and waved farewell. The Gulf city's first war volunteers were on their way to the conflict which would


54 Hotze, Three Months in the Confederate Army, 13.
claim many of their lives; "the city of Mobile had lost the elite of her youth."\(^{55}\)

During succeeding months this scene of departing troops reoccurred many times in Mobile. The men went by boat and train. They wore a variety of uniforms and carried a variety of flags. One of the most colorful companies was the Emerald Guards, the members all being firemen and predominantly natives of Ireland. When they left Mobile, the Emerald Guards wore uniforms of dark green. An observer described the flag these men bore as having a harp in the center "encircled with a wreath of shamrock and the words 'Erin-go-Bragh'" and the words "Faugh-a-ballagh!" (Irish for "clear the way") below that.\(^{56}\) Other foreign companies from Mobile joined the Confederate service, units with nicknames like the Scotch Guards, Gardes Lafayette, French Guards, and German Fusiliers.\(^{57}\) Mobile's home guard units contained numerous foreigners as well, even though these men may

\(^{55}\) Ibid.; Mobile Daily Advertiser, Apr. 24, 1861.

\(^{56}\) Kate Cumming, Kate: The Journal of a Confederate Nurse, ed. by Richard B. Harwell (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), 53.

\(^{57}\) Ella Lonn, Foreigners in the Confederacy (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1940), 96-98.
have volunteered only to escape being conscripted into regular service. 58

There are no figures on how many men Mobile furnished to the Confederate armies. By July 1861 some 2,000 men had gone into service, but many of these had enlisted for only one year. 59 Mobile County's white male population between the ages of 15 and 40 in 1860 was 8,053. If the white males between 40 and 50 are added to this figure, the total number of men liable to military service during the war was approximately 9,682. 60 Some sixty companies from Mobile County served in the regular Confederate Army, and men from the county made up part of at least five other companies. 61 Assuming a strength of from 75 to 100 men per company, Mobile County's contribution to the regular army would have been between 4,500 and 6,000 men at the least. The men in home guard, militia, or reserve units may have raised total enlistments by as many as 1,000 men.

In the months following the firing on Fort Sumter, the Confederates continued to strengthen Fort Morgan.

58 Ibid., 98-99.
59 MobileAdvertiser and Register, July 17, 1861.
60 Eighth Census, Population, 2.
Troops occupied and built up the defenses of Fort Gaines as well. Grant's Pass became the site of a small earthen fortification. These works guarding the entrances to Mobile Bay were not the only obstacles to enemy vessels. Confederate engineers drove pilings and floated torpedoes to block all but a narrow channel left open for blockade runners. To protect the water approaches to the city itself, the Confederates erected earthworks on various islands and peninsulas and placed floating batteries to support these forts. Again the engineers used pilings and torpedoes near the bay batteries, as they were called, and the combination of forts and obstructions here made it virtually impossible for enemy vessels to reach Mobile itself if they passed the forts at the bay entrances.

The Confederate defenses of Mobile did not neglect the land approaches to the city either. In the spring of 1862, engineer officer Captain Charles F. Liernur designed and supervised the beginning of construction of a line of earthworks surrounding the city. Brigadier General Danville Leadbetter began erecting a second line of fortifications closer to Mobile in 1863. This line consisted of strong forts flanked by redoubts, all connected by rifle pits. Then in 1864 engineers under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel Victor von Sheliha commenced a third and even stronger series of forts and
entrenchments between the other two. Even though engineers and laborers worked on these defenses up until the time the city surrendered in 1865, the enemy considered them so formidable that Union forces did not attempt to assault them.

With the land fortifications and bay batteries effectively protecting Mobile from direct enemy approach, the enemy could get at the city in only one way: by water from the north. If a hostile force could make its way through the rivers near the northeastern shore of Mobile Bay, it could move circuitously and either approach Mobile from its exposed side or isolate the city from above. The Confederates attempted to impede movement in this area as well, although their efforts did not progress in earnest until the last months of the war. They built several forts or batteries to protect the rivers and a series of fortifications and rifle pits on the eastern shore to cover the flanks of these water batteries. This area, too, had torpedoes and pilings in the water to render it even more hazardous for vessels to approach.

In addition to all of the defensive preparations outlined above, the Confederates had a small naval force stationed in the bay. The squadron began modestly with two vessels which had been converted into gunboats. Eventually the squadron numbered eight warships: the
ironclad Tennessee, ironclad ram Nashville, armored floating batteries Tuscaloosa and Huntsville, armored ram Baltic, and lightly armored gunboats Selma, Gaines, and Morgan. While only one of these vessels was actually very strong (the Tennessee), the presence of a naval squadron of unknown capabilities undoubtedly was a factor in deterring an attack on Mobile Bay by the Union navy. Mobile's overall defenses were thus among the strongest in the Confederacy and resulted in the city being "the last important place in the Confederacy which was captured."  

62 Confederate naval forces and operations are thoroughly covered in two publications by William N. Still, Jr.--"The Confederate States Navy at Mobile, 1861 to August, 1864," Alabama Historical Quarterly, XXX (1968), 127-44, and Iron Afloat: The Story of the Confederate Armorclads (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971), 187-212, 223-26--so this paper will not treat the naval aspect of the defense of Mobile in great detail except as it relates to active operations in Mobile Bay or nearby streams.

On the same day that Mobile's war volunteers left for Montgomery, Major Danville Leadbetter sent a report of his inspection of the city's defenses to Colonel Hardee at Fort Morgan. Leadbetter also made several recommendations for strengthening the defenses. He suggested that a floating battery commanded by a naval officer would suffice to protect Grant's Pass. Most of Leadbetter's concern focused on Fort Gaines and the main ship channel between Gaines and Fort Morgan. Naturally, he urged that heavy guns be placed in Gaines, but he recognized that they would not be able to defend effectively the bay entrance. This area was three and a quarter miles wide, and no cannons in the forts could completely cover the middle of the area. Leadbetter recommended that a floating battery of strong timber covered with iron bars should be placed in the center of the channel. This, with the guns of the two forts, should prove sufficient to prevent enemy vessels from entering.¹

¹Leadbetter to Hardee, Apr. 23, 1861, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 65.
At this early stage of the war, the Confederate command gave no thought to defensive works near Mobile itself. Leadbetter wrote Hardee that if the bay entrances were properly protected, the only way the city could be approached was by a force marching overland from somewhere on Mississippi Sound. According to Leadbetter, a landing on the coast could not be prevented. The answer to such a movement would be strong defense by "the stout hearts and strong arms of the military forces which can be concentrated at the city." Leadbetter felt that the urgency of the situation required that he begin work on his recommendations "without waiting for formal authority." Hardee forwarded Leadbetter's report to Montgomery and told the Secretary of War that he had ordered Leadbetter to work on the defenses at Fort Gaines.

Many of the leading citizens of Mobile were very concerned about the safety of their city, and they began contacting the Confederate War Department concerning their fears. The concensus seemed to be that the city was defenseless and likely to be attacked by Northern

\begin{footnotes}
\item[2] Ibid., 65-66.
\item[3] Ibid., 66.
\item[4] Hardee to Secretary of War, Apr. 23, 1861, ibid., 66.
\end{footnotes}
forces. A three-man committee appointed by the citizens of Mobile travelled to Montgomery to present personally a request to Leroy P. Walker for arms and ammunition. These men also protested an order directing the only field artillery unit in Mobile to move to Pensacola. Colin J. McRae, Mobile's representative in the Provisional Confederate Congress, urged Walker to do something to calm the fears of the city. He suggested in particular that cannon in Fort Morgan be mounted in batteries at Choctaw Point, Grant's Pass, and the eastern end of Dauphin Island. The Confederate government reacted favorably to these requests but did so slowly.

Although Mobilians showed apprehension, their ardor for the Confederate cause and their militantcy had not diminished. The noted British journalist William Howard Russell visited Mobile about this time and found the people supporting what he called "the most ultra-Secessionist doctrines" and determined "to repel the 'Lincolnite mercenaries' to the last." Russell recorded in his diary that there was a great deal of marching,

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drilling, and drum-beating going on. Every steeple and spire in the city seemed to have a Confederate flag atop it. When he checked into the Battle House Hotel, he discovered that a vigilance committee had headquarters there and scrutinized all visitors. Russell concluded:

...It was fortunate they did not find traces of Lincolnism about us, as it appeared by the papers they were busy deporting 'Abolitionists' after certain preliminary processes supposed to 'Give them a rise, and open their eyes To a sense of their situation.'

Russell visited Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines while at Mobile, and his impressions present a telling portrait of the weaknesses of these works. He described Gaines as "a shell of masonry" and noted that the small garrison had only a few small cannons set up on the beach and the sand hills nearby to defend the fort. Morgan seemed only slightly stronger, the Confederates having mounted there a number of guns of varying calibers. Russell was impressed with the men of the garrison, the Second Alabama Infantry Regiment, and the unit's commander, Colonel Henry Maury. Yet the fort had grave weaknesses. Russell felt that in a heavy bombardment Morgan would suffer great damage and that the magazines were vulnerable.

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7 Ibid., 107.
to enemy fire. Recalling his observations of Fort Sum­
erter after its fall, he recommended that the wooden
buildings and barracks be destroyed to avoid fires.\(^9\)

Mobile soon received new attention to its defenses.
On May 27, 1861, the Confederate government assigned
southern Alabama to Department No. 1, commanded by Major
General David E. Twiggs, whose headquarters were in New
Orleans.\(^10\) The day before, Lieutenant Colonel Franklin
Gardner had assumed command of Fort Gaines after receiv­
ing orders to report to Hardee on May 7. Gardner con­
ducted an inspection of his new post and sent a report
to Hardee. The recommendations and plans for improving
Gaines' situation adopted by Leadbetter received endorse­
ment from Gardner. He felt that as soon as the work was
completed and some heavy guns mounted, the fort would be
"in a tolerably fair state for defense."\(^11\) Gardner
requested at least two companies to reinforce his small
garrison. When Hardee forwarded Gardner's report to
Montgomery, he stated that he had no men to send Gardner

\(^9\)Russell, My Diary North and South, l11.

\(^10\)Para II, Special Order No. 61, Adjutant and
Inspector General's Office, May 27, 1861, O.R., LIII,
690.

\(^11\)Compiled Service Record of Franklin Gardner, RG
109, National Archives; Gardner to Lieutenant C. P.
and asked that the government order additional companies to Fort Gaines.¹²

Governor Moore and his staff, accompanied by a large group of men and women from Mobile, conducted an inspection tour of the lower bay defenses on June 11, 1861. Hardee acted as guide, and the entourage stopped first at Grant's Pass. The eighty-man garrison of Fort Grant received the governor in a formal line of inspection. A newspaper correspondent expressed the impression that the troops made: "The men looked healthy, in trim order as to apparel and discipline, and showed that they were commanded by officers who knew their duty."¹³ After a quick lunch aboard the steamer, Moore's party spent about an hour at Fort Gaines. They then went across to Fort Morgan, and a portion of the garrison there led them into the fort with the band playing and flags flying. From the ramparts of Morgan, the visitors observed the Federal warship Niagara and witnessed the firing of a columbiad. The garrison next conducted battalion drill on the parade ground behind the fort. Although the men's performance seemed a little ragged, the correspondent


¹³Advertiser and Register, June 12, 1861.
felt that with two more months of training "they will pass muster with any troops."\textsuperscript{14}

Several days later the command arrangements at Mobile changed. The Confederate War Department ordered Hardee to go to Memphis, Tennessee, on June 17, 1861. There he received a promotion to brigadier general and an assignment to command troops in northern Arkansas.\textsuperscript{15} In ordering Hardee to Memphis, Cooper informed him that Gardner would succeed him in command. Two days later, Colonel Henry Maury telegraphed Cooper asking if Gardner's assignment was a mistake since he outranked Gardner. Cooper replied by ordering Maury to assume command at Fort Morgan and Gardner to retain his command at Fort Gaines.\textsuperscript{16} The loss of Hardee did not help Mobile's defensive situation. Maury, although described by

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Ibid}.


\textsuperscript{16}Maury to Cooper, June 19, 1861, Telegrams Received by the Confederate Secretary of War, 1861-1865, RG 109, National Archives; Cooper to Hardee or "officer commanding Fort Morgan," June 20, 1861, Letters and Telegrams Sent, Adjutant and Inspector General, Chap. I, Vol. 35, p. 205.
Russell as "an ingenious and clever officer." was at best an average commander. Later in the war he was arrested and tried for drunkenness. Available evidence indicates that after receiving command at Fort Morgan, Maury did not exercise responsibility for the rest of the bay defenses as Hardee had before him.18

Toward the end of June 1861, Mayor John Forsyth and some of the city's governmental leaders succeeded in gathering a large number of artillery pieces and small arms for the use of the Mobile militia. Five hundred muskets came from the state authorities and an additional 500 muskets from the Confederate government. The Confederate authorities also informed Forsyth that as many as 600 more muskets would be available if needed. Plenty of powder and musket balls existed to supply these and other weapons in the city. In addition to these muskets, Forsyth obtained between 25 and 30 artillery pieces, most of them smoothbores but some being rifled guns. The mounting of the artillery proceeded slowly, but the authorities believed that half of the cannon would be on carriages and ready for action by early July.19

17 Russell, My Diary North and South, 111.
19 Advertiser and Register, June 30, 1861.
A meeting of most of the prominent citizens of Mobile resulted in a number of resolutions supporting the efforts of Forsyth and other civil authorities of the city. On June 29 a committee of five men presented the resolutions to the meeting at Odd Fellows Hall. These men recognized that the city government might have to "take the responsibility of exercising unusual powers" and pledged themselves to support "all such measures as they may deem proper and necessary for the efficient defense of Mobile."\(^{20}\) One resolution created a Committee of Safety to assist the civil authorities. Another resolution authorized the city fathers to use the Harbor Improvement Fund or any other funds, to levy taxes, and to accept contributions for defense of Mobile. The citizens hoped the Confederate government would repay all expenditures but expressed willingness to have the city bear the burden. Forsyth, the Aldermen, and the Common Council received authority to hire or purchase transportation, laborers, tools, and equipment and to construct necessary fortifications. Those men attending the meeting promised to use their influence to gain the support of the entire city population for the measures they had adopted.\(^{21}\)

\(^{20}\)Ibid., July 2, 1861.

\(^{21}\)Ibid.
Mobile's militia units spent short periods of time in camps of instruction to improve their training and discipline should they be called upon for active duty. One of these camps, located at Bayou La Batre on the coast southeast of the city, bore the name Camp Garnett. Camp Moore, named for Alabama's governor, stood nearer Mobile. The First Alabama State Volunteers of the Fire Brigade established the camp about one mile from the city on the north side of the road to Spring Hill. One of the soldiers at Camp Moore reported that they were drilled by companies during the afternoon. A problem with the camp which this soldier recognized was its proximity to Mobile:

...After drill, all want to go home. It is difficult for a man to realize the necessity of sleeping on hard boards in a tent, when his home, family, and a comfortable bed, are within a few minutes walk; therefore, it is but natural that he should want to 'go home,' and enjoy his domestic comforts, or go and see his sweetheart.\(^{22}\)

Commanders of Mobile would experience this problem and similar ones with troops stationed close to home as the war years passed.

\(^{22}\)Ibid., July 4, Aug. 9, 20, 1861; Special Order No. 16, Headquarters Army of Alabama, Adjutant General's Office, Aug. 5, 1861, quoted in ibid., Aug. 7, 1861; Orders No. 8, Headquarters 1st Regiment, Alabama State Volunteers, Fire Brigade, Aug. 5, 1861, quoted in ibid., Aug. 6, 1861.
Government authorities received information on Mobile's situation in early August 1861. Major Leadbetter reported on August 4 to Congressman Robert H. Smith about the status of Mobile's defenses and made recommendations for improving them. Fort Morgan, garrisoned by ten companies of the 2nd Alabama, seemed to be in good shape. Approximately seventy cannons were mounted in the fort, but few of them were heavy guns. Leadbetter did not think the fort would survive a regular siege. Fort Gaines remained weak. Five companies of state artillery comprised the garrison, but these men had only ten serviceable guns, all 32-pounders. Many more guns would have to be mounted before the fort would be in decent shape. One company of state artillery manned the three 32-pounders which guarded Grant's Pass. Here, too, heavier guns seemed needed. No defenses existed to prevent an enemy force from landing on Mississippi Sound and marching right into Mobile.23

Most of Leadbetter's recommendations dealt with the works guarding the bay entrances. To protect Fort Morgan

from approach by land, he suggested extensive earthworks on the peninsula east of the fort to keep an enemy force far enough away that it could not reach the fort with long-range cannon fire. Even at this early stage of the war, Leadbetter anticipated the use of ironclad steamers by the United States against the forts. He recommended a heavy chain supported by rafts as a means of blocking the main ship channel near Fort Morgan. For the channel near Fort Gaines, he felt crib-work obstructions would suffice. Delayed by these obstacles, any enemy ironclads could then be destroyed or crippled by the fire of columbiads in the forts. Leadbetter suggested the construction of fourteen batteries connected by rifle pits in a semi-circular line around the city to protect Mobile's land approaches. To cover the water approaches to the city, he favored strong batteries at Choctaw Point and the mouth of Spanish River. The cost of all of these defensive works would be tremendous, but Leadbetter concluded:

...we must, if necessary, spend our all in this business, certainly hundreds of millions, and I know of no point more worthy the application of a half of one million than Mobile Bay."

Congressman Smith passed Leadbetter's report on to the War Department, where it received immediate attention. Secretary Walker ordered sixteen 10-inch

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columbiads sent to Mobile as soon as the Ordnance Bureau could have them ready. He also wrote to Governor Henry T. Clark of North Carolina requesting that he send thirty 32-pounder guns to Mobile. Walker authorized the rifling of the 32-pounder smoothbores already at Mobile and their placement in the best positions to repel an attack. He asked Leadbetter to prepare cost estimates for each defensive site at Mobile. Finally, Walker wrote to Governor Moore and asked him to accept for active duty six companies which would go to Fort Gaines to strengthen its garrison.25

About this time Leadbetter received orders to go to Richmond to assume command of the Engineer Bureau. The War Department ordered Captain Samuel H. Lockett to Mobile to succeed Leadbetter as engineer officer.26 Leadbetter addressed a long letter to Lockett to inform him of what he had recommended for the Mobile defenses and to make suggestions for possible action. In the letter, Leadbetter elaborated on his ideas for defensive works surrounding Mobile. He thought the line should be

25 Walker to Leadbetter, Aug. 15, 1861, ibid., 130; Walker to Clark, Aug. 16, 1861, ibid., 131; Walker to Moore, Aug. 15, 1861, ibid., 130.

located approximately two and a fourth miles out from the courthouse, which stood near the riverfront. The redoubts would be placed about one mile apart and would all mount heavy guns. Redans with smaller guns would be built between the redoubts. The whole line would be connected with entrenchments suitable for field guns and infantry weapons. Leadbetter expressed some doubt about his ideas for obstructions in the ship channels and asked for Lockett's thoughts. In closing, Leadbetter estimated that the proposed defenses would cost about $500,000.\textsuperscript{27}

Mobile's civic authorities realized the deficiencies in the city's defenses and expressed willingness to spend the money in the city treasury to remedy the weaknesses. They proposed a voluntary tax to raise $50,000 "for the purpose of placing the city in a posture of defense.\textsuperscript{28}"

The proposal met such opposition from the people that the government dropped it before it could be voted on. The \textit{Advertiser and Register} ran an editorial entitled "Look to Our Homes" to call attention to the city's weak defensive state. This editorial emphasized the need for large, long-range guns which would be expensive to buy. Richmond and Montgomery could not furnish the necessary

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textit{Advertiser and Register}, Aug. 29, 1861.
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artillery, so Mobile might have to purchase some guns herself. The paper issued this warning: "The time may soon come when those who smothered this appeal to the patriotism of the citizens of Mobile will discover that they have been 'penny wise and pound foolish' in mounting that favorite hobby of demagogues—resistance to taxation."\(^{29}\) On the following day, the Advertiser and Register renewed the appeal to the people to put up $50,000 for "Home Defence," but there is no evidence of a favorable response.\(^{30}\)

Much of the correspondence between Mobile and Richmond during the next month or so dealt with the defense of the city and attempts to obtain and mount the artillery necessary to strengthen the forts and batteries guarding the water approaches to the city. Leadbetter talked over and over again of the thirty guns requisitioned from the governor of North Carolina, all the time expecting them to be forthcoming.\(^{31}\) Governor Clark, however, had advised Richmond when the requisition reached

\(^{29}\)Ibid.

\(^{30}\)Ibid., Aug. 30, 1861.

him that he had no spare guns but that the navy yard at Norfolk, Virginia, had some. Efforts by the Mobile authorities to secure guns from the navy yard failed. By early October, Leadbetter finally admitted defeat. He wrote Lockett:

...From present appearances I would not recommend you to rely on getting any more heavy guns or carriages from this quarter. The demands from all directions are urgent, and the Secretary says he cannot give what he has not got.32

The acute need for cannons at Fort Gaines, in particular, is reflected in a report by one of the units stationed there:

The company has two 6 pounder Field Pieces one a U. S. Brass Gun patent 1845, the other an Iron 4 pounder Gun bored [sic] to a 6 Pounder captured from the British at Fort Boyer [sic] in 1814 and made in 1777.33

As previously mentioned, at this time no one commander had charge of the overall defense of Mobile. The area belonged to Twiggs' Department No. 1, but that general concentrated all of his attention on New Orleans. On September 3, 1861, Congressman Smith recommended to Secretary Walker that Brigadier General Jones M. Withers,

32 Clark to Walker, Aug. 20, 1861, ibid., LII, Pt. 2, p. 131; Withers to Walker, Sept. 11, 1861, ibid., VI, 729; Leadbetter to Lockett, Oct. 7, 1861, ibid., 750.

33 Roll for Aug. 31-Oct. 31, 1861, Record of Events Cards, Company A, 1st Battalion Alabama Artillery, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from Alabama, RG 109, National Archives.
a former mayor of Mobile, be assigned to command the city's defenses. The War Department responded by creating the District of Alabama and assigned Withers to head the new district. Although he had graduated from West Point and had served in the Creek and Mexican wars, Withers' chief qualification for this command seems to have been his familiarity with the city. News of his assignment leaked out and reached Mobile before the War Department issued formal orders. Some people in the city expressed dissatisfaction with and opposition to the assignment. Mayor Forsyth and others spoke out in favor of Withers, however, and he seems to have entered his command without major opposition from the citizens.

Toward the end of September the Confederates began constructing the earthworks around Mobile which Leadbetter had proposed. The city's Council of Defense issued

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35Smith to Walker, Sept. 12, 1861 (with endorsement by Jefferson Davis), Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Forsyth to Walker, Sept. 16, 1861, O.R., VI, 738.
an appeal to the citizens to furnish one thousand of their slaves as laborers to help white volunteer workmen and Confederate engineers do the work. Although the owners would receive no remuneration, the Council did offer to provide rations for the slaves. The Council requested that the slave owners provide their chattels with spades, shovels, and picks, and whites had to furnish their own tools. Both the owners and white volunteers received assurances that the laborers would work in separate parties based on their race. As the construction got under way, the Council of Defense again asked any whites "who wish work" to report to the race track at the edge of town where the workers were being organized.  

When the War Department ordered Withers to Mobile, it approved requisitions for three new infantry regiments to serve at the city. This news preceded Withers to Alabama, and the state authorities initiated steps to muster in several Mobile regiments. Withers learned of this action when he stopped at Montgomery on his way south. He protested immediately against using organizations of city men. Withers renewed his protest several days later with these words:

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36 Leadbetter to Secretary of War, Sept. 23, 1861, O.R., VI, 743; Advertiser and Register, Sept. 14, 28, 1861.
...The expectation is to play soldier at home, not to neglect their private interests, nor endure fatigue, exposure, or discipline. Such material is most costly and least serviceable to Government, and I desire to be responsible for none of it.  

After expressing his desire to have regiments from north Alabama, Withers eventually got two such units, but he had to accept two Mobile regiments also.  

As one of his first acts as commander at Mobile, Withers issued the first of a series of orders regulating the movement of vessels in and around Mobile Bay. The first of these orders required fishermen, oystermen, and other boat owners to obtain permits in order to move their vessels in the waters under the jurisdiction of the District of Alabama. Those applying for permits were obliged to be "well endorsed by true and reliable citizens." Later Withers issued orders that no vessels of any type could pass by the forts at the mouth of the

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37 Endorsement by Walker, Sept. 12, 1861, on Leadbetter to Withers, Sept. 11, 1861, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 175; Advertiser and Register, Sept. 20, 1861; Withers to Cooper, Sept. 27, 1861, O.R., VI, 747; Withers to [Cooper], Sept. 30, 1861, ibid., LII, Pt. 2, p. 156.

38 Withers to [Cooper], Sept. 30, 1861, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 156; Withers to [Cooper], Oct. 15, 1861, ibid., 173-74; Cooper to Withers, Oct. 6, 1861, ibid., 175; Advertiser and Register, Oct. 13, 1861; Special Order No. -, Headquarters Department of Alabama, Oct. 12, 1861, quoted in ibid.

39 General Order No. 3, Headquarters Department of Alabama, Sept. 30, 1861, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Oct. 1, 1861.
bay without permits and that vessels then outside the forts had to come into the bay. Finally, Major General Braxton Bragg, who later became Withers' departmental commander, ordered the closure of Grant's Pass "effectually and unconditionally" to prevent a coastal trade along Mississippi Sound that was benefitting the enemy.

Mobile's command situation underwent the change hinted at above in early October 1861. On the seventh of that month, the War Department realigned the command structure of the Gulf coast. It extended Bragg's command at Pensacola to include the entire state of Alabama, designating the new entity as the Department of Alabama and West Florida. Bragg established his new headquarters on the fourteenth, choosing to stay in Pensacola. He retained Withers as commander of the District of Alabama. Withers obviously thought his command was an independent department and wrote to Richmond of the "humiliation and mortification" he felt when he


41 Withers to Major George G. Garner, Dec. 9, 1861, O.R., VI, 779; Bragg to Benjamin, Dec. 11, 1861, ibid.

learned he had been placed under Bragg's command. Because of what he called "this sudden manifestation of change in estimate of my fitness for the position to which I was then assigned," Withers asked to be relieved of duty.\textsuperscript{43} After several visits with Bragg and assurances from Davis that his competency was not in question, Withers withdrew his request.\textsuperscript{44} With the proximity of Mobile to Pensacola, this new command situation represented a logical step in the Confederacy's defensive strategy.

The authorities in Richmond had placed Mobile and the rest of Alabama under Bragg, in part, to placate him. He had grown tired of his rather stagnant situation at Pensacola and desired a more active field, so he could prove himself as a commander. In a letter to a friend, Bragg stated that President Davis had promised him command of the Gulf Coast from Pensacola to New Orleans. When Twiggs made it known that he would retire, Bragg expected Davis would "show his sincerity and confer this

\textsuperscript{43}Withers to Cooper, Oct. 15, 1861, \textit{ibid.}, LII, Pt. 2, p. 174.

\textsuperscript{44}Bragg to Davis, Oct. 22, 1861, in the William P. Palmer Collection of Braxton Bragg Papers, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio, hereinafter cited as Bragg Papers, Western Reserve; Bragg to Adjutant General C.S. Army, Oct. 25, 1861, \textit{O.R.}, VI, 756; Withers to Benjamin, Nov. 2, 1861, Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War, 1861-1865, RG 109, National Archives.
PAGE 49 WAS SKIPPED IN NUMBERING ONLY.
command on me." Instead, the president gave New Orleans and Department No. 1 to Major General Mansfield Lovell, a northerner who had just recently joined the southern cause. Bragg was naturally upset. In a letter to Governor Thomas O. Moore of Louisiana he complained: "The command at New Orleans was rightly mine. I feel myself degraded by the action of the government...." Bragg in a series of letters spoke harshly of Lovell, saying the "eleventh-hour" convert had been "purchased in the open market by the highest bidder." Yet he determined to make the best of the situation and do a good job in his new command.

Bragg devoted much of his attention to Mobile itself after receiving it under his jurisdiction. He sent his

45 Benjamin to Bragg, Oct. 8, 1861, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve; Bragg to "My dear Doctor," undated, ibid.

46 Bragg to Thomas O. Moore, Oct. 31, 1861, in Thomas O. Moore Papers, Louisiana State University Department of Archives and Manuscripts.

47 Bragg to Benjamin, Oct. 30, 1861, O.R., VI, 759; Bragg to Moore, Nov. 14, 1861, Moore Papers; Bragg to "My dear Doctor," undated, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve. Thomas Bragg, Braxton's brother and the Confederate Attorney General, later recorded in his diary that Davis had "seemed disposed" to place the Gulf Coast under Braxton's command but that Benjamin persuaded Davis to give it to Lovell. Entry Jan. 6, 1862, Thomas Bragg Diary, 1861-1862, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

48 Bragg to Elise Bragg, Oct. 14, 1861, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve.
engineer officer on an inspection tour when he assumed command and made a visit himself from October 23 to 27. At Mobile, Bragg found that Withers had halted construction of the earthworks on the land side of the city. He concurred with Withers' decision and criticized the "grand scheme for squandering money by digging ditches... which would have required 40,000 men to defend them." Bragg felt that more troops should be ordered to Mobile to back up the essentially untrained and undisciplined forces then there. To protect Mobile adequately, Bragg decided to put his force at Pensacola on the defensive and to concentrate men and material at Mobile. Perhaps the best summary of Withers' position at Mobile lies in Bragg's comment that "he has a hurculean [sic] task with most inadequate means."  

Bragg found shortcomings connected with both the troops and subordinate commanders at Mobile. The men suffered from measles, and Bragg felt that their proximity to the city encouraged a lack of discipline. He suggested that their camp be moved to a point fifteen or twenty miles from the city. To improve their diet, Bragg


50 Bragg to Davis, Oct. 22, 1861, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve; Bragg to Adjutant General, Oct. 25, 1861, O.R., VI, 755-56; Bragg to Adjutant General, Oct. 28, 1861, ibid., 757.
ordered that the men's rations of meat would be ten ounces of bacon or salt pork or sixteen ounces of beef. He also ordered that "one gill [four fluid ounces] of good Louisiana Molasses will be added to the ration."\(^{51}\) Bragg complained that the officers commanding Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines, Maury and Gardner, were "very competent, but sadly addicted to drinking, and therefore unsafe for those exposed positions."\(^{52}\) Hoping to find abler commanders for the forts, he recommended several officers for promotion to brigadier general. Gardner received orders relieving him of duty on November 14. To replace him, the War Department promoted William L. Powell to colonel in the Provisional Army and ordered him to Mobile. Bragg assigned Powell to overall command of both forts and Grant's Pass as well.\(^{53}\)

In late October 1861, Bragg learned that an enemy expedition was on its way to the Gulf. He began looking

\(^{51}\)Bragg to Adjutant General, Oct. 23, 1861, O.R., VI, 757; Bragg to Cooper, Oct. 31, 1861, ibid., 761; General Order No. 6, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Oct. 31, 1861, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida, Oct. 15, 1861-Feb. 28, 1862, RG 109, National Archives.

\(^{52}\)Bragg to Adjutant General, Oct. 28, 1861, O.R., VI, 757.

\(^{53}\)Ibid.; Compiled Service Record of Franklin Gardner; Benjamin to Davis, Nov. 24, 1861, Letters Received, Secretary of War; Benjamin to Bragg, Nov. 24, 1861, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 219; Bragg to Adjutant General, Jan. 4, 1862, ibid., VI, 793.
around for troops to reinforce Mobile and Pensacola. Brigadier General Leroy P. Walker, who had recently resigned as Secretary of War, commanded a new brigade at Huntsville, and Bragg requested that two of his regiments be ordered south. On arriving, the men would receive weapons of sick and wounded soldiers on the coast. After receiving permission to use some of Walker's brigade, Bragg ordered one regiment to Mobile. He also ordered two armed regiments at Montgomery to Withers. When Bragg ordered a second of Walker's regiments to Mobile, that general wrote to Richmond that he, too, would go to Mobile. Secretary of War Judah P. Benjamin approved Walker's move. Walker reported to Bragg at Pensacola and received formal assignment to Withers' command. Bragg to Cooper, Oct. 29, 1861, O.R., VI, 758; Bragg to Cooper, Oct. 31, 1861, ibid., 761; Benjamin to Bragg, Oct. 31, 1861, ibid.; Walker to Benjamin, Nov. 4, 1861, ibid., 764; Benjamin to Walker, Nov. 5, 1861, ibid.; Bragg to Adjutant General, Nov. 5, 1861, ibid., 764-65; Benjamin to Walker, Nov. 6, 1861, ibid., LII, Pt. 2, p. 198; Walker to Benjamin, Nov. 6, 1861, ibid., VI, 765; Moore to Bragg, Nov. 8, 1861, ibid., LII, Pt. 2, pp. 202-203; Benjamin to Walker, Nov. 10, 1861, ibid., 203; Special Order No. 14, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Dec. 1, 1861, ibid., VI, 772.

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55Dr. George Little and James R. Maxwell, A History of Lumsden's Battery C.S.A. (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: R. E. Rhodes Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1905), 5.
Part of Mobile's value to the Confederacy during the war years lay in its railroad connections. Just before the firing on Fort Sumter, the Mobile and Ohio Railroad opened its line to traffic. This road connected Mobile with Columbus, Kentucky. At Corinth it crossed the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, which ran east and west. On November 15, 1861, the Mobile and Great Northern Railroad began operations, completing Mobile's rail system. This latter railroad ran from Tensas Landing to Pollard, Alabama, where it joined the Alabama and Florida Railroad to provide service to Montgomery to the north and Pensacola to the south. The Mobile and Great Northern had been constructed fairly quickly. The workers laid the first rails in late March 1861, and the company promised that it would be finished by September.

By early October, however, the work was still incomplete. Company president William D. Dunn wrote Withers that although grading, bridging, and laying of cross ties was complete, half of the rails remained to be put down. The company had exhausted its money supply, and Dunn requested a loan of $15,000. With this money,

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57 Ibid., 75.
he said, the road should be finished between November 10 and 15. Dunn hoped Withers would use his influence with the government to get the loan approved. Dunn also contacted Congressman McRae to ask for his assistance. The government approved the loan, and, as promised, the road opened on November 15. After the fall of Corinth to Union forces, the Mobile and Ohio-Mobile and Great Northern systems made Mobile the only rail link between Confederate armies in the east and west. The sole problem in the system was that men and supplies had to be detrained and transported by steamer between Mobile and Tensas Landing. Even so, this trip could be completed in about one and a half to three hours.

One facet of Mobile's defenses received attention from Richmond in early December 1861. Secretary of War Benjamin wrote to Bragg and inquired if any measures had been taken to prevent an enemy force from landing at Pascagoula and marching to Mobile. He feared that now the enemy was in the Gulf he would land and march by night to

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58 Dunn to Withers, Oct. 2, 1861, Letters Received, Secretary of War; Dunn to McRae, Oct. 3, 1861, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 165; McRae to Davis, Oct. 3, 1861, ibid., 164-65; Bragg to Benjamin, Nov. 1, 1861, ibid., VI, 762; Bragg to Cooper, Nov. 11, 1861, ibid., 766; Dunn to Benjamin, Nov. 16, 1861, ibid., 4, I, 732.

surprise the city. Bragg replied that he had cavalry 
pickets on the coast where landings might take place. 
The infantry and light artillery not on duty in the forts 
were prepared to concentrate quickly to meet any threat. 
Bragg also expected that reinforcements from Pensacola 
could reach Mobile in ten hours' time. After receiving 
Bragg's letter, Benjamin took steps toward strengthening 
Bragg's hand in the area. The War Department issued 
orders transferring the area of Mississippi between Pasc-
cagoula and the Alabama line from Department No. 1 to 
Bragg's department. Bragg then assigned the area to 
Withers' district. 60

Controversy between the army and navy at Mobile 
sprang up in late December 1861 and early January 1862. 
Early in December Withers had expressed open contempt 
for the naval force:

...The idea of our caricature gunboats being 
a protection to the coast trade is to me 
simply ridiculou:s. In truth I should look 
on our Navy Department as an amusing fancy 
sketch but for the waste of money and cor-
ruption for which it is the excuse. 61

60 Benjamin to Bragg, Dec. 2, 1861, O.R., VI, 774; 
Bragg to Benjamin, Dec. 11, 1861, ibid., 779; Bragg 
Diary, Dec. 31, 1861; Para XVI, Special Order No. 264, 
Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, Dec. 12, 1861, 
ibid., 780; General Order No. 18, Headquarters Depart-
ment of Alabama and West Florida, Dec. 20, 1861, ibid., 
785.

61 Withers to Garner, Dec. 9, 1861, O.R., VI, 780.
Bragg, however, carried on the controversy. He reported to Richmond that Lieutenant James D. Johnston of the navy refused to acknowledge any authority by Withers. An incident which occurred several days later brought more wrath by Bragg. Federal blockade vessels had run a blockade runner ashore and tried to capture her by sending in sailors on small boats. Fort Morgan's guns opened fire on the enemy boats, driving them off, and an unarmed Confederate steamer finally braved enemy fire to help the runner into the bay. Bragg was angry because the gunboat Florida had remained at Mobile "unoccupied and independent" and the gunboat Alert had been "lying in the harbor here utterly useless."  

In Richmond Secretary Benjamin took Bragg's complaints to Davis, who agreed that there should be more harmony between the services. Benjamin recognized that he confronted a delicate problem of authority and advised Bragg that he would talk the matter over with Secretary of the Navy Stephen R. Mallory. When Benjamin referred Bragg's letter to Mallory, he suggested that it might be good policy to make small craft in coastal waters subject to the orders of the appropriate department commander.

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62 Bragg to Adjutant General, Dec. 24, 1861, ibid., 787; Captain Levin M. Powell to Flag Officer W. W. McKean, Dec. 27, 1861, O.R.N., XVII, 14; Lieutenant A. K. Hughes to Powell, Dec. 27, 1861, ibid., 15; Bragg to Adjutant General, Dec. 29, 1861, O.R., VI, 790.
Then he made a telling observation: "...as you cannot have chose your best officers for such unimportant commands, I think it not improbably that there is ground for the complaints." Mallory answered Bragg's charges by saying that the Florida was in Mobile refitting after a recent engagement with enemy vessels and thus too far away to have lent aid and that the Alert was only a small schooner with one gun. He had confidence in Johnston and promised that there would be greater cooperation in the future.

Mobile's militia forces remained quite weak toward the end of 1861. In a letter to Governor John Gill Shorter, Bragg stated:

I find, on enquiry here, that no organization, equipment, or drill of the militia exists. The people are quietly pursuing their ordinary daily avocations, attending to their private interests, whilst the defense of the city is left to the army alone. As far as I know or can learn, no other threatened point in the Confederacy is thus exempt.

Bragg asked Shorter to use his influence to get the

63 Benjamin to Bragg, Jan. 5, 1862, O.R., VI, 795; Benjamin to Mallory, Jan. 6, 1862, ibid., 796 (emphasis added).

64 Mallory to Benjamin, Jan. 9, 1862, O.R.N., XVIII, 17.

thousands of able-bodied men in the city to respond to the possible threat to Mobile. Militia routine in the city did step up, with company muster and drills occurring three times each week. In a few weeks Bragg could report an improved situation:

...With the cheerful and cordial aid of Governor Shorter we shall probably get out at least 1,000 armed militia—men who have held back, but will come out rather than give up their army.

On December 27, 1861, Benjamin wrote Bragg about a possible change of command. It is possible that Bragg's earlier desire for more active service or the hope of further smoothing Bragg's feelings about not being given command over New Orleans and the Gulf Coast prompted the Secretary of War. Whatever the reason, Benjamin stated that he and Davis had been looking for someone to go to the trans-Mississippi region and take charge of all Confederate troops in Missouri and Arkansas. Bragg was their choice, and Benjamin asked if he would agree to take the assignment. While this letter was on its way, Davis received a letter from Mayor R. H. Slough and other

prominent citizens of Mobile asking that he establish Bragg's headquarters in the city. They feared an attack and stated: "The presence of General Bragg here would greatly inspire our troops and people, and would consolidate and bring to perfection our military organization,..."\(^{67}\)

Bragg responded to Benjamin's letter by declining the offer tendered. The facts that the troops in the trans-Mississippi area were largely unorganized and undisciplined and that there seemed little prospect for success there influenced his decision. Most of his argument, however, Bragg centered around his concern for Mobile. He pointed out that a large enemy force had landed on Ship Island. The people of Mobile expressed alarm for the safety of the city. Because of lack of military resources and weakness in troop strength, Bragg did not feel the city was at all safe. He stated that his influence with the people and troops was such that he did not think "any other could now fill my place to their satisfaction."\(^{68}\) Benjamin learned of the enemy landing before he got Bragg's letter and quickly wrote that Bragg


\(^{68}\) Bragg to Benjamin, Jan. 6, 1862, O.R., VI, 797.
should no longer consider the offered command since his own seemed threatened. He informed Bragg of the petition from the citizens of Mobile but left to him the choice of headquarters location. After receiving Bragg's letter turning down the offer, Benjamin wrote:

...The people there would have every reason to complain of your withdrawal under such circumstances, and the dissatisfaction would be such as to produce a very bad state of feeling as regards their defense.

Although Bragg had shifted Walker's brigade to Mobile, he found some morale problems with the unit, most of them attributable to its commander. While his men remained in a crowded, unhealthy camp some miles from Mobile, lacking discipline and instruction, Walker lived in the city with his staff and ignored his brigade. Bragg had absolutely no confidence in Walker and thought him unfit for command. He wrote Richmond requesting proper generals for his troops. In response, the War Department ordered Brigadier General Samuel Jones to Pensacola from the Army of the Potomac and nominated Colonel John K. Jackson for promotion to brigadier general for duty at Mobile. Bragg seemed pleased with these moves. He wrote Benjamin that he planned to place Jones in command at Pensacola so that he could spend more

69Benjamin to Bragg, Jan. 9, 1862, ibid., 803; Benjamin to Bragg, Jan. 12, 1862, ibid.
time at Mobile. Even though Walker outranked Jackson, Bragg promised to make arrangements to employ both to best advantage. The command at Mobile stood on the verge of several changes in organization and subordinate commanders.\(^70\)

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\(^{70}\) Bragg to Adjutant General, Jan. 4, 1862, ibid., 793; Benjamin to Bragg, Jan. 9, 1862, ibid., 802; Bragg to Benjamin, Jan. 17, 1862, ibid., 810; Dr. Josiah C. Nott to Dr. Samuel H. Stout, Dec. 29, 1861, in Samuel H. Stout Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
CHAPTER III
"THE WORK WILL NOT ADMIT OF DELAY..."

On January 27, 1862, Bragg issued orders changing the command structure in his department. He placed Brigadier General Samuel Jones in charge at Pensacola so that he could move departmental headquarters to Mobile. All of the troops in and around Mobile received the new designation the Army of Mobile, to be commanded by Withers. The responsibility of the army would be the defense of the Gulf Coast between the Pascagoula and Perdido rivers. Relieving Walker of command of the infantry brigade at Mobile, Bragg ordered him to Montgomery and transferred Brigadier General Adley H. Gladden from Pensacola to take over the brigade. Bragg expected Gladden to correct the demoralization and drunkenness in Walker's brigade through discipline and instruction. On February 5 Bragg arrived in Mobile and established his headquarters.¹

¹General Order No. 23, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Jan. 27, 1862, O.R., VI, 815-16; Bragg to Adjutant General, Feb. 1, 1862, ibid.; Advertiser and Register, Feb. 1, 6, 1862; Bragg to Adjutant General, Feb. 8, 1862, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 265; James S. Deas to ------, Feb. 6, 1862, in Chestnut-Miller-Manning Collection, South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston.
Bragg set about almost immediately to improve conditions at Mobile. He wrote Benjamin: "It is difficult to conceive the state of affairs here and almost as difficult to apply a remedy." Bragg succeeded in getting all stores and businesses to close their doors at three o'clock in the afternoon. Able-bodied men could then spend the remainder of the daylight hours drilling or performing other military duties. To aid in the disciplining of the regular soldiers in camp, Bragg ordered all saloons and drinking establishments in Mobile and Baldwin counties closed. This order also forbade sales of alcohol "except for medicinal purposes, by regular apothecaries, upon the written prescription of physicians." Owners of supplies of alcohol were required to pack and store these supplies where they could be inspected. Many of the citizens of Mobile approved of these efforts by Bragg, and, according to one

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2Bragg to Benjamin, Feb. 11, 1862, Letters Received, Secretary of War.

3Advertiser and Register, Feb. 7, 1862; (London) The Index, May 1, 1862; General Order No. 34, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Feb. 20, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida, Oct. 15, 1861-Feb. 28, 1862, RG 109, National Archives.
observer, the regulations "worked a great reformation among the soldiers." ⁴

About the time Bragg took over immediate supervision at Mobile, his forces at that point numbered slightly more than 7,000 men present for duty. Most of these troops were newly organized, and none had faced enemy fire. Some units had only pikes as weapons, and others had no arms at all. Bragg ordered the 1st Louisiana Regulars from Pensacola, where it had fought in several actions, to Mobile and a raw regiment from Mobile to Pensacola. He also ordered a company of marines from the Florida town to Mobile. These troops he expected to serve as examples of discipline for the men of the Army of Mobile.⁵ On February 13, the navy launched the gunboat Gaines, which was being constructed at Mobile. She would soon join the small naval force already in the bay.

⁴ General Order No. 34, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Feb. 20, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida; The Index, May 1, 1862.

⁵ Abstract from Field Return, Department of Alabama and West Florida, Feb. 1, 1862, O.R., VI, 819; Deas to ______, Feb. 6, 1862, Chestnut-Müller-Manning Collection; Para I, Special Order No. 51, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Feb. 11, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida; Para II, Special Order No. 52, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Feb. 12, 1862, ibid.; Para III, Special Order No. 39, Headquarters Army of Pensacola, Feb. 13, 1862, in A. C. Van Benthuyzen Papers, Special Collections Division, Tulane University Library.
It appeared to Bragg that he might need these experienced troops and naval assistance soon. He had received reports that a large Federal naval expedition was headed for the Gulf and feared it might attack Mobile. Bragg admitted in a confidential letter that Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines could not "prevent their entrance of a dark night," and he pushed the construction of water batteries near the city.⁶

Events in Kentucky and Tennessee soon intruded to break the relative calm existing at Mobile. Following the Confederate defeats at Mill Springs and Fort Henry, the War Department began scouring the lower South for troops to reinforce General Albert Sidney Johnston's army. Bragg had to furnish at least four regiments. He responded by ordering two regiments each from Mobile and Pensacola to Knoxville.⁷ Bragg also took the opportunity to make some suggestions to the authorities in Richmond on the Confederacy's future strategy. His ideas contained some of the earliest, if not the earliest

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⁶Advertiser and Register, Feb. 13, 14, 1862; Bragg to Brigadier General Samuel Jones, Feb. 12, 1862, O.R., VI, 825.

⁷Benjamin to Bragg, Feb. 8, 1862, O.R., VI, 823; Bragg to Jones, Feb. 12, 1862, ibid., 824-25; Bragg to Benjamin, Feb. 18, 1862, ibid., 894; Para I, Special Order No. 54, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Feb. 14, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida; Bragg Diary, Feb. 19, 1862.
considerations of the place of Mobile in the overall strategy of the Southern war effort. According to Bragg, all resources should be concentrated so that the enemy could be attacked in Kentucky. He advocated abandoning all points on the Gulf except Mobile, New Orleans, and Pensacola. He did not feel that the loss of the abandoned territory would prove significant. From this point onward, Bragg continued to support the defense of the city because of the strategic significance of its rail and telegraph links with the eastern and western portions of the Confederacy.

The command and troop situation at Mobile soon changed again. On February 18, 1862, Benjamin sent Bragg instructions to withdraw his forces from Mobile and Pensacola and "hasten to the defence of the Tennessee line." He advised Bragg to abandon Pensacola completely but to leave garrisons in the forts in Mobile Bay. Benjamin hoped these garrisons would discourage an attack on Mobile. The Confederate high command did not agree initially with Bragg's advocacy of defending Mobile or his idea of its importance. Benjamin told Bragg "the risk of its capture must be run by us." Bragg did not

8Bragg to Benjamin, Feb. 15, 1862, O.R., VI, 826.
9Benjamin to Bragg, Feb. 18, 1862, ibid., 828.
10Ibid.; Bragg Diary, Feb. 19, 1862.
receive these instructions until February 27, but he made immediate arrangements to comply. He ordered most of his infantry and Generals Withers and Gladden to Corinth. Colonel John B. Villepigue replaced Withers in command of the Army of Mobile. After arranging to turn over the department to Jones at Pensacola, Bragg left Mobile for Corinth on March 1.\(^{11}\)

The departure of Bragg and Withers deprived Mobile of two able generals. Withers served capably as a division commander in the Army of Tennessee until late summer 1863, when failing health forced him out of active duty. His performance in several battles resulted in praise from Bragg and Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk.\(^{12}\)

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\(^{11}\) Bragg to Benjamin, Feb. 27, 1862, O.R., VI, 834; Bragg to Jones, Feb. 27, 1862, ibid., 835; Bragg to General G. T. Beauregard, Feb. 27, 1862, ibid., 836; Para II, Special Order No. 62, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Feb. 26, 1862, ibid.; Paras II and III, General Order No. 37, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Feb. 27, 1862, General Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida, Oct. 14, 1861-Feb. 28, 1862, RG 109, National Archives; Para I, General Order No. 38, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Feb. 28, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida; Para --, General Order No. 38, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Feb. 28, 1862, O.R., VI, 836; Bragg to Jones, [March 1], 1862, ibid., 837.

Although his tenure as commander of the Army of Tennessee was an almost continuous record of failures, Bragg's service at Mobile can hardly be faulted. Bragg had been a hero in the Mexican War and an outstanding artillery officer in the old army. His appointment as a general in the Confederate army had received widespread applause:

...no one doubted Bragg's ability when the Civil War began....he was one of the most distinguished soldiers to join the Confederacy and for a time one of the most impressive.  

Davis demonstrated his confidence in Bragg by assigning him to command at Pensacola, a site where war might break out because the Federals held Fort Pickens. As I stated previously, Bragg recognized Mobile's strategic significance and pushed the defensive preparations there. He won the respect of his men and the people of the city. His interest in the city's welfare continued until the end of the war. The only criticism of his command at Mobile might be that his underestimation of the importance of entrenchments caused him to delay the construction of earthworks around the city.  

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14 Ibid., 155, 195, 202-203; Josiah C. Nott to Bragg, Nov. 1, 1862, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve; John Forsyth to Bragg, Nov. 3, 1862, ibid.
Bragg had not hesitated in turning over to Jones the command of the Department of Alabama and West Florida. A native of Virginia, Jones graduated from West Point in 1841 and received a commission in the artillery corps. For seven years he served as an instructor at the Military Academy, an assignment which included courses in tactics and artillery. Jones' first Confederate service came as chief of artillery to Beauregard at First Manassas, and his performance brought him a promotion to brigadier general. His experience as an artillery officer undoubtedly led Davis and Benjamin to choose him to go to Bragg in January 1862. That experience impressed Bragg, as did his "high character as an officer." Even after only a short time observing Jones at Pensacola, Bragg had confidence in his abilities and gave him what Bragg felt to be "the most important command in this army..., and the one on which the general [Bragg] considers the safety of our cause depends."  

Bragg's new assignment caused the Advertiser and Register to declare that his leaving would probably stir up the "croakers and panic makers" even though there was

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15 Warner, Generals in Gray, 166; Mark M. Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1959), 443; Benjamin to Bragg, Jan. 9, 1862, O.R., VI, 802; Bragg to Cooper, Feb. 1, 1862, ibid., 820.

16 Garner to Jones, Mar. 28, 1862, O.R., VI, 867.
no cause for alarm. Jones had assumed command shortly
after Bragg left, but he kept his headquarters at
Pensacola. Perhaps with the idea of reassuring the
people of Mobile, Bragg on March 4 issued an order at
Jackson, Tennessee, resuming command of the Department of
Alabama and West Florida and adding to his jurisdiction
the troops in northern Mississippi and southwestern
Tennessee. This order apparently never took actual
force, but Jones and other commanders at Mobile continued
to correspond with Bragg and seek his advice or ask
instructions. To calm further the fears of Mobilians,
Jones ordered an experienced unit from Pensacola to man
the batteries protecting the upper bay, and he also
ordered reinforcements to Fort Gaines.

The defenses at Grant's Pass received renewed
attention from the Confederate engineers. Lockett had

17 Advertiser and Register, Mar. 2, 1862.
18 General Order No. 39, Headquarters Department of
Alabama and West Florida, Mar. 3, 1862, General and
Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida;
Para I, General Order No. 1, Headquarters Second Grand
Division, Army of the Mississippi Valley, Mar. 4, 1862,
19 Para I, Special Order No. 65, Headquarters Depart-
ment of Alabama and West Florida, Mar. 4, 1862, General
and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Flor-
da! Advertiser and Register, Mar. 2, 1862; Dr. George
Little and James R. Maxwell, A History of Lumsden's Bat-
tery, C.S.A. (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: United Daughters of the
Confederacy, 1905), 5.
staked out gun positions at Cedar Point to help protect the pass. Villepigue visited Cedar Point and revised Lockett's plan. Henry B. Warren, a civilian engineer with responsibility for erecting the battery, found an infantry company at the point, but the men received orders to go to Corinth before he could put them to work mounting guns. Warren did get foundations laid for three guns but had to await a force of laborers to complete construction of the battery. By April, Warren had finished his work, and a company of the 1st Alabama Battalion Artillery had occupied the earthwork. Warren also began driving piles into the waters of the pass. He had the piles prepared on Dauphin Island and transported them by steamer to the pass. The men assigned to this task drove some 250 piles into the water about a quarter of a mile out from Grant's Island. To protect the pile driver from enemy vessels, the Confederate command stationed a steamer nearby where it could pull the barge to safety if necessary.

Two new militia regiments entered active service in Mobile at this critical juncture in early March 1862--

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20 Henry B. Warren to Lockett, Feb. 27, 1862, William P. Palmer Collection of Civil War Manuscripts, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio; Roll dated Apr. 23, 1862, Record of Events Cards, Company D, 1st Alabama Battalion Artillery, Compiled Service Records.

21 Warren to Lockett, Feb. 27, 1862, Palmer Civil War Collection.
the 2nd Volunteer Regiment, Colonel John H. Higley, and
3rd Volunteer Regiment, Colonel John Forsyth. The two
units joined the 9th Brigade, Alabama Militia, already on
duty in the city. Both were organized specifically for
the defense of the city and were well armed. Forsyth's
regiment performed provost guard duty in Mobile while
Higley's went into camp at Hall's Mills. On Dog River
near Mobile, this site became the main camp of instruc­
tion for Alabama militia troops. From time to time regu­
lar Confederate units encamped there also. The men con­
structed wooden houses arranged in regular rows as their
quarters. A soldier stationed there provided this
description of the camp:

...Some of the buildings are quite spacious
and two stories high. Others again are mere
log huts. The timber for a mile all around
has been cleared away, forming a large and
splendid drill ground, the terror of the
soldiers.  

Bragg soon requested that Jones send Villepigue to
report to Jackson. In complying with Bragg's telegram,
Jones felt compelled to go personally to Mobile and

22Advertiser and Register, Mar. 5, 1862; General
Order No. 1, Headquarters 2nd Regiment Alabama Volunteer
Militia, Mar. 4, 1862, quoted in ibid.; General Order
No. 1, Headquarters 3rd Regiment Alabama Volunteer Mili­
tia, Mar. 4, 1862, quoted in ibid.

23Ibid., Mar. 21, 1862; F. Jay Taylor (ed.), Reluc­
tant Rebel: The Secret Diary of Robert Patrick, 1861–
1865 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press,
1961), 126.
assume command there. He ordered Villepigue to Tennessee, and the latter officer turned over command of the Army of Mobile to Colonel Powell at Fort Morgan until Jones could reach the city. Jones arrived on March 14 and almost immediately telegraphed Cooper in Richmond asking that Davis declare martial law in and around Mobile. He assured Cooper that "the best citizens desire it and have petitioned that it be done."  

Secretary of War Benjamin informed Jones on March 23 that Davis approved his request. The next day Jones proclaimed martial law in Mobile and Baldwin counties and that part of Jackson County, Mississippi, east of the Pascagoula River. His order suspended "the jurisdiction of the civil courts...so far only as it may conflict with the military requirements of the Government."  

The command situation at Mobile remained in flux during late March 1862. Jones received an order from Bragg on March 24 instructing him to turn over command to Colonel Powell and to report to him in Tennessee. 

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24 Bragg to Jones, Mar. 11, 1862, O.R., VI, 852; Jones to Colonel Thomas M. Jones, Mar. 12, 1862, ibid., 853; Powell to Jones, Mar. 14, 1862, ibid., 856; Jones to Bragg, Mar. 15, 1862, ibid.; Jones to Cooper, Mar. 14, 1862, Letterbook, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve.  

25 Benjamin to Jones, Mar. 23, 1862, O.R., VI, 866; General Order No. 19, Headquarters Army of Mobile, Mar. 24, 1862, ibid., LII, Pt. 2, pp. 290-91; Daily Tribune, Apr. 4, 1862.
When word of this order got out, Governor Shorter and the Mobile Committee of Safety requested Benjamin to allow Jones to remain. Benjamin telegraphed back that Jones would be ordered to remain but sent no instructions to Jones. William M. Dunn, chairman of the Committee of Safety, told Jones of this latter telegram, and the general determined to stay in Mobile and await official confirmation of Dunn's telegram. Several days passed with no word from Richmond, so Jones decided to join Bragg. Upon leaving, Jones turned over command of the Army of Mobile to Brigadier General Thomas J. Butler, commander of the 9th Brigade, Alabama Militia. After a day or so with Bragg at Corinth, Jones received orders to return to Mobile. Bragg may have sent him back so that a competent officer would have charge of the department. Jones resumed command of the department and Army of Mobile on April 2, but his position remained unsettled.

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26 Jones to Bragg, Mar. 24, 1862, Letterbook, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve; Jones to Cooper, Mar. 25, 1862, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 290; William M. Dunn to Benjamin, Mar. 25, 1862, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Shorter to Benjamin, Mar. 25, 1862, ibid.; Jones to Bragg, Mar. 26, 1862, Letterbook, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve; Jones to Major General Mansfield Lovell, Mar. 28, 1862, in Mansfield Lovell Papers, Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California; Para I, General Order No. 21, Headquarters Army of Mobile, Mar. 29, 1862, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Mar. 30, 1862; Para II, Special Order No. 24, Headquarters 2nd Corps, Army of Mississippi, Mar. 31, 1862, quoted in Compiled Service Record of Samuel Jones; Para I, General Orders No. 40, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida,
While these events occurred, several official acts transpired which involved Mobile's military situation. On March 24, 1862, the Confederate Congress appropriated $1,200,000 to be used in the defense of Mobile Bay and the Alabama River. This money would go a long way toward providing needed defensive construction. General Butler issued an order requiring the registration of all white males over eighteen years old living in and around Mobile who had not already joined Confederate or state military service. The desire to "determine who may be entitled to exemption from military service and to fix the status of all men" prompted the order. Butler also ordered all government employees not currently enlisted in volunteer companies to organize themselves into military companies. These units would be expected to drill whenever possible. Both of Butler's orders aided in placing the eligible men of the city on a better footing if they had to be used to defend Mobile.

Apr. 2, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida.


Para II, General Order No. 21, Headquarters Army of Mobile, Mar. 29, 1862, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Mar. 30, 1862.

General Order No. 33, Headquarters 9th Brigade Alabama Militia, Mar. 28, 1862, quoted in ibid., Mar. 29, 1862.
Some confusion still remained in Mobile's command arrangements. Brigadier General John H. Forney, having been ordered to the city nine days earlier, arrived in Mobile on April 11, 1862. The War Department intended Forney to replace Jones so that the latter could join the army at Corinth. Forney, however, suffered from a wound and poor health, and he applied for and received a fifteen-day leave to recuperate. Under these circumstances Jones felt compelled to remain in command. The situation confronting him did not seem an encouraging one. In all, only about 2,400 men were present for duty in the Mobile defenses, most of them stationed in Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines. Following the battle of Shiloh, Jones had sent several units to Corinth and would soon send several more. He felt that the forts at the bay entrances stood in fairly good shape, and although he did not think the enemy would attack, Jones warned that a strong assault would capture Mobile. To help defend the city, Jones requested that Richmond either send weapons to arm several thousand men to be recruited in Alabama.

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or order troops from Corinth to Mobile. He also asked that a general officer be sent to Mobile.31

A new military unit from Mobile was offered to the Confederate army in April 1862. On the twenty-third, G. Huggins Cleveland wrote to Secretary of War George W. Randolph asking if he succeeded in raising a battalion or regiment would the War Department accept it for Confederate service. The request would not have sounded unusual except that the men Cleveland wished to organize were "Creoles," free men of mixed white and black blood. They were property-owning slaveholders and, according to Cleveland, "as true to the South as the pure white race."32 He also stated that the "Creoles" were anxious to go to war and would form a battalion or regiment in a few days' time. Congressman Edmund S. Dargan of Mobile endorsed Cleveland's application and stated: I know the character of the population he proposes to enlist, and

31 Jones to Cooper, Apr. 15, 1862, O.R., VI, 875-76; Para I, Special Order No. 79, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Apr. 13, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida; Para V, Special Order No. 80, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Apr. 14, 1862, ibid.; Jones to Cooper, Apr. 20, 1862, O.R., VI, 879-80.

think they will render as efficient aid as any class we have."  The War Department denied Cleveland authority to raise his unit on the ground that "the law does not permit the Department to accept any new corps." Mobile's "Creoles" did not give up the idea of getting into Confederate service, however, and would offer again to form military units for active duty.

Forney returned to duty from sick leave and assumed command of the Department of Alabama and West Florida on April 28, 1862. Forney's main qualification for command at Mobile was his experience at Pensacola early in the war. Governor Moore appointed him as a special aide with the rank of colonel and sent him to the Florida town in January 1861 to assist in drilling the Alabama troops there. He later received a commission as colonel of the 1st Regiment of Artillery, Army of Alabama, and in this capacity commanded a portion of the troops at Pensacola. When Bragg assumed command there in March, he assigned Forney to duty as acting inspector general and used him to superintend the construction of works and the mounting of artillery. In June 1861, Forney left Pensacola to take command of an Alabama infantry regiment on its way


34 A. T. Bledsoe to Dargan, May 5, 1862, ibid., 1111.
north to Virginia. He led his unit at First Manassas and in a skirmish at Dranesville in December and received a severe wound in the latter action. Both General Joseph E. Johnston and Brigadier General James E. B. Stuart recommended Forney for promotion because of his bravery in the skirmish. Forney was in Alabama recovering from his wound when he received his promotion and orders to report to Mobile.  

The situation Forney inherited from Jones was poor but apparently not discouraging. Mobile's defenses still remained rather weak. A private in Fort Gaines confided in a letter to his sister that if a large enemy force attacked the bay: "my opinion is we will not be able to hold the fort tho the officers think we can." On assuming command Forney directed that obstructions be placed on Dog River bar to prevent enemy vessels from approaching the city if they should get into the bay.

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36 James R. Vickers to Miss Morell Vickers, Apr. 26, 1862, in Fort Gaines Collection, Mobile Museum Department.
The engineers left a small passage over the bar for their own naval vessels to use, but the gap could be closed quickly by sinking a wreck in it. Forney also issued the following order:

That all cotton at or near navigable waters within this Military Command shall be forthwith removed by the owner to some point in the interior of the country near to which no approach can be made by water, or shall be burned.\textsuperscript{37}

He took this action to discourage an enemy attack on Mobile. Any cotton not removed promptly the military would burn without compensation to the owner.\textsuperscript{38}

Following the fall of New Orleans, Forney feared that the Federals would attack Mobile next. He evidently felt that Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines would be passed by the enemy fleet as had been Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip on the Mississippi River. Obviously, if this occurred, much more than obstructions over the Dog River bar would be necessary to protect the city. Accordingly, Forney revived the idea of defensive works near Mobile. On April 30 he ordered the construction of entrenchments

\textsuperscript{37}Forney to Beauregard, Apr. 28, 1862, Palmer Civil War Collection; General Order No. 50, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Apr. 30, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida.

\textsuperscript{38}General Order No. 50, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Apr. 30, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida.
for light artillery and infantry to surround the city. The soldiers of the Army of Mobile would furnish the labor involved, but willing citizens could volunteer their services. Forney also instructed his men to strengthen the batteries which covered the Dog River obstructions and to erect other batteries to bear on the obstructions.⁵⁹ Captain Charles F. Liernur, whom Jones had assigned as chief engineer of the department on April 15, took charge of the construction of all of these defensive works and received assistance from a number of other engineer officers.⁴⁰

The defensive posture of the city did not satisfy a number of persons besides Forney. One resident wrote that things were "in a bad state" in the city and that "many families" had begun moving to the interior of the state.⁴¹ Some of the military men expressed apprehension

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⁵⁹ Para VIII, Special Order No. 95, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Apr. 30, 1862, ibid.; Aberdeen (Miss.) Examiner, Feb. 7, 1890; Forney to Beauregard, May 8, 1862, Palmer Civil War Collection; Forney to Beauregard, May 10, 1862, ibid.

⁴⁰ Para II, Special Order No. 81, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Apr. 15, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida; Para VIII, Special Order No. 95, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, Apr. 30, 1862, ibid.

⁴¹ The Index, June 12, 1862.
about the city also. The troops in Mobile lacked sufficient arms and ammunition. Forney's exact feelings are difficult to discern from available evidence, but the opinions of Flag Officer Victor M. Randolph on the naval force at Mobile seem clear. He did not expect his "cockleshell gunboats" to survive an attack on the bay and thought the Confederate military would be forced to defend the rivers above Mobile. One of Randolph's subordinates wrote home that the flag officer took his squadron to the city whenever the enemy appeared off the bay.  

Although he gave some thought to evacuating the city, Forney promised the people that he would defend Mobile. He asked them to furnish tools and workers for the entrenchments. He also appealed to them to avoid "all undue excitement" and to preserve "strict order." 

Work on the entrenchments began more slowly than Forney had hoped. Units at times worked in shifts, one

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42 Forney to Randolph, May 5, 1862, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Flag Officer Victor M. Randolph to Shorter, May --, 1862, O.R.N., XVIII, 847-48; Ed. Harleston Edwards to his mother, May 11, 1862, in E. H. Edwards Letters, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

occupied during the day and another at night. Forney quickly authorized his officers to impress white and black laborers alike to speed construction. A private in the Alabama Cadet Corps wrote his mother:

...the officers send a squad of men in town and if they see an idle man on the streets or more than one clerk in a store they order them to 'Fall in,' and march him down and give him a hoe or shovel and put him to work....

At least a partial reason for the lack of progress seems to have been that many of the men laboring on the batteries would leave work and go into the city. Liernur requested the provost marshal in Mobile to set up a guard to prevent the men from leaving. Forney soon issued an order requiring commanding officers to keep their men at work and away from the city.45

To facilitate construction of the works, Liernur decided to practically strip the forts at the bay entrances of engineering property and laborers. He sent


Captain William R. Neville to bring the "papers, maps, furniture, building material (not needed for defence and which can be used by the troops to restore breaches and damages during action), horses, carts, provisions, tools, cooking utensils &c" to Mobile. Neville also had orders to transfer all Negro laborers to the city. Apparently some of the cannon and ammunition in the forts were to be moved as well, as Forney mentioned them in Neville's instructions.\(^\text{46}\) The owners of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad turned over some of their railroad iron to Liernur for use in bombproof shelters in some of the bay batteries. Again Forney aided Liernur by ordering Captain Junius A. Law's Company D, 1st Alabama Artillery Battalion, from the battery at Cedar Point to the city defenses.\(^\text{47}\)

The governmental authorities and press of Mobile appreciated the efforts of Forney and Liernur. Recognizing the urgency of the work in progress, the Advertiser and Register appealed to the people of the city to provide the needed labor which the military could


\(^\text{47}\) Liernur to Firnan (?) Hurtel, May 5, 1862, ibid., 66; Para XII, Special Order No. 103, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, May 8, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida.
not furnish itself. It urged the men to volunteer their services at Liernur's offices in the customhouse. The paper closed its editorial with these words: "The work will not admit of delay, and Gen. Forney will not permit it to drag when there are idle men in town capable of doing service." Adding its praise, the city council passed a series of resolutions commending Forney and asking the populace to get involved in the defense of the city. The town fathers promised to help in every way they could. Their resolutions expressed their determination "to stand by the authorities in their efforts to beat back the invading foe, and to hold the city to the last extremity."

Forney's fears of an attack on Mobile had some basis in fact. Union interest in capturing the city dated back to early 1862. When he received orders to assume command of the Western Gulf Blockading Squadron, Flag Officer David G. Farragut also received instructions to capture the forts at the bay entrance after he had taken New Orleans. At about the same time, Major General George B. McClellan told Major General Benjamin F. Butler that after his expedition accomplished its objective of

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48 "Advertiser and Register, May 7, 1862.

49 "Joint Resolutions by President Forsyth, Relating to the Defence of Mobile," May 14, 1862, quoted in ibid., May 15, 1862."
capturing New Orleans and Baton Rouge he was expected to
attack Mobile. 50 Once the Crescent City had actually
fallen, Farragut began making plans to attack Fort
Morgan. Butler, however, favored continued operations up
the Mississippi River against Vicksburg and Memphis.
Although these latter operations took precedence, Farra­
gut sent Commander David D. Porter's squadron of mortar
boats and gunboats toward Mobile. Porter planned to
attack Fort Morgan on May 7, 1862. While he made pre­
parations for the attack, one of his gunboats ran aground
near the fort, and the Confederate gunners fired about
ten rounds at her. The gunboat succeeded in getting
afloat again, but Porter never carried out the attack. 51
From this point on, the Union high command gave no more

50 Gideon Welles to Flag Officer David G. Farragut,
Jan. 20, 1862, O.R.N., XVIII, 7-8; Major General George
B. McClellan to Major General Benjamin F. Butler, Feb.
23, 1862, O.R., VI, 695.

51 Farragut to Captain Thaddeus Bailey, Apr. 29,
1862, O.R.N., XVIII, 147; Farragut to Welles, Apr. 29,
1862, ibid., 148; Butler to Edwin M. Stanton, Apr. 29,
1862, quoted in Jessie Ames Marshall (ed.), Private and
Official Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin F. Butler During
the Period of the Civil War, 5 vols. (Norwood, Mass.: The
Plimpton Press, 1917), I, 428; Commander David D.
Porter to Welles, May 10, 1862, O.R.N., XVIII, 478-79;
Forney to Beauregard, May 8, 1862, Palmer Civil War Col­
lection; David D. Porter, Incidents and Anecdotes of the
serious thought to attacking the forts, as the Mississippi River became the scene of the naval effort.  

One result of this feint attack on Mobile was the evacuation of Pensacola by the Confederates. Colonel Thomas M. Jones had been removing artillery, ammunition, and other property from the town for several months in anticipation of evacuation of the forts and naval yard. General Robert E. Lee in Richmond had advised Jones that if the enemy attacked Mobile he should move his forces to that city. When Jones received a telegram from one of Forney's staff officers that shots had been fired on Fort Morgan, he began withdrawing from Pensacola. He completed the evacuation on the night of May 9. Forney maintained Jones' troops near Pollard, Alabama, as an "army of observation" to protect the railroad between Mobile and Montgomery. He originally assigned Colonel J. R. F. Tatnall of the 29th Alabama to command the troops. Tatnall's men had instructions to remove the railroad iron between Pensacola and Pollard in addition to scouting the countryside. In late May Forney

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53 Jones to Forney, May 14, 1862, O.R., VI, 660.
assigned Jones, by then an acting brigadier general, to command the troops at Pollard. From May 1862 until early 1865, the Confederates stationed troops at Pollard to watch the Union forces in Pensacola and help protect Mobile from that direction.

The Confederate authorities in Mobile remained concerned about the city's defensive posture. In late May 1862 Liernur still worked feverishly on the line of earthworks surrounding Mobile. He directed only a small number of laborers, however, and appealed to the citizens to volunteer their "Negro Laborers, Cooks and Waiters, who can be spared, to work on the entrenchments and perfect the works." Those persons willing to contribute would have their names registered with the provost marshal along with the number of laborers furnished. To strengthen the armed forces around the city, Forney urged the men of Mobile and nearby counties to form military companies and arm themselves as best they could. These companies would form themselves into regiments, and once organized they would drill so as to be prepared for

54 Paras V and VI, Special Order No. 107, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, May 12, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida; Para III, Special Order No. 124, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, May 29, 1862, ibid.

55 Advertiser and Register, May 25, 1862.
service when needed. Forney promised to try to supply ammunition to those who could not supply themselves.\footnote{56}{Ibid., May 25, 27, 1862.}

In early June Forney moved several of his units around to have his most experienced men in his most strategic defensive works. He transferred the 27th Mississippi Infantry from Pollard to relieve the 1st Confederate Infantry, then in charge of the bay batteries and the shore batteries at the southern end of the line of entrenchments. The 1st Confederate Infantry moved to Fort Gaines and relieved some ninety-day troops manning the guns in that fort. Both the 27th Mississippi and 1st Confederate had occupied batteries at Pensacola and had engaged in several duels with Federal gunners in Fort Pickens.\footnote{57}{Para IV, Special Order No. 122, Headquarters Army of Mobile, June 3, 1862, in Special and General Orders, Army of Mobile, March-June 1862, RG 109, National Archives; Aberdeen Examiner, Feb. 7, 1890; Paras IV and V, Special Order No. 128, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, June 3, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida.} When not drilling or on guard duty, the men passed the time bathing in the bay or playing marbles under nearby live oaks. The living quarters for the men varied. Some slept on cots arranged under large, open,
cotton storage sheds. These men also did their cooking next to the sheds.⁵⁸

Liquor still provided a problem for the military authorities even though Bragg had attempted to remove the supply months before. Forney issued orders prohibiting the sale or delivery of intoxicating beverages to officers or enlisted men in Confederate service on steamboats or vessels on the rivers near the city or on any of the railroads near the city. This order also forbade sale of liquor to civilians who would then allow soldiers to drink it. Anyone caught violating the order would be arrested and have his liquor supplies destroyed.⁵⁹ The men had little or no coffee to drink because of the blockade of Mobile Bay. Forney eventually had to restrict the supply of coffee to use by men in the hospitals of the city.⁶⁰ This shortage of coffee was at best only a partial excuse for the excessive use of


⁵⁹General Order No. 62, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, June 20, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida; Advertiser and Register, June 26, 1862.

⁶⁰Para IV, Special Order No. 124, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, May 29, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida.
liquor at Mobile. The frequent boredom and monotony of military life has often driven soldiers in a garrison situation to seek relief in alcohol.

At this time the Confederate command began to give attention to the defensive situation along the rivers which emptied into Mobile Bay at its northeastern corner. Part of Forney's plans for the area included something new to Mobile—a floating battery. In May 1861, the state authorities had seized the ship Danube from her owners. The Confederates later converted her into a floating battery mounting four 42-pounder cannons. Forney ordered her stationed at the point where the Blakely and Apalachee rivers diverged so that her guns would command the latter river. He also wanted a battery erected on the western bank of the Blakely River to protect that stream.\(^{61}\) The Confederates needed to have defensive works covering these two rivers. If left unobstructed, enemy vessels could ascend them and then make their way through the maze of streams at the head of Mobile Bay to approach Mobile from the rear. Eventually the engineers build another earthwork to help prevent such an enemy

move in the area. The Confederates usually referred to the defenses in this area as the Appalachee Batteries.

In late May and again in late June 1862, the War Department issued a series of orders attempting to clarify the command situation in the West and to reorganize the departments there. Beauregard at Corinth had requested a clear definition of the boundaries of his Department No. 2. The War Department responded by placing those parts of Mississippi and Alabama north of the thirty-third parallel, east of the Mississippi River, and west of Alabama's eastern boundary in Beauregard's command. After Bragg succeeded Beauregard, Richmond extended the eastern boundary of the department "to the line of railroad from Chattanooga via Atlanta to West Point, on the Chattahoochee River, and thence down the Chattahoochee and Apalachicola Rivers to the Gulf of Mexico." Four days after the War Department issued this last order, new Secretary of War George W. Randolph wrote Bragg that his department included all of the state of Alabama.

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63 Para XVI, Special Order No. 146, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, June 25, 1862, ibid., 766.
This decision placed Mobile in a new command, and the city's status in this command would receive clarification before long.\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{64}Randolph to Bragg, June 29, 1862, \textit{ibid.}, 770.
"...IT SHOULD BE DEFENDED FROM STREET TO STREET..."

General Braxton Bragg assumed command of the extended Department No. 2, also referred to as the Western Department, on July 2, 1862. He reorganized several of the subdivisions of his new department. One of these became the District of the Gulf, which consisted of the territory between the thirty-second parallel and the Gulf from the Pearl River to the Apalachicola River. Forney remained at Mobile as commander of the new district.¹ The District of the Gulf remained the territorial command responsible for the defense of Mobile from this time until the end of the war, although for a brief period the War Department upgraded the district to a department. The district's boundaries changed slightly several times, but the protection of Mobile and Mobile Bay stood as top priority of the generals in charge of the district. As commander of a subdivision of a larger territorial unit, Mobile's general-in-chief lacked complete control over the troops in his district but could draw supplies freely from other areas in the department. District status

¹General Order No. 89, Headquarters Department No. 2, July 2, 1862, O.R., XV, 771; Advertiser and Register, July 6, 1862.
connected with the states of Alabama and Mississippi seems to have been the best position for Mobile because the area surrounding the city could never furnish enough foodstuffs. The War Department would always see that Mobile had a sufficient garrison.

A demonstration of Mobile's strategic importance to the Confederacy occurred shortly after creation of the District of the Gulf. In what one author calls "the largest single Confederate troop movement by rail," twenty-five thousand men of the Army of the Mississippi moved in railroad cars from Tupelo, Mississippi, through Mobile to Chattanooga, Tennessee.\(^2\) A smaller troop transfer preceded this movement by about a month. Following the occupation of Corinth by Union forces, Major General Don Carolos Buell's Federal army began operations aimed toward Chattanooga. Major General Edmund Kirby Smith, whose department included Chattanooga, asked Bragg at Tupelo to send troops to help defend the city. Bragg responded by ordering Major General John P. McCown's division to report to Kirby Smith by rail via Mobile. The three thousand men of this division left on June 28, 1862, and their lead elements reached Chattanooga on July 3. Transit through Mobile went smoothly, but the

men encountered difficulties between Montgomery and Chattanooga, thus delaying their arrival slightly.\(^3\)

By late July 1862 Bragg had decided that he could not attack Middle Tennessee from Tupelo as he desired and that Kirby Smith could not hold Buell out of Chattanooga. Knowing that this city and its railroad connections through eastern Tennessee were strategically more important than northern Mississippi, Bragg determined to go to Kirby Smith's aid. On July 21 he ordered the infantrymen of the three divisions of the Army of the Mississippi to proceed by rail through Mobile to Chattanooga. He sent his artillery and wagons overland through central Alabama. To get troops to Chattanooga quickly, Bragg also ordered available units at Mobile and Pollard to start for the city. These latter troops departed on July 22, and Bragg's first units left Tupelo the next day. The Mobile units reached Chattanooga on the twenty-seventh, while the lead units of the Army of the Mississippi did not arrive for several more days.\(^4\)

\(^3\)Ibid., 181; Major General Edmund Kirby Smith to Bragg, June 27, 1862, O.R., XVI, Pt. 2, p. 709; Paras II and III, Special Order No. 96, Headquarters Department No. 2, June 27, 1862, ibid., XVII, Pt. 2, p. 626; Smith to Davis, July 14, 1862, ibid., XVI, Pt. 2, p. 727.

\(^4\)Bragg to Smith, July 22, 1862, O.R., XVI, Pt. 2, p. 732; Bragg to Cooper, July 23, 1862, ibid., XVII, Pt. 2, p. 656; Special Order No. 4, Headquarters of the Forces, July 21, 1862, ibid., 657; Lieutenant Edward Cunningham to Brigadier General Carter L. Stevenson,
If Mobile had not still been in Confederate hands, the transfer of Bragg's army from Tupelo in time to save Chattanooga would not have been possible. The subsequent Confederate campaign into Kentucky would not have been possible either.  

Bragg once again expressed his concern for the defense of Mobile as he moved his army through the city. Even though he ordered infantrymen from Mobile to reinforce Kirby Smith ahead of the Army of the Mississippi, he planned to leave "a sufficient garrison" at Mobile. Four infantry regiments and a light artillery battery entrained at Mobile and proceeded to Chattanooga. In addition to being closer to Chattanooga than Bragg's units, these regiments had more men present for duty than Bragg's regiments. The latter had suffered casualties at Shiloh and in the skirmishes around Corinth and had lost men to disease both at Corinth and Tupelo. To replace the units from Mobile, Bragg ordered three Alabama and July 28, 1862, ibid., XVI, Pt. 2, p. 739; Aberdeen Examiner, Feb. 7, 1890; Black, Railroads of the Confederacy, 182.

5I am indebted to my colleague Lawrence L. Hewitt, who cleared up some misconceptions about Bragg's strategy during the summer of 1862 in discussions concerning Hewitt's "Braxton Bragg and the Invasion of Kentucky: A Campaign of Maneuver" (unpublished seminar paper, Louisiana State University, 1975).

two Louisiana regiments detached from the Army of the Mississippi. He also ordered a light battery from Columbus, Mississippi, to Mobile. The two Louisiana units moved on to duty at Pollard while the Alabama regiments remained at the city where they could recruit.\textsuperscript{7}

While engaged in shifting troops from Mobile to Chattanooga and from Tupelo to Mobile, Bragg was planning to change commanders at Mobile. Forney apparently wanted to be relieved so that he could resume duty in the field. It is well known that Bragg had little confidence in the major generals and brigadier generals under his command. Perhaps with these two factors in mind, Bragg ordered Samuel Jones, now a major general, to relieve Forney in command of the District of the Gulf. What position Bragg had in mind for Forney is unknown, but he probably would have succeeded to command of Jones' division. Word of this planned change reached Richmond (and possibly Mobile) before Bragg issued the order. Jefferson Davis sent the following telegram to him:

\begin{quote}
The confidence felt in General Forney, at Mobile, and the knowledge he has acquired as the successor of General Jones, render
\end{quote}

the propriety of withdrawing him very
doubtful. Please reconsider your purpose
in that regard....

In response to this wire, Bragg revoked his order and
left Forney in command at Mobile.9

The troops left by Bragg at Mobile settled into
their new duties in a short period of time. Two of the
regiments—the 17th and 18th Alabama—remained near the
city. The 18th Regiment established Camp Beulah on the
Spring Hill Road four miles from Mobile. Forney ordered
the 17th Alabama into camp on the Bay Shell Road near
the city. This regiment had charge of the bay batteries.
The men were unfamiliar with the handling of artillery so
Forney assigned some of his experienced artillery offi­
cers to instruct the officers and drill the men in their
new duties.10 The camp of the 17th Alabama was known as
Camp Forney, and one soldier described it as "beautiful

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8Bragg to Cooper, July 24, 1862, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 332; Bragg to Cooper, June 29, 1862, Ibid., XVII, Pt. 2, p. 628; Bragg to Randolph, Aug. 9, 1862, Ibid., 673; Para I, Special Orders No. 133, Headquarters Department No. 2, July 26, 1862, Ibid., 659; Davis to Bragg, July 26, 1862, Ibid.

9Special Order No. 134, Headquarters Department No. 2, July 27, 1862, Ibid.

and healthy. Some of the officers and men had wooden houses for their quarters, but most of the regiment lived in walled tents with plank floors. As winter and cold weather approached, the soldiers bought stoves to put in the tents for warmth. Many of the men probably would have agreed with the diarist who wrote: "I spent decidedly the most pleasant winter of the War, at Mobile."\(^{11}\)

Two units—the 18th and 19th Louisiana Infantry regiments—became a part of the force at Pollard after detaching from Bragg's army. Men of the two units had mixed reactions to the area around Pollard. A private of the 19th Louisiana found the camp pleasing with its nearby springs providing fresh water and a nearby river furnishing good fishing.\(^{12}\) On the other hand, a lieutenant of the 18th Louisiana remembered little to compliment the village on: "There was no evidence of any cultivation of the soil in the vicinity, the general appearance of the country and the inhabitants thereof indicating that the principal food was composed of Pine top

\(^{11}\)Roll for July 1862-Aug. 1863, Record of Events Cards, Field and Staff, 17th Alabama Infantry, Compiled Service Records; "Diary of Captain Edward Crenshaw," 438.

\(^{12}\)Private John A. Harris to Rebecca Harris, Aug. 11, 1862, in John Achilles Harris Letters, 1861-1864, Louisiana State University Department of Archives and Manuscripts.
The Louisianians had not been at Pollard long when Secretary of War Randolph asked Forney if he could spare them to be sent to western Louisiana. Forney protested that detaching the regiments would seriously reduce his infantry force. Eventually Randolph and Forney reached a compromise, and Forney gave up only the 18th Louisiana.

By October 1862 the Confederate troops stationed in Fort Morgan had settled into a regular routine of duties. With no signs of an enemy attack, the men's daily life remained uneventful. Before breakfast every morning the men drilled by company. They held guard mount at eight o'clock and then dress parade. Activities during the afternoon varied. On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, the men of the 2nd Battalion, 21st Alabama Infantry Regiment, went through battalion infantry drill. The troops of the 1st Alabama Artillery Battalion drilled at the guns on those afternoons. On Tuesday and Thursday the battalions switched, the artillerymen drilling as infantry and the infantrymen as artillery. The only duty on Saturday was cleaning, and on Sunday the men had company

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13 Weekly Thibodaux Sentinel, July 11, 1868.

14 Randolph to Forney, Sept. 1, 1862, O.R., XV, 804; Forney to Randolph, Sept. 3, 1862, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Weekly Thibodaux Sentinel, July 25, 1868.
inspections and inspections of kitchens and quarters. Only about 900 to 1,000 men occupied Fort Morgan, and at least some of the officers thought the position a weak one. Lieutenant Colonel Charles S. Stewart wrote to his wife that the fort could not keep enemy ironclads from running through into the bay. He felt that only in cooperation with the Confederate ironclads under construction at Selma could the fort's garrison achieve any success against attack.15

In mid-October the Confederates feared that an attack on Mobile was imminent. Scouts near Pensacola sent word to Forney that thousands of new Union troops had landed at the Florida town with the intention of undertaking a campaign into southeastern Alabama. Forney quickly sent requests for reinforcements to Richmond and Lieutenant General John C. Pemberton, commanding in Mississippi. He did not think he had enough men to defend both Mobile and Pollard. Governor Shorter also asked Jefferson Davis to send more men to Mobile, saying: "General Forney is worn down and wants help."16


16 Forney to Cooper, Oct. 18, 1862, O.R., XV, 833; Forney to Lieutenant General John C. Pemberton, Oct. 18, 1862, ibid., 833-34; Shorter to Davis, Oct. 18, 1862, ibid., LIII, Pt. 2, p. 377.
Pemberton sent a brigade to Meridian to be used if the enemy did advance on Mobile. The War Department promised Forney that Brigadier General Leadbetter would receive orders to report to Mobile as chief engineer and that the Department would send a brigadier general to command some of Forney's troops. Davis authorized Forney to enroll all militiamen between the ages of thirty-five and forty for Confederate service. The fear of attack passed quickly, however, and Forney received no troop reinforcements.\(^{17}\)

This threatened enemy attack caused Forney to push the completion of defensive works around the city. He asked Mayor Slough to furnish laborers. Slough, in turn, urged the citizens to volunteer their services, and he announced that white laborers would receive $2.50 a day plus rations. Shortly after this plea, Governor Shorter issued an appeal for 600 slaves for use in working on the Mobile defenses. He called for 100 slaves each from Montgomery, Lowndes, Dallas, Marengo, Perry, and Wilcox counties. The request for slaves read in part:

> The owners will be allowed a dollar a day for each slave, to commence from his embarkation on river or railroad; transportation,
subsistence and medical attendance will be furnished. Each slave must be provided with either a spade or shovel, axe or pick, clothing, bedding and provision to last to Mobile. Any owner who sent twenty-five slaves could select a white man to go with them to care for them and help supervise their work.

Shorter estimated that the defenses could be completed in about sixty days. Newspapers throughout Alabama and in other southern states published the governor's appeal. The Montgomery Daily Mail urged the citizens of the capital city to give their aid cheerfully "in promoting a move so necessary for the protection and safety of our interests and our homes." This paper's editor realized how important the defense of Mobile was to the rest of the state. The Charleston Mercury also expressed its concern for the safety of Mobile but found some things in Shorter's call to criticize. In particular, the Mercury's editor felt that Shorter was too calm and that he was being too slow in getting necessary laborers. Why ask for only 600 slaves, stated the paper, when he should have requested several thousand to finish the work quickly. The Mercury also wondered: "...why in a

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18 Advertiser and Register, Oct. 22, 29, 1862; Montgomery Daily Mail, Oct. 25, 1862.
19 Montgomery Daily Mail, Oct. 25, 1862.
20 Ibid.
vital matter of this sort, there should be any dislike to resort immediately to impressment."\textsuperscript{21} No information is available on how many slaves went to Mobile in response to Shorter's appeal, but Forney apparently did not receive a large number.

About October 20, 1862, Shorter visited Mobile to survey the situation there for himself. After this trip he reported to Davis in a lengthy letter and talked of the problems he found and the importance of Mobile. First, he indicated that Forney needed the assistance of some regular army officers as subordinates. Second, Shorter found the troops at Mobile to be primarily "fresh, undisciplined, and unskilled." Third, and most importantly, the forces in the District of the Gulf seemed too weak in numbers adequately to protect the territory for which they had responsibility. In speaking of the importance of Mobile, Shorter called the city "the only Gulf port of any importance which is left us and one of the most important lines of communication in the Confederacy."\textsuperscript{22} He then reminded Davis that the fall of Mobile and its railroad connections would result in the isolation of the Trans-Mississippi Department.

\textsuperscript{21}Charleston Mercury, Oct. 28, 1862.
In Shorter's mind there was no such thing as too much money spent in the defense of the city. He felt that the Confederacy would not survive long if the city fell to the enemy. Shorter advocated rather drastic action should Mobile face capture:

...If Mobile is to fall, I earnestly hope that orders will be given that not one stone be left upon another. Let the enemy find nothing but smoking and smouldering ruins to gloat over....

Davis replied to Shorter's letter in a short note. He agreed with the Alabama governor on Mobile's importance and the probable consequence of its fall. However, he stated that the Confederacy did not have any troops to spare from other places to send to Mobile. Davis did not seem to think that the enemy seriously threatened Mobile enough to increase its garrison. He did say that the War Department was looking for some men to send. In the meantime he suggested that conscripts be used to fill the depleted Alabama units then at Mobile. Some assistance for Forney in the form of subordinate brigadier generals soon came. Alfred Cumming, whom the War Department had already ordered to Mobile, assumed command of a brigade of four regiments shortly after his arrival. Davis also instructed the War

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23 Ibid., 380.
24 Davis to Shorter, Oct. 29, 1862, ibid., XV, 848.
Department to order James E. Slaughter from Jackson, Mississippi, to Mobile. Forney assigned Slaughter to the command of the Army of Mobile, which then consisted of the troops in the city entrenchments and bay batteries, including Cumming's brigade. Forney himself received a promotion to major general.  

In addition to the possibility of enemy attack and the weakness of his own force, Forney faced a couple of additional problems in early November 1862. One of these concerned the civilian population in Mobile. Apparently Forney felt that some of the people were passing information to the enemy and asked for the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in Mobile. Davis acquiesced and suspended the writ both in the city and the territory within ten miles. He did not object to civilians being held for offenses but did not want military courts to try them. Forney's second problem concerned drunkenness among the officers and men of his command.


26 Cooper to Forney, Oct. 19, 1862, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 378; Cooper to Forney, Nov. 10, 1862, ibid., XV, 859.
He issued orders prohibiting the sale of liquor in and around Mobile and closing all bars and liquor shops. In addition to the seizure of liquor supplies of those who violated the order, Forney threatened to send guilty parties outside the district and forbid them to return.  

Some of the people at Mobile did not trust completely the Confederate military authorities in the city. To a few merchants it seemed that certain officers used their positions to give preferential treatment to individuals in the shipment of supplies on the railroads and riverboats. Other merchants and boat owners showed reluctance to bring fuel and food supplies to the city on their vessels for fear that the military would impress the boats or articles. As a result of this slowing of trade, prices of items such as firewood and corn rose sharply. Several persons wrote to Davis and the War Department to complain about the state of affairs. Acting Secretary of War James A. Campbell sent a long letter to Forney outlining the complaints which he had received. Campbell advised that seizures of private property were justified only in cases of extreme necessity and warned against officers using their influence

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27 General Order No. 84, Headquarters District of the Gulf, Nov. 10, 1862, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Nov. 11, 1862; General Order No. 85, Headquarters District of the Gulf, Nov. 13, 1862, quoted in Daily Tribune, Nov. 13, 1862.
for personal gain. Before he received Campbell's letter, Forney had already published a notice that he and the Confederate authorities did not contemplate the seizure of any boats or supplies. He did state, however, that railroads and steamboats would be expected "to give preference to the transportation of Government stores."  

Mayor Slough initiated a possible solution to the problem existing between the military and civilians. In early November 1862 he appointed a Committee of Safety for Mobile. The twenty-five-man group included Price Williams, Peter Hamilton, Daniel Wheeler, and Dr. G. A. Ketchum, all leading citizens of the city. These men were to work with the governor and the Confederate authorities at Mobile in two areas. They would collect information relating to the city's defenses which the civilian populace needed to know about. The committee also had authority to make plans that would lead to cooperation between the civilians and the military if the enemy threatened the city. In announcing the formation of the committee, Slough reaffirmed that Mobile would be defended. He felt that his duty as mayor compelled him to let the people know what he expected of them. He pointed to the examples of Vicksburg and Richmond where

28 James A. Campbell to Forney, Nov. 23, 1862, O.R., XV, 874-76; Notice, District of the Gulf, Nov. 13, 1862, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Nov. 16, 1862.
the people had cooperated with the armies in turning back enemy attacks and stated that he was sure Mobilians would "help save to the Confederacy one of the most important bases of military operations." 29

On November 4, 1862, Leadbetter finally arrived in Mobile. He had received orders to go there in mid-October but had been delayed by ill health. Even after reaching the city Leadbetter still suffered from a cold and jaundice. Despite his sickness, he conducted a ten-day inspection of the defenses in the district. He did not find matters to his liking and began looking for means to strengthen the defenses. In a report to the War Department, Leadbetter stated that he felt time was of the essence but that "the means available in anchors and chains for rafts and in iron for general use is extremely limited." 30 Obstructing the various channels near Fort Morgan, Fort Gaines, and the bay batteries stood as his first priority. He hoped that the obstructions would

29Advertiser and Register, Nov. 11, 1862.
30Leadbetter to Cooper, Nov. 14, 1862, O.R., XV, 867; Cooper to Jones, Oct. 19, 1862, ibid., XVI, Pt. 2, p. 968; Cooper to Leadbetter, Nov. 7, 1862, in Danville Leadbetter Papers, Dr. Thomas M. McMillan Collection, Mobile Museum Department, hereinafter cited as Leadbetter Papers; Colonel Jeremy F. Gilmer to Captain George E. Walker, Nov. 14, 1862, Letters and Telegrams Sent by the Engineer Bureau of the Confederate War Department, 1861-1864, Chap. III, Vol. 2, p. 51, RG 109, National Archives.
slow enemy vessels so that they would receive a pounding by artillery fire. Another of Leadbetter's priorities was to complete the line of defenses around the city. The entrenchments remained unfinished and weak. As opportunity presented itself, he intended to strengthen works already partially constructed.\footnote{Leadbetter to Cooper, Nov. 14, 1862, \textit{O.R.}, XV, 867.}

The Alabama legislature took several actions relative to the defense of Mobile during November. On the seventeenth it approved two joint resolutions. The first stated:

\begin{quote}
...the city of Mobile shall never be surrendered; that it should be defended from street to street, from house to house, and inch by inch, until, if taken, the victor's spoils should be alone a heap of ashes.\footnote{"Joint Resolution in relation to the defense of Mobile," Nov. 17, 1862, \textit{ibid.}, LII, Pt. 2, p. 389.}
\end{quote}

The second resolution called for an appropriation to help pay for the evacuation from Mobile of women and children and to maintain them in a safe place in the interior.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}.}

Three days later the legislature passed a bill authorizing the enrollment of Creoles (free Negroes) between the ages of eighteen and fifty in Mobile as part of the militia. The mayor would accept interested men, form them into companies, and appoint white officers to

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}
command the units. These companies would only be used to defend Mobile. Thus, the Creoles of Mobile finally got the opportunity for service which the Confederate government had denied them. Mayor Slough issued a call for Creoles to report for enlistment in accordance with the legislative act in mid-December. 34 No evidence is available to show their response, however.

Leadbetter began working in earnest to upgrade Mobile's defenses in late November. He assigned one of his engineer officers to the task of placing obstructions in the entrances to Mobile Bay. This officer began driving wooden piles into the sea floor on the twenty-fourth. Although the work was difficult, he reported to Leadbetter that he hoped his crew could put in around fifty piles a day. Another of Leadbetter's subordinates supervised the erection of earthworks on the land face of Fort Morgan and the sodding of the fort's walls. Leadbetter asked Forney for permission to take up eight miles of the railroad between Pollard and Pensacola so that he could use the iron in the defensive works around Mobile. Forney gave his permission but furnished only a guard to

34"An Act to authorize the enrollment of the Creoles of Mobile," Nov. 20, 1862, ibid., 4, II, 197; Advertiser and Register, Dec. 18, 1862.
protect the operation. Leadbetter had to provide the necessary labor and transportation.  

Although Leadbetter could see some progress, he and the Confederate command at Mobile still had to contend with shortages of men and material. Leadbetter had to request more laborers from the state government because previous appeals had not resulted in a sufficient number of men coming in. Governor Shorter promised to impress slaves and forward them to Mobile as soon as possible. Leadbetter also asked Shorter and the Confederate Engineer Bureau for more spades and shovels for the laborers to use, but there were none to be had. A shortage of artillery pieces also plagued Leadbetter. The Mobile Committee of Safety wrote to Shorter asking him to use his influence to try to get more cannons from the Confederate authorities in Richmond. Shorter forwarded their letter to the Secretary of War, reminding him that he (Shorter) had made similar requests for guns several times in the past. In closing, the governor stated his conviction that if guns arrived he felt certain that they would enable the land and naval forces at Mobile to defend the city successfully. The Engineer Bureau did

351st Lieutenant John W. Glenn to Leadbetter, Nov. 24, 1862, Leadbetter Papers; Captain William R. Neville to Liernur, Nov. 25, 1862, ibid.; Forney to Leadbetter, Nov. 24, 1862, ibid.
send two heavy guns to the city in response to Shorter's and Leadbetter's requests.  

About this time another change in command occurred at Mobile. Forney's health apparently began failing in late October 1862. Dr. Josiah C. Nott and former mayor John Forsyth wrote to Bragg expressing concern for Forney and the safety of the city. Forsyth also addressed a letter to Davis. In Nott's opinion, Forney's would and the weight of his responsibilities had proven too much for him. Forney's personal physician and many of the officers around the commanding general felt that "he is not in condition for such an important command, & ought to be relieved from command until his health is restored...." Forsyth intimated that Forney might be suffering mental as well as physical problems. The lack of proper direction from the top had supposedly thrown affairs in and around Mobile into a state of near chaos:

\[\text{\footnotesize\cite{footnote}}\]

\[\text{\footnotesize\cite{footnote}}\]

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37Josiah C. Nott to Bragg, Nov. 1, 1862, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve; Forsyth to Bragg, Nov. 3, 1862, ibid.
...The town is full of officers & soldiers; the rifle guns are rusting in the batteries; 1200 cavalry on both sides of the bay are doing nothing...Every thing is wrong & full of peril....

Forsyth concluded: "...Mobile is lost if the existing administration lasts until the enemy comes." 39

Bragg began looking for assistance for Forney after receiving these reports. Slaughter, too, apparently suffered from some illness and could not provide the support Forney needed. In a letter to Cooper, Bragg stated that for a general assigned to duty at Mobile "acquaintance with artillery and engineering is essential." 40 He had hoped to order Brigadier General Johnson K. Duncan, recently exchanged after his capture at Fort Jackson, Louisiana, to Mobile, but Duncan was also ill. In mid-November, Bragg asked for and received the services of Brigadier General William W. Mackall. The latter had graduated eighth in his class at West Point and entered the artillery corps. Mackall had experience with both artillery and engineering as commander of Island No. 10. At Mobile, he assumed command of the former Army of Mobile, now a division consisting of Slaughter's and

38 Forsyth to Bragg, Nov. 3, 1862, ibid.
39 Ibid.
Cumming's brigades. Bragg issued an order on December 8 relieving Forney of command of the District of the Gulf, and the latter relinquished temporary command to Mackall on the fourteenth. Forney then began a much-needed leave to recover his health. He had served competently while at Mobile but his failing physical condition somewhat restricted his effectiveness in his last days in command of the district.

The only events of consequence occurring during Mackall's tenure as head of the District of the Gulf involved Grant's Pass. Leadbetter decided to erect a strong earthwork there to protect that vital entrance into the bay. The few guns placed there early in the war had been removed. To guard the pass, the Confederate engineers had driven piles in the channel and stationed one or more of their gunboats there to bar passage.

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41 Cooper to Bragg, Nov. 5, 1862, O.R., XX, Pt. 2, p. 389; Bragg to Cooper, Nov. 15, 1862, Ibid., 403; Cooper to Bragg, Nov. 16, 1862, Ibid., 405; Special Order No. --, Headquarters Department No. 2, Nov. 17, 1862, in Compiled Service Record of William W. Mackall.

by the enemy. Thomas H. Millington, a civilian engineer, took charge of the construction of an earthwork designed to mount at least three guns. Millington and his men worked rapidly. He began work on a shell bank in Grant's Pass on December 7. Leadbetter instructed him to transport dirt from Dauphin Island or Mobile Point near Fort Morgan to use in the construction. Millington found it more expedient to use oyster shells and sand from the immediate vicinity, however, and by December 13 had the battery ready for guns to be mounted. The chief of artillery for the District of the Gulf had selected one 10-inch columbiad, one 8-inch columbiad, and one 32-pounder rifled piece as armament for the work.

The Confederates at Fort Gaines had little time to rest. They moved artillery pieces in, and Captain J. M. Cary's Company C, 1st Alabama Artillery Battalion, transferred from Fort Morgan to man the guns. On December 14 two Union sidewheel steamer gunboats sailed to within about two miles of the battery to see what the

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44 Millington to Liernur, Dec. 12, 1862, Leadbetter Papers; Millington to Liernur, Dec. 19, 1862, ibid.; Major Daniel Trueheart to Leadbetter, Nov. 24, 1862, ibid.
Confederates had done. The gunboats stopped and opened fire on the battery and the Confederate gunboat Selma stationed nearby. All of the shells from the enemy vessels fell short of their marks. The Selma replied to this fire first, but her shots fell short also. Cary's Alabamians manned their guns and opened on the enemy gunboats. One of their shells burst before it reached the vessels, and another passed over them. With this the two sidewheelers withdrew. Millington and his engineers continued their work unmolested until its completion on December 17.45

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45"Extracts from private diary of Commodore H. H. Bell, U. S. Navy, 1862--No. 5," O.R.N., XIX, 734; Advertiser and Register, Dec. 16, 1862.
CHAPTER V

"CANNOT GENL. BEAUREGARD SEND ME REINFORCEMENTS!"

Jefferson Davis needed a competent officer to replace Forney at Mobile, and he searched for such a man during a trip to the West in December 1862. While visiting Bragg's army at Murfreesborough, he received a recommendation from Major General William J. Hardee. The latter, whom it will be remembered had been Mobile's first commander, suggested Major General Simon B. Buckner, one of Hardee's division commanders. The desire to see Brigadier General Patrick R. Cleburne promoted at least partially motivated Hardee's recommendation. Davis did select Buckner and directed Bragg to appoint Cleburne as a major general to take over Buckner's division. Bragg issued the pertinent orders on December 14.¹

Despite Hardee's maneuvering, Buckner had qualifications

¹"Liddell's Record and Impressions of the Civil War in North America 1860 to 1866," in Moses and St. John R. Liddell Family Papers, Louisiana State University Department of Archives and Manuscripts; Special Order No. 62, Headquarters Department No. 2, Dec. 14, 1862, O.R., XV, 899-900; Enclosure No. 5, Bragg to Cooper, Nov. 22, 1862, ibid., XX, Pt. 2, pp. 508-509; Para III, Special Order No. 24, Headquarters Army of Tennessee, Dec. 14, 1862, ibid., 449; Colonel George W. C. Lee to Bragg, Dec. 13, 1862, ibid., LII, Pt. 2, p. 396; Leonidas Polk to wife, Dec. 25, 1862, in Leonidas Polk Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
for command of the District of the Gulf. He had graduated from West Point, served bravely in the Mexican War, and taught tactics at the Military Academy. After resigning from the army in 1855, Buckner worked for a while as a construction superintendent. In Confederate service, he had led a division at Fort Donelson and in the Kentucky Campaign and had a reputation as "an excellent organizer."²

Mobile's new commander assumed his duties on December 23, 1862. A Montgomery newspaper, in noting Buckner's arrival, stated: "He is well qualified for the position, and will inspire the utmost confidence in his ability, and military skill,..."³ Buckner found only about 7,600 men present for duty in his district. He soon issued an appeal to the men of Mobile to aid in defense of the city. He asked them to come out and either


³General Order No. 105, Headquarters District of the Gulf, Dec. 23, 1862, O.R., XV, 905;Advertiser and Register, Dec. 27, 1862; Daily Mail, Dec. 30, 1862. Shortly after Buckner's arrival, the District of the Gulf was renamed Department of the Gulf but remained under Bragg's Department No. 2. Some authorities in Richmond apparently never officially recognized the new status. Major General Simon B. Buckner to Seddon, May 12, 1863, O.R., XXIII, Pt. 2, p. 833.
form new companies or fill up existing units. The troops when organized would be placed under competent officers for drill and instruction. Buckner intended to use the men only in actual defense of the city and only if the city seemed in real danger. William Dunn, president of the Committee of Safety, urging the populace to respond to Buckner's call, said: "...let no resident of Mobile able to wield an arm refuse to take his place in the ranks of its defenders."^4

Davis visited Mobile shortly after Buckner took over the District of the Gulf. The president arrived by train on the afternoon of December 30 and moved into a room at the Battle House Hotel. A number of people gathered near the hotel with the expectation of hearing him speak. However, Davis left soon with Buckner, several other generals, and the staff officers of these generals to inspect the 17th Alabama Infantry and the fortifications they manned on the bay shore. The reviewing party visited each battery and inspected the company responsible for each one. After this phase of the proceedings had ended, the entire 17th Alabama marched in review. That night the regiment's band serenaded Davis at the Battle House, and he made a short address to the crowd.

The next day Davis visited Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines with Buckner and the new naval commander at Mobile, Admiral Franklin Buchanan. On January 1, 1863, Davis left Mobile to return to Richmond.  

No extraordinary events occurred in the Mobile defenses between the time Buckner arrived and the end of January 1863. The troops assigned to the various batteries and earthworks drilled several times a day as both infantry and artillery. Their officers expected them to keep their batteries and quarters clean and in good order. The engineers needed more shovels for use in construction of the fortifications, and Buckner appealed to both the Quartermaster General and the Engineer Bureau for some to be sent. The Engineer Bureau could furnish only about half the number of shovels he requested. Many of the laborers available to the Confederate engineers were unsatisfactory. One officer complained: "The Irishmen sent me by the Bureau is a lazy set and I return them having only permitted them to

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5Daily Mail, Jan. 4, 1863; Ephraim McD. Anderson, Memoirs: Historical and Personal; Including the Campaigns of the First Missouri Confederate Brigade (St. Louis: Times Printing Co., 1868), 257.

6Order No. 3, Headquarters Batteries Huger and Tracy, Dec. 28, 1862, Records of the Department of the Gulf, 1861-1865, Louisiana Historical Association Collection, Special Collections Division, Tulane University Library; Order No. 9, Headquarters Batteries Huger and Tracy, Dec. 28, 1862, ibid.
work but one day." In addition to having to deal with poor labor, the Confederate officers also had to cope with problems created by the elements. For example, high tides and winds eroded away about ten feet of the front parapet of the Pinto Island Battery. The commander of the bay batteries recommended the erection of pilings in front of the battery to act as a breakwater.

The Confederate command established a series of regulations concerning Negro laborers on January 26, 1863. Leadbetter ordered his superintendents to have overseers and laborers at work promptly at seven o'clock every morning. The overseers were to keep the men under their charge busy at all times so that they would lose no time. No overseer could excuse a man from work unless a medical officer approved his remaining in quarters. The superintendents issued all tools to the overseers, who would have responsibility for these tools after they issued them to the work gangs. If the laborers damaged any property, such as flatboats, tools, pile drivers,

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8 Captain William Y. C. Humes to Trueheart, Jan. 16, 1863, Leadbetter Papers.
or wagons, the superintendents had to report the damage to engineer headquarters. Leadbetter's regulations expressed some concern for the health of the laborers. He wanted their rations to be as good as possible, and he ordered an assistant surgeon to check the men daily. How well all of these regulations would work had yet to receive testing, however.9

A minor foray by the Confederates against the Sand Island lighthouse occurred on the last day of January 1863. Sand Island is situated near the main ship channel into Mobile Bay southwest of Fort Morgan, and a lighthouse located on the island helped guide vessels into the bay. After the Union navy established the blockade off the bay, the blockaders would sometimes use the lighthouse to observe movements of the Confederates within the bay. To deprive the enemy of this observation post, the engineer officer for the lower bay defenses, Lieutenant John W. Glenn, led a small group of Confederates from Fort Gaines to the island by boat. Glenn and his men set fire to five frame buildings near the lighthouse. Lookouts aboard the U.S.S. Pembina detected Glenn's activity, and the gunboat fired a few shots at

The Confederates withdrew after having destroyed only the buildings set afire, but Glenn planned to return to destroy the lighthouse later.  

The Confederates attempted to conduct another offensive operation in early February 1863. Mobile's naval officers had control of this sortie. They hoped to make a night attack on the blockading squadron and capture at least one of the vessels by boarding. On the night of February 5, between sixty and one hundred men from other vessels transferred to the Selma for the attack. Armed with cutlasses and pistols, they wore white handkerchiefs around their caps so that they could distinguish one another from the enemy during the boarding. The Selma left Mobile in a dense fog, weather which should have aided the operation. Near Dog River bar, however, the gunboat struck a snag or piling and began to sink rapidly. The crew got her pumps going and kept her afloat until she could be steered into shallow water. There the Selma ran aground. Ship carpenters came down to patch the hole, and the Confederates used a steam fire engine to get the Selma afloat. She then sailed to the

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dry dock for permanent repairs. One naval officer summarized the operation: "...now we are once more afloat, not having boarded the blockaders and 'nobody hurt.'"

Work to improve the battery at Grant's Pass had continued since the skirmish there in December. Captain Cary's Alabamians replaced the carriage of their 8-inch columbiad to make it more serviceable. When they discovered the magazine leaking and covered with too little dirt, Lieutenant Glenn's engineers made the necessary repairs. To supply the garrison in the event of extended operations, the Confederates constructed a casemated storeroom for foodstuffs and water tanks to hold about 3,800 gallons. Cary still had several recommendations for further improvements. He asked for a supply of timber to build a small hospital for his men. To protect his men from the weather, he proposed that a building be erected as company quarters. Finally, Cary requested that the engineers build a wharf on the island to facilitate resupply and reinforcement of the garrison.

11 Memorandum by Hitchcock, Feb. 24, 1863, O.R.N., XIX, 627; T. L. Moore to Cousin Blannie, Mar. 7, 1863, in Southall and Bowen Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
In time the engineers completed all of the construction Cary asked for.\(^{12}\)

The Confederate engineers had continued to work on their defenses nearer Mobile as well as at Grant's Pass during January. Buckner had ordered a four-gun battery erected on Choctaw Point Spit because the earthen batteries near Choctaw Point could not effectively cover the main ship channel to the city or the Dog River bar obstructions. As the spit was under water, the engineers would have to use crib work filled with dirt as the base for the battery. Leadbetter assigned this task to Liernur, who began driving piles for the crib work. The Confederates carried out minor improvements at the Pinto Island and Spanish River batteries. The former mounted six guns and covered Choctaw Pass and Spanish River. Spanish River Battery contained eight guns, the heaviest of which bore on the channel of Spanish River. Leadbetter also strengthened the line of obstructions from Choctaw Point to Spanish River. These piles stood in the water in eight rows five to ten feet apart. The openings

\(^{12}\)Cary to Colonel William L. Powell, Feb. 6, 1863, Leadbetter Papers; Trueheart to Leadbetter (with endorsement by Leadbetter to Glenn), Feb. 2, 1863, \textit{ibid.}; Glenn to Leadbetter, Feb. --, 1863, \textit{ibid}.}
left at the Spanish River and Choctaw Pass channels would be closed by rafts when necessary.  

Leadbetter's engineers also remained busy near the eastern shore of the upper bay. They had already completed Apalachee Battery on the west side of the fork of the Apalachee and Blakely rivers and mounted six guns in it. Leadbetter expressed dissatisfaction with the location and layout of the battery, however. He began erecting a four-gun work at the head of Apalachee Island. Here the Confederate artillerymen could better cover the two rivers than they could from the Apalachee Battery. Unfortunately the engineers had no guns readily available to place in the new battery. Leadbetter planned to put the four 42-pounders then in the ironclad battery Danube in the work if no other cannon could be found. He did not think the Danube was strong enough to withstand heavy enemy fire. In the meantime, he directed stationing of the Danube near Apalachee Battery for use if needed. In the channels on each side of the new earthwork the Confederate engineers put in several lines of pilings to obstruct passage.  

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The entrenchments around the city occupied much of Leadbetter's attention. Work had ceased on the line of fortifications begun by Liernur in 1862. By early 1863 that line was nine miles long. Buckner had come to the conclusion that he would not be able to obtain a sufficient number of troops properly to man such extensive works. He ordered Leadbetter to build a second line of earthworks between Liernur's and Mobile. A shorter line would prove easier to man adequately. Leadbetter planned to begin his work at Choctaw Point and extend the fortifications around to the mouth of One Mile Creek. There a series of earthworks and a swamp would block any enemy advance. In this line Leadbetter hoped to construct square redoubts approximately 600 yards apart with trenches for infantrymen between each redoubt. In concluding his report of work done on these works Leadbetter stated:

The line is too near the city to save it from bombardment, but such an attack would prove a lesser evil than the capture of the place. It is hoped that the line can be held until the place shall be relieved.

Living and health conditions of the Negro labor force at Mobile underwent close scrutiny by both engineers and medical officers in early February 1863. Many of the workers suffered from illness much of the time,

\(^{15}\text{Ibid.}, 1012.\)
and rumors circulated that the mortality rate among them was very high. At least one engineer officer complained that he could not keep enough laborers to do the work he had orders to do. Dr. D. E. Smith, the assistant surgeon in charge of the Engineer Hospital, conducted an investigation into the rations and living quarters of the Negroes. He found the food issued anything but sufficient for their good health:

...Upon investigation of their rations I find them to consist of Corn Meal, rice, Molasses and fresh beef, the latter article often falling short and according to evidence of overseers for as many as five and six days in succession the negroes [sic] have lived upon Bread and Molasses. The Corn Meal is issued in sufficient quantities, but there being no lard or fat of any kind issued it makes very unpalatable bread. Bacon is issued for one day only in every fifteen days and salt meats are not issued at all,...

To correct these deficiencies, Smith recommended that the engineer commissaries issue to the workers more salted meat and large quantities of fresh vegetables.

Smith also observed problems with the workers' quarters. Most of the Negroes stayed in Hitchcock's Cotton Press where they were crowded together in

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16 Glenn to Leadbetter, Feb. 1, 1863, Leadbetter Papers.

17 Assistant Surgeon D. E. Smith to Surgeon F. A. Ross, Feb. 11, 1863, ibid.

18 Ibid.
uncomfortable quarters. The Press stood near the Choctaw Point swamps, a traditionally unhealthy area of the city because of dampness and mosquitoes. Dr. F. A. Ross, Medical Director of the District of the Gulf, had appointed three medical officers to attend to the laborers in addition to Dr. Smith at the hospital. According to Smith, the primary diseases affecting the Negroes were typhoid fever, measles, pneumonia, Erysispelas, and "swamp fever."\(^{19}\) Ross admitted that the physicians had not been able to treat some of the ill Negroes successfully but stated that the laborers received the same care as the soldiers and that deaths among the laborers were fewer than among a similar number of raw troops. Although Ross could do little about the food issued, he did recommend the erection of barracks for the Negroes along the line of earthworks. The Confederates also constructed a larger hospital for the laborers who worked on Dauphin Island and the other lower bay defenses.\(^{20}\)

In late February 1863 the Confederates completed the destruction of the Sand Island lighthouse. Despite the burning of the wooden buildings, the men of the

\(^{19}\) Ibid.; Advertiser and Register, Feb. 17, 1863.

\(^{20}\) Advertiser and Register, Feb. 17, 1863; Glenn to Leadbetter, Mar. 3, 1863, Leadbetter Papers.
blockading squadron continued to land on the island and use the lighthouse to observe Confederate movements. Writers in the past have given credit for destroying the lighthouse to Captain N. J. Ludlow, but Lieutenant Glenn actually carried out the mission. He and a small party of men proceeded by boat to Sand Island on the night of February 22. The next morning the Confederates placed a total of seventy pounds of powder at various places in the structure. By three o’clock that afternoon Glenn had completed his work, and he fired the charges. Then he and his men returned to Fort Gaines. In his report of the operation, Glenn described the results of his mines:

...Nothing remains but a narrow shred [?] about fifty feet high & from one to five feet wide. The first storm we have will blow that down....

During February the Confederate engineers continued to work at strengthening the Mobile defenses. No great endeavor had been required at Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines since they seemed practically complete. Leadbetter's men took up the iron rails from the road between Fort Morgan and Navy Cove because they needed the iron for a floating battery under construction at Mobile. They laid wooden rails to replace the iron taken up. At Grant's Pass the engineers erected a wharf in accordance with Capatin

21Owen, History of Alabama, II, 1006; Glenn to Leadbetter, Feb. 24, 1863, Leadbetter Papers.
Cary's earlier request. Leadbetter continued work at the Choctaw Point Spit battery but felt construction should be suspended for two reasons. First, he did not think cannons were available to mount there, and second, he wanted to use the boats employed there to complete the new battery on Apalachee Island. A good deal of work had been done at the latter battery, but earth had to be brought in by boat because little dirt was available on the low, swampy island. The engineers placed no further piles in the channels near this battery during the month.  

Leadbetter's men conducted other engineering operations at the bay batteries and city entrenchments. They had practically completed Pinto Island Battery even though the tide eroded part of the parapet. At Spanish River Battery the engineers did work to reinforce the parapet and expand the flanks to contain two additional guns. The engineers drove further pilings near these batteries to obstruct the channels. To help reinforce the earthworks, the Confederates moved a floating battery into the area. This battery mounted two 10-inch guns, and railroad iron covered her front. The gunboat Selma fired some of her guns at the battery to test the iron's

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22 Leadbetter to Gilmer, Mar. 15, 1863, _O.R._, XV, 1014-1015.
strength, and although several shells broke on the hard surface, none of the shots hurt the iron. On Leadbetter's new line of entrenchments, the laborers began redoubts on either side of Government Street and worked outward from there. They completed each earthwork to the point where it seemed defensible, and the laborers then moved on to begin a new work. They would add the finishing touches later. Leadbetter placed Colonel P. J. Pillans in charge of the construction of the city entrenchments.

The rations drawn by the troops at Mobile in early 1863 contained more varieties of foods than those issued to troops in the field. Commissary officers furnished the following items most regularly—fresh beef, corn meal, rice, molasses, and salt. The troops received one pound of beef eight days in ten, one and a quarter pounds of corn meal seven days in ten, fifteen pounds of rice per hundred rations daily, one gallon of molasses daily, and four and a half pounds of salt daily. If molasses

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was not available from the commissaries, those officers would make up for it by doubling the sugar ration. Issued less often, but nonetheless available, were bacon, flour, potatoes, and vegetables. To supplement rations drawn, many of the soldiers planted gardens to raise vegetables. These gardens not only provided food but also relief from the daily drill routine. At least one regiment planted a field with corn and melons in addition to its garden. As the war wore on, this abundance of foodstuffs did dwindle. 25

In order to defend Mobile properly in case of attack, Buckner and Leadbetter realized they needed adequate artillery and ammunition. Buckner sent his chief of artillery, Major Victor von Sheliha, to Richmond to try to get more heavy artillery pieces for Fort Morgan, Fort Gaines, and Fort Grant. Leadbetter sent with Von Sheliha a letter to Colonel Jeremy F. Gilmer, chief of the Engineer Bureau, and called Gilmer's attention to Mobile's needs. He stated: "The liberality accorded in this behalf to the city of Charleston and the good effect

25 General Order No. 130, Headquarters District of the Gulf, Mar. 1, 1863, Orders, District of the Gulf, 1862-1865, RG 109, National Archives; Harris to C. L. Hays, Feb. 23, 1863, Harris Letters; Advertiser and Register, Mar. 20, 1863.
of it, will plead in our favor." In a letter to General Cooper, Buckner asked for more ammunition for his artillery pieces. He complained that the Ordnance Bureau had limited him to 175 rounds per gun. Buckner also stated:

The object of the fortifications now in progress is to compel the enemy, should he appear in large force, to besiege this place, and reduce him to the necessity of making regular approaches. The works will be needless unless a proper supply of ammunition is provided. The requisition I send is for not exceeding a half-supply for a siege. It is indispensable to a good defence....

Secretary of War Seddon assured Buckner that he would receive enough ammunition to give him 200 rounds per gun. The supply bureaus in Richmond had no more than that at the time, but Seddon said he would keep Buckner in mind when supplies became more plentiful.

On April 18, 1863, the Confederates once again made an offensive move against the enemy. Union blockading vessels were accustomed to lying in as close to Mobile Point east of Fort Morgan as possible to try to catch blockade runners going out or coming in through the

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27 Buckner to Cooper, Mar. 20, 1863, in Simon B. Buckner Papers, Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

28 Seddon to Buckner, Apr. 4, 1863, O.R., XV, 1035-1036.
Swash Channel. In this operation, the Confederate troops had as their objective discouraging the blockaders from coming in so close to land. Major James T. Gee left Fort Morgan with two lieutenants and forty-two enlisted men of his 1st Alabama Artillery Battalion and two rifled field pieces on the night of April 17. The detachment marched nine miles along the point until they found a blockader lying about one mile from the beach. At daylight the Confederates opened fire with their cannons. After being struck several times the Union vessel withdrew from range. Two other gunboats came up, and all three fired at the Confederate position. The Union fire did no damage except to hit and destroy a stack of muskets. After two and a half hours the Union vessels sailed off, and Gee's men returned to Fort Morgan. From this time on the blockaders did stay farther out from the land.²⁹

During April 1863 Buckner lost several of his generals and many of his troops. Through the last two weeks of March he received repeated requests from Pemberton in Mississippi to send one or two cavalry regiments to the northern part of that state to aid planters in getting their crops out of the region and to combat enemy raids.

²⁹Roll for Feb. 28-Apr. 30, 1863, Record of Events Cards, Company B, 1st Alabama Artillery Battalion, Compiled Service Records; Stewart to Julia Stewart, Apr. 21, 1863, Stewart Letters.
On March 28 Buckner finally agreed to send the 2nd Alabama Cavalry to Pemberton even though he did not feel he could spare any troops. The regiment reached Pemberton about April 29 with less than half of its men armed. President Davis telegraphed Buckner on April 7 asking what troops he could spare for Bragg in Middle Tennessee. Buckner replied that he could send Cumming's brigade of about 2,200 men if Pemberton would reinforce Mobile in case of attack. By April 20 Buckner had sent Cumming's brigade of three regiments, one additional regiment, two infantry battalions, and a battery to Tullahoma—in all about 4,000 men. Buckner thus lost practically all of his infantry, except for several regiments serving as heavy artillery. In addition to the loss of General Cumming, who accompanied his brigade to Tennessee, Buckner lost General Mackall, who became Bragg's chief of staff. In response to a request for his services by

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30 Pemberton to Buckner, Mar. 20, 1863, O.R., XXIV, Pt. 3, p. 679; Pemberton to Buckner, Mar. 24, 1863, ibid., 687; Pemberton to Buckner Mar. 26, 1863, ibid., 691; Pemberton to Buckner, Mar. 28, 1863, ibid.; Pemberton to General Joseph E. Johnston, Apr. 29, 1863, ibid., 803.

31 Davis to Buckner, Apr. 7, 1863, in Dunbar Rowland (ed.), Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist: His Letters, Papers and Speeches, 10 vols. (Jackson, Miss.: Department of Archives and History, 1923), V, 469; Buckner to Davis, Apr. 8, 1863, O.R., XXIV, Pt. 3, p. 724; Johnston to Buckner, Apr. 11, 1863, ibid., XXIII, Pt. 2, p. 750; "Diary of Captain Edward Crenshaw," 441.
General Edmund Kirby Smith, the War Department ordered General Slaughter to Texas, but it quickly revoked the order rather than deprive Buckner of his last brigadier. Slaughter retained command of the troops in the immediate vicinity of Mobile.\textsuperscript{32}

The War Department on April 27, 1863, ordered Buckner to turn over command of the District of the Gulf to his ranking subordinate and go to Knoxville, Tennessee, and assume command of the Department of East Tennessee. The reason for this order is not clear, but the War Department possibly hoped Buckner would end the confused command situation in East Tennessee and work closely with Bragg in Middle Tennessee. Major General Dabney H. Maury, who had just assumed command at Knoxville, received orders to await Buckner and then go to Mobile to assume Buckner's place.\textsuperscript{33} The latter had succeeded in improving the condition of the Mobile defenses by

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item Para I, Special Order No. 9, Headquarters Department No. 2, Apr. 17, 1863, O.R., XXIII, Pt. 2, p. 777; Para XVI, Special Order No. 96, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, Apr. 20, 1863, \textit{ibid.}, XV, 1048; Para XIX, Special Order No. 102, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, Apr. 27, 1863, quoted in Compiled Service Record of James E. Slaughter.
\item Cooper to Buckner, Apr. 27, 1863, O.R., XV, 1055-1056; Cooper to Major General Dabney H. Maury, Apr. 27, 1863, \textit{ibid.}, 1056; Thomas Lawrence Connelly, \textit{Autumn of Glory: The Army of Tennessee, 1862-1865} (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 107.
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his energetic action. Admiral Buchanan, no doubt expressing the sentiment of many in Mobile, wrote to Richmond asking that Buckner's orders be revoked: "...he has the confidence of all here...and his absence will cause much regret to the whole community." 34 Others in Mobile accepted the loss of Buckner and asked Seddon to assign Mackall in his place. They felt that Mackall knew their situation and wants. Since his arrival at Mobile, these citizens had found him "uniformly courteous, and always attentive to all his duties--and firm and prompt in their discharge." 35

Before Buckner could leave Mobile, he once again received requests to send troops to Mississippi. Originally Pemberton had asked several of his subordinates to request some cavalry from Buckner to combat a Union cavalry force conducting a raid through Mississippi. Buckner replied to these requests by saying that he had sent all of his available troops to Tennessee. Pemberton then went to Davis and the War Department to get their assistance. The War Department ordered a cavalry regiment from Montgomery to Pollard and ordered Buckner to

34 Buchanan to Mallory, Apr. 28, 1863, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War.

send some cavalry from either Pollard or Mobile to Pemberton. To this Buckner replied that he had very few men left in his district and practically no cavalry to spare. He did agree to send the only cavalry battalion he had left, about 300 men in all. There was a plaintive note in Buckner's closing remarks: "Cannot Genl. Beauregard send me reinforcements!" The 15th Alabama Cavalry Battalion proceeded from Mobile to Meridian, but it arrived too late to be used against the enemy raid.

Buckner's last action prior to departing for Knoxville was to issue a call for the citizens to organize themselves for local defense. He urged them to form companies, battalions, and regiments so as to be ready if needed to man the defenses. The organization of the troops he turned over to General Slaughter. After arriving in Knoxville, Buckner reported that his appeal "was

36 Pemberton to Brigadier General John Adams, Apr. 24, 1863, O.R., XXIV, Pt. 3, p. 781; Pemberton to Adams, Apr. 25, 1863, ibid., 785; Major General William W. Loring to Pemberton, Apr. 25, 1863, ibid., 787; Johnston to Pemberton, Apr. 27, 1863, ibid., 791; Loring to Pemberton, Apr. 27, 1863, ibid., 793; Pemberton to Davis, Apr. 28, 1863, ibid., 797; Pemberton to Cooper, Apr. 29, 1863, ibid., 801; Davis to Pemberton, May 1, 1863, ibid., 807; Campbell to Colonel James H. Clanton, May 1, 1863, ibid., XV, 1069; Cooper to Buckner, May 1, 1863, ibid.; Buckner to Cooper, May 2, 1863, ibid., 1070-1071.

37 Buckner to Pemberton, May 2, 1863, ibid., XXIV, Pt. 3, p. 817; Brigadier General Abraham Buford to Pemberton, May 2, 1863, ibid.; Brigadier General Daniel Ruggles to Colonel Benjamin S. Ewell, June 22, 1863, ibid., 973.
responded to in a proper spirit, and with a promise of fair success." Governor Shorter made a final appeal on behalf of the citizens of Mobile to Richmond to have Mackall appointed to replace Buckner. Seddon replied that the authorities in Richmond had already chosen Buckner's successor before the receipt of the April 30 letter from the Mobile Committee of Safety or Shorter's telegram and that the decision would not be changed. Slaughter assumed temporary command of the District of the Gulf on May 8, 1863, when Buckner left by rail. The War Department instructed Slaughter to continue the organization of local defense troops while he awaited Maury's arrival. His only other action of consequence as temporary commander seems to have been to issue an order to obstruct completely the channel at Grant's Pass.  

38 Daily Mail, May 7, 1863; Buckner to Seddon, May 12, 1863, O.R., XXIII, Pt. 2, p. 833.  
39 Shorter to Seddon, May 6, 1863, O.R., XV, 1077; Seddon to Shorter, May 7, 1863, ibid.; Buckner to Seddon, May 9, 1863, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Seddon to Slaughter, May 13, 1863, Telegrams Sent, Secretary of War, Chap. IX, Vol. 35, p. 36; Leadbetter to Glenn, May 8, 1863, O.R., XV, 1080.
CHAPTER VI

"...AN INTERESTING AND AGREEABLE COMMAND..."

On May 19, 1863, Major General Dabney H. Maury assumed command of the District of the Gulf, a position he would retain until the end of the war.¹ A native of Virginia, Maury graduated from West Point in 1846 and fought in the Mexican War. His Confederate service began as chief of staff to Major General Earl Van Dorn in Arkansas. Promoted to brigadier general, Maury led a division of the Army of the West at the battles of Iuka and Corinth. His division moved to Snyder's Bluff on the Yazoo River above Vicksburg in late December 1862 and defended that position against attacks by Union gunboats. In April 1863 Davis chose Maury to assume command in East Tennessee, desiring "an efficient officer of rank" for that "important command."² There is no evidence indicating

¹General Order No. 192, Headquarters Department of the Gulf, May 19, 1863, quoted in Daily Tribune, May 23, 1863.
why Davis so soon switched Maury and Buckner, but he specifically selected Maury to take over at Mobile and would not allow any senior major generals to be assigned to the district. Maury's primary qualification for the command was his experience in supervising heavy artillery against gunboats at Snyder's Bluff, but his record in Arkansas and northern Mississippi had marked him as an able general.  

Former Confederate Congressman Edmund S. Dargan provided his home as a residence for Maury and his wife when they arrived in Mobile. In later years Maury remembered his tenure at the city as "altogether an interesting and agreeable command." He had not been particularly anxious to go to Mobile and for a long time did not understand why he had been assigned there. He had hoped for an assignment to take over a division in his native Virginia. When he received orders for Mobile, however, Maury welcomed the prospect of leaving Knoxville. In a letter to the Secretary of War he wrote: "...I shall

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4 Dabney H. Maury, Recollections of a Virginian (New York: Scribners, 1894), 190.
enter upon its duties with more satisfaction than I find here.\textsuperscript{5} Maury became very popular with the people of Mobile and the soldiers under his command. One of Maury's men remembered him:

\ldots Our commander was Dabney H. Maury, 'every inch a soldier,' but then there were not many inches of him. The soldiers called him 'puss in boots,' because half of his diminutive person seemed lost in a pair of the immense cavalry boots of the day. He was a wise and gallant officer.\textsuperscript{6}

Shortly after arriving in Mobile, Maury attempted to augment his weak garrison. Thousands of refugees from New Orleans had arrived in the city to avoid swearing the oath of allegiance to the United States government. The group of refugees included large numbers of men of military age. Maury telegraphed the War Department to seek authority to organize eligible men into companies and form battalions or a regiment. He inquired whether the men should be accepted as conscripts or with the privileges of volunteers. Secretary Seddon replied several days later that Maury could organize the New Orleans refugees into military units but only for temporary service.

\textsuperscript{5}Maury to Seddon, May 7, 1863, O.R., XXIII, Pt. 2, p. 822.

The conscript laws demanded that the men remain liable to being drafted and placed in existing organizations. After receiving Seddon's instructions, Maury tried to form the Louisianians into companies, but he had to admit defeat. The refugees resisted his efforts to form a battalion. Many of the men did eventually enter Louisiana units stationed at Mobile, however.\(^7\)

In a letter of May 23, 1863, President Davis reassured Governor Shorter about his concern for Mobile and explained the government's policy on the defense of the area. Davis had recently received letters from Shorter and the citizens of Mobile that had expressed concern about Mobile's weak condition. He told Shorter that the government intended to protect the safety of the city because "any misfortune which should befall it would be deeply felt by the Confederacy."\(^8\) In 1862 the authorities in Richmond had begun formulating their strategy on coastal defense, and by May 1863 had established this strategy. Davis explained that due to the enemy's

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\(^7\)Maury to Seddon, May 22, 1863, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Seddon to Maury, May 26, 1863, Telegrams Sent, Secretary of War, Chap. IX, Vol. 35, p. 43; Maury to Seddon, June 16, 1863, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War.

\(^8\)Davis to Shorter, May 23, 1863, quoted in Dunbar Rowland (ed.), Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist: His Letters, Papers and Speeches, 10 vols. (Jackson, Miss.: Department of Archives and History, 1923), V, 494.
numerical superiority, the Confederates could not leave large numbers of men in unthreatened coastal garrisons. All available men had to go to important places under attack or actually threatened. If the enemy attacked Mobile, then troops would move there from other areas. Davis suggested that both state and city officials fully organize local defense troops to back up the regulars in the event of a sudden assault.\(^9\)

The Confederate engineers continued work on the Mobile defenses during May 1863, although they had completed many of their tasks already. On the forts guarding the bay entrances, they had little work to do. The engineers sodded the embankment at Fort Gaines and completed the wharf at Fort Grant. Leadbetter reported the Choctaw Point, Pinto Island, Spanish River and Apalachee batteries all complete. He suspended work on the Choctaw Spit battery in order to put his full effort on the battery on Apalachee Island. The latter battery Leadbetter expected to complete in June. Despite a severe shortage of laborers, the Confederate engineers finished construction of most of Leadbetter's line of redoubts around the city. Fourteen redoubts stood ready to be manned, and Leadbetter planned only two more redoubts and several

smaller works between some of the redoubts. His men mounted cannon in practically all of the defensive works. The only other work of consequence carried out by the engineers involved the placing of additional obstructions between Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines and near Apalachee and Blakely islands near the eastern shore.  

A new weapon in Mobile's defensive arsenal made its appearance during May. Maury, having witnessed their effectiveness near Vicksburg, ordered the procurement of one hundred fifty torpedoes (mines) for placement in the waters around and in Mobile Bay. At Grant's Pass the engineers put ten or twelve torpedoes in the channel west of the battery. Other torpedoes they floated near the Spanish River Battery. Leadbetter informed Admiral Buchanan that he intended to place torpedoes in two locations not usually visited by naval or civilian vessels—the channels of Apalachee and Blakely rivers below Apalachee Island Battery and the area of Garrow's Bend near the city. Leadbetter also warned that he would eventually put the devices in the channel near Fort Morgan, extending from the western edge of the channel toward the fort to obstruct three-fourths of the passage. All vessels moving through the area would need to sail close to

the wharf at the fort. Leadbetter advised Buchanan:
"This will cause little trouble and may prevent accidents."¹¹ By war's end, the torpedoes at Mobile would be responsible for the sinking of ten enemy vessels.¹²

In early June 1863 Mobile's command designation changed again. The War Department formally created the Department of the Gulf on June 8. The department consisted of Mobile and the approaches to the city. Technically the new department remained under the jurisdiction of General Joseph E. Johnston's Western Department, headquartered in Mississippi.¹³ Governor Shorter and the Mobile Committee of Safety had urged Richmond to make Mobile an independent command and expressed their displeasure about its status as a "mere dependency" of Bragg's Army of Tennessee. Most of the credit for persuading the War Department to take the actual step belongs to Buckner. After his arrival at Knoxville, he sent Seddon a lengthy letter discussing Mobile's situation


and making several suggestions. Buckner recommended that the city be separated from Bragg's command because the two had no close relationship. He recounted command problems which had occurred during his tenure at Mobile and stressed the connection between the defense of Mobile and Vicksburg. In concluding, Buckner urged Seddon to issue orders similar to those which actually appeared on June 8.14

This new arrangement did not, in the long run, prove beneficial to the defense of Mobile. Davis had created the Confederate departmental system "as a means to organize and to administer military forces within every inch of southern terrain."15 The departments each had responsibility of defending a certain area or location. Davis allowed the departmental commanders wide discretionary powers in the defense of their area, and, as stated previously, the general exercised virtually complete control over the units under him. Only in this regard did establishment of the Department of the Gulf work in Maury's and Mobile's favor. Davis had hoped that

14 Hamilton to Shorter, May 12, 1863, ibid., LII, Pt. 2, p. 471; Buckner to Seddon, May 12, 1863, ibid., XXIII, Pt. 2, pp. 833-34.

departments would supply their own needs for food and other supplies. Here the Department of the Gulf suffered because the territory within its limits simply could not provide a sufficient amount of food for Mobile and its army. As will be seen later, Buckner experienced problems with another department commander in trying to obtain supplies, and Maury faced the same situation for a time. The creation of a separate department at Mobile also made more difficult coordination of the city's defense with defense of the areas Mobile needed to be connected with—the states of Alabama and Mississippi.\footnote{Ibid., 88-92.}

Maury renamed eight of the fortifications in his department in early June 1863. All of the batteries so involved received names of Confederate officers who had died in the line of duty. Apalachee Battery became Battery Tracy, named for Brigadier General Edward D. Tracy of Alabama who died in the battle of Port Gibson. The battery on Blakely Island, sometimes referred to as Gindrat Battery, became Battery Huger, after Lieutenant Commander Thomas B. Huger, killed April 25, 1862, on the C.S.S. McRae below New Orleans. Pinto Island Battery had its name changed to Battery Gladden in memory of Brigadier General Adley H. Gladden, who received a mortal wound at Shiloh shortly after leaving Mobile. One of the
floating batteries Maury named for Brigadier General Lloyd Tilghman, who died at the battle of Champion's Hill. He placed the name of one of the generals killed at Elkhorn Tavern on one work—the Light House Battery became Battery McCulloch for Ben McCulloch. Spanish River Battery was renamed Battery McIntosh to honor Commander Charles F. McIntosh, who died aboard the C.S.S. Louisiana near New Orleans. Two relatively new fortifications on the Alabama River above Mobile also received new names. A work at Choctaw Bluff was called Fort Stonewall for Stonewall Jackson, and the work at Oven Bluff was named Fort Sidney Johnston after Albert Sidney Johnston who died at the battle of Shiloh.17

While Maury contended with the problem of too few troops, he also faced an excess of officers in the city. These officers had come to Mobile on leave or recruiting duty. Maury felt that they were a discredit to the army and a bad example to soldiers and civilians alike because most seemed to wander the streets with nothing to do and seemingly under no one's authority. Maury wrote to Joe Johnston saying that the officers there on recruiting duty served no purpose, that the enrolling

17General Order No. 207, Headquarters Department of the Gulf, June 17, 1863, quoted in Advertiser and Register, June 20, 1863; Warner, Generals in Gray, 107, 201, 306, 309; Caldwell Delaney, Confederate Mobile: A Pictorial History (Mobile: The Haunted Book Shop, 1971), 99-100.
officer of the department, Major Jules C. Denis, was "fully capable of performing all the duty." Maury requested permission to order all officers assigned to units in Johnston's department back to their commands. Some hope existed for partial relief of the troop shortage at Mobile. Davis had called upon Alabama to muster 7,000 militiamen into Confederate service. The commander of the militia forces of the state ordered the enlistment of 500 men in Mobile County. These troops would not be available until August at the earliest, however.

Not only did Maury face a shortage of troops, but he also found the defenses short of Negro laborers. The Engineer Bureau no longer encouraged the use of soldiers on fortifications, possibly for fear of the demoralizing effects of having them doing the same work as slaves. Thus Leadbetter could rely only on slave labor and a small number of officers and men in engineer service. The planters of Alabama remained reluctant to send their slaves away when they needed them to work the fields.

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18 Maury to Ewell, June 18, 1863, Letters and Telegrams Received, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, Nov. 1862-April 1865, RG 109, National Archives.

19 General Order No. 10, Office Adjutant and Inspector General, Alabama Militia, June 17, 1863, quoted in Daily Mail, June 20, 1863.
At one point Leadbetter had only about 150 slaves working on the city entrenchments. Maury authorized him to try to hire laborers for two dollars a day plus subsistence. Leadbetter had little luck with his efforts to hire men. When the engineer in charge at Choctaw Bluff asked for laborers to work there, Leadbetter wrote that he had none to spare. Toward the end of June 1863 Maury sent some of his troops into nearby counties to impress slaves. One of the officers, who came from one of Alabama's hill counties, enjoyed the impressment work he carried out near Greenville:

...You can imagine that I have a good deal of fun. At first I thought it a very unpleasant business to impress Negroes, but the planters oppose it so much that my ambition makes it more a pleasure to take them than not....

The fall of Vicksburg on July 4, 1863, caused Maury to adopt new measures to improve his defenses. He felt that the enemy would attack the city now that they had the Mississippi River in their possession. In a circular to the citizens of Mobile and surrounding areas, he

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called upon the able-bodied men to form local defense units and the owners of slaves to send laborers to work on the fortifications. Slaughter received the responsibility of organizing, issuing arms to, instructing, and making assignments for the new units formed. To Leadbetter, Maury assigned the task of arranging employment for any slaves sent to the city. Leadbetter then took several measures to speed up work on the fortifications. First, he ordered construction of the city entrenchments carried on on Sundays as well as on other days in the week. Second, under instructions from Maury, Leadbetter closed down construction at Choctaw and Oven bluffs and moved all of the laborers and tools from there to Mobile. In addition to these actions, Maury revoked the leaves of all officers, ordering them back to their units, and announced that only sick leaves would be granted in the future.\footnote{Circular, Headquarters Department of the Gulf, July 8, 1863, quoted in \textit{The Index}, Aug. 27, 1863; Para I, General Order No. --, Engineer Office, July 13, 1863, Letters and Telegrams Sent, Engineer Office, Mobile, Chap. III, Vol. 10, p. 33; Leadbetter to Captain Charles de Vaux, July 20, 1863, Letters Sent, Engineer Office, Gulf, Chap. III, Vol. 12, p. 277; Leadbetter to Robertson, July 20, 1863, \textit{ibid.}; Para I, General Order No. 221, Headquarters Department of the Gulf, July 23, 1863, quoted in \textit{The Index}, Aug. 27, 1863.}

When the Port Hudson garrison surrendered on July 9, 1863, Maury became more concerned about a possible attack
on Mobile. He realized few factors existed to prevent Banks' Union army from moving against the city. In a letter to the War Department, Maury outlined the condition of his command. The forts at the bay entrances appeared defensible to him. Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines both had provisions for six months. Seventeen of the proposed nineteen redoubts in the city entrenchments were ready, and the two remaining would be ready soon. Maury anticipated that he would need 20,000 men, plus appropriate ordnance supplies for his guns, to withstand a siege. The problem imposed by the defensive line was that it was so close to the city that if an attack came the city would suffer from enemy fire. Because of the active trade in Mobile and the city's status as a refugee center, Maury estimated that the city contained some 15,000 non-combatants whom he would have to evacuate. In response to Maury's letter, Davis instructed the War Department to push the collection of supplies for Mobile and study the reinforcement of the garrison if an attack came. He preferred to postpone removing non-combatants until an assault seemed certain.\footnote{Maury to Cooper, July 16, 1863, with endorsements, O.R., XXVI, Pt. 2, pp. 111-12.}

Fears on the part of the Confederate command of an attack on Mobile continued through the remainder of July.
Cognizant of the situation, Davis warned Johnston that the enemy might move from New Orleans against the city. Johnston apprised Davis that he had obtained the same information from Union prisoners. He also contacted Maury to learn the condition of Maury's troops and supplies. In responding to Johnston's inquiry, Maury stated that his force of 2,500 men was entirely inadequate to withstand an attack. He felt he needed 15,000 men and four additional field batteries. Several days later Maury sent a telegram to Richmond saying that he expected to receive an attack and needed more men and ordnance supplies. Cooper, in the meantime, had received information from Johnston that Johnston's scouts had learned that the Union command did not intend to move immediately against Mobile. He passed this news on to Maury and stated that in view of this development no troops would be sent to Mobile. Knowing that an assault might come in the near future, Seddon advised Maury to continue to collect supplies and ammunition and to strengthen the defenses. 23

23 Cumming, Kate, 121; Davis to Johnston, July 18, 1863, O.R., XXIV, Pt. 1, p. 208; Johnston to Davis, July 19, 1863, ibid.; Ewell to Maury, July 19, 1863, ibid., Pt. 3, p. 1017; Maury to Johnston, July 20, 1863, ibid., 1019; Maury to Cooper, July 23, 1863, ibid., XXVI, Pt. 2, p. 120; Cooper to Maury, July 31, 1863, ibid., 128; Seddon to Maury, Aug. 1, 1863, ibid., 129.
Union authorities had given some thought to an attack on Mobile. Major General William T. Sherman, after capturing Jackson, Mississippi, following the fall of Vicksburg, suggested to Major General Ulysses S. Grant an attack on Mobile from New Orleans. When Mobile fell, he wanted to conduct operations against Selma. Banks also urged a move to capture Mobile:

The capture of Mobile is of importance second only in the history of the war to the opening of the Mississippi....Mobile is the last stronghold in the West and Southwest. No pains should be spared to effect its reduction.  

Perhaps prodded by these missives, Grant telegraphed Major General Henry W. Halleck and suggested an attack on Mobile from the vicinity of New Orleans. The Union high command had other objectives in mind, however. Halleck informed Grant that remaining Confederate armies in Mississippi, Arkansas, and western Louisiana should be broken up first. When these things had been accomplished, the Union command would have enough men to go against either Mobile or Texas.  

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25 Grant to Major General Henry W. Halleck, July 18, 1863, ibid., 530; Halleck to Grant, July 22, 1863, ibid., 542.
Banks continued to press Washington about an attack on Mobile. He felt that the capture of Mobile and occupation of much of Texas would practically end the war in the Southwest. Halleck told Banks that he saw Texas as a more important objective. Abraham Lincoln had urged Halleck to send a force to eastern Texas. Still Banks persisted. In several letters he pointed out that his intelligence pictured Mobile as weak and not likely to receive reinforcements. He suggested that Grant send him troops from his army and that the attack start from Portersville on Mississippi Sound. Banks anticipated a campaign of only thirty days and stated that Grant concurred in the operation. Diplomatic considerations arising from the French takeover in Mexico were uppermost in the minds of the Union high command, however. Halleck instructed Banks to forget Mobile for the time being and make an immediate move against some point on the Texas coast. Banks began making plans in accordance with Halleck's orders soon after receiving them.26 Again more important enemy objectives saved Mobile from an attack.

26 Banks to Halleck, July 23, 1863, ibid., XXVI, Pt. 1, p. 651; Halleck to Banks, July 24, 1863, ibid., 652; Abraham Lincoln to Secretary of War, July 29, 1863, ibid., 659; Banks to Halleck, July 30, 1863, ibid., 661-62; Banks to Halleck, Aug. 1, 1863, ibid., 666; Halleck to Banks, Aug. 6, 1863, ibid., 672; James A. Padgett (ed.), "Some Letters of George Stanton Denison, 1854-1866: Observations of a Yankee on Conditions in
By the summer of 1863 the naval squadron at Mobile was suffering a shortage of men. Buchanan explained to the Navy Department that discharges, desertions, and illness had reduced his force to the point where he did not have enough men to man the guns on all of his vessels. Very few volunteers had joined the squadron, the great majority of whom had had no experience as seamen. He asked Mallory to intervene with the Secretary of War to permit the transfer of men from the army to the navy. Maury, recognizing the necessity of cooperation with the navy, asked the War Department to grant Buchanan's requests:

...The naval force here is very important, and, as a successful defense of this place will depend in great measure upon it, I think it appropriate for me to urge upon the Department the necessity of aiding the admiral of this station in procuring men for his ships;...

Mallory forwarded Buchanan's letter to Davis, who in turn referred it to Seddon "for attention and such relief as can be given." Seddon informed Mallory that the War Department would cooperate in the transfer of men.

Louisiana and Texas," Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XXIII (1940), 77-79.


28 Mallory to Davis, July 24, 1863, with endorsement by Davis, July 30, 1863, ibid., 4, II, 662-63.
By mid-1864 several hundred men from the army units in the Department of the Gulf had received orders to join Buchanan's warships.29

The navy did not stand alone in trying to obtain men. Maury remained apprehensive about the safety of Mobile, as did Johnston. Both men made efforts to get troop reinforcements for the city. Not only was Mobile's garrison relatively weak, but Maury by early August 1863 had only one general officer remaining in his department. After repeated requests by Kirby Smith for his services in Texas, the War Department ordered Slaughter to the Trans-Mississippi Department. Slaughter left Mobile for Havana aboard a blockade runner and eventually got to Texas on another blockade runner.30 Seeking to increase his available forces, Maury asked Cooper to return to Mobile the infantry brigade which Buckner had sent to Bragg in April 1863—if it could be spared. The War Department answered that no troops could be sent from Tennessee then or in the foreseeable future. Johnston

29 Seddon to Mallory, [Aug. --, 1863], ibid., 697.

wrote to Governor Shorter to request that he send troops to Mobile. Shorter replied that he had no volunteers or militia which he could send to the city. Few volunteers had responded to Davis' June call, and the governor reported the militia severely depleted in numbers. There appeared to be no chance of reinforcements for Mobile. 31

About the middle of August 1863 Maury again anticipated that the enemy would make an attack against Mobile. Information came to him which indicated troop and ship concentrations at Ship Island. He succeeded in pushing the work on his defensive lines because the planters had sent more laborers to the city than earlier in the year. Leadbetter ordered his men to strengthen the walls of Fort Grant and to place a rifled cannon there to improve the fort's firepower. A foundry in Mobile turned out two cannons per week, and Maury planned to reopen another foundry which had closed. The Confederate command still needed a large amount of ammunition for the guns in the defenses, but Maury had accumulated food supplies sufficient to subsist 10,000 men for four months. In response to information sent to him by Maury about a possible

attack, Johnston made three of his brigades available to Maury if needed. He stationed one brigade at Meridian and the two others at Enterprise—all with easy access to Mobile via the Mobile and Ohio Railroad.\(^\text{32}\)

While expecting an attack, Maury remained confident of his ability to defend Mobile successfully. Leadbetter had made good progress in strengthening the walls of the redoubts surrounding the city. Anticipating that the enemy would move by land either from the Pascagoula area or Pensacola, Maury felt that relief forces could cut the supply lines of the enemy to either place and help check any attack. The Confederate command still needed long-range cannon at Mobile, and Maury asked Johnston for three 20-pounder Parrott guns which he had promised to send to the city. Maury did not want to employ one weapon—the land mine—in the defense of Mobile, however.

In early August 1863, Brigadier General Gabriel J. Rains, who had designed these anti-personnel devices, had arrived in Mobile to confer with Maury about possible use of mines. After discussing the matter with Maury but

getting nothing accomplished, Rains proceeded under orders from Richmond to Charleston. Maury remained unimpressed with Rains' ideas:

General Rains has gone away with his gimcracks; he was not at all practical; everything I received from him was vague and visionary.  

Despite Maury's expressed confidence, he still attempted to get more troops for his garrison. He asked Johnston to send one of the brigades designated to go to Mobile to the city as soon as possible. He argued that the new situation would be healthier and more cheerful for the men. Maury did not want any Alabama troops sent to him if men from other states stood available. Two of his Alabama regiments on duty at Mobile suffered from desertions, and Maury blamed this on the influence of the men's despondent friends and relatives. He expressed particular interest in getting to Mobile men of Louisiana units which had served artillery batteries at Snyder's Bluff and Vicksburg. Many of these men had served under Maury at the former place, and he knew how good they were. As soon as the authorities declared these men exchanged, Maury wished them ordered to him: "...the

year of alertness and frequent practice at Vicksburg made them very dexterous in sinking ships."

As August 1863 drew to a close, the defensive stance of Mobile seemed fairly good. Maury and his command still had several shortages in supplies facing them, however. Subsistence stores coming into the city did not keep pace with supplies issued. Maury asked Johnston to allow him to gather more foodstuffs along the Mobile and Ohio Railroad in Mississippi even though the area stood outside his department. He also complained that he still did not have enough shells and powder for his artillery pieces. To improve the readiness of his field artillery, Maury ordered his men to impress horses in and around the city to fill out the teams. Johnston ordered Brigadier General Samuel B. Maxey's brigade of seven regiments from Enterprise to Mobile in response to Maury's request of the twenty-fourth. Several of Maxey's regiments encamped at Hall's Mills, while the bulk of the brigade went to Portersville on the coast. The addition of these troops gave Maury approximately 6,400 men to defend the city. He wrote to Richmond: "With a proper garrison and a

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34 Maury to Johnston, Aug. 24, 1863, ibid., XXVI, Pt. 2, p. 179.
proper supply of ammunition I believe Mobile can successfully resist any attack of the enemy.\textsuperscript{35}
CHAPTER VII
"...THE TREES FALLING ALL AROUND..."

Concern for a proper garrison and supporting force for Mobile again occupied the minds of Maury and Johnston in September 1863. Johnston reported to Richmond on the strength of the garrison. His estimate of 10,000 men being needed for an adequate defense agreed with that of Maury. In addition to the two brigades which he had previously earmarked to support Mobile, Johnston told Cooper that two brigades at Newton, Mississippi, would also go to the city if the enemy attacked. These four brigades, along with 1,200 to 1,500 local defense troops, would give Maury a supporting force of approximately 6,750 men. Johnston still did not think this would be enough men to combat a large besieging army. Maury asked the War Department to order Brigadier General John C. Moore to Mobile to command Maxey's brigade, as Maxey had received orders to go to the Trans-Mississippi Department. He also repeated his request to Johnston to send Louisiana artillerists to man his heavy guns. Finally, Maury expressed a desire to have the Missouri brigade which had served at Vicksburg. In requesting the Louisiana and Missouri troops, Maury stated again a conviction of his:
"I think it very important to have troops belonging to distant localities."¹

The Mobile defenses appeared in satisfactory shape and required very little work during the month of September. Leadbetter's engineers enlarged Battery Gladden on its left flank so that they could place two more cannons in it. To honor the memory of the Missouri soldiers killed in the war, Maury ordered the Choctaw Point Battery renamed Missouri Battery. Along the line of works surrounding Mobile, the engineer laborers toiled to thicken the walls of the various redoubts. This work became so routine that the overseers and engineers allowed the slaves to slack off on their duties. Their actions forced Leadbetter to order the engineers to remain at the fortifications throughout the work day and to threaten to recommend the overseers for conscription if they continued to neglect their duties. Near Fort Morgan the engineers placed more torpedoes in the main ship channel. At Grant's Pass Lieutenant Glenn and his men expanded the

¹Johnston to Cooper, Sept. 4, 1863, O.R., XXVI, Pt. 2, pp. 201-202; Maury to Cooper, Sept. 5, 1863, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Maury to Ewell, Sept. 7, 1863, O.R., XXVI, Pt. 2, p. 211; Maury to Hardee, Sept. 24, 1863, Letters and Telegrams Received, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana; Ewell to Maury, Sept. 30, 1863, in Telegram Book, July 4, 1863-May 6, 1864, p. 138, Joseph E. Johnston Papers, Library of the College of William and Mary.
walls of Fort Grant to accommodate six heavy guns and bombproof shelters for barracks and storerooms. 2

Fort Grant again became the site of an engagement with Federal gunboats on September 13, 1863. Company D, 21st Alabama Infantry, previously stationed at Fort Morgan, had joined the garrison in late August. About 10 o'clock A.M. the gunboats Genesee, Jackson, and Calhoun sailed up toward the earthwork to test its strength and opened fire after anchoring. A Confederate gunboat and transport stationed near Fort Grant changed their positions to avoid being struck. The Confederate gunners opened up with their own guns in reply to the enemy fire, but the range was so great that none of their shots struck the vessels. This exchange continued almost without interruption until almost 4 o'clock in the afternoon, when the Federal gunboats disengaged and steamed back toward Ship Island. Although the gunboats had thrown approximately 175 shells at the little fort, only fifteen struck the island, and none did any damage. A soldier stationed at Fort Grant wrote: "The only loss on our

side was a poor innocent rat that got killed in trying to make its escape out of the magazine."  

On September 25, 1863, Colonel William Llewellyn Powell, commanding the lower bay defenses with headquarters at Fort Morgan, died in Mobile after a long illness. Powell's death saddened Maury and placed him at a loss as to how to replace Powell. He praised Powell's ability and efficiency as an officer:

...His loss is irreparable. He had peculiar qualifications for the position he occupied and was a man of very rare combinations of good traits....

During Powell's illness Maury had allowed the senior officer at Fort Morgan, Colonel George A. Smith of the 1st Confederate Infantry, to command Powell's brigade but wanted a permanent replacement. On the same day that Powell died, Brigadier General Francis A. Shoup, having received orders earlier in the month to report for active duty at Mobile, arrived. Maury assigned Shoup to

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4 Maury to Cooper, Sept. 28, 1863, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 532; Maury to [Johnston], Sept. 29, 1863, Letters and Telegrams Received, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana.
command Powell's brigade because of his experience as an artillery officer. Shoup had begun his Confederate service as a lieutenant of artillery and had commanded General William J. Hardee's artillery at Shiloh. Maury did not, however, intend Shoup's assignment to be permanent as he felt "the command is hardly equal to his [Shoup's] rank." In October Maury renamed the fort at Grant's Pass Fort Powell in memory of its former brigade commander.

The engineers conducted only limited operations in the Department of the Gulf during October 1863. A change in the position of chief engineer of the department at least partially accounted for the slowdown. Leadbetter left Mobile to become Bragg's chief engineer and superintend the construction of fortifications on Missionary Ridge southeast of Chattanooga. To replace him, the War Department ordered to the city Lieutenant Colonel Victor

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6Para II, Special Order No. 251, Headquarters Department of the Gulf, Oct. 28, 1863, quoted in Adver­tiser and Register, Oct. 30, 1863.
von Sheliha, a former Prussian army officer and most recently Buckner's chief of artillery. Von Sheliha would remain chief engineer at Mobile for most of the remainder of the war.\textsuperscript{7} The engineers, with assistance from the infantry, began felling all of the trees between the two lines of earthworks surrounding the city. They also began cutting down the trees for about one mile out from the first line of trenches. This tree removal would provide a clear field of fire for all of the redoubts and lesser works. One officer participating in this project wrote his wife:

...it is only when I see all these hands chopping that I fully realize the expression, 'The forest disappeared beneath the settlers axe,' for I must say it is pleasant to see the trees falling all around....\textsuperscript{8}

All of the engineering operations at Mobile cost the Confederate government a good deal of money. By October 1863 these expenditures had begun causing some concern in Richmond. Leadbetter had estimated in January that he


\textsuperscript{8}Orear to Carrie Orear, Oct. 3, 1863, Weaver Collection.
would need $700,000 to complete his work. At that time, however, the Engineer Bureau could send him only $50,000 because Congress had not acted on the Bureau's appropriations request. Leadbetter's expenditures had reached $600,000 by June, and yet he had not been able to complete the defenses. For the next few months Leadbetter's estimates of funds required averaged $300,000. The Treasury Department notified the Engineer Bureau that it could place no more than $850,000 per month to the Bureau's credit. Lieutenant Colonel A. L. Rives wrote Gilmer that because Mobile's appropriation took up more than one-third of this total he feared "the remainder will scarcely suffice to meet the expenditures necessary in other quarters." In a letter to Leadbetter, Rives pointed out that the expenditures at Mobile had already greatly exceeded those at Charleston, and he urged "the strictest economy in future operations." However, the

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10 Rives to Leadbetter, Oct. 16, 1863, ibid., Vol. 4, p. 21. These engineering funds paid for such things as hire of mechanics, compensation for slave labor, hire of wagons and animals, and hire of vessels.
estimates of funds needed continued to average $300,000 for the remainder of the year.\textsuperscript{11}

Maury had to look again for a commander for the lower bay forts in early October 1863. Shoup became ill and had to relinquish his command. When Maury learned that Colonel Edward Higgins had been declared exchanged after his capture at Vicksburg, he asked Davis to promote Higgins to brigadier general and order him to Mobile to command both the lower bay and harbor defenses. Higgins had served as a midshipman in the United States Navy prior to the war and had entered Confederate service as a captain of artillery. As lieutenant colonel of the 22nd Louisiana Infantry he had commanded Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip below New Orleans during Farragut's attack on the Crescent City. Later he commanded the defenses at Snyder's Bluff, and during the long siege of Vicksburg had charge of the river batteries. Maury thus thought his service had given him skill in defending fortifications against ships. During a visit by Davis to Mobile in late October, Maury again requested that the president promote Higgins and assign him to Mobile. On Maury's recommendation, Davis initiated the necessary

orders concerning Higgins. The latter had arrived in Mobile and assumed command by late November. 12

In early November 1863 Maury attempted to get approval from the War Department to accept into Confederate service one or more companies of Creoles (free Negroes) from Mobile. The department had turned down an earlier request by Maury on the reasoning that Negroes could not be organized as soldiers. He did not think the authorities in Richmond fully recognized the status of Mobile's Creoles. In his dispatch, Maury pointed out that these people had enjoyed all of the privileges and immunities of United States citizens since the cession of Mobile to the country. Most of the white people of the city did not look upon them as Negroes. Maury intended to drill the Creoles as heavy artillerists, and he stated that they seemed anxious to enter Confederate service. Seddon replied to Maury's request by saying that Negroes could serve only as laborers or in support jobs.

Political considerations dictated Seddon's stand: "Our position with the North and before the world will not allow the employment as armed soldiers of negroes."¹³

Troops once again left Mobile for another theater in late November 1863. Bragg at Missionary Ridge had been trying since late October to get reinforcements for his army. To accommodate Bragg, Davis promised to get two brigades from Johnston in Mississippi and suggested that Bragg exchange troops with Maury to obtain larger regiments. Johnston agreed to send two brigades to Bragg for temporary service. One of the brigades he chose was that of Brigadier General William A. Quarles, formerly Maxey's, then stationed at Mobile. Maury expressed willingness to send two of his regiments to Bragg if he could get some heavy artillerists to replace them. He stated particular interest in having the 1st Alabama Infantry, which had manned heavy guns at Port Hudson, and the 1st Tennessee Heavy Artillery. Johnston, however, advised Maury against giving up any troops to Bragg since replacements were probably not available. Maury heeded this advice, and only Quarles' brigade departed from Mobile's garrison. The remnants of the

Tennessee artillery regiment did arrive in Mobile in December and received assignment to the Apalachee batteries. 14

Maury made some interesting comments about Mobile in a candid letter written in late November 1863. He felt that the city was a very pleasant one but that the quiet situation caused men stationed there to lose easily their soldierly habits. The people of the city acted hospitably but had not really felt the war's impact. Maury ventured the opinion that Mobile had been fortified at Vicksburg's expense. Heavy guns which could have been used at Vicksburg had gone to Mobile where they probably would receive little, if any, use. Maury gave two reasons for doubting an attack on Mobile. First, he did not think Banks' army was in any condition to attack due to its repeated defeats in Louisiana and Texas during the fall and early winter. Second, Maury expressed confidence that the defenses around the city and harbor could hold off any assault. He predicted: "I do not think

they will attempt Mobile until they have an army of 40,000 men, a large fleet of ironclads and about ninety days leisure [sic] for them."  

By early December 1863 Von Sheliha found that the rations issued to the Negro laborers at Mobile had become insufficient. The men received only three-quarters of a pound of beef a day, no corn meal, and few other victuals. Von Sheliha recognized the necessity for larger ration amounts and requested aid from the commissary department. After receiving assurances of increased supplies, Von Sheliha issued orders establishing an improved schedule of rations which included one pound of beef daily, one pound of pumpkins daily, one and a quarter pounds of corn meal daily, ten pounds of rice per hundred rations eight days in fifteen, fifteen pounds of peas per hundred rations seven days in fifteen, and four and a half pounds of salt per hundred rations daily. He ordered scales set up in each quarters area to weigh the rations. Von Sheliha charged his overseers with seeing not only that the slaves receive the proper rations but also that the food was prepared properly and distributed fairly. If the overseers failed to follow these instructions, commissaries had authorization to purchase

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15 [Maury] to [Sterling Price], Nov. 29, 1863, in James W. Eldridge Collection, Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
necessary rations and deduct their price from the overseers' wages. 16

For several weeks during December 1863, Maury had the services of an additional general officer. Brigadier General John C. Moore reported for duty at Mobile on the tenth. Maury had specifically requested Moore on two occasions and wanted to place him in command of Maxey's brigade. Instead of ordering Moore to Mobile for that purpose, the War Department obtained the promotion of Colonel William A. Quarles to take over the brigade. On November 23 the Department finally ordered Moore from his command in the Army of Tennessee to report to Maury. The latter general assigned Moore to command the Eastern Division of the Department of the Gulf and the part of the department west of Dog River. When the War Department realized that both Shoup and Moore had received orders to Mobile, Cooper instructed Maury to retain the former and send the latter back to the Army of Tennessee.

despite Maury's request to keep Moore and send Shoup to Mississippi.17

Rumors of a planned attack on Mobile again reached the city in December. Maury repeated his request to Johnston to send him the artillerists who had become prisoners at Port Hudson and Vicksburg as soon as they received their exchange. He needed these experienced soldiers to garrison his batteries rather than the infantrymen who then served the guns. If these regiments got orders for Mobile, Maury felt that their absentees would return and that new recruits would fill their ranks. Besides this concern over the lack of veteran troops, Maury also expressed concern that he did not have sufficient food and ordnance supplies to withstand a siege. He admitted in a letter to Cooper that he expected the enemy fleet to run successfully past Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines if an attack came. He expressed much the same feeling to Beauregard at Charleston but said he would do his best to obstruct the channel. Maury asked Beauregard

to come to Mobile to help in the defense of the city if
the situation at Charleston permitted him to get away.
He recognized the success Beauregard had had in South
Carolina and wished to use his knowledge in the defense
of Mobile. 18

In anticipation of the feared attack, Von Sheliha
pressed the work being done on Mobile's defensive works.
The troops cutting down trees around the city redoubts
completed this task and chopped the timber into firewood.
Von Sheliha had enough Negro laborers coming in from the
plantations that the small number of soldiers working on
the defenses could return to their commands, but he hoped
to get even more slaves. He knew that he had to keep
construction going to make the defenses absolutely
complete. Like Maury, Von Sheliha realized that the
masonry forts alone could not prevent an enemy fleet with
ironclads from entering the bay. After consultations
with Maury, Gilmer, Buchanan, and Beauregard, Von Sheliha
decided to construct an earthwork battery on the west
bank of the main ship channel between Fort Morgan and
Fort Gaines. He also planned to obstruct the channel
further with torpedoes, ropes, and sunken timbers.
Continued construction on Fort Powell rendered that bay

18 Maury to Cooper, Dec. 11, 1863, ibid., XXVI, Pt.
2, p. 499; Maury to Ewell, Dec. 12, 1863, ibid., 500-501;
Maury to Beauregard, Dec. 17, 1863, ibid., 510-11.
entrance secure. Closer to the city, Von Sheliha's men reconstructed and expanded four bay batteries—McIntosh, Gladden, Huger, and Tracy. The line of city entrenchments appeared closer to completion, but it did not satisfy Von Sheliha because of its proximity to the city. He began construction of a third line of fortifications between the two existing lines. This new line would include nine large redoubts, according to Von Sheliha's plans. By late December, only Redoubt A and Redoubt B, which flanked Stone Street Road, were in progress.  

Von Sheliha and his engineers faced some criticism and complaints despite the good work they did on Mobile's defenses. Planters in the interior of Alabama voiced most of the complaints, which centered around the use and treatment of slave laborers. In a letter to Governor Thomas H. Watts, Von Sheliha answered the criticisms. The planters alledged first that the engineers kept the slaves in Mobile beyond the sixty-day period for which they had been impressed. Von Sheliha pointed out that he retained no Negroes longer than sixty days and that, in fact, he had counted the days spent in travel to and

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from Mobile as a part of the impressment period. The second complaint stated that the slaves received mistreatment while in the city. Although he admitted that some abuses still existed, Von Sheliha referred Watts to orders issued setting standards for the feeding of the Negroes. He also said that the cotton presses used as barracks had been improved and that workers made shoes and clothing for the slaves to wear. In closing, Von Sheliha hinted at a plan to replace the impressment system with a permanent engineering corps of Negro laborers, a plan which, if successful, would eliminate further criticisms of the engineers.

This idea of a corps of Negro engineers received more extensive treatment in a letter Von Sheliha wrote to Senator Clement C. Clay of Alabama. Von Sheliha outlined briefly the disadvantages of the impressment system. When the slaves were sent to Mobile, they left the plantations without necessary clothing and shoes. Many Negroes received discharges quickly because they were unfit for the duties required of them, while others received discharges due to illness. The engineers then had to instruct the laborers who remained in the complicated tasks of military engineering. This period of

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teaching took so much time that the slaves spent very little of the sixty-day impressment period on productive labor on the earthworks. Even during training and actual work, the process of acclimatization often reduced the amount of effective work the slaves could perform. In addition to the disadvantages mentioned, the impressment system cost a lot of money. The government paid not only for the transportation, hire, and support of the laborers but for the hire of agents and clerks to maintain the system. To these costs, the authorities might have to add compensation to planters for their slaves who died while at Mobile. 21

The advantages to be gained by the organization of an engineer-laborer corps were four in number, according to Von Sheliha. First, such an organization would enable chief engineers to carry out all of their plans successfully. For example, Von Sheliha estimated that if he had a proper standing labor force he could complete the work at Mobile so that it would "not only stand a most minute criticism" but that it would "stand any siege." 22 Second, an engineer corps would work more


efficiently than impressed laborers. Third, the
government would save a considerable amount of money.
Fourth, the creation of a labor corps would eliminate the
shortcomings and hatred of the impressment system. Von
Sheliha suggested also that his idea extend to hospital
nurses and teamsters. This would free many men who could
bear arms from what he called "an inactive, unsoldierlike
service." Von Sheliha's plan showed merit, and it is
perhaps unfortunate that the Confederate authorities did
not follow up on it.

Maury found himself faced with dissatisfaction
among a part of the troops of his command in late Decem­
ber 1863. Some of the men of the 57th and 61st Alabama
Infantry regiments at Pollard contemplated laying down
their weapons and going home, hoping to bring the end of
the war closer. Predominantly conscripts from the poor
counties of northern Alabama, these men felt little
affinity with the Confederate cause. They had set
Christmas Day as the date for the mutiny. The regi­
mental field officers learned of the plot, however, and
by personal persuasion prevented any mutiny. Maury
began looking into the situation as soon as he learned

23 Von Sheliha to Clay, Dec. 29, 1863, Letters Sent,
John Forsyth supported a proposal similar to Von She­
liha's in an editorial. Advertiser and Register,
Nov. 13, 1863.
of it and ordered Brigadier General James H. Clanton, commanding at Pollard, to investigate matters thoroughly and make a full report. In his own report to the War Department, Maury recommended that these two units and his other Alabama regiments be sent to other theaters in exchange for weakened but veteran units. He thought active service away from their homes and alongside seasoned troops would eliminate the mutinous feelings of these Alabama soldiers.\(^{24}\)

The feelings of discontent among Clanton's brigade broke out into overt action in early January 1864. Sixty men of the 57th Alabama mutinied on January 5 while on picket duty. One of their officers arrested all of the men, and Clanton sent them to Mobile for trial. Clanton ferreted out the ringleaders of the plot and succeeded in quieting the situation. Maury remained concerned about the morale of Clanton's troops and repeated his request to have them transferred. He also asked the War Department to transfer Clanton. Joe Johnston seconded Maury's recommendations. Seddon and Davis approved Maury's request and ordered Clanton to duty

in northern Alabama. The 57th Alabama received orders to report to Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk's army in Mississippi, while the 61st Alabama moved to Virginia. Clanton subsequently performed adequate service, and the two infantry regiments served creditably until the end of the war.25

In early January 1864 information reached both Mobile and Richmond that the enemy planned to attack the Gulf city. Maury contacted Polk and Johnston to ask for reinforcements. Polk immediately ordered two artillery units to Mobile and requested that Johnston return to him some of the brigades sent to the Army of Tennessee in November 1863. Johnston did not want to give up any men and referred the matter to Davis. The latter ordered two brigades—Baldwin's and Quarles'—back to Polk for use in protecting Mobile.26 Maury also contacted Polk about

25Maury to Seddon, Jan. 11, 1864, ibid., 551-52; Clanton to Garner, Jan. 6, 1864, ibid., 552; Clanton to Garner, Jan. 7, 1864 (three items), ibid., 553; Johnston to Davis, Jan. 11, 1864, ibid., XXXII, Pt. 2, pp. 543-44; Cooper to Johnston, Jan. 14, 1864, ibid., 555; Johnston to Cooper, Jan. 15, 1864, ibid., XXVI, Pt. 2, p. 553; Polk to Colonel Thomas M. Jack, Jan. 28, 1864, ibid., XXXII, Pt. 2, p. 629; Paras XV and XVI, Special Order No. 32, Headquarters [Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana], Feb. 1, 1864, ibid., 651; "Organization of troops in the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana," Mar. 10, 1864, ibid., Pt. 3, p. 604; Brewer, Alabama, 668-69, 673.

26Davis to Maury, Jan. 9, 1864, in Rowland (ed.), Jefferson Davis, VI, 147; Polk to Maury, Jan. 10, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 2, p. 542; Polk to Davis, Jan. 10,
obtaining supplies for his troops. Approximately three hundred cannons of various sizes stood in the Mobile defenses, but none of them had more than 250 rounds per gun. While Maury had 130,000 pounds of salt meat and 400 beef cattle available, he desired to obtain more pork. He hoped to save as much of his current reserves as possible and bring in the pork when a siege seemed imminent.27

As Maury began to receive troop reinforcements for his garrison, he endeavored to persuade the city's non-combatants to leave Mobile. Even with the urging of Mobile's newspapers, the people did not depart in large numbers. Maury correctly realized that the enemy would have actually to begin operations against the city itself before the civilians would leave.28

1864, ibid.; Polk to Johnston, Jan. 10, 1864, ibid.; Johnston to Davis, Jan. 11, 1864, ibid., 543-44; Maury to Polk, Jan. 12, 1864, ibid., 549-50; Para I, Special Order No. 13, Headquarters Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, Jan. 13, 1864, ibid., 553; Davis to Johnston, Jan. 14, 1864, ibid., 554; Cooper to Johnston, Jan. 14, 1864, ibid., 554-55; Seddon to Maury, Jan. 14, 1864, ibid., 557.


28 Maury to Polk, Jan. 12, 1864, ibid., 549; Maury to Polk, Jan. 16, 1864, ibid., 565-66; Advertiser and Register, Jan. 17, 1864.
reinforcements to reach Mobile were the men of Brigadier General Francis M. Cockrell's Missouri brigade. The 1st Louisiana Heavy Artillery Regiment followed them shortly afterwards. These two units received assignments to the redoubts and entrenchments of the city works. Both units impressed Maury and the civilian population by their soldierly appearance and discipline demonstrated in a military review held soon after their arrival. The brigades of Baldwin and Quarles reached Mobile from Dalton, Georgia, in late January and moved into camp at Dog River Factory. With the addition of all of these troops, Maury had approximately 12,000 men to defend Mobile.\(^{29}\)

Von Sheliha continued to push his engineers in their work to improve Mobile's defenses. He proposed to establish two ironclad floating batteries to obstruct the main ship channel into the bay rather than attempt to construct an earthwork battery as he had planned earlier. To secure the floating batteries on the western edge of the channel, Von Sheliha hoped to anchor them to flats which he would sink next to the channel. He had his

engineers place floating rope obstructions in the channel while he worked on his plans, and he submitted his new proposal and other plans for the Mobile defenses to the chief of the Confederate Engineer Bureau, General Jeremy Gilmer. The latter did not think Von Sheliha would succeed in establishing his floating batteries and cited the unstable sand bottoms, strong currents, and unmanageability of the structure as difficulties Von Sheliha might not overcome. Although Gilmer did not strongly object to the effort, he urged Von Sheliha to proceed cautiously and test his floating batteries thoroughly.

As to the new line of redoubts Von Sheliha had begun around the city, Gilmer suggested that the Prussian erect the redoubts quickly and perfect them as time permitted.30

A final change in Mobile's command status began taking shape in late January 1864. The War Department created the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana on the twenty-eighth of that month to include all of the areas named in its title. Both Maury and Polk, the department commander, assumed that the order did not affect the status of Maury's command. Maury continued to use the title "department" on all of his

30Gilmer to Von Sheliha, Jan. 19, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 2, p. 577; Von Sheliha to Buchanan, Jan. 15, 1864, ibid., 560-61.
reports and returns, and on February 7 Polk issued orders defining the boundaries of the "Department" of the Gulf.\textsuperscript{31} The War Department informed Maury that his command now comprised a district in Polk's department and incorrectly stated: "There is no order constituting such a department [meaning the Gulf]."\textsuperscript{32} Even though the War Department had included Mobile and its environs in several descriptions of Johnston's massive Western Department while he held command, Johnston still referred to the area around Mobile as a department. This uncertain situation finally reached resolution on April 6, 1864, when the War Department formally revoked the orders creating the Department of the Gulf and designated Maury's command as the District of the Gulf. This appellation remained in effect until the end of the Civil War.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{31}Para II, Special Order No. 23, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, Jan. 28, 1864, ibid., 627; "Abstract from return of the Department of the Gulf,..." Jan. 20, 1864, ibid., 582; Para I, Special Order No. 38, Headquarters [Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana], Feb. 7, 1864, ibid., 692.

\textsuperscript{32}H. L. Clay to Maury, Mar. 5, 1864, ibid., 586.

\textsuperscript{33}Para III, Special Order No. 275, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, Nov. 24, 1862, ibid., XXXI, Pt. 4, p. 511; Cooper to Johnston, Aug. 12, 1863, ibid., 512; Maury to Ewell, Nov. 4, 1863, ibid., XXVI, Pt. 2, p. 390; Ewell to Maury, Nov. 10, 1863, ibid., 678; Para XXIV, Special Order No. 81, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, Apr. 6, 1864, ibid., XXXII, Pt. 3, p. 752; Cooper to Buckner, Feb. 20, 1863, Letters and Telegrams Sent, Adjutant and Inspector General, Chap. I, Vol. 38,
Despite the confusion caused by the War Department's January 28 order, it placed Mobile in its proper context within the strategy for the defense of the western Confederacy.

CHAPTER VIII
"...THE PARIS OF THE CONFEDERACY..."

Despite the extensive military preparations and troop movements going on around them, the people of Mobile attempted to maintain the lifestyle they had enjoyed before the war. To a great extent they seemed successful. Many observers concluded that the war did not really touch Mobile to any extent. One resident remembered after the conflict: "Mobile was called the Paris of the Confederacy, New Orleans having fallen so early in the fray, and gay indeed it was." Dances, parties, band concerts, and parades continued unabated. Although many soldiers and citizens enjoyed the social life they found at Mobile, other people criticized the "hideous reputation" the city had. A newspaper correspondent assigned to Mobile wrote:

...I must say the country is likely to contrast the hard fighting and hard living of her brave soldiers in Tennessee, Virginia, and elsewhere, with these holiday doing at Mobile. Making obstreperous mirth over more than two hundred thousand newly made graves of our kindred and friends, and in the hearing of

1 [Mary E. Brooks?], "War Memoirs," typescript in Irwin Collection, Mobile Museum Department.

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the poor sick fellows who crowd our hospitals in thousands, is not at all to my taste....

In response to the criticism, Mobilians answered: "But while we worked and prayed for those who were actually doing battle for our cause, we felt that it was only right to make bright the lives of the soldiers and sailors stationed here, or on leave."³

This bright social life continued down to the last days of the war, but on occasion the citizens demonstrated that they did feel the impact of the war. Kate Cumming recorded in her diary in January 1865 that the city seemed as festive as it had ever been. In the midst of the final siege of Mobile, a local soldier wrote to his girlfriend: "Our city is not at all changed in appearance...."⁴ A graphic portrayal of the effect the war had on the community occurred in late 1862. There existed in Mobile a mystic krewe, called the Cowbellions,

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³"War Memories."
which paraded through the city every New Year's Eve. Young men comprised most of the membership of the society, and they normally exhibited a great deal of cheerfulness and color. On the occasion in question, however, the mood was anything but cheerful. The few remaining members dressed in black, and they played the music of a dirge. They carried a transparent banner on which they had written the words "In Memory of Our Departed Associates." Everyone who witnessed the spectacle was deeply affected and realized that "Mobile has had her share of sorrow."\(^5\)

As can be imagined, soldiers and sailors found Mobile a very pleasant duty station or site for leave. A Missourian remembered: "...a man could come nearer getting the worth of Confederate money there, than any other place in the department."\(^6\) When members of Kentucky's famed Orphan Brigade passed through the city, they used a ruse to try to get around an order confining them to their camp and to obtain a meal of Mobile's noted oysters. The men found themselves face to face with their brigade commander as they entered the Battle House.

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\(^6\) Anderson, Memoirs, 255.
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UNIVERSITY OF MICROFILMS
To their excuse that they were looking for stragglers, Colonel R. P. Trabue observed: "...you are looking for straggling oysters. I know what you are up to."\(^7\) Some soldiers got carried away by the city's atmosphere. One group of officers are said to have taken up quarters in the Battle House and "trained...on a diet of whiskey, music, and women."\(^8\) Many young officers and enlisted men, including Brigadier General Thomas H. Taylor, married Mobile girls. On one day alone ten officers got married.\(^9\)

The people of Mobile tried to aid the soldiers and sailors in ways other than providing social entertainment. In May 1861 Adelaide de Vendel Chaudron and Ellen S. Walker organized the Mobile Military Aid Society. This group of women began by making uniforms for soldiers in service. Later they supplied clothing and food to the families of men who were away at war. Eventually they provided assistance to needy soldiers passing through.


The Society originally did their work free of charge, but in time they had to accept government funds and private donations to support their efforts. Other ladies picked lint and made bandages for the wounded in nearby hospitals. Even in the final days prior to the fall of Mobile, her women were putting together boxes of provisions for the soldiers fighting in the trenches across the bay. The post chaplain, Reverend F. B. Miller, established the Soldiers' Library on Water Street, equipping it at his own expense and keeping it open throughout the war. In the library soldiers could find "a large assortment of reading matter, books, pamphlets, magazines and newspapers, all conveniently arranged, and seats and tables for writing."\(^{10}\)

This charity the citizens also extended to needy persons living in the city. The Military Aid Society in 1862 began providing food and clothes for the families of men away in service besides meeting their responsibilities toward the soldiers themselves. Another group, the Female Benevolent Society, provided food, clothing, and quarters for soldiers' widows and their children.

A third group of women made it their duty to contribute clothing to needy children of soldiers. In order to assure that poor people of Mobile got needed food, a committee of the city's leading men established the Free Market in December 1861. The association collected supplies not only from Mobile County but from planters in the interior as well. The railroad and steamship companies provided free transportation for supplies coming from these planters. When the Free Market first opened, approximately 800 people got food there. By early 1863 slightly more than 2,500 people were taking advantage of the market. Even though supplies became more expensive and in shorter supply as the war wore on, the Free Market continued to serve the poor until Mobile's surrender.

Life in Mobile remained relatively normal in other ways besides its lively social life. The city government continued as usual except that the mayor and aldermen took on added responsibilities such as assisting the Free Market and aiding the thousands of refugees who crowded into the city. Throughout the war the courts in Mobile, such as the Confederate District Court for the Southern Division of Alabama, held regular sessions and scheduled

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11 Sterkx, Partners in Rebellion, 104.

12 Advertiser and Register, Jan. 18, 1862, Mar. 26, 1863.
a number of special terms. All of the city's churches remained open, and their ministers, like the civil officials, assumed extra duties in visiting the wounded and the families of soldiers away at war and in conducting numerous funerals. Mobile's public schools operated until the end of the war through liberal contributions by her citizens. The shortage of schoolbooks due to the war received relief when Adelaide de Vendel Chaudron authored a set of readers and spelling books. S. H. Goetzel and Company of the city printed these books. In many instances the firm used wallpaper for parts of the books because regular paper was in short supply.  

The city authorities made every effort to keep Mobile as clean as possible throughout the war. Early in the conflict they ordered the razing of dilapidated buildings so that new construction could take place. In August 1862 Mayor Slough appointed a committee with members in every ward to supervise the city's sanitary condition. The city council had passed an "Ordinance to Secure Public Health" which allowed the committee to

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13 Peter J. Hamilton, Mobile of the Five Flags (Mobile: Gill Printing Co., 1913), 302-306; Minute Book, Confederate District Court, Southern Division of Alabama, Apr. 18, 1861-Jan. 13, 1865, Federal Records Center, East Point, Georgia; Delaney, The Story of Mobile, 119; Advertiser and Register, Feb. 5, 1862; Cumming, Kate, 249.
investigate anything that might endanger the people's health. This ordinance also required all property owners or occupants to keep their areas clean. The authorities did not always strictly enforce the ordinance. In February 1865 citizens reported to the city fathers that hogs running loose in the streets had damaged the sidewalks and other property. All stock owners received instructions to lock up their animals, and an Inspector of Animals supervised the enforcement of stock regulations. One woman whose hog the inspector had seized had to pay $5.00 for an affidavit and $20.00 in pound fees to get her animal back.\textsuperscript{14}

The people of Mobile exhibited a great deal of tolerance toward those among them who held divergent political opinions. A Northern-born Union man who lived in the city throughout the war wrote later that few acts of oppression occurred during the conflict.\textsuperscript{15} One of the few incidents of tension transpired in October 1862. Three cases of attempted arson occurred at that time. Fortunately the fire department extinguished all of the blazes before they did great damage, but the incidents made apparent the need for vigilance. In an editorial,\textsuperscript{14,15}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Advertiser and Register}, May 7, Sept. 5, 1862, Feb. 5, 1865.
\item William Rix, \textit{Incidents of Life in a Southern City During the War} (Mobile: Iberville Historical Society Papers, 1865), [5].
\end{itemize}
the Advertiser and Register attempted to identify the guilty parties:

...The majority of them are probably negroes, debauched by association with the viler strata of the white population, but there must be white men actively engaged in the nefarious schemes which are in operation,...

To aid the city police in patrolling the city, Slough organized groups of citizens to guard against further mischief. For the most part, the city authorities prevented any similar occurrences.  

Although a detailed analysis of the effect of the war on slavery in Mobile is beyond the scope of this study, a few comments on the institution seem appropriate. By 1860 the percentage of slaves in the Mobile population had declined to just over twenty-five percent. Slave women outnumbered slave men. A majority of the "heads of families" in the city owned slaves but most owned only a small number of Negroes who performed domestic duties. Businesses or corporations owned the larger slaveholdings of the city. This, slavery in Mobile seemed a relatively benign institution with more contact between whites and blacks than occurred in the country. Certainly the white

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16 Advertiser and Register, Oct. 25, 29, 1862.
17 Ibid., Oct. 29, 1862.
populace did not seem hostile toward the slaves.\textsuperscript{18} A cursory examination of the Mobile newspapers reveals little evidence that slavery in the city changed significantly during the war. Certainly no one protested or expressed fears about the large numbers of slave laborers in the city working on the fortifications. Unrest among or crimes committed by slaves does not appear to have increased noticeably. A few violent crimes against whites and incidents such as the incendiariism mentioned above did occur but were exceptions to the norm. The real changes in white-black relations came after the war, not during it.\textsuperscript{19}

Throughout most of the war, the civilian population of Mobile evaded large outbreaks of disease such as had happened before 1860. The efforts at keeping the city clean undoubtedly contributed to holding down disease. A smallpox epidemic threatened to erupt in late March 1864, however. When the authorities discovered the


prevalency of the disease, it was confined primarily to Negroes in the city. The Advertiser and Register urged its readers to seek vaccination. Mr. O. Kratz, Superintendent of Vaccination, opened an office on Jackson Street to innoculate any persons who presented themselves to him. He gave vaccinations between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. without charge. Several days after the opening of this office, the Advertiser and Register renewed its appeal to the people to take advantage of the free vaccinations. The editorial stated that smallpox appeared "very prevalent." Apparently Mobile's citizens heeded the newspaper's advice, because in mid-April it reported that the smallpox "is rapidly disappearing, and that the alarm which prevailed a few weeks ago has subsided."21

Both civilians and soldiers found good hospital facilities to treat diseases and wounds. The five hospitals in operation when the war began continued to serve throughout the war. In the course of the conflict, as the number of sick and wounded began to grow, the Confederate authorities constructed or transformed older buildings into at least seven new hospitals for soldiers and sailors. The United States Marine Hospital opened on

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20 Advertiser and Register, Mar. 25, 29, 1864.
21 Ibid., Apr. 13, 1864.
November 3, 1861, under the name Ross Hospital after appropriation by Confederate authorities. This facility, one of the finest hospitals in the South, could accommodate 250 patients. In November 1863 the city authorities turned over the City Hospital to the Confederate government to serve as a military hospital. The military set aside part of the building, now called Cantey Hospital, for civilians. The Sisters of Charity supervised the wards of the hospital and acted in such capacities as druggists and stewards. The three remaining pre-war hospitals in Mobile remained for use of civilians only.22

In July 1862 the medical director at Mobile established a convalescent hospital at Spring Hill near the city. Between 70 and 100 soldiers could receive care at the facility. One soldier reported that the food at Spring Hill consisted primarily of "poor beef, corn meal, coffee, grits, sour bread, small piece of bacon twict [sic] a week, also some pudding...."23 This soldier did have one complaint about his quarters:


23 Para III, Special Order No. 153, Headquarters Department of Alabama and West Florida, July 1, 1862, General and Special Orders, Department of Alabama and West Florida; Abram M. Glazener to wife, Apr. 27, 1863, in Glazener Papers, Civil War Times Illustrated Collection, United States Military History Institute,
...There is one thing I have got acquainted with since I have bin [sic] here that is lice....It is a hard matter to keep clean of them unless you shift your clothes twist [sic] a week. They are in the bed clothes. You are certain [sic] to catch [sic] them....

The blockade and the needs of other hospitals limited the supply of medicine available for the Spring Hill and other facilities at Mobile, but the doctors had access to some medical supplies. In many cases doctors and citizens used home remedies more often than they would have in normal times.  

As stated, the military increased the number of hospitals at Mobile as the war progressed. On May 14, 1863, a hotel on Royal Street became the S. P. Moore Hospital. The Soldiers Rest Hospital opened on July 18, 1863, and one year later the medical authorities converted it into a hospital for officers only. Several days after the opening of this latter facility, the Nott Hospital began receiving patients. Mobile's medical staff converted the Kennedy House Hotel into the Heustis Hospital October 18, 1864. On November 23, 1864, the Mansion House Hotel became Nidelet Hospital, the last medical facility

Carlisle Barracks, Pa., hereinafter cited as Glazener Papers.

24 Glazener to R. M. Shuford, May 24, 1863, Glazener Papers.

established by the military in Mobile. Both of the former hotels required extensive cleaning and renovation but became excellent hospitals.\textsuperscript{26} I have mentioned the hospital constructed for Negro laborers working on Mobile's fortifications. In December 1864 an inspector made the following report on this facility:

\ldots I have never seen any place in which Negroes are congregated which presented the degree of cleanliness and neatness comparable with this establishment. The wards, outbuildings, kitchen, bathroom, even the yard was policed as well as it was possible to do it\ldots .

The charity of the women of Mobile is again apparent in the aid they gave to the patients in the military hospitals. In 1862 a group of women formed the Ladies' Supply Society. They had as their goal the furnishing of food to the soldiers and sailors in Ross Hospital. Some of the members of this society took on additional duties such as cleaning floors, acting as practical nurses, and making beds. Dr. Josiah C. Nott, Medical Director of the Department of the Gulf, praised the society for its many good works. Another organization, the Soldiers' Friend Society, performed services at Moore Hospital similar to

\textsuperscript{26}Army Argus and Crisis, Jan. 7, 1865; Donald (ed.), "Alabama Confederate Hospitals," 275-76; Cumming, Kate, 255.

\textsuperscript{27}Donald (ed.), "Alabama Confederate Hospitals," 277.
those performed by the Ladies' Supply Society at Ross Hospital. One Mobile lady used her own money to establish and equip a convalescent hospital on the grounds of her home. Not only did she set up this facility, but she also spent many hours personally tending to the sick and wounded.\textsuperscript{28}

The war had a tremendous impact on Mobile's economy. Normal economic activities were interrupted and curtailed, prices rose drastically, and supply shortages existed. All three of these problems were interrelated and worked to make life difficult for all segments of the city's population. As a port city, Mobile's economy was based on her merchant community. The blockade, the diversion of goods to the armies, and the use of river steamers and railroads by the military all reduced the trade the merchants had enjoyed prior to 1860. From time to time exhausted stocks or exhorbitantly priced existing supplies forced stores to close. About the only time the merchants could do a booming business came following the arrival of a blockade runner bearing luxury food and clothing items. Naturally the situation worsened as the war progressed and as blockade running came to an end.

\textsuperscript{28}Selma Morning Reporter, Feb. 24, 1863; Advertiser and Register, Oct. 11, 1863; William P. Fidler, Augusta Evans Wilson, 1835-1900: A Biography (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1951), 91.
Mobile never fully recovered from the effects of the war and never again acted as an important port as she had done before 1860. 29

Adapting to the situation as well as possible, Mobile's civilians found substitutes for items in short supply. Homespun replaced finer fabrics in women's clothes. Many people dyed old clothes to make them appear new. Referring to the clothing situation, one Mobilian wrote:

...All the rag-bags have been emptied, and dresses turned and cut into all kinds of shapes. Any and every thing is the fashion; nothing is lost. The old scraps of worsted and flannel are carefully unraveled, carded, and spun, for making capes and nubies. The fact is, it is a kind of disgrace to have plenty of clothes. If any one has on a new silk or calico dress, kid gloves, or any thing that is foreign, they have to give an account of how they came by it. 30

Both women and men wore hats made from palmetto. Some men sported suits made of a mixture of cotton and coe hair, a combination said to have been waterproof. From time to time wood became scarce, and the military impressed existing supplies. When lighting oil and


30 Hamilton, Mobile of the Five Flags, 306; Cumming, Kate, 189, 248-49.
candles became hard to acquire, many people burned pitch pine knots to provide illumination.  

Prices for all goods rose in Mobile as they did elsewhere in the Confederacy due to shortages and the decreasing value of Confederate currency. Speculators often took advantage of the situation to buy large quantities of supplies and sell them at exorbitant prices. In March 1862 a group of citizens asked General Samuel Jones to establish a tariff of prices to keep the speculators from asking too much for the goods they had for sale. Jones promptly established the tariff they had recommended and prohibited large sales of foodstuffs to one individual or company. At first the Advertiser and Register protested Jones' order as being unfair to the majority of honest merchants of the city, but, when the general apprised the paper of the intent of the order, it came out in full support of his action.

31Mumford Diary, Jan. 13, 1864; Cumming, Kate, 88, 249; Mobile The Home Journal, May 27, Sept. 23, 1864.

32Jacob Faser to Louisa Mentzinger Faser, Nov. 10, 1861, quoted in "Letters of Jacob Faser, Confederate Armorer," Alabama Historical Quarterly, III (1941), 197; W. A. Smith, William H. Ross, and B. Tardy (?) to Jones, Mar. 24, 1862, in General Samuel Jones Papers, 1861-1865, RG 109, National Archives; General Order No. 20, Headquarters Army of Mobile, Mar. 24, 1862, Special and General Orders, Army of Mobile; Daily Tribune, Apr. 4, 1862; Jones to Shorter, Mar. 25, 1862, Letterbook, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve; Advertiser and Register, Jan. 18, Mar. 26, 30, 1862.
Once the crisis which had precipitated Jones' order had passed, the price tariff was abandoned. Later in the war the Alabama state government regulated prices of foodstuffs through a commission. Actually none of these efforts succeeded because prices continued to go up for most items. A currency bill passed by the Confederate Congress in February 1864 with the intention of increasing the value of currency had the effect of raising prices alarmingly in Mobile. Several examples will sufficiently demonstrate the rise in prices. Molasses sold for twenty-eight cents a gallon early in the war but had gone up to seven dollars a gallon by the fall of 1863. Valued at fifty cents a pound in November 1861, butter increased in value to five dollars a pound by June 1864. Perhaps the greatest rise occurred in the price of flour, which went from forty-five dollars a barrel in October 1862 to four hundred dollars a barrel in January 1865. Under these circumstances, it is not difficult

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33 Maury to Seddon, Feb. 2, 1864, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Seddon to Maury, Feb. 5, 1864, Telegrams Sent, Secretary of War, Chap. IX, Vol. 35, p. 154; E. Merton Coulter, The Confederate States of America, 1861-1865 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1950), 160; Lieutenant James P. Butler to Aunt, Mar. 21, 1864, in Thomas Butler Family Papers, Louisiana State University Department of Archives and Manuscripts.

34 Faser to Louisa, Nov. 10, 1861, quoted in "Letters of Jacob Fase," 197; Richard Spencer to Mrs. A. R. Holcombe, Sept. 19, 1863, June 2, 1864, quoted in Mrs. Sargent Pitcher, Jr. (ed.), "Spencer-Holcombe Letters
to understand why many people in Mobile found it impossible to furnish their families with needed food items even when those items were readily available.

Food shortages in Mobile during the Civil War are more easily understood by looking at the city's antebellum food supply. The relatively large population of the city and county meant that the surrounding countryside could not supply the needs of the people. No large food surpluses existed in the interior of the state for transport to Mobile. About the only item that did reach the city from the interior in significant amounts was corn. Mobile's major food imports—pork, wheat and flour, corn, beef, and whiskey—came through New Orleans. The coastal trade route from the Crescent City became so well developed that western produce entered Mobile very easily. As I will discuss in the next chapter, the Federal blockade cut off this coastal trade in the summer of 1861. This forced Mobile to look to Alabama and Mississippi for her food supplies, but the plantations and farms of these states could not furnish pork, beef, corn, and wheat in quantities sufficient to meet the city's average annual consumption of those items. That the

Written in the 1860s," Louisiana Genealogical Register, XIX (Mar. 1972), 45, 46; Corsan, Two Months in the Confederate States, 115; Mumford Diary, Jan. 19, 1864; Daily Tribune, Oct. 23, 1864; Advertiser and Register, Jan. 29, 1865.
population of Mobile ate as well as they did is a tribute to the merchants, planters, and farmers of Alabama.\textsuperscript{35}

The people of Mobile did not always find necessary supplies available. One of the more severe crises occurred in the winter of 1862 and early spring of 1863. On December 12, 1862, General Pemberton issued an order prohibiting the transportation of corn and fodder out of Mississippi. The necessity of supplying his army and the activities of speculators brought about this order. Because Mobile had drawn much of its corn from the counties of northern Mississippi via the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, the city stood to suffer as a result of the order. The Advertiser and Register quickly asked that Pemberton or higher authorities modify or rescind the order. At the same time Mayor Slough and the president of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad sent protests to

\textsuperscript{35}Sam Bowers Hilliard, Hog Meat and Hoecake: Food Supply in the Old South, 1840-1860 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), 107-108, 200, 208, 209. Professor Hilliard estimates average annual consumption of the four major food items in the diet of antebellum Southerners as follows: pork, 150 pounds; beef, 25 to 30 pounds; corn, 13 bushels; and wheat, 2 bushels. Ibid., 105, 130, 157, 230. A survey of fragmentary import statistics for Mobile found in extant newspapers reveals that not enough of the four named foods reached the city to meet Hilliard's estimates for consumption, especially in view of the needs of the military and the increased population because of refugees.
Pemberton, General Johnston, and the War Department hoping to open the flow of supplies to the city. 36

Both the War Department and Buckner at Mobile referred the protests to Johnston, who was away in Tennessee and preferred not to interfere in such a distant situation. He suggested to Mayor Slough and Governor Shorter that Mobile look to southern Alabama for her supplies in the future. In view of Johnston's inactivity, Secretary of War Seddon suggested that Pemberton and Buckner try to work out the problem together. 37

Pemberton continued to insist, however, that Mobile get her supplies by way of the Alabama and Tombigbee rivers. His intransigence prompted Buckner to issue orders forbidding the shipment of supplies and provisions from his department. He also authorized his chief of subsistence to impress cattle and other stores held by speculators.

36 Vicksburg Daily Whig, Jan. 10, 1863; Milton Brown to Buckner, Jan. 9, 1863, O.R., XV, 937; Johnston to Shorter, Feb. 8, 1863, ibid., 971; Campbell to Pemberton, Feb. 10, 1863, Telegrams Sent, Secretary of War, Chap. IX, Vol. 34, p. 457; Campbell to Major L. Mims, Feb. 11, 1863, ibid., 458.

At the same time, Buckner attempted to reassure the public as to his intentions:

It is not the policy of the Commanding General to make seizures of private property, or to prevent shipments from one portion of the District to another. Supplies evidently intended for private consumption will not be interferred with while in transit within this District. 38

The people of Mobile really suffered the brunt of this conflict between military authorities, although some evidence exists that they found certain items in plentiful supply. 39 To help subsist the populace, the city's military commanders relaxed restrictions on fishing around Mobile Bay. Fishermen and oystermen normally could not go outside the confines of the bay, but General Mackall issued an order allowing them to go up to three miles west of Grant's Pass in search of their catches. All boats taking advantage of the order had to register with the army and comply with any regulations

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established by the naval commander at Mobile. In response to his request, Buckner received permission from the War Department to sell excess military supplies at cost to the needy in times of scarcity. At least a few enterprising citizens found ways to get around Pemberton's order. One man bought a quantity of bacon in Mississippi and devised an ingenious method of transporting it to Mobile without having it confiscated. He bought a six-foot pine box similar to those used to transport the bodies of soldiers to their families. Filling the "coffin" with the bacon, he marked the box "John Shoat, 32nd Alabama Regiment, Mobile, Ala." A Montgomery newspaper reported: "The shoat, or shoats, came to hand without trouble, and in good order." 40

Perhaps the most noted response to the supply difficulties came in the formation of the Mobile Supply Association. A group of 74 prominent and wealthy gentlemen joined together to organize the association and used their own money to finance it. The association had as its goal the purchase of supplies and the sale of them at cost to people in the city. By selling goods at cost these men could keep prices of all goods down to a

40 Order No. 1, Mackall's Division, Feb. 21, 1863, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Feb. 25, 1863; Buckner to Cooper, Mar. 20, 1863, Buckner Papers; Montgomery Daily Advertiser, Mar. 8, 1863.
reasonable level. The Advertiser and Register urged other patriotic citizens to join the association so that its capital would increase and its operations could expand. At first the agents of the association worked only along the Alabama and Tombigbee river systems in collecting supplies. Association Secretary T. A. Hamilton appealed to Johnston to permit the purchase of corn in Mississippi and its shipment on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad. Johnston approved the shipment of supplies for both the Supply Association and the Free Market. Eventually the organization had agents in many parts of the Confederacy procuring necessities for Mobile's people.

The supply shortage came to a head in late March and early April 1863. The inability of the military commanders to settle the matter, newspaper editorials complaining of the situation, and reports of signs reading "Bread or Peace" stuck on street corners in Mobile all prompted

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41 Advertiser and Register, Dec. 18, 1862; Daniel McNeill to Editors, Dec. 19, 1862, quoted in ibid., Dec. 20, 1862; T. A. Hamilton to Johnston, Feb. 19, 1863, Letters and Telegrams Received, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana; Campbell to Slough, Nov. 3, 1863, Telegrams Sent, Secretary of War, Chap. IX, Vol. 35, p. 124; Campbell to Johnston, Nov. 3, 1863, ibid., 125; Johnston to Campbell, Nov. 6, 1863, Johnston Papers; Johnston to Slough, Nov. 6, 1863, ibid.; Cumming, Kate, 190; Peter Joseph Hamilton, A Little Boy in Confederate Mobile (Mobile: Colonial Mobile Book Shop, 1947), 12-13.
Seddon to act. He approved a plan which Colonel Lucius B. Northup, Commissary General and head of the Subsistence Department, had put forth. Northup's plan called for the creation of Chief Commissaries in each state to supervise the collection, storage, and distribution of supplies. In informing Buckner of his decision, Seddon wrote:

...The course which under the circumstances I sought to adopt is what appears to me under any but very exceptional conditions the more regular and judicious. It is to confine each Commander, to subsidiary operations in obtaining supplies, to his own Department and to require of the Commissary General through the Bureau officers and agents to be active in all, collecting supplies, accumulating at Depots and preparing to distribute and meet requisitions from the various Armies according to their respective needs....

Northup's plan, the activities of the Mobile Supply Association, and improved crop harvests in Alabama eased Mobile's supply difficulties considerably.

The "bread riot" of September 4, 1863, vividly demonstrated that some of the people of Mobile continued


to suffer from shortages of food and other supplies. On the morning of that day, several hundred poor women, armed with hatchets, hammers, brooms, and axes, gathered on the Spring Hill Road. Carrying banners reading "Bread or Blood" and "Bread and Peace," they marched two-by-two down Dauphin Street into the city. Thousands of spectators watched as the women broke into stores, took out food and clothing, and distributed their loot amongst their number. Available sources indicate that Jews owned most of the stores broken into, indicating a prejudice against that class, and that most of the onlookers sympathized with the plight of these women. Maury called out the 17th Alabama Regiment to put down the riot, but the men of that unit refused to take action. The failure of the military to stop the women left the whole matter in the hands of the civil authorities. Mayor Slough made a speech promising to meet the needs of the rioters if they would disperse. A witness related the results of his effort:

\[\ldots\text{[the speech] had the desired effect of disbanding the Amazonian phalanx and sending the women to their houses, well satisfied with the result of their foray.}\]  

\[\text{\textsuperscript{44}}\text{New Orleans Times, Sept. 21, 1863; Colonel Samuel E. Hunter to Stella Bradley Taylor Hunter, Sept. 4, 1863, in Hunter-Taylor Family Papers, Louisiana State University Department of Archives and Manuscripts; Orear to Carrie Orear, Sept. 5, 1863, Weaver Collection; Rix, Incidents of Life, [9].}\]
Slough quickly followed up on his promise to the "bread rioters." On the same day that the riot occurred, the mayor addressed an appeal to the citizens of Mobile to come to the aid of the needy women:

...Their own wants and those of their children are calculated to touch the hardest and least sympathetic heart. Let us then, my fellow citizens, see that these worthy objects of charity are placed above the reach of absolute destitution....

Slough asked the people to contribute monetary subscriptions to be used to purchase food and clothing for those needing assistance. To collect the money and distribute the supplies, he appointed a fourteen-man Special Relief Committee. The committee then appointed a special agent to purchase goods from city factories for delivery to the poor. They also solicited contributions of money or material suitable for clothing. Selecting other citizens to form the Citizens' Relief Association and to aid in its activities, the Special Relief Committee surveyed the various wards of the city to locate poor families and determine their needs. In the following months, the committee succeeded in alleviating most of the distressing conditions afflicting Mobile's poor.46

45Advertiser and Register, Sept. 5, 1863.
46Ibid., Sept. 14, 1863.
Supply shortages continued until the end of the war, but nothing like the two crises just described occurred again. Scarcities of meat existed during various periods, while at other times vegetables and other items became hard to obtain. A scarcity of money or interruptions in the normal transportation system usually created these temporary shortages. In January 1865, for instance, the military impressed most of the river steamers to transport its supplies, thus making it difficult to bring in goods intended for the citizens of Mobile. When the Federal fleet occupied the bay, its presence deprived Mobile of one of its luxury foods—oysters. Oystermen could bring in a few of the shellfish from the upper regions of the bay, but high prices kept these few delicacies out of the hands of most people. The enemy occupation of the bay also resulted in almost completely cutting off coffee imports. These shortages affected morale as well as stomachs:

...some who did not touch it [coffee] before the war, talk gravely about its loss as if their very existence depended upon it, and indeed they are quite melancholy about it.47

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47 Mumford Diary, Feb. 16, 1864; Daily Tribune, June 5, 1864; Advertiser and Register, Jan. 29, 1865; Cumming, Kate, 248.
THE CONFEDERATE DEFENSE OF MOBILE, 1861-1865
VOLUME II

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in The Department of History

by
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M.A., Louisiana State University, 1972
August 1980
Although Mobile occupied a strategic position in the Confederacy because of her railroad connections, her primary strategic importance lay in her status as a major port for blockade runners. New Orleans outranked Mobile as a port early in the war, as she had before the war, but the fall of the Crescent City in April 1862 made Mobile the leading port on the Gulf. The vessels which ran the blockade in and out of Mobile took their cargoes to and from Havana, Cuba, the best base for this trade in the Gulf. The trip between Mobile and Havana took about three days if the runner encountered no problems. Taking out of Mobile primarily loads of cotton, the runners exchanged their cargoes for both military supplies and items for consumption by the civilian populace of the Gulf South. Running the blockade was very dangerous, but attempts to get by the blockading squadron increased as the war progressed. In speaking of the men who engaged in the trade, one author has written:

...Some of the blockade runners were patriots who wished to aid the Confederacy, but many were in the business only for money, and they made profits equal their risk.

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1Frank L. Owsley, King Cotton Diplomacy: Foreign 222
Blockade runners did not find Mobile an easy port to enter and leave. For one thing, access to the bay was limited and difficult. Three entrances to the bay which vessels might use existed. One of these was a westward approach near Dauphin Island known as the Pelican Channel, but its shallow draft precluded its use. A second entrance, known as the Swash Channel, followed the shoreline from the east toward Fort Morgan. Although less than twelve feet deep at low tide, the runners used it a great deal because once they had gotten into it, the blockading fleet found it difficult to cut the runner out from the fleet's normal station. The Main Channel extended from near Fort Morgan five miles southward. At the lower end of this channel stood a bar with twenty-one feet of water over it. Blockading vessels could station themselves at these three entrances and cover them very easily. Confederate field artillery could keep the blockaders far enough away from the Swash Channel to keep it open most of the time, but the Confederates could do nothing to protect the other channels. By stationing vessels near the bar in the Main Channel, the Federals could maintain the blockade "more effectually and by a

smaller force than at almost any other place of trade on the coast."  

The shallow waters in and around Mobile Bay also created difficulties for blockade runners. In the bay itself the two anchorages used by vessels had little depth. Only twelve feet of water covered the anchorage near the city and eighteen to twenty feet that near Fort Morgan. This lack of deep water limited the blockade running fleet to light-draft sailing vessels for the most part during the early years of the war. These schooners and sloops had to depend on a fair wind to go in and out of the bay. Those steamers which did engage in the trade needed both fair wind and high tides for success. Naturally many of the sailing vessels and steamers presented no match for the much faster Federal blockaders. By late 1863, however, new, light-draft, British-built steamers with engines designed for high speeds dominated the blockade runners. These British steamers made frequent successful trips through the blockade. A contemporary observer noted that one of the vessels appeared "in her voyages, almost as regular as a mail-packet in time of peace."  

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3 Ibid., 132; Marcus W. Price, "Ships that Tested the Blockade of the Gulf Ports, 1861-1865," *American Neptune,*
In presidential proclamations of April 19 and 27, 1861, Abraham Lincoln established a blockade of the ports of the Confederacy from Texas to Virginia. The first Federal ship to appear off Mobile Bay was the steam frigate Niagara. She arrived in the area during the first week of May 1861. Her patrol area consisted of the entire coast between Pensacola and the mouth of the Mississippi River, so she did not always stand off Mobile Bay during the month of May. The U.S.S. Powhatan assumed the duties of blockading Mobile Bay on May 26. When she arrived near the Main Channel, her crew observed a welcoming signal on the flagstaff of Fort Morgan. The Confederate garrison had raised the United States flag, union down, on the flagstaff under the Confederate flag. To the editors of the Daily Advertiser, the incident seemed a "Joke on Lincoln," but the arrival of the Powhatan marked the permanent establishment of the blockade of Mobile.  

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The Federals gave all of the ships then at Mobile approximately a month to leave the port with their cargoes before a rigid blockade became effective. Between May 4 and 27, thirteen vessels cleared the harbor, most of them British ships bound for Liverpool. These vessels carried on them 28,182 bales of cotton weighing 13,507,240 pounds and 7,555 barrels of turpentine and resin. As the "last day of grace" neared, the Acting British Consul at Mobile, James Magee, arranged with the commander of the Powhatan to allow a tugboat to pull to sea the two remaining British ships. Having secured this authority, Magee contracted with the captain of the steam tug Baltic to tow out the two vessels. These ships sailed out from the bay on May 31, both having been boarded by the commander of the Niagara, which had relieved the Powhatan three days previously. From May 31 onward any vessel attempting to enter or leave Mobile Bay would be subject to seizure and the confiscation of her cargo by Federal authorities.  

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5Lord Lyons to James Magee, May 8, 1861, quoted in J. Thomas Scharf, History of the Confederate States Navy (New York: Rogers and Sherwood, 1887), 437-38; Record Book of Exports of Domestic Produce in Confederate Vessels and Foreign Vessels, 1861-1875, passim, RG 36, National Archives; Magee to Officer Commanding U. S. Squadron off Mobile, May 27, 1861, O.R.N., IV, 185; Lieutenant David D. Porter to Magee, May 27, 1861, ibid.; William Rix, Incidents of Life in a Southern City During the War (Mobile: Iberville Historical Society Papers, 1865), [6-7], McKean to Welles, June 4, 1861, O.R.N., IV, 196; Abstract log of the U.S.S. Niagara, May 5-June 7, 1861, ibid., 206.
From early June 1861 until the end of the year, little activity took place in and out of Mobile except for some coastal trade with New Orleans. Even this coastal trade had ended by June 24. The Confederate government had not yet arranged to receive supplies from Europe, so no English or other foreign ships attempted to enter Confederate ports during much of 1861. In fact, the first blockade runner to arrive in the Confederacy reached Savannah, Georgia, in September. Besides this general lack of blockade running, the paucity of potential cargo for export contributed to the inactivity at Mobile. Receipts of cotton from the interior fell off dramatically once the war started. The blockade represented one reason for the low cotton imports. Of greater importance, cotton factors in Mobile urged planters not to ship any cotton to the city. The Advertiser and Register, supporting the factors, asserted that the blockade prevented it from being shipped and that stockpiles of cotton would


prove "a strong temptation to the enemy to organize land and naval armaments for attacking" Mobile.  

With the start of the new year (1862) blockade runners began attempting to sneak in and out of Mobile Bay. Most of these vessels successfully eluded the few blockaders stationed near the bay. A few, however, were not so fortunate. On January 20 the Andrieta tried to get into Mobile, but the U.S.S. R. R. Cuyler sighted her. The captain of the Andrieta raised the British colors, ran his ship ashore east of Fort Morgan, and ordered his men to abandon her. Federal boarding parties reached the Andrieta and secured ropes to her. Shortly afterwards Captain William Cottrill's company of mounted scouts reached the beach and opened a heavy fire on the Federals, driving them away from the beached vessel. The enemy boarders had done their job, however, and with the rise in the tide hauled the ship off as a prize. The British consul at Mobile attempted fruitlessly to persuade the commander of the Federal squadron that the Andrieta had not intended to run the blockade.  

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8"Weekly Receipts of Cotton at Mobile" as reported in the Advertiser and Register, June-September 1861; ibid., Aug. 30, 1861.

9Bragg to Cooper, Dec. 31, 1861, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Colonel William L. Powell to Captain D. E. Huger, Jan. 21, 1862, O.R., VI, 498-99; Lieutenant Francis Winslow to McKean, Jan. 23, 1862, O.R.N., XVII, 59-60; Magee to Commander U. S. Fleet off Mobile,
Official Confederate policy on blockade running out of Mobile began taking shape in the spring of 1862. Three or four businessmen at Mobile approached General Sam Jones and his successor in command at Mobile, General Butler, about taking cotton to Havana so that they could use it to purchase military supplies for the Confederacy. Both Jones and Butler expressed reluctance to grant them permission. Jones did allow a few small cargoes to go out, but under restrictions "requiring that the parties interested, the Captain and Crew, shall be loyal and indentified [sic] in interest with the Confederate States and that the return cargoes shall as far as practicable be composed of munitions of war."\(^{10}\) The Confederate Navy Department signed contracts with two or three individuals to supply munitions to the government after taking cotton out of Mobile. Secretary of War Randolph encouraged Jones to allow blockade running on the grounds that it was "good policy to exchange produce for arms and

\(^{10}\) Butler to Bragg, Mar. 29, 1862, Letterbook, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve; Butler to Bragg, Mar. 31, 1862, ibid.; Jones to Randolph, Apr. 4, 1862, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Jones to Cooper, Apr. 5, 1862, Letterbook, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve.
munitions of war" even though "the practice is liable to
great abuse and should not be allowed indiscriminately."\(^\text{11}\)

The dash of the Confederate raider Florida into the
bay provided one of the most dramatic incidents of the
blockade of Mobile. She had only recently entered the
Confederate service when her captain, John Newland Maf-
fit, ran her into the bay on the afternoon of September
4, 1862. Maffitt intended sailing his ship from Havana
to Mobile so that he could enlist a full crew and procure
complete equipment to fire her guns. Both he and his
undersized crew suffered from an attack of yellow fever.
When the Florida received her cannons from the British
at Nassau, she had not gotten the rammers, sights,
sponges, and other items necessary to work the guns. In
order to get by the four Union blockaders guarding the
entrances to the harbor, Maffitt decided to fly the Brit-
ish colors and depend on the Florida's resemblance to a
British warship to deceive the enemy. It seemed a des-
perate gamble but one Maffitt had to take.\(^\text{12}\)

\(^{11}\)Randolph to Jones, Mar. 26, 1862, Letters Sent,
Secretary of War, Chap. IX, Vol. 6, p. 217; Randolph to
Jones, Apr. 4, 1862, Telegrams Sent, Secretary of War,
Chap. IX, Vol. 34, p. 171; Randolph to Jones, Apr. 14,
1862, Letters Sent, Secretary of War, Chap. IX, Vol. 6,
pp. 329-30.

\(^{12}\)Extracts from the journal of Lieutenant J. N.
Maffitt, May 4-December 31, 1862, O.R.N., I, 766; Edward
Boykin, Sea Devil of the Confederacy (New York: Funk &
Three Union blockaders guarded the main ship channel into Mobile Bay. As the Florida approached, Commander George H. Preble of the ten-gun, steam sloop Oneida remained unaware that Maffitt's cruiser was anywhere in his vicinity. After successfully bluffing his way past the two other enemy vessels, Maffitt steamed directly for the Oneida. As the Florida began to steam past the latter ship, Preble fired a shot across her bow. He then ordered a full broadside when the Florida did not slow down. Soon the two other Federal gunboats opened fire on the Florida. Maffitt's ruse had paid off, however. His vessel ran successfully past her enemies, and her superior speed kept her ahead of her pursuers. Despite her lead, however, a hail of shell and shrapnel struck the Florida. The chase lasted for two hours. Maffitt, so ill that he had to be lashed to the rail, finally took his battered vessel under the guns of Fort Morgan, where he received a greeting of a twenty-one gun salute and the cheers of the garrison. Preble received no cheers. Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles relieved him of command and dismissed him from the service. The Navy Department later restored his rank and returned him
to duty, but not until 1872 did a court of inquiry clear Preble of blame for the escape of the Florida.13

After entering the bay, the Florida remained in quarantine for two weeks. She then steamed up to the city to undergo repairs. Maffitt began to recruit his new crew and to equip his vessel fully for service. By early January 1863 Maffitt and the Florida appeared ready to go to sea. The weather did not favor the Florida's exit until January 15. On that day a gale began blowing from the north. The Florida started out about 2:30 on the morning of the sixteenth. Seven Federal warships waited for her to come out. Under the cover of a heavy mist, the Florida succeeded in passing five of the enemy vessels before they discovered her. When Maffitt realized that they had seen his ship, he ordered all sails raised. The gale winds drove her forward at fourteen knots. Only one Federal vessel possessed speed enough to try to catch the Florida, and she chased the Confederate cruiser for three hours, when the Federals lost sight of their prey and returned to the blockading squadron. Maffitt once again had eluded the enemy and

embarked on a notable career of destroying enemy commerce. After the war, Admiral David D. Porter wrote of the entire incident:

...His [Maffitt's] being permitted to escape into Mobile Bay, and then out again, was the greatest example of blundering committed throughout the war....

The success of the Florida in running the blockade at Mobile graphically demonstrates the inefficiency of the blockade there during 1862. An Englishman who visited the city in the fall of that year reported:

...The people of Mobile seem to drive a thriving trade with Havannah by running the blockade--their swift, well-handled steamers going in and out just when they please....

Even some of the blockaders recognized the weakness of their efforts to guard the bay. A frustrated sailor aboard the steamer Susquehanna implied in a letter to a northern newspaper that many blockade runners were being allowed to escape and stated: "If there be a case for judicial and executive investigation it is here at this

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post of the Gulf squadron, and it should be inquired into." Although no conspiracy existed, it is easy to understand this Federal's feelings. Available reports on arrivals and departures from Mobile during the year 1862 show that eighty-three percent of all attempts to run the blockade succeeded. The situation at Mobile typified the blockade elsewhere along the Southern coast. In his study of blockade running, Frank L. Owsley concluded:

"...for the first year and a half the blockade was nothing more than the plundering of neutral commerce en route to the Confederacy under the cover of a nominal blockade."

Opposition to running the blockade began to surface in Mobile in early 1863. Because of the potential profits in blockade running, owners of various types of vessels prepared to take their ships out with loads of cotton. The Committee of Safety wrote to Governor Shorter to express their concern about owners of six river and bay


17 Information on the various arrivals and departures can be found in Record Book of Exports..., 1861-1875; Entry of Merchandise, Mobile, 1861-1865, RG 36, National Archives; Abstracts of Import Duties, Mobile, 1861-1865, RG 36, National Archives; Bureau of Customs Cargo Manifests, Mobile, 1861-1865, RG 36, National Archives; O.R.N., XVII, XVIII, XIX, passim; Price, "Ships That Tested the Blockade...", American Neptune, XII (1952), 52-59.

18 Owsley, King Cotton Diplomacy, 232.
steamers fitting out their vessels to run the blockade. These citizens felt that the vessels were essential to the transportation of supplies to the city from the interior and possibly to furnish engines and machinery for the construction of gunboats. If captured, the loss of these ships would prove a severe blow to the city and state. The committee asked Shorter to use his influence in Richmond to prevent these ships from going out.

Shorter did forward the committee's letter to Secretary of War Seddon and added his protest to theirs. Seddon replied that the Confederate government could not interfere with "such legal use of the river steam-boats as the owners deem judicious." In answer to Shorter's expressed and the committee's veiled opposition to exporting cotton, Seddon stated that the Confederate Congress had sanctioned blockade running and that the War Department agreed with that policy.

One Mobilian complained that the value of goods exported through the blockade far exceeded that of goods imported and that ships coming in brought too few

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19 Peter Hamilton to Shorter, Mar. 25, 1863, O.R., 4, II, 462; Shorter to Buckner, Mar. 28, 1863, ibid., 462-63; Shorter to Seddon, Mar. 28, 1863, ibid., 461; Seddon to Shorter, Apr. 7, 1863, ibid., 472-73; Gift to ------, June 10, 1863, quoted in Harriet Gift Castlen, Hope Bids Me Onward (Savannah, Ga.: Chatham Publishing Co., 1945), 125.

munitions and staple goods. Using statistics from the Customhouse, John E. Murrell informed the War Department that from May 1862 to April 1863 cotton worth $1,823,000 had gone out of Mobile while the value of imported goods stood at only $208,168. This represented a balance of $1,614,832 against the Confederacy. Murrell, who had participated in blockade running himself, expressed special concern that runners brought too much liquor into Mobile. He suggested that the blockade trade, as then conducted, end or be regulated to benefit the war effort. To this end he recommended that the government order half of the space on all outgoing vessels reserved for government cotton and the same space on returning ships for government supplies. Finally, Murrell urged that the government exclude or severely limit importation of liquor. The authorities did not then want to enact the policies suggested by Murrell, but in March 1864 they did establish several blockade-running regulations similar to Murrell's recommendations. These new regulations derived from a plan submitted by Murrell's friend Colin J. McRae of Mobile. 21

The Confederate government did begin taking steps to insure a more reliable flow of needed supplies. In early

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21 John E. Murrell to Colonel William L. Powell, Apr. 30, 1863, Letters Received, Secretary of War; Vandiver (ed.), Confederate Blockade Running, xxxv-xxxvi.
April 1863 Secretary of War Seddon authorized General Buckner to seize the iron, side-wheel steamer Alabama to run the blockade for the government. Once Buckner impressed the vessel, Seddon expected him to charter her to a party owning munitions in Havana to bring these supplies back to Mobile. Seddon advised that if, on the return trip, additional room remained on the Alabama, the parties involved might include food supplies in her cargo. The government already successfully employed blockade runners at Wilmington, North Carolina. Seddon stated that running the Alabama directly under government control would prove more successful and economical than if she remained under private control because "the Government can command more reliable Officers, the best pilots and secure facilities." The Alabama became a successful blockade runner, making at least five trips during the summer of 1863.

Buckner's successor at Mobile, General Maury, attempted to continue and even strengthen Buckner's policy on blockade running. He contracted at least two other steamers, the Fanny and the Crescent, to bring in goods for the Confederate armies. The War Department authorized Maury to make similar arrangements with as

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many shipowners as possible. Maury's efforts did not always succeed, however. Some shipping firms did not honor contracts signed by them, and Maury urged the War Department to annul the contracts. He also reported:

...I believe that the people concerned in running the blockade will run their ships on Government account only on compulsion or in consideration of extraordinary benefits from the Government, and it is probable that owners will sell their ships in Havana, and that future voyages will be made under a foreign flag....

The solution to this problem, as Maury saw it, was for the government to have its agents in Havana buy suitable boats and "take the business into its own hands." Both the Alabama and the Fanny ran out of luck on September 12, 1863. On that day three Federal gunboats chased the Fanny as she tried to enter Mobile Bay. She attempted to escape into Pascagoula Bay, but her crew set her afire to prevent her capture and thus destroyed her cargo. The Alabama, too, attempted to get into the bay, but Federal blockaders discovered and chased her.

23 Seddon to Maury, June 8, 1863, Telegrams Sent, Secretary of War, Chap. IX, Vol. 35, p. 49; Maury to Seddon, June 13, 1863, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Maury to Seddon, June 24, 1863, ibid.; Maury to Cooper, July 16, 1863, O.R., XXVI, Pt. 2, pp. 112-13; Seddon to Maury, July 24, 1863, ibid., 121.

24 Maury to Cooper, Sept. 28, 1863, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 531; Maury to Cooper, Aug. 28, 1863, ibid., 518.

25 Maury to Cooper, Aug. 28, 1863, ibid., 518.
They finally captured her near the Chandeleur Islands and took her to New Orleans. Maury informed Joe Johnston that blockade running seemed temporarily at an end at Mobile because of the loss of these two vessels: "They may be regarded as the last of the blockade runners, as they were the best of them."\(^{26}\) Indeed, blockade running at Mobile practically came to an end for the year. Slightly more than one hundred violations of the blockade occurred from January to September but less than twenty after the capture and destruction of these two runners.\(^{27}\)

During 1864, British side-wheel steamers dominated and revived the blockade running business at Mobile. The most prominent of these were the Denbigh, Donegal, and Mary. A description of the Denbigh fits almost any of these vessels which their builders had specifically designed to run the blockade:

...She was a side-wheeler, schooner-rigged....
She was built of iron, and had a marked draft

\(^{26}\)Macomb to Bell, Sept. 13, 1863, O.R.N., XX, 583; Bell to Welles, Sept. 15, 1863, ibid., 584; Maury to Cooper, Sept. 28, 1863, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 531;
Maury to Johnston, Sept. 20, 1863, ibid., XXVI, Pt. 2, p. 244; Maury to [Johnston], Sept. 29, 1863, Letters and Telegrams Received, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana.

\(^{27}\)Record Book of Exports..., 1861-1875, passim; Entry of Merchandise, Mobile, 1861-1865; Abstracts of Import Duties, Mobile, 1861-1865; Bureau of Customs Cargo Manifests, Mobile, 1861-1865; Owsley, King Cotton Diplomacy, 252-53.
of seven feet, fore and aft. She had artificial quarter galleries, an elliptic stern, and a straight stem. Boats painted white swung from iron davits on her port quarter and abreast of her mainmast. A house with a binnacle on top was athwartships, between her paddle boxes. Her funnel was painted black, and there was a bright, copper steampipe at the after part of it. She had side houses and a hurricane deck, with her foremost through it. Her masts were bright. Mastheads, tops, caps, crosstrees, bowsprit, and gaff were painted white...

Only the presence of large numbers of Federal warships off Mobile Bay in February and March 1864 and the capture of the forts at the bay entrances in August 1864 slowed and eventually ended the highly successful trade of these steamers.

The British steamers did not always enjoy easy trips in and out of the bay. On the night of January 31, 1864, the Denbigh ran aground in the Swash Channel east of Fort Morgan while attempting to get out. Her crew, aided by troops from the fort, threw off the cotton with which she was loaded. The blockading fleet discovered the Denbigh's plight and opened fire on her. One shot hit the wheelhouse but did no damage. Artillery fire from Fort Morgan drove off the attackers. Several days later, the steamer Dick Keys succeeded in getting the Denbigh off

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and towed her into the bay. The Virgin ran aground in the Swash Channel on July 9, 1864, trying to get into the bay. During the daylight hours of the tenth and the eleventh, the blockaders fired at the Virgin but did not hit her. Confederate soldiers boarded the stranded vessel to protect her against enemy cutting-out expeditions, and finally they got the Virgin off and brought her into the bay.

Another blockade runner did not enjoy the fortune of the Denbigh and Virgin. The Ivanhoe ran aground in the Swash Channel on the night of July 1 during her first attempt to evade the blockade. Two companies moved out of Fort Morgan to protect her and to remove her cargo. Six or seven Federal gunboats opened fire on the Ivanhoe after sunrise. The enemy fleet continued to shell the steamer for several days, on each occasion the gunners in Fort Morgan returning their fire. Although Confederate shells struck several vessels, none damaged the

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Federals very seriously. On the night of July 5 an expedition of four launches boarded the *Ivanhoe* and set her afire. Confederate soldiers on the beach opened up a strong rifle fire when they discovered the flames. The raid destroyed both the bow and stern of the blockade runner but not her mid-section. Eventually, Confederate engineers succeeded in getting the *Ivanhoe*'s machinery out of her, but the passage of Farragut's fleet into the bay ended plans to refloat her.\(^{31}\)

The last steamer to run the blockade at Mobile, the *Denbigh*, went out on the night of July 27, 1864. When Farragut's fleet concentrated off Mobile Bay prior to running past the forts, it became impractical for vessels still at Mobile to get out. Maury gave some thought, however, to allowing one steamer to attempt to run out after the Federals had gotten into the bay. The War Department gave its permission for the *Heroine* to make the attempt if she could do so safely, but conditions did not permit her to get out. Three other vessels—the

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Virgin, Red Gauntlet, and Mary—became entrapped at Mobile besides the Heroine. Maury ordered the seizure of all four for use by the military. The steamers served as dispatch and transport boats and did good work during the siege of Spanish Fort and Blakely. When the army evacuated Mobile, the blockade runners carried men and supplies up the inland rivers of Alabama. The Confederate naval commander surrendered them with his other vessels at the end of the war.  

Blockade running had proven a highly successful and profitable business at Mobile and other Southern ports. Professor Frank Vandiver has concluded that running the blockade "was perhaps the most successful, large-scale campaign attempted by the South," He argues that the supplies which came into the Confederacy through the blockade enabled her to wage war longer than she could

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32 Tarleton to Lightfoot, July 28, 1864, Tarleton Letters; Seddon to Maury, July 20, 1864, Telegrams Sent, Secretary of War, Chap. IX, Vol. 35, p. 246; Maury to Seddon, Aug. 4, 1864, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Seddon to Maury, Aug. 5, 1864, Telegrams Sent, Secretary of War, Chap. IX, Vol. 35, pp. 224-25; Maury to Seddon, Aug. 14, 1864, with endorsement by Lieutenant Colonel Thomas L. Bayne, Aug. 16, 1864, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; John Scott to G. A. Trenholm, Aug. 17, 1864, ibid.; Jeanie Mort Walker, Life of Capt. Joseph Fry, the Cuban Martyr (Hartford, Conn.: The J. B. Burr Publishing Co., 1875), 176-78; Bradlee, "Blockade Running," 155; Scharf, History of the Confederate States Navy, 595, 598.

33 Vandiver (ed.), Confederate Blockade Running, xli.
have done without them and that, given time, blockade running would have eventually eliminated supply shortages. Mobile certainly played an important role in the business. Attempted violations of the blockade at Mobile numbered between 208 and 220. Slightly more than eighty percent of these attempts succeeded. The number of attempts was exceeded only at Wilmington, Charleston, and New Orleans, and the percentage of successful attempts stood as high or perhaps slightly higher at Mobile than at the other three ports.  

34Ibid.; Owsley, King Cotton Diplomacy, 259-60. The figures quoted were compiled by the author from most of the sources cited in this chapter.
CHAPTER X
"THE DAMAGE TO THE FORT WAS VERY TRIFLING."

Mobile figured in Union plans for the early months of 1864, but only in an indirect way. The real Union offensive operation in Mississippi and Alabama during the months of January, February, and March was a raid by Major General William T. Sherman's army from Vicksburg to Meridian, Mississippi. No one in the Union high command suggested that their forces attack Mobile. Major General Nathaniel P. Banks' troops would have been the men to have made such an attack, but they had been preparing since early January for a campaign up Red River to Shreveport, Louisiana.\(^1\) Sherman anticipated that when he reached Meridian the Confederates would think he would then turn south against Mobile. He did not have enough men to attempt an attack on the Gulf city and recommended that upon their return to Vicksburg his troops go up Red River to cooperate with Banks. Sherman thought the Red River campaign would be a short, decisive stroke that

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\(^1\) Sherman to Banks, Jan. 16, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 2, p. 114; Halleck to Banks, Jan. 4, 1864, ibid., XXXIV, Pt. 2, p. 15; Halleck to Banks, Jan. 11, 1864, ibid., 55-56; Banks to Sherman, Jan. 25, 1864, ibid., 145.
"would be the death blow to our enemies of the Southwest" and free troops for a later attack on Mobile.  

To attract attention away from his foray toward Meridian and to keep the Confederates from shifting large numbers of troops against him, Sherman requested that Banks conduct a demonstration or feint attack against Fort Powell. Such a move would reinforce the idea that the Federals would make an attack on Mobile. Sherman asked Banks to have naval vessels keep up the mock assault for about a week so that he could make the most of his stay in Meridian in tearing up the Mobile and Ohio Railroad in that vicinity. Banks discussed Sherman's request with Farragut at New Orleans and urged his cooperation. Farragut eagerly agreed, probably hoping that the army would send him some troops for a full-fledged attack on the forts at the entrance to Mobile Bay. 

He ordered six mortar boats at Pensacola readied for the attack on Fort Powell in cooperation with gunboats already in Mississippi Sound. Farragut informed the Navy Department of his intentions: "I shall therefore amuse myself in that

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2 Sherman to Banks, Jan. 16, 1864, ibid., XXXII, Pt. 2, p. 114; Sherman to Halleck, Jan. 29, 1864, ibid., 260.

way for the next month, unless the ironclads should come out,..."4

On the eve of Sherman's Meridian expedition, Maury did not seem concerned about an attack on Mobile. He reported on January 31 and February 2 that he had not procured hard evidence of preparations for a land attack. Rumors and some more conclusive facts reached Maury that Farragut might try to run his fleet past the outer line of forts but did not have the vessels necessary for a successful assault on the bay batteries. Maury continued to have his engineers work to improve Mobile's defenses. Thousands of slaves impressed throughout the state augmented the work force in the city. Ordnance stores arrived a bit too slowly to satisfy Maury, but he realized that given the South's limited resources he got all that could be spared for his command. All of the troops at Mobile appeared to be in good condition and their morale was high. To strengthen his outer line, Maury hoped for success in constructing a battery in the channel between Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines. He wrote the

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War Department: "This, with obstructions, torpedoes, and the admiral's fleet, ought to make the passage difficult to wooden ships."  

The various defensive works around the city impressed an Englishman who visited Mobile about this time and inspected them. Of the new line of redoubts being thrown up by Von Sheliha's engineers, FitzGerald Ross wrote that they "were perfect models of strength and judicious arrangement." Each of the redoubts was constructed of sand and had parapets twenty-five feet wide. Turf fastened to the sand by Cherokee Rose shrubs covered the revetment, or embankment, in front of each redoubt. The prickly nature of the shrubs would prove an additional obstacle to any enemy troops trying to storm the fortifications. Ross stated that when Von Sheliha's line of earthworks reached completion and all improvements completed on the bay batteries Mobile would be "one of the most strongly fortified places in the world."

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5Maury to Polk, Jan. 31, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 2, p. 640; Polk to Lieutenant Colonel Thomas M. Jack, Jan. 28, 1864, ibid., 629; Polk to Watts, Jan. 28, 1864, ibid., 629-30; Polk to Major J. C. Denis, Jan. 28, 1864, Telegrams Sent, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, Chap. II, Vol. 236 1/4, p. 21, RG 109, National Archives; Maury to Seddon, Feb. 2, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 2, pp. 655-56.


7Ibid.
Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines did not please Ross, however, because experience at Fort Sumter had shown that modern artillery could level the old brick forts, making them dangerous places for men to be stationed. According to Ross, both the army and navy commanders at Mobile acknowledged that these forts could not stop an enemy fleet from passing them.  

Sherman's Union army left Vicksburg February 13 in its march toward Meridian. The troops captured Jackson February 5 and crossed Pearl River two days later. Polk's Confederates opposing Sherman lacked enough numerical strength to make a stand and fell back in front of the Federal advance. Polk requested that Maury send him two brigades from Mobile if he could spare them and promised to return them if the enemy attacked Mobile. The brigades of Quarles, Cockrell, and Baldwin left the city on February 7 to join Polk. In return for these forces, Polk ordered the recently organized 22nd Louisiana Consolidated Infantry and three companies of the 1st Alabama Infantry to Maury. The men of both units had experience as heavy artillerists, and Maury had requested them earlier. The latter general also relieved Shoup of

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8 Ibid., 196-97.
9 Sherman to Brigadier General John A. Rawlins, Mar. 7, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 1, p. 175; Polk to Davis, Feb. 9, 1864, ibid., 335; Polk to Maury, Feb. 2, 1864,
his duties at Mobile and ordered him to Polk temporarily as a brigade commander. To protect his eastern division against a possible Federal raid from Pensacola, Maury sent Brigadier General James Cantey's brigade to Pollard.\footnote{Para I, Special Order No. 37, Headquarters Department of the Gulf, Feb. 6, 1864, cited in Compiled Service Record of Francis A. Shoup; Bob ------- to Hunter, Feb. 5, 1864, Hunter-Taylor Papers; Orear to Carrie Orear, Feb. 6, 1864, Weaver Collection.}

The troops from Mobile had barely begun arriving at Meridian when Polk decided to order them back. In addition to the three brigades mentioned above, Polk sent two other brigades and the men in a camp for exchanged prisoners at Enterprise to Maury. The movements of the enemy prompted this action. Sherman reached Morton on February 8 and began marching toward Meridian the next day. Fearing that Sherman's force comprised part of a combined attack by land and sea on Mobile, Polk wished to strengthen its garrison, which numbered about 2,500 men. He had visited Mobile several days before and expressed

\footnote{ibid., Pt. 2, p. 655; Para IX, Special Orders No. 36, Headquarters [Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana], Feb. 5, 1864, ibid., 681; Maury to Cooper, Feb. 7, 1864, ibid., 692; Chambers, "My Journal," 299; Para III, Special Order No. 34, Headquarters Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, Feb. 3, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 2, p. 663; Daniel P. Smith, Company K, First Alabama Regiment, or Three Years in the Confederate Service (Prattville, Ala.: Published by the Survivors, 1885), 90.}
confidence that the defenses looked complete enough to resist an assault. Supplies at the city appeared sufficient to sustain a large garrison for six months, but Polk promised Maury to try to send him additional meat and corn. In reporting his actions to Richmond, Polk urged Davis to supply Maury's requisitions for heavy artillery ammunition. Polk encouraged Maury to ask the non-combatants in the city to leave.¹¹

Maury followed up quickly on Polk's request. He informed the people through the newspapers that Mobile might be attacked and asked everyone who could not participate in the defense of the city to leave for the interior. An editorial in the *Advertiser and Register* ventured the opinion that Sherman was unlikely to move against the city, yet recommended that women, children, and other non-combatants leave so as not to be "in the way—an obstacle to the General commanding, and a drawback to the success of the defence."¹² Several days later, Maury, in a letter to Mayor Slough, made the observation that few people had left Mobile and urged him to use his


¹² *Advertiser and Register*, Feb. 11, 1864.
authority to make them go. He offered to furnish trans-
portation for the people. Slough complied with Maury's
request by appealing to the patriotism of the populace
and pointing out that if they left more food would be
available for the soldiers defending Mobile. Governor
Watts added his voice to those of Maury and Slough and
made arrangements with planters and townsmen of the
interior to house the refugees. Hundreds of people
finally left the city, and many of them found a welcome
in Montgomery, where a number of their fellow townsmen
had gone earlier.\(^13\)

Confederate authorities in Richmond did not ignore
the possible threat to Mobile. In particular, Davis
seemed anxious that Sherman's column be stopped before it
could reach the Gulf. He urged Joe Johnston at Dalton to
send troops to Polk to attack the Federals. The capture
of Mobile would not only mean the loss of its port and
rail facilities but also that the enemy would have a good
base for operations into the interior of Alabama.
Johnston replied to the president's entreaties by saying
that his army was too weak to aid Polk and hold the
approaches to Atlanta at the same time. He then suggested

\(^13\) Ibid., Feb. 16, 1864; Mumford Diary, Feb. 15,
1864; Chambers, "My Journal," 302; Mary Elizabeth Massey,
Refugee Life in the Confederacy (Baton Rouge: Louisiana
that Polk assemble all of his cavalry and use it to harass Sherman's line of march. Seddon telegraphed Beauregard at Charleston and asked if he could go and assume command of the defenses at Mobile. The Creole general replied that Charleston remained threatened and that he did not think it proper for him to take over at Mobile at such a late hour because he did not know the situation there. Beauregard offered only to inspect the defenses and confer with Maury. The War Department then ordered Gabriel Rains back to Mobile from Charleston to work once more with subterranean shells.

By February 13, Maury had learned of Farragut's planned attack on Grant's Pass, though he apparently did not know the attack was only a feint. He asked the War Department for 6,000 more men to hold the lines in the event of a siege. While he felt that he had a sufficient supply of commissary stores, Maury requested more ordnance for his heavy artillery. In response to Maury's request

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for experienced engineers, the Engineer Bureau made application for several officers to Seddon. Maury's report to Seddon on the condition of his outer line did not sound optimistic. He found Fort Powell weak and difficult to strengthen properly. A determined enemy assault would probably get through Grant's Pass. According to Maury, the defensive posture near the main channel did not seem very much better:

...The line between Forts Morgan and Gaines is also very liable from the same causes to be forced. The channel is too wide and deep to defend or obstruct effectually. The battery to have been placed in the channel is not yet quite ready, nor has the admiral yet been able to move the Tennessee into the lower bay. The enemy will probably, therefore, be able to occupy the lower bay with his fleet of war ships, and will do so preliminary to the siege. 17

Various preparations for the threatened attack occurred in the city. Colonel Charles A. Fuller, Post Commandant, ordered all saloons and drinking establishments closed to try to keep soldiers of the garrison as sober as possible. Mayor Slough issued a civil order which


echoed Fuller's directive. General Cantey, commander of the troops in and around the city, required all men in Mobile who could bear arms to enroll for defense of the city. He would force all who did not obey his order to leave Mobile immediately. Efforts to procure enough food to supply the garrison continued. Polk contributed a quantity of bacon from Mississippi: "...it is not well cured & it may be well to issue the joints at once & to have the balance packed carefully in a cool place." To supplement the food coming in from normal sources, Captain V. M. Byrnes, Post Commissary, asked that citizens leaving Mobile and unable to take subsistence stores with them turn these supplies over to his office for use by the military. Persons who responded to Byrne's request would receive receipts and orders which commissaries in the interior would honor for an amount of stores equal those turned in at Mobile.  

On the morning of February 16, 1864, the anticipated attack on Fort Powell began. Six mortar schooners and

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18 Special Order No. 6, Commandant Post, Feb. 10, 1864, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Feb. 11, 1864; Order, Mayor's Office, Feb. 10, 1864, quoted in ibid.; General Order No. 22, Headquarters Cantey's Brigade, Feb. 15, 1864, quoted in Daily Tribune, Mar. 8, 1864; Polk to Maury, Feb. 16, 1864, Letters and Telegrams Sent, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, Chap. II, Vol. 8 3/4, p. 45, RG 109, National Archives.  

19 Notice, Office Post Commissary, Feb. 16, 1864, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Feb. 16, 1864.
four gunboats opened fire on the fort at about nine o'clock that morning. The Confederates manning the guns in Powell replied infrequently to the enemy bombardment. None of their shells struck the Federal vessels. Most of the shells hurled at the fort also fell short of their mark. A Confederate officer wrote later to his girlfriend: "The damage to the Fort was very trifling." At least five Federal shells exploded in the officers' quarters and completely destroyed them. Two men in the fort, one of them Lieutenant Colonel James M. Williams, commanding the post, received wounds during the attack. A shell fragment knocked Williams down and stunned him. He barely escaped being killed according to a newspaper report: "The shell grazed the front of his army and body, entirely tearing away the sleeve and breast of his coat." At least one Confederate concluded from the

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results of the bombardment that naval fire alone would not reduce the fort. 22

Heavy winds from the north prevented the Federal vessels from renewing their attack for a week. Maury used the lull to continue his defensive preparations. He requested additional artillery shells, powder, and rifle ammunition from the War Department. To inquiries from Beauregard, Maury and Von Sheliha both replied that the engineers had placed a heavy sand glacis, or cover, around the walls of Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines to protect the masonry from the fire of rifled cannons. Maury continued to collect food supplies from Polk to provide subsistence in the event of a siege. To assist Von Sheliha in the construction of fortifications near the city and in the strengthening of the outer defensive line, Maury requested the War Department to assign Major General Jeremy F. Gilmer, Chief of the Engineer Bureau, to Mobile temporarily. Finally, to guard against a possible landing on the coast, Maury organized a force of sharpshooters from his infantry brigades and sent them with the

15th Confederate Cavalry and two field pieces to Bayou LaBatre. 23

The Confederate high command and Maury divided their attention between defense of the city and Sherman's movements in Mississippi. Seddon advised Maury to concentrate his efforts against Sherman in the field rather than preparing to defend Mobile itself. The Federals had reached Meridian on February 14 and sent detachments south along the Mobile and Ohio Railroad to Enterprise. Maury apparently agreed with Seddon's strategy because he registered no protest and ordered Cantey's brigade up the railroad to prevent any further southward movement by the enemy. Polk granted one of Maury's requests and sent the 1st Alabama Infantry to Mobile. This unit took charge of the heavy artillery in seven redoubts on the city's outer line of defenses. Polk also promised to send the 1st

Mississippi Artillery to Mobile as soon as he could do so. Von Sheliha had gathered additional entrenching tools from Montgomery and put them to use with the force of slave laborers then coming in from the interior. By February 20, Maury had almost 9,300 men under his command ready for the defense of the city. Although not a large army, this force was probably sufficient considering the enemy forces threatening Mobile. 24

Farragut's mortar schooners and gunboats renewed their attack on Fort Powell on February 23 and continued their bombardment the two days following. On the twenty-third, the Federal gunners fired slightly more than 300 shells at the fort but caused no damage and no casualties. During the attack on the following day, the Federal vessels threw nearly 375 shells toward Fort Powell. Again, few of the shells struck the target, and those that did had no serious effects. The Confederate artillerymen in Fort Powell initiated the action of February 25 by firing on the Federal squadron. Despite the

470 shells fired in reply by the enemy, the fort sustained less damage than it had the previous day. The garrison lost one man killed and two wounded, however.25

A frustrated Union naval officer wrote to a comrade about these fruitless attacks:

We are hammering away at the fort here, which minds us about as much as if we did not fire—that is, the fort—for the men skedaddle as soon as the fire is at all brisk, although they will keep up anything like a fair fight, as they did with me for two hours yesterday in the Orvetta, and until the others commenced action, when they retired.26

Heavy northerly winds, low tides, and bad weather prevented Farragut's vessels from renewing their attack on Fort Powell until February 29, but on that day they carried out the fiercest bombardment the fort had to sustain. They fired some 567 shells that day, but the attack again had negligible results:

...only 20 [shells] struck the island and 3, the bombproof, killing or wounding no one and damaging the Fort so slightly that ten men in


26Captain Percival Drayton to Jenkins, Feb. 24, 1864, O.R.N., XXI, 95.
ten minutes restored it to its former condition. . . .

The Confederate gunners fired slightly more effectively than before. Despite the bursting of one of their cannons, the men kept up a steady barrage. Five shells struck one of the mortar schooners, forcing her out of the action. The commander of the Confederate ram Baltic wrote to a friend about the engagement:

...I saw some beautiful line shots made...during the bombardment, and am satisfied at least one of the mortar schooners would have been sunk if sailors had been handling it [a cannon], but unfortunately those who were working it knew not how to sight a gun....

Finally at sunset Farragut ordered his ships to break off the engagement. The fort's flag remained flying as the Federal vessels sailed westward.

The bombardment of the twenty-ninth convinced Farragut that further attacks on Fort Powell would yield no better results. He also realized that he could do nothing to result in capture of the Confederate forts guarding


29 Farragut to Welles, Mar. 1, 1864, O.R.N., XXI, 97.
the entrances to Mobile Bay. High winds and low tides had prevented the Federal vessels from getting any closer than two miles to the fort. Several ships ran aground during the two week demonstration and had to be towed off. The low water also made it almost impossible for small boats to land an assault force against the fort. Buchanan's small squadron of gunboats had assumed a position in rear of Fort Powell where they could take the garrison off or reinforce it. The ironclad Tennessee could not get over Dog River Bar, but Farragut mistook the Baltic or another vessel for the Tennessee. Thinking the ironclad ready for action, Farragut did not feel he could run into the bay without monitors or ironclads of his own. Lacking troops to cut off the land approaches to the Confederate forts, the Union admiral decided he could not attack Mobile Bay successfully and chose to end his demonstration. 30

Fort Powell had come through this baptism of fire very well, although particular facets of its defense had not satisfied the Confederate command. In each attack the Confederate guns had been silenced because the weight

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30 Farragut to Fox, Feb. 28, 1864, quoted in Thompson and Wainwright (eds.), Confidential Correspondence of Gustavus Vasa Fox, I, 345; Farragut to Welles, Feb. 28, 1864, O.R.N., XXI, 96-97; Farragut to Welles, Mar. 1, 1864, ibid., 97; Farragut to Jenkins, Mar. 1, 1864, ibid., 98; Farragut to Banks, Mar. 2, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 2, p. 12.
of metal thrown against the fort had made it impossible for the artillerymen to remain at their stations. The Confederate engineers could not strengthen the earth and sand parapets and traverses so that the men could remain safely at their guns. None of the torpedoes placed in the waters west of Grant's Pass exploded even though the Federal vessels struck many of them. Later the engineers discovered that marine worms had formed clusters on the tops of the torpedoes and prevented the firing mechanisms from working. Despite these disappointments, the Confederate military authorities remained pleased with the defense of the fort. The garrison had lost only one man killed and five wounded. None of the nearly 2,000 shells fired at the fort did any damage which the men could not repair overnight:

...not a single gun had been dismounted, not a single traverse had been seriously damaged, nor had the parapet and the bomb-proof lost any of their strength, all damage done by the exploding shells being at once repaired by throwing sand-bags in the open craters....

Major General Gilmer arrived in Mobile on February 24, 1864, to serve on temporary duty under Maury. He had helped design many of the defensive works at Charleston,

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so his experience could prove very useful. With Maury and Buchanan, Gilmer visited Fort Powell and Fort Gaines during the bombardment of the former place. Later he reviewed the troops manning the city works and made a thorough inspection of the land defenses. He found the various forts and redoubts strong though incomplete. Gilmer requested the War Department to order more engineers to Mobile to expedite completion of the works. To strengthen the position at Grant's Pass, he ordered the construction of small earthwork batteries at Cedar Point and Little Dauphin Island. These works would prevent the Federals from erecting land batteries there to use against Fort Powell. The battery at Cedar Point Gilmer wanted built around the cedar trees located there to help conceal it. By the time Gilmer left on March 9, he expressed confidence that with a show of naval force to

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33 Maury to Cooper, Feb. 25, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 1, p. 401; Ross, Cities and Camps, 186-98; Advertiser and Register, Feb. 26, 1864; Mumford Diary, Feb. 25, 1864; Rives to Seddon, Feb. 26, 1864, Letters and Telegrams Sent, Engineer Bureau, Chap. III, Vol. 4, p. 473; Rives to Gilmer, Feb. 26, 1864, ibid., 474; Rives to Gilmer, Mar. 2, 1864, ibid., 482; Rives to Maury, Mar. 3, 1864, ibid., 485.
back it up, the outer line of defenses at Mobile could prevent the Federal fleet from entering the bay.  

Another new general, Brigadier General Richard L. Page, reported for duty at Mobile about this time to replace Higgins. The latter, whom Maury had assigned to command the outer defenses, became ill in early February and had to be relieved of command. Maury requested that Seddon promote Colonel Henry Maury of the 15th Confederate Cavalry and assign him in Higgins' place. Davis instead chose Page as Higgins' replacement and ordered him to proceed to Fort Morgan. At the time, Page held the rank of captain in the Confederate Navy, so Davis arranged his appointment as brigadier general. There is no evidence explaining Davis' choice of Page, but the new general's background seemed to qualify him for the position. A native of Virginia, Page had served in the United States Navy from 1824 to 1861. He resigned his commission when Virginia seceded and helped construct defenses on the James and Nansemond rivers. Later Page commanded shore batteries near Norfolk. When he received Davis' order, he held command of the ordnance and

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34Ives to Davis, Feb. 29, 1864, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 631; Von Sheliha to Fremaux, Mar. 2, 1864, ibid., XXXII, Pt. 3, pp. 577-78; Gilmer to Seddon, Mar. 9, 1864, ibid., LII, Pt. 2, p. 637.

35Advertiser and Register, Feb. 18, 1864; Maury to Seddon, Mar. 3, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 1, p. 403.
construction depot at Charlotte, North Carolina, a post he had ably filled for two years.\(^{36}\) Page reached Fort Morgan March 12 and quickly made a favorable impression on the officers and men of the garrison:

We are very well pleased with our new general, although he hasn't found out the difference between a fort and a ship yet. He is a tall erect old fellow with the air of a man who has seen service and been accustomed to exercise command. A great disciplinarian, but very quiet and gentlemanly with it all. He is vastly preferred to his predecessor the irascible Higgins.\(^{37}\)

The land threat to Mobile ended when Sherman's army began its withdrawal from Meridian February 20 and crossed the Pearl River February 24.\(^{38}\) The duties of the Confederate troops around the city became more routine. Battalion and regimental drills helped improve the


\(^{37}\) Tarleton to Lightfoot, Mar. 11, 28, 1864, Tarleton Letters.

discipline and instruction of the men. At times the various brigades competed against each other in "match drills." Some of the regiments which had manned the outer line of the land defenses returned to the city and established camps in the several squares. The men of these regiments performed guard duty at various governmental or military buildings. One guard detachment at the government whiskey depot took advantage of their assignment: "...some of the men soon drank enough to render them boisterous and afterward utterly useless as guards,..." 39 Food prices remained high and rations for the soldiers skimpy: "The troops only receive ten pounds of meat per month with corn meal and salt." 40 To try to make up the deficit in food supplies, Maury ordered that the men plant vegetable gardens between the lines of fortifications. The soldiers worked the gardens and then ate the produce. 41


41 Maury to Seddon, Mar. 3, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 1, p. 403; Advertiser and Register, Mar. 8, 1864.
Maury continued to move his units around as the month of March progressed. He sent troops from Mobile to relieve regiments which had been stationed along the coast to support Fort Powell. Men of the 1st Alabama Infantry occupied the battery at Cedar Point and reinforced the garrison at Fort Powell. The remainder of this regiment and the other units on the coast moved into comfortable tent camps in the nearby pine groves. Often the men dredged for oysters to supplement their rations. One soldier remembered later: "Under such circumstances, the duty imposed on the regiment was not regarded as onerous." Maury ordered three brigades from the suburbs of the city to the spacious piney woods near Pollard, where Cantey assumed command of them. While in transit by boat from Mobile to Tensas Landing, many of the men occupied their time by shooting alligators sunning on the river banks. Once in camp near Pollard, the soldiers constructed and occupied cabins. They found plenty of good water and fuel nearby and settled down to picket and drill duty. Most of the troops who remained

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at Mobile moved to the larger forts on Von Sheliha's line, where they camped behind the entrenchments. 43

Work on the various defensive positions continued while Maury moved his troops around, and the army and navy commanders attempted to maintain vigilance in case of another attack. Von Sheliha found too much difficulty in transporting heavy siege artillery to his Little Dauphin Island battery and decided to arm the work with Parrott guns on field carriages. To give Fort Morgan further protection, Von Sheliha began construction of a seven-gun water battery at the base of the fort's western face. The engineers completed three redoubts on the new land line near the city and moved guns into them. All of this engineering work required experienced men to carry it out, so the Engineer Bureau persuaded Seddon to continue the detail of three civilian engineers who had worked for the chief engineer at Mobile for several years. 44 Buchanan, meanwhile, kept all of his gunboats

43 Advertiser and Register, Mar. 20, 1864; Chambers, "My Journal," 308-310; Orear to Carrie Orear and parents, Mar. 26, 1864, Weaver Collection; Butler to aunt, Mar. 21, 1864, Butler Family Papers.

in the lower bay near Fort Powell, while he attempted to get the *Tennessee* over the Dog River Bar. The poor condition of the ram *Baltic* caused naval constructor John L. Porter to recommend that workmen strip off her iron and place it on newer vessels. Buchanan continued to keep her in service despite Porter's recommendation and her own commander's opinion of her: "...the *Baltic* is as rotten as punk, and is about as fit to go to sea as a mud scow...."\(^45\)

\(^{45}\)Simms to Jones, Mar. 20, 1864, *O.R.N.*, XXI, 884; Simms to Jones, Mar. 30, 1864, *ibid.*, 886.
CHAPTER XI
"...AN ATTACK IS REALLY IMMINENT..."

The specter of an attack on Mobile raised by Farragut's demonstration in February 1864 caused Von Sheliha to press his engineering operations, but a shortage of labor hampered him during much of the month of April. About the twelfth of that month he had 250 men working on the city entrenchments. Companies of soldiers sentenced to hard labor by courts martial supplemented the slave force but still did not constitute enough men to conduct the construction at the rate needed. Von Sheliha complained to the Engineer Bureau that although the yearly price paid planters for their hands ($360) seemed liberal, it probably would not suffice to satisfy the planters even if the government furnished clothing, quarters and rations. He recommended conscription as the only sure way to bring in workers. Colonel George B. Hodge, in Mobile on an inspection tour for the War Department, echoed Von Sheliha's conclusions.¹ By the end

of the month, Von Sheliha reported his labor force had increased. He also received permission from the War Department to hire 2,000 slaves, and agents moved into both Mississippi and Alabama to obtain the needed workers. If he could not hire enough laborers, Von Sheliha had the War Department's permission also to impress slaves.  

Von Sheliha and his engineers conducted their operations as well as they could. They concentrated most of the work done along the lower bay line on Fort Morgan and Fort Powell because Von Sheliha believed Fort Gaines in satisfactory condition. At Fort Morgan, the engineers completed the water battery and had a redoubt east of the fort nearly complete. Recognizing the exposed position of the parapet guns in Morgan, Von Sheliha ordered the erection of traverses between each gun to afford some protection for the gunners. The engineers added more sandbags to thicken the fort's magazine. They also completed the western face of Fort Powell, the earthwork now being large enough to hold eleven guns. In the main

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ship channel, the engineers placed more torpedoes and sank the first of a series of timber obstructions. On the city entrenchments, Von Sheliha's men laid gun platforms in four redoubts, continued strengthening of three others, and began construction of a new redan. Hodge had high praise for the fortifications:

...They evince a scientific proficiency in engineering unsurpassed, if equalled, by anything on this continent, and are themselves the most eloquent evidence of the educated skill of the engineer in charge, Lieut. Col. Von Sheliha.³

Maury shifted fresh troops to Fort Gaines to relieve the men who had garrisoned the post for many months. Seven companies of the 1st Alabama Infantry moved from Alabama Port to Dauphin Island. This regiment and the 30th Louisiana Infantry Battalion did duty in the fort on alternate days, while two companies of the Alabama regiment manned the guns every night. Although the men of the garrison did not have much in the way of amusements to occupy their idle hours, they did eat well. Using a large seine and the more standard hook and line, the soldiers caught a variety of fish, crabs, and oysters.

In addition to seafood, the men enjoyed vegetables raised in a ten acre garden near the fort. The only real excitement on the island during the month of April occurred on the sixteenth. A landing party of about 100 men came ashore on the western end of the island from the Federal fleet. A picket guard quickly drove back the invaders. On the twentieth, the men at Fort Gaines thought they would witness an engagement at Fort Morgan when a Federal gunboat shelled a party of laborers erecting a battery near the fort, but the vessel withdrew after firing only a few shots. 4

On April 13, 1864, Colonel Hodge reported to the War Department on his inspection tour. He stated that he found the troops "well equipped and clad, and evincing in the precision of their drill and maneuvers a marked and most creditable efficiency." 5 Their weapons he noted as being in excellent shape. Hodge concluded: "The

4 Edward Young McMorries, History of the First Regiment Alabama Volunteer Infantry C.S.A. (Montgomery: The Brown Printing Co., 1904), 72; Roll dated Apr. 30, 1864, Field and Staff, Record of Events Cards, 30th Louisiana, Compiled Service Records; Daniel Smith, Company K, First Alabama Regiment, or Three Years in the Confederate Service (Prattville, Ala.: Published by the Survivors, 1885), 92-94.

5 Advertiser and Register, Apr. 5, 1864; Mumford Diary, Apr. 4, 1864; Hodge to Cooper, Apr. 13, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 3, p. 778.
entire force compares favorably with any of similar numbers I have seen in the armies of the Confederacy."  

When Hodge began his inspection, Maury had five brigades numbering 9,300 men, but soon reductions in the garrison totaling 3,100 men occurred. Baldwin's old brigade, now under Brigadier General Claudius W. Sears, left Pollard on April 11 for Selma, where it once again became part of Polk's field army. On the twentieth, Cantey's brigade began leaving Pollard on their way to join Johnston's army in northern Georgia. The War Department ordered this latter transfer so that Johnston might eventually gather enough men to enable him to assume the offensive into Tennessee.  

Hodge had both negative and positive comments about the supply departments at Mobile. He wrote critically of

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6 Hodge to Cooper, Apr. 13, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 3, p. 778.

the quartermaster situation. The officer in charge of these supplies did not answer to Maury but had responsibility only to the Quartermaster General in Richmond, a situation which existed almost everywhere in the Confederacy. Thus any time the army in Mobile requested quartermaster supplies, the requisition had to go all the way to Richmond to receive approval. Hodge echoed a complaint Maury had made to Polk to have the situation changed. The commissariat seemed in much better shape. Hodge found enough food supplies in Maury's warehouses to feed the garrison for six months. On April 1 the rations issued to the men had been increased. One soldier commented later that the meat ration went up from 1 1/4 pounds to 1 1/2 pounds a day and bacon from 1/3 pound to 1/2 pound a day. At least one subordinate commander had established a fishery to add variety to his men's diets. All of the foodstuffs Hodge found to be of "excellent quality." 

The onset of the Atlanta campaign in May resulted in further inroads in the strength of the Mobile garrison.

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8 Hodge to Cooper, Apr. 13, 1864, O.R., XXXII, Pt. 3, pp. 779-80; Maury to Polk, Apr. 11, 1864, ibid., 772.

9 Hodge to Cooper, Apr. 13, 1864, ibid., 779-80; Mumford Diary, Apr. 1, 1864; Smith, Company K, 92; Lieutenant Samuel A. Verdery to Captain Edward Durrive, Apr. 14, 1864, Records of the Department of the Gulf, LHA Collection.
On the first, Johnston requested that Reynold's brigade at Pollard be ordered to join the Army of Tennessee. Maury complied with the request by sending the brigade plus an Alabama battery to Dalton. To replace Reynold's brigade at Pollard, Maury brought the 1st Alabama Infantry to Mobile from Fort Gaines and forwarded the regiment on to Pollard. There the 1st Alabama had to perform the guard and picket duty several regiments had done.

Shortly after these troop movements, Polk ordered Maury to send two regiments to Selma. Maury ordered not only these regiments but two field batteries as well. 10 Toward the end of May, Johnston needed more men to reinforce his hard-pressed army. The War Department ordered Quarles' Tennessee brigade from Mobile to northern Georgia. In addition to the Tennessee regiments, Quarles took with him the 30th Louisiana Battalion at Fort Gaines and the 1st Alabama. Maury sent the 22nd Louisiana Consolidated Infantry from the city works to Pollard to

10 Johnston to Bragg, May 1, 1864, O.R., XXXVIII, Pt. 4, p. 654; Maury to Polk, May 5, 1864, ibid., 668; Smith, Company K, 94; Polk to Maury, May 4, 1864, Letters and Telegrams Sent, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, Chap. II, Vol. 8 3/4, p. 235; Para XII, Special Order No. 126, Headquarters Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, May 5, 1864, O.R., XXXVIII, Pt. 4, p. 668; Para VII, Special Order No. 126, Headquarters District of the Gulf, May 5, 1864, Orders, District of the Gulf; Para VII, Special Order No. 141, Headquarters District of the Gulf, May 20, 1864, ibid.
replace the Alabama regiment. Not only did all of these soldiers go to Georgia, but Maury also ordered all spare horses and mules to Johnston.\textsuperscript{11} The departure of these troops reduced Maury's force by approximately 2,000 men and left him with an army of slightly more than 4,300 men. The absence of an enemy threat to the city meant that the loss of nearly one-third his garrison had little real impact on Maury's situation, however.\textsuperscript{12}

Maury established an artillery school in May for the officers and men of regiments remaining in the District of the Gulf. In April he had proposed to the War Department the establishment of a military academy to train promising privates to become officers for Confederate armies in the Southwest, but the law did not permit such a school.\textsuperscript{13} The artillery school opened on May 20 with details of officers and men from all of the regiments

\textsuperscript{11}Para XX, Special Order No. 118, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, May 21, 1864, O.R., XXXVIII, Pt. 4, p. 732; Bragg to Johnston, May 21, 1864, ibid.; LII, Pt. 2, p. 671; Hunter to Stella, May 24, 1864, Hunter-Taylor Papers; Smith, Company K, 95; Roll for May and June 1864, Field and Staff, Record of Events Cards, 22nd Louisiana Consolidated Infantry, Compiled Service Records; Mumford Diary, May 19, 1864.


\textsuperscript{13}Maury to Cooper, Apr. 23, 1864, ibid., 4, III, 317-18.
in attendance. Maury hoped the school would provide needed instruction to officers and men who had never handled heavy artillery and also act as a refresher course for those who had. Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Beltzhoover of the 1st Louisiana Heavy Artillery commanded the school and taught the officers. Three subordinate officers instructed the non-commissioned officers and enlisted men. Many of the officers resented having to attend the school, especially since they had manned artillery batteries throughout the war. Besides the lengthy studies and recitations conducted by Beltzhoover and his instructors, the course included artillery and infantry drill as well. Some students did not find the meals served at the school very nourishing:

...Breakfast, rye coffee and corn bread (of unsifted meal); dinner, corn bread and boiled bacon, except on three days out of ten, when molasses was issued in lieu of bacon; supper, corn bread and rice boiled in the pot liquor left at noon...

The school continued its sessions until June 27, when it closed under the false expectation of reopening later at Fort Gaines. Although no evaluation of the school's


15 Mumford Diary, June 17, 27, 1864.
results exist, it must have benefitted most of the officers and men who attended.

A shortage of competent engineer troops and laborers continued to plague Von Sheliha during May. He still had officers out in Mississippi and other areas of Alabama trying to hire slaves. An unexpected source of laborers came in the form of a small group of Negro troops captured by Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest at Fort Pillow, Tennessee. The War Department authorized the use of these runaway slaves on the fortifications provided their owners received remuneration. Von Sheliha complained to the Engineer Bureau that enrolling officers had conscripted many of his mechanics and other skilled white laborers. The Bureau intervened with the War Department to get the enrolling officers to "interfere as little as possible with the mechanics, experts &c... necessary to the prosecution of the operations" of Von Sheliha at Mobile. One company of engineer troops had already formed under Captain Leverette Hutchinson in

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the District of the Gulf. The War Department authorized a second company but refused to permit Von Sheliha to organize a third. The department did allow him to recruit Captain Jules V. Gallimard's company of sappers and miners so that it could render efficient engineer service and suggested he call upon engineer companies organized in the army of the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana when needed.\(^\text{18}\)

Admiral Buchanan attempted to conduct a sortie against the Federal blockading fleet in late May. His ironclad ram, the **Tennessee**, finally got across Dog River Bar on May 18. A potentially formidable vessel with her six Brooke rifled guns, heavy ram, and four inches of iron plating, the **Tennessee** was, however, slow and had exposed tiller chains. Davis and the Navy Department had pressured Buchanan to raise the blockade even though he wished to wait until completion of the ironclad **Nashville**. Accompanied by the **Baltic**, **Gaines**, **Morgan**, and **Selma**, Buchanan took the **Tennessee** down the bay to an anchorage near Fort Morgan. On the first night chosen for the attack, bad weather hampered the squadron's movements and prevented an offensive. The **Tennessee** ran aground the next night. By the time she

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\(^{18}\)Rives to Captain Leverette Hutchinson, May 28, 1864, *ibid.*, 270; Rives to Von Sheliha, May 21, 1864, *ibid.*, 205.
floated off, Buchanan had decided to cancel the attack because he considered Farragut's fleet too strong. Farragut had expected the Confederates to come out for some time and had reinforced the blockading fleet until it numbered a dozen vessels. Although the results of Buchanan's foray down the bay were negative, at least one army officer supported his cancellation of the attack:

...Everyone thinks the admiral acted most prudently. I don't think the younger portion of the gunboats fancied the expedition much.\textsuperscript{19}

During much of the month of June 1864 several Confederate officers feared an attack on Mobile. Maury reported that Captain James D. Johnston, commander of the Tennessee, expected Farragut to run into the bay. He also stated that every effort to obstruct effectively the main ship channel had failed. General Page at Fort Morgan was also apprehensive and had no confidence in any of the Confederate warships except the Tennessee. From slaves who had escaped from the Federal lines at Pensacola, Page learned that the enemy planned to make an

attack on June 18. When that day passed without an assault, he became convinced that the Federal move had only been postponed. He complained to a friend that he had only 300 men in the fort, not enough to man all of the guns, and saw no prospects of any reinforcements. One of Page's subordinates at Fort Morgan did not share the general's pessimism and noted that the Federal fleet did not seem as strong as it had been when the month began. The officer concluded:

...General Page persists in thinking an attack imminent and his mind is so peculiarly constituted that when once an absurd idea gets into it there is no getting it out except to make room for another equally absurd....

The Confederates' fears had some basis in reality because the Union high command had such an attack in the planning stages. Grant had intended that an assault take place in April to coincide with his Virginia campaign and Sherman's northern Georgia campaign. Banks' army, which would conduct the attack against Mobile, suffered delays and defeats in its Red River expedition that prevented it from complying with Grant's wishes.21

20 Maury to Cooper, June 3, 1864, O.R.N., XXI, 901; Page to Jones, June 26, 1864, ibid., 903-904; Tarleton to Lightfoot, June 17, 19, 22, 1864, Tarleton Letters.

21 Grant to Banks, Mar. 15, 1864, O.R., XXXIV, Pt. 2, pp. 610-11; Grant to Banks, Mar. 31, 1864, ibid., Pt. 1, p. 11; Grant to Sherman, Apr. 4, 1864, ibid., XXXII, Pt. 3, pp. 245-46; Grant to Major General David Hunter,
Once the Red River campaign ended, Grant and Sherman renewed their requests for a Mobile expedition. Sherman wanted only a feint to draw Confederate troops away from Georgia. Grant, on the other hand, hoped to see the city captured so that Federal forces could use it as a base from which to supply Sherman's armies after they got deep into Georgia. Major General Edward R. S. Canby, new Union commander in the Gulf region, began making preparations and intended to send Brigadier General Andrew J. Smith's troops to make the attack. This plan Canby had to abandon when Forrest defeated a Union force at Brice's Crossroads, and Smith's men moved to Memphis to help fight Forrest. Canby suspended subsequent plans when Grant ordered two divisions from Canby's army to protect Washington, D. C., from a threat by Confederate Major General Jubal Early's army. This second delay meant that the Federals could make no move against Mobile until some time in July at the very earliest. 22

22 Grant to Halleck, June 3, 1864, ibid., Pt. 4, p. 185; Sherman to Major General Edward R. S. Canby, June 4, 1864, ibid., 212; Sherman to Brigadier General Andrew J. Smith, June 4, 1864, ibid., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 79; Grant to Halleck, June 5, 1864, ibid.; Halleck to Canby, June 6, 1864, ibid., XXXIV, Pt. 4, p. 240; Sherman to Major
The month of June 1864 proved a period of ups and downs for Von Sheliha and his engineer operations. Early in the month, Colonel S. Crutchfield reported the results of an inspection tour to the Ordnance Bureau in Richmond. He found most of the ammunition magazines in the bay batteries and city works inadequate for proper storage. In almost every case he described the magazines as too small, while he said a few were damp or poorly ventilated. Toward the middle of the month, the Engineer Bureau authorized Von Sheliha to purchase the right to cut timber from land near the city works for use as lumber and fuel. Under orders from Maury, Von Sheliha organized his engineer employees into a battalion for local defense, a move which would result in improved instruction and discipline. To a request by Von Sheliha that it allow him to reorganize Gallimard's company of sappers and miners and increase its strength to 100 men, the War Department replied in the negative. He could only raise the company's strength to a total of 64 men. On June 25 Von Sheliha wrote to Gilmer asking to be relieved from duty:

...His reasons for making this application are that he receives no assistance whatever and

General Cadwallader C. Washburn, June 14, 1864, ibid., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 115; Canby to Halleck, June 18, 1864, ibid., XXXIV, Pt. 4, pp. 438-39; Halleck to Canby, June 24, 1864, ibid., 528; Canby to Farragut, July 1, 1864, ibid., XLI, Pt. 2, pp. 3-4; Canby to Washburn, July 2, 1864, ibid., 21-22.
yet is expected to accomplish more than any Engineer could possibly perform with the inadequate means at his disposal.

The War Department turned down Von Sheliha's request, however, and he remained at his post in Mobile.

By July 1, 1864, Maury had few troops left in his command. In the entire District of the Gulf, only 4,337 effectives remained. Page's brigade, which garrisoned the three lower bay forts, numbered slightly more than 1,200 men, some 200 of whom were cavalrymen on picket and outpost duty. At Pollard, Colonel Isaac W. Patton had his own 22nd Louisiana Infantry, a cavalry regiment, and an artillery battery, in all about 1,100 men. This force had responsibility for the protection of the railroad to Montgomery as well as covering the approaches from Pensacola to Mobile. In early June, Higgins had returned to Mobile from sick leave and assumed command of the city works and bay batteries, also known as the artillery brigade. Under his command he had 1,100 artillerymen


and 400 local defense troops. Most of Higgins' men, having manned many of the water batteries at Vicksburg, had a great deal of proficiency at operating heavy artillery pieces. Their small numbers meant that they had to perform a great deal of guard duty in addition to their normal routine. Besides having a shortage of troops, Higgins also had fewer artillery pieces than his predecessor. Maury had sent a large number of heavy guns and mortars to Atlanta for the works there.  

The Mobile garrison suffered further reductions in strength when the 1st Louisiana Heavy Artillery and 1st Mississippi Light Artillery regiments left for Meridian on July 6. These two units acted as infantrymen under orders to assist in opposing a Union force marching eastward from Vicksburg. In speaking of the departure of the troops, one officer wrote in his diary: "Mobile is left almost without a corporal's guard,..." Recognizing Mobile's weakened condition, Confederate authorities in Richmond sought to find additional troops for the garrison. Davis asked Governor Watts to organize state reserve units for Mobile, and Cooper ordered Major

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25 Ibid.; Organization of troops in the District of the Gulf, June 30, 1864, ibid., 678; General Order No. 1, Headquarters Commandant of Mobile, June 4, 1864, quoted in Mobile Evening News, June 10, 1864; Mumford Diary, June 5, 6, July 1, 1864.

26 Mumford Diary, July 5, 1864.
General Jones M. Withers, commander of the Alabama Reserves, to send available units to the city. By mid-July, some 40 to 50 companies of reserves had moved to aid Maury. Major General Stephen D. Lee, who had succeeded Polk in departmental command, briefly considered dismounting some of Forrest's cavalry and sending them to Mobile, but he realized that such troops would not be practical there. Maury, however, remained anxious to get his two artillery regiments back because of their experience "in preparing the redoubts, mounting guns, &c" and wrote Lee: "...I know you will hasten them to me at the earliest moment at which you can spare them."28

Intelligence reports reaching Maury continued to indicate that the enemy would soon make an attack on Mobile, and he made various efforts to prepare for the assault. He did not appear confident of complete success: "In view of the large naval preparations of the enemy we may expect Forts Morgan, Gaines, &c., to be cut

27 Davis to Watts, July 7, 1864, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 687; Cooper to Withers, July 8, 1864, ibid., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 695; Davis to Withers, July 11, 1864, ibid., LII, Pt. 2, p. 691; Withers to Davis, July 12, 1864, ibid., 692; Davis to Withers, July 13, 1864, ibid., 693; Cooper to Withers, July 14, 1864, ibid., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 712; Withers to Cooper, July 14, 1864, ibid.; Withers to Bragg, July 15, 1864, ibid., LII, Pt. 2, p. 708.

28 Lee to Bragg, July 9, 1864, ibid., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 696; Lee to Bragg, July 10, 1864, ibid., 700; Davis to Lee, July 11, 1864, ibid., 702; Maury to Lee, July 11, 1864, ibid.
off, and even reduced." Maury still faced the problem of too many non-combatants remaining in the city. To Lee, Maury complained:

...these people are not Virginians; they do not desire their city to be defended, and unless they see a pretty formidable force coming in here they will give me much trouble during my preparations.

While a bit too harsh, Maury's assessment seems to have been basically correct. The great majority of the people undoubtedly wished to see some sort of defense made but not if it meant a bombardment of the city itself. An evacuation or bloodless surrender would allow them to continue their everyday lives relatively unaffected, and most of the population probably felt more concern about protecting their homes and livelihoods than occupation by the enemy. A few merchants and businessmen undoubtedly thought enemy occupation would benefit the city economically and looked forward to the day when the Stars and Stripes replaced the Stars and Bars.

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30Maury to Cooper, July 5, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 687; Maury to Cooper, July 7, 1864, ibid., 693; Maury to Lee, July 9, 1864, ibid., 697; Maury to Bragg, July 14, 1864, Bragg Papers, Duke; Maury to Lee, July 11, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 703.
Maury requested several things to help in the defense of the city. He asked for the impressment of an additional 5,000 slaves to work on the city's land entrenchments. He also sent requisitions to the War Department for more heavy artillery ammunition. To this request, Cooper responded that all of the ordnance stores which he had asked for had been sent. Finally, Maury suggested that, since his information indicated no Union offensive operations in the near future, the Confederate forces west of the Mississippi River act to divert Union troops collecting to attack Mobile. Davis then sent word to General Edmund Kirby Smith, commander of the Trans-Mississippi Department, that he should send available troops east of the river to defeat any enemy moves there.  

The two artillery units which Maury loaned to Lee returned to Mobile on July 18, 1864. These regiments had served as a reserve infantry force during the battle of Tupelo, Mississippi, on July 14 and became free to go back to Maury following the retreat of the Union army.

31Von Sheliha to Rives, July 9, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 698; Maury to Cooper, July 7, 1864, ibid., 692; Maury to Cooper, July 7, 1864, ibid., 693; Cooper to Maury, July 8, 1864, ibid., 695; Maury to Cooper, July 10, 1864, ibid., 701; Maury to Cooper, July 5, 1864, ibid., 687; Lee to Kirby Smith, July 9, 1864, ibid., 696; Davis to Lee, July 14, 1864, ibid., 710; Lee to Kirby Smith or Major General John G. Walker, July 16, 1864, ibid., 714.
Maury sent both units into the various redoubts in the city works. The men had occupied their stations for only two days when they again received orders to report back to Lee at Meridian. This left only one regular army unit in the city—Colonel Maury's 15th Confederate Cavalry. General Maury had moved this regiment from Pollard to Mobile where it could reinforce Lee, protect the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, or guard the coast near Pascagoula. Detachments of the unit performed provost duty in the city in the absence of infantry or artillery troops. On July 22 the regiment left Mobile to return to Pollard. A Union raiding force had moved toward Pollard from Pensacola on the twenty-first, and Colonel Patton needed the cavalry unit to help repel the raid. No regular army units remained in Mobile to defend the city works. All guard duty had to fall upon the shoulders of the local militia.

On July 20, 1864, Confederate troops stationed at Fort Morgan witnessed the arrival of the monitor Manhattan to join the Union blockading squadron. The appearance of this monitor, the first of four which would

32Mumford Diary, July 18, 20, 1864; Para IX, Special Order No. 202, Headquarters District of the Gulf, July 20, 1864, Orders, District of the Gulf.

33Maury to Lee, July 11, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 702; Daily Tribune, July 13, 1864; Mumford Diary, July 22, 1864.
eventually join Farragut, seemed a further indication that the Federals planned an attack. Page responded by ordering all non-combatants away from Fort Morgan. Whenever the assault came, believed Maury and some of the other army officers, one of the weak spots in the defenses would be Buchanan's squadron. Maury wrote Bragg that he did not count very heavily on the navy:
"...their ships are inferior to those of the enemy, and the long period of inaction has not been promotive of energy and enterprise."  
A lieutenant at Fort Morgan voiced a more severe criticism of the navy in a letter to his sweetheart:

...I have noticed one peculiarity about our naval men here, from Admiral Buchanan down to the last midshipman and that is an unlimited capacity for getting excited. They fly off the handle at the shortest notice and on the slightest pretext....

This officer also expressed the opinion that the officers of the Mobile squadron had caused the confusion he saw in General Page's mind, thus hindering his ability to command the fort.  

36 Tarleton to Lightfoot, July 10, 26, 1864, ibid., 69-70, 76-77.
Von Sheliha pressed his engineering operations so that the enemy would not find any weaknesses in Mobile's various defensive positions. A continuing shortage of laborers and a newly developed shortage of tools made his work more difficult. At times during July 1864 as few as fifteen slaves made up the labor force in the city. Governor Watts responded to Maury's appeal for more slaves by saying that the planters would only give them up when troops arrived to take them. Von Sheliha did get to use 300 slaves impressed from several salt works, but these men only remained at Mobile for nine days. Even if Von Sheliha had had as many laborers as he desired, he admitted that he did not have enough tools to put in their hands. He had sent 1,200 entrenching tools to the Army of Tennessee, which left him with only 1,500 spades and shovels. Von Sheliha preferred not to use the 3,000 picks at Mobile to break ground, as he found plows much better. He tried to get 1,000 shovels from the Quartermaster Department's stores in Montgomery, but the

Engineer Bureau responded that the Quartermaster Department could spare only 200.\textsuperscript{38}

The engineers made fair progress on the bay batteries and city works during July despite the labor and tool shortage. Battery McIntosh required no work except repair of minor damages caused by heavy rains. Von Sheliha's men mounted a fifth gun in Battery Gladden and prepared platforms for two more guns expected to arrive from Selma. Because of the battery's isolated location, Von Sheliha constructed a blacksmith shop there. To protect Battery Tracy and Battery Huger from an enemy approach from Pensacola, Von Sheliha proposed the erection of defensive works near Blakely. Along the line of city entrenchments, the engineers conducted operations on six redoubts and three redans. Eight of the redoubts on Von Sheliha's new line had guns mounted in them. The engineers had not yet begun work on four planned redoubts or several of the redans to be located between the larger forts. Von Sheliha had wanted to place infantry trenches between all of the redoubts and redans but could not do much construction of this type. In a mid-month report to

the Engineer Bureau on the condition of the Mobile city defenses and bay batteries, Von Sheliha stated that when he completed his plans, "Mobile will hold out as long as our provisions last." 39

Of more concern to Von Sheliha than the upper bay defenses was the condition of the three forts on the lower bay line. Only these works would bear the brunt of the initial enemy naval attack when it came. Von Sheliha assigned Captain Gallimard as engineer in charge of the entire lower line. The engineers mounted three guns on the east face of Fort Powell to protect that fort from attack from the rear if Farragut's fleet passed Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines. To strengthen the approaches to Powell from Mississippi Sound, the engineers constructed a row of chevaux-de-frise made of railroad iron in the waters west of the fort. Von Sheliha instructed Gallimard to cease work on batteries at Cedar Point and Little Dauphin Island because of the shortage of laborers. At Fort Gaines, Gallimard's men continued construction of a new wharf. The placement of torpedoes in the main ship channel continued. By the end of July, 180 torpedoes floated in three rows across the channel, but a gap of

226 yards between Fort Morgan's water battery and the point at which the torpedoes commenced still remained.  

An attack by a Federal gunboat on July 4 had amply demonstrated the weakness of Fort Morgan, and Von Sheliha determined to try to strengthen the fort as much as possible. In the attack three shells hit the fort's outer wall, and one struck the west face of the citadel, a tall, octagonal, brick structure in the center of the fort. Von Sheliha's conclusions drawn from his observation of the shells' effects seem prophetic:

...From the depth to which these shots penetrated, from the size of the opening they produced, and from the amount of rubbish that fell, it is obvious that Fort Morgan, in its present condition, cannot withstand a vigorous bombardment. The guns on the west faces, if not dismounted by the reverse fire of the enemy, will fall with the casemates on which they are mounted. The high scarp-wall will be breached by curbed shot. The citadel will crumble to pieces from the effect of either shot or shell, direct or reverse fire....

The United States Army constructed Fort Morgan in 1833 when none of the heavy rifled guns used by Farragut's vessels had existed. With cannons like the 100-pounder...
Parrott, the Federal fleet could stand out of the range of the heaviest guns in Fort Morgan and pound the fort to pieces at will.  

In his instructions to Gallimard, Von Sheliha made a number of recommendations for improvements on the fort. To protect the individual guns and their crews, he suggested the erection of heavy side and rear traverses. The engineers also had to build traverses around the bombproofs and magazines and in front of the main sally-port. Von Sheliha wanted cribs filled with sand put up over all faces of the fort's walls liable to receive direct fire from the enemy's fleet. This would prevent the walls from being penetrated by shot and broken into fragments which would fly through the air like pieces of shrapnel and also would prevent the walls from being pounded into rubbish and breached. Von Sheliha or one of his subordinates suggested that the citadel be cut down in height and bombproofed. One officer's opinion of this idea may reflect the judgment passed on all of the engineer operations in the fort: "...all are agreed that if an attack is really imminent the work is most untimely." 


43Von Sheliha to Garner, July 9, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 706; Von Sheliha to Gallimard, July 10, 1864,
Finally, Von Sheliha wanted the line of earthworks across the peninsula east of the fort completed. The engineers had already done some work on this line. In his report to Maury's chief of staff, Von Sheliha predicted that if the work force increased at Fort Morgan, the laborers would complete all of the work in fifteen days. The slaves did not come in, and most of the critical improvements remained undone when Farragut's fleet ran past the fort on August 5. 44

By late July 1864, Union forces along the Gulf coast began making final plans for an attack on Mobile Bay. Concerned that the Confederates would continue strengthening Fort Morgan, Farragut had urged Canby to send him some troops so that he could attack the forts before the Confederates made them too strong. Even before Canby agreed to loan the men, Farragut proceeded with his own preparations. He saw his objective only as the reduction of Fort Morgan, Fort Gaines, and Fort Powell, thus sealing off blockade running in and out of the bay. In both orders and correspondence, Farragut outlined his strategy to his subordinates. First, his main attack force—fourteen wooden gunboats and four monitors—would run through the main ship channel. Once inside the bay, the gunboats had as their objective the destruction or dispersal of Buchanan's wooden vessels. Farragut intended the monitors to attack and capture or sink the ram Tennessee. Seven gunboats in the Gulf and five or six more in Mississippi Sound would assist and protect the landing of Canby's infantry and artillery on Dauphin Island. Farragut considered the capture of Fort Gaines
essential so that he could supply his vessels in the bay during further operations. Following the reduction of Gaines, the combined Union forces would capture Fort Powell and Fort Morgan in turn.¹

Canby designated a force of approximately 1,500 men to operate in conjunction with the navy against the Confederate forts. He hoped to reinforce this expedition if circumstances required it. Major General Gordon Granger commanded the Union forces, while Brigadier General George F. McGinnis held immediate command of the infantry.² Although precise numbers do not exist, it is clear that the Confederate troops opposing Granger and Farragut numbered slightly less than the Union landing force. From his headquarters in Fort Morgan, Page commanded the Third Brigade, District of the Gulf, which consisted of the garrisons of the three forts. The garrison of Morgan consisted of five companies of the 1st Alabama Artillery Battalion, two companies of the 1st Tennessee Heavy Artillery, and one company of the 21st

¹Canby to Sherman, July 20, 1864, O.R.N., XXI, 380; Farragut to Canby, July 25, 1864, ibid., 386; Canby to Farragut, July 26, 1864, ibid., 388; General Order No. 10, U. S. Flagship Hartford, July 12, 1864, ibid., 397-98; Farragut to Commodore James S. Palmer, July 18, 1864, ibid., 378.

Alabama Infantry: in all about 500 men. Colonel Charles D. Anderson, 21st Alabama Infantry, commanded Fort Gaines. Six companies of Anderson's regiment and two companies of the 1st Alabama Artillery Battalion, some 400 men, made up that garrison. At Fort Powell, Lieutenant Colonel Williams still held command with a force consisting of two companies of the 21st Alabama and a portion of Captain James F. Culpeper's South Carolina Battery: a total force of about 140 men.³

At daylight on August 5, 1864, lookouts at Fort Morgan saw Farragut's vessels approaching the main ship channel. The admiral used the same tactics he employed in running the Confederate batteries at Port Hudson: his vessels steamed up in pairs, lashed together, with the more powerful ships on the side facing Fort Morgan. Between the gunboats and the fort, the monitors had their station, where Farragut hoped they would silence both the water battery and parapet guns of the fort. In approaching Fort Morgan, the lead monitor, the Tecumseh, fired a few shots to test the range to the fort. Shortly after

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³Page to Maury, Aug. 30, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 1, p. 441; Benjamin B. Cox, "Mobile in the War Between the States," Confederate Veteran, XXIV (1916), 212; Maury to Seddon, Aug. 12, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 1, p. 428; Williams to Garner, Aug. 7, 1864, ibid., 441; Bernard A. Reynolds, Sketches of Mobile: From 1814 to the Present (Mobile: B. H. Richardson, Printer, 1868), 75; Mobile Register, Aug. 9, 1908.
7:00 A.M., when the Union vessels had come within a mile of the fort, Page ordered his gunners to open fire. The Federal squadron took approximately forty-five minutes to pass the fort. Page's men fired 491 shot and shell at the enemy from the fourteen heavy and several lighter guns which bore on the channel. Heavy smoke from the guns on both sides obscured the gunners' vision, and their fire had very little effect on the gunboats or monitors and caused few casualties. One shell did disable the Oneida when it struck her boiler, but the Oneida's consort, the Galena, took her into the bay with the other vessels.⁴

The Confederates did destroy two Union vessels during Farragut's run into the bay. Neither of these vessels, however, fell victim to the fire of Fort Morgan's guns. As stated above, Farragut's four monitors steamed between the wooden gunboats and the fort with the ultimate intention of attacking the Tennessee. The leading

monitor, the *Tecumseh*, proceeded as ordered through the
gap between the Confederate torpedoes and Fort Morgan.
Her commander, T. A. Craven, directed her into the
torpedo field so that he could come to grips with the
Confederate ironclad, but the *Tecumseh* struck a mine and
sank almost immediately. Only 21 men of her crew man-
aged to escape before she went down. One historian has
termed the sinking of the *Tecumseh* "the most completely
disabling blow struck by torpedoes during the entire
war." The side-wheel steamer *Philippi* became the second
victim of the Confederates. She attempted to follow the
main attack force into the bay but struck the shoal on
the western edge of the channel. The Confederate gunners
at Morgan directed a heavy, effective fire into her, and
her commander ordered her abandoned. A party of men from
the Confederate gunboat *Morgan* soon boarded the *Philippi*
and burned her.

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5Farragut to Welles, Aug. 12, 1864, *O.R.N.*, XXI, 417; Farragut to Welles, Aug. 27, 1864, *ibid.*, 489-90;
Acting Master C. F. Langley and Acting Master Gardner
Cottrell to Farragut, Aug. 6, 1864 (with endorsements),
*ibid.*, 569-70; Milton F. Perry, *Infernal Machines: The
Story of Confederate Submarine and Mine Warfare* (Baton

6, 1864, *ibid.*, 506-507; Commander George W. Harrison to
Buchanan, Oct. 1, 1864, *ibid.*, 584.
Buchanan's small squadron added what firepower it could to oppose Farragut's vessels as they steamed into the bay. The gunners delivered a raking fire into the Federal gunboats which the latter could not return. When the Federal gunboats finally did open on the Confederate squadron, their fire was heavy and accurate. The Gaines received several hits below the water line and began sinking. Lieutenant John W. Bennett steered his ship toward Fort Morgan and, about 500 yards from the fort, ran her onto the beach, where he ordered his men to abandon her. The commanders of the Morgan and Selma attempted to get their gunboats into shallow water after they witnessed the disabling of the Gaines. Lieutenant Peter U. Murphey took his Selma toward the northeast. The Union gunboat Metacomet, which had cast off from the flagship Hartford, gave chase. After the Metacomet disabled one of his guns and caused a dozen casualties with her heavy guns, Murphey surrendered the Selma rather than risk sinking and more casualties. Commander George W. Harrison managed to get the Morgan safely under the guns of Fort Morgan. That night Harrison ran past the Federal fleet and reached the safety of the upper bay lines. The officers and crew of the Gaines also escaped to Mobile
during the night in six boats from the Gaines and the Tennessee. 7

The dispersal of the Confederate wooden gunboats left only the Tennessee to face Farragut's squadron. Buchanan had attempted to ram the Hartford and Brooklyn as they steamed past into the bay, but the ironclad's inferior speed prevented her from coming close enough to do anything other than fire her guns into the enemy. Once inside the bay, Farragut's vessels gathered about four miles from Fort Morgan and began to anchor. Buchanan determined to renew the battle and try to sink one or more of the enemy gunboats. The latter all raised their anchors and joined in the fray. Three gunboats rammed the Tennessee but caused little damage, though Buchanan suffered a broken leg when an enemy shell knocked loose the after port cover and it struck him. The enemy fire cut the Tennessee's steering chains and made it impossible for her crew to change her position. When the ram had her smokestack shot away, she filled with smoke, and her crew could not answer the increasing hail of enemy shells. Commander James D. Johnston

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finally surrendered the ironclad after an engagement of about an hour's duration, a fight Farragut called "one of the fiercest naval contests on record." Casualties in the small Confederate squadron numbered 12 killed and 20 wounded. In Port Morgan, Page lost 1 killed and 3 wounded. On the other hand, Farragut's vessels suffered 52 killed and 170 wounded, not counting the drownings aboard the Tecumseh.

Farragut's squadron got safely into Mobile Bay despite all of the efforts made by the Confederates. In analyzing the Battle of Mobile Bay in later years, Von Sheliha presented this conclusion:


9"Killed and wounded of Confederate fleet,..." O.R.N., XXI, 578-79; Harrison to Buchanan, Oct. 1, 1864, ibid., 585; Bennett to Mallory, Aug. 8, 1864, ibid., 588; Farragut to Welles, Aug. 8, 1864, ibid., 407; Gee to Captain C. H. Smith, Aug. 6, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 1, p. 442.
...The Federal attack would not have succeeded—nay, it would even have resulted in disaster to Admiral Farragut's fleet—had it been possible to obstruct the channel between Fort Morgan and the eastern bank.¹⁰

The shifting sand of the channel bottom combined with the tidal flow and strong winds over the bay prevented the Confederate engineers from either placing piles in the channel or securing a floating battery there. All the Confederates could do was place torpedoes across the western portion of the channel. Maury ordered a gap of 400-500 yards left between the easternmost torpedoes and Fort Morgan so that either Buchanan's squadron or blockade runners could pass in and out. He felt safe in this order because of the more than 20 guns which bore on the channel from Fort Morgan: "No vessel yet built could pass through that channel in daylight."¹¹

Farragut and the Federals knew of the existence of the torpedoes and of the gap left in the channel. In his orders outlining the plan of attack, Farragut directed his ships to sail well to the east of the buoy he knew marked the eastern end of the torpedo field. To protect


his wooden vessels as much as possible against the heavy Confederate fire they had to face, Farragut ordered sheet chains draped over the ships' sides and sand bags or chains placed on deck over the ships' engines. The sinking of the Tecumseh caused Farragut to alter his plans. He directed his flagship to the head of the line and into the torpedo field. By steaming further to the west, Farragut avoided having to remain subjected to the heavy fire from Fort Morgan. When some of Farragut's officers had inspected the torpedo line the night before the battle, they found no torpedoes. From this evidence Farragut theorized that the mines had floated in the water so long that they had become ineffective. Thus he was willing to risk going through them. Events proved Farragut correct because none of the mines exploded. Officers on several gunboats reported after the battle that they had heard numerous torpedo primers snapping as the vessels passed through the field. Although one Confederate torpedo officer felt that few of the Federal vessels could have gotten into the bay if the gap had not been left in the torpedo line, the evidence of what actually occurred when the Federals passed through the field supports Von Sheliha's assessment: "...had the gap

been closed by torpedoes alone, we have our very serious doubts if it would have made any material difference.\textsuperscript{13}

Buchanan's small squadron had little more success in stopping Farragut's ships than did the torpedoes. The Confederate tars did their best work and caused the most damage to the Federal vessels as the latter passed Fort Morgan and thus were unable to return the fire of the Confederate gunboats. Farragut reported that most of his casualties resulted from shells fired by Buchanan's ships. For example, one shell killed 10 and wounded 5 men aboard the Hartford. Once the Federal squadron got into the bay, the unprotected wooden Confederate gunboats did not stand a chance of success against the superior enemy force. Only luck allowed the Morgan to escape capture or destruction. The loss of his gunboats left Buchanan in a difficult position. His ironclad was one of the most powerful ever built, but she lacked speed and had lost her smokestack during the passage of the Federal fleet. In his mind, Buchanan had two options: to continue the battle and do as much damage to the enemy as possible before retiring under the guns of Fort Morgan or

\textsuperscript{13}Farragut to Welles, Aug. 12, 1864, ibid., 417; Barrett to Andrews, Aug. 20, 1864, ibid., 785-86; Kinney, "Farragut at Mobile Bay," 390-91; Perry, Infernal Machines, 161; Daniel B. Conrad, "Capture of the C. S. Ram Tennessee in Mobile Bay, August, 1864," Southern Historical Society Papers, XIX (1891), 74; Von Shellha, A Treatise on Coast-Defence, 105.
to sit back and await what he felt would be the inevitable destruction of his vessel. His move clearly surprised Farragut and the other Federal commanders. The destruction of the Tennessee's rudder chains foiled Buchanan's plans to return to Fort Morgan and resulted in the surrender of the ironclad. Buchanan might be criticized for risking his vessel when it could have proven more effective as a floating battery at Fort Morgan, but he was a fighting admiral and pursued the course he thought correct.¹⁴

The evacuation and destruction of Fort Powell by the Confederates gave Farragut the route he needed to supply his vessels in Mobile Bay. While Farragut's squadron ran past Fort Morgan, five Federal gunboats in Mississippi Sound opened fire on Fort Powell. Lieutenant Colonel Williams' garrison replied with the four guns which faced the Sound. Only five Federal shells struck the fort, and none of them did any damage. The Confederates failed to hit any of the enemy gunboats. This action lasted about two hours, at the end of which time the Federals broke off the engagement. They renewed their fire about 11:45 A.M. but ceased firing when they received no reply from the fort. In mid-afternoon, the

¹⁴Farragut to Welles, Aug. 12, 1864, O.R.N., XXI, 418; Drayton to Farragut, Aug. 6, 1864, ibid., 425; Conrad, "Capture of the Tennessee," 75, 80.
monitor Chickasaw approached Fort Powell from the east and captured the barge Ingomar, which had been used by the engineers in working on the fort. Williams ordered his men to open on the monitor with a rifled gun on the fort's south face. He had two guns on the east face, but they were exposed because the engineers had not completed the parapet. Only one shell struck the monitor, knocking away its smokestack. The Federal gunners fired 25 shells in reply, and their fire had more effect. Williams reported the damage his fort sustained:

...A shell entered one of the sally ports, which are not traversed in the rear, passed entirely through the bombproof, and buried itself in the opposite wall. Fortunately it did not explode. The shells exploding in the face of the work displaced the sand so rapidly that I was convinced unless the ironclad was driven off it would explode my magazine and make the bombproof chambers untenable in two days at the furthest....

Williams found himself in a difficult position and turned to Colonel Anderson at Fort Gaines for advice. Anderson told him to evacuate his men if he could not hold the fort. Convinced that he could not defend the

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work against additional attacks by the Chickasaw, Williams marched his garrison out of Fort Powell and blew up the magazine. Maury, Von Sheliha, and the Mobile press criticized Williams' failure to hold Fort Powell, and Maury relieved him of command pending an investigation of his conduct. The military tribunal which looked into the case acquitted Williams and said that he acted correctly in saving his garrison from an indefensible position. Although restored to duty, Williams did not receive Maury's permission to take command of his regiment until December. Fort Powell fell because its eastern face had no protection against the fire of the Chickasaw or any of the other monitors. After the war, Williams expressed his opinion on the reason for the weakness of the fort:

"The bay side of Fort Powell had been left unprotected while our engineers were engaged in many absurd works, and some which deserve a worse name--such as the construction of batteries near Fort Morgan for no


17 Maury to Bragg, Sept. 14, 1864 (with endorsements), O.R., LII, Pt. 2, pp. 741-42; Williams to Seddon, Sept. 14, 1864, Letters Received, Secretary of War; Folmar, "Lt. Col. Williams," 130-34.
other purpose than the protection of blockade runners in the swash channel..."  

Available evidence indicates Williams had sufficient supplies and a labor force to enable him to throw up at least a temporary parapet so that he could have defended the fort for several days. The surrender of Fort Gaines on August 6 would still have given Farragut a means of getting supplies into the bay to his ships, however.  

The Confederates began making preparations for the defense of Fort Gaines following the landing of Granger's Federals late on the afternoon of August 3, 1864. Maury was away in Meridian temporarily commanding the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, and Higgins acted in his place at Mobile. When Page learned that the Federals had landed, he requested reinforcements so he could attack the enemy force on Dauphin Island. Higgins had no real force to send Page but did order 200 reserves, local defense troops, and marines from the city to Gaines. He also ordered the 22nd Louisiana to proceed

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from Pollard to Gaines. The initial 200-man reinforcement arrived at Gaines on the fourth. Although subjected to the fire of a Federal monitor, the disembarkation concluded successfully. The gunners in Gaines replied briefly to the monitor's fire. Unfortunately for the Confederates, their heaviest gun facing the Federal fleet outside the bay became dismounted during this skirmish. Page did not have enough men to conduct an attack, but Anderson's men burned their outbuildings and prepared for siege operations. Due to problems with its transport vessel, the 22nd Louisiana did not get away from Tensas Landing on schedule and consequently did not get to Fort Gaines before Farragut's fleet got into Mobile Bay. They did, however, escape becoming prisoners when the fort fell.

20 Captain Miles D. McAlester to Brigadier General Richard Delafield, Aug. 20, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 1, p. 410; Maury to Seddon, Aug. 12, 1864, ibid., 428; Maury to Cooper, Sept. 1, 1864, ibid., 429; Higgins to Cooper, Aug. 2, 1864, ibid., LII, Pt. 2, p. 715; Mumford Diary, Aug. 5, 1864; Reynolds, Sketches of Mobile, 75; Roll for July and Aug. 1864, Record of Events Cards, Company F, 22nd Louisiana Consolidated Infantry, Compiled Service Records.


22 Maury to Cooper, Sept. 1, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 1, p. 429; Granger to Canby, Aug. 5, 1864, O.R.N., XXI,
Granger's men edged in close to Fort Gaines during August 4 and by midnight had gotten their light artillery within 1,200 yards of the fort. During Farragut's passage of Fort Morgan, the Federals opened with these guns on Fort Gaines. Granger reported that his fire took the fort's water battery in reverse and silenced the guns, but it is unlikely that the Confederates would have even attempted to fire on the enemy fleet because they had no guns which could fire that far. Anderson's men did open on the Federal batteries but caused no damage. When the Tennessee attacked Farragut's fleet, the Confederates fired a few shots at the Federals with 10-inch columbiads that faced in that direction. Anderson signalled Page asking what he should do. He stated that his fort would offer little protection to his men if fired on from Dauphin Island and the enemy fleet. Page advised Anderson to do his best and keep up the men's morale. On the fourth, Anderson had assured Page that he would resist the enemy for as long as possible, and he repeated that

521; Roll for July and Aug. 1864, Co. F, 22nd La., Compiled Service Records.

23McAlester to Delafield, Aug. 20, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 1, p. 410; Granger to Christensen, Aug. 5, 1864, O.R.N., XXI, 519.
assurance on the afternoon of the fifth: "'We will emu-
late our glorious old admiral and do our very best.'"\textsuperscript{24}

On the afternoon of August 6, the monitor Chickasaw steamed to within several thousand yards of Gaines and opened fire. Most of the monitor's shells struck the fort but did not cause any serious damage, but they did kill several men who lay sick in the post hospital.\textsuperscript{25} Anderson again requested guidance from Page, and the latter sent two of his staff officers, Captains Clifton H. Smith and R. T. Thom, to consult with Anderson. These officers left Gaines with the impression that Anderson would defend the fort to the last. Shortly after the captains left, however, Anderson received a letter signed by all but two of the officers in the garrison asking him to surrender the fort, which they felt would soon be torn apart by the enemy's fire, rather than risk further loss of life in a hopeless situation. Anderson acceded to his officers' wishes and asked Farragut for surrender terms early on August 7. Page attempted to learn the purpose of the flag of truce and signalled for Anderson to hold

\textsuperscript{24}Page to Maury, Aug. 8, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 1, p. 436.

the fort. Ignoring Page's signals, Anderson visited Farragut and Granger aboard the Hartford that evening and agreed to their terms. While he was away, Page visited Gaines in an attempt to stop the proceedings but had no success. At 8 o'clock on the morning of the eighth, Anderson surrendered to the Federal navy. The garrison numbered 46 officers and 818 enlisted men. Twenty-six guns, a large supply of ordnance stores, and food supplies for twelve months all fell into Federal hands.26

Anderson's surrender of Fort Gaines brought no less controversy or condemnation than Williams' evacuation of Fort Powell. Page dubbed the surrender a "deed of dishonor and disgrace to its commander and garrison."27 Maury echoed Page's sentiments and said that the men should have defended the fort. In a confidential letter to Braxton Bragg, Maury stated one theory to explain the conduct of both Anderson and Williams:

26Page to Maury, Aug. 8, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 1, p. 437; Reynolds, Sketches of Mobile, 77-79; Captain F. N. Smith, et al, to Colonel Charles D. Anderson, Aug. 6, 1864, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, pp. 743-44; Wilkinson Diary, Aug. 7, 8, 1864; Farragut to Welles, Aug. 8, 1864, O.R.N., XXI, 414; Anderson to Farragut, Aug. 7, 1864, ibid.; Farragut to Anderson, Aug. 7, 1864, ibid., 415; Granger to Christensen, Aug. 8, 1864, ibid., 524; Page to Maury, Aug. 8, 1864, ibid., 561; Maury to Seddon, Aug. 8, 1864, ibid., 562.

I think constant croaking and discussion of the weakness of that line had greatly prepared the minds of the commanders to give it up, and when the tremendous fleet placed itself between them and the city, the Garrisons were overwhelmed by dismay.  

Officers stationed at Fort Morgan were shocked by the surrender of Gaines. One lieutenant confided his feelings to his diary: "Humiliation and sorrow were in our hearts, but indignation soon expelled from our hearts all other feelings...."  

An officer who had not signed the letter asking Anderson to surrender later defended the colonel's actions even though he felt Anderson should have waited until the Federals demanded a capitulation:

...Col. Anderson may have acted injudiciously in yielding to its [the letter by the officers] request by making the overture to Admiral Farragut, but as we are in honor bound to tell the whole truth, we shall here state that from the moment that the Federal fleet succeeded in running the gauntlet of Fort Morgan and the famous Tennessee had surrendered, from that moment the men of Fort Gaines lost heart....

With the smaller forts captured, the Federals on August 9 turned on Fort Morgan. Granger's infantry, which had received reinforcements from New Orleans,

28 Maury to Seddon, Aug. 8, 1864, ibid., 426; Maury to Seddon, Aug. 12, 1864, ibid., 428; Maury to Bragg, Aug. 14, 1864, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve.

29 Austill, "Fort Morgan," 259; Wilkinson Diary, Aug. 8, 1864.

30 Reynolds, Sketches of Mobile, 77-79.
landed at Navy Cove and began moving toward the fort. Page chose not to oppose the landing and turned his attention to preparing his position for a stubborn defense. Since the passage of Farragut's fleet, the Confederate garrison had worked to construct sand traverses around all of the guns, quarters, and sally port. Page telegraphed Jefferson Davis that he planned to hold out "to the last extremity." The Confederates burned all of the buildings between the fort and Navy Cove and cleared the ground as much as possible. On the afternoon of the ninth, Farragut and Granger demanded an unconditional surrender of the fort after the fleet had bombarded it for several hours. The enemy fire had done no damage and slightly wounded one man. Page replied: "I am prepared to sacrifice life and will only surrender when I have no means of defense." By sundown, the

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Federal troops had moved to within two miles of Fort Morgan and completed the investment of the place.³³

Nothing of real consequence occurred at Morgan during the next few days. Granger pushed skirmishers and sharpshooters to within several hundred yards of the fort's walls while his engineers and artillerymen established batteries and siege approaches. Within the fort, officers joined with the men in working on the traverses. Although everyone was tired, morale remained high. The men had provided for the siege by driving a number of cattle and hogs into the fort to furnish fresh meat. One lieutenant wrote in his diary: "My cow and calf were browsing in the luxuriant grass in the ditch near me, happily unconscious of their impending doom."³⁴ Page detailed 160 men as sharpshooters under Major Gee, 1st Alabama Artillery Battalion, to meet any attack. From time to time these men exchanged shots with the Federal sharpshooters. The Tennessee, now manned by Federal sailors, and Farragut's three monitors opened fire on the fort on August 13 and continued the bombardment sporadically through the next day. Page's gunners returned the

³³Andrews, Campaign of Mobile, 17; Austill, "Fort Morgan," 259; Wilkinson Diary, Aug. 9, 1864.

fire but had no effect on the ironclads. When one Confederate saw the shells bouncing off her, he pronounced the *Tennessee* impregnable. The accurate Federal fire had caused several casualties, and the post adjutant wrote in his diary: "The casemates are not safe; the shells have no respect for them...." 35

Beginning on August 15, the Federal forces on the peninsula kept up a fairly steady fire on Fort Morgan with artillery as well as their sharpshooters. One or more of Farragut's monitors continued the fire from the fleet. The Confederate sharpshooters maintained a sporadic return fire but had to lie low because of the heavy and accurate shooting of the Federals. Except for several brief bombardments of the enemy camp, Page did not allow his artillerymen to open on the Federal land or naval forces. One of his officers reported that Page refused to fire because he did not think the Confederate artillery could effectively retard the enemy advance and because he feared a heavy bombardment in retaliation. Many men in the garrison disagreed with Page's policy and thought it demoralized the soldiers. Several officers stated that the occasional Confederate fire did hamper Granger's advance:

35 Austill, "Fort Morgan," 260-61; Wilkinson Diary, Aug. 12, 13, 14, 1864.
...It is a very fine thing to stand off coolly, aim the gun as if at target practice, & fire at a parcel of poor devils cooped up in a pile of bricks, when there is no danger in the way, but when both sides talk Mr Fed is rather nervous....

Throughout all of the Federal bombardments, Page moved about the fort sending officers and men to secure places while exposing himself a number of times to enemy fire.

Life became quite dangerous for the men of the Fort Morgan garrison, and instances of close calls from death and heroic actions occurred frequently. On one occasion, a 15-inch shell from a monitor tore into a casemate used as an office and completely or partially destroyed much of the furniture. The shell landed at the feet of several men standing in the office but failed to explode. On another occasion, a 15-inch shell entered a casemate used as sleeping quarters for forty men and exploded. The explosion miraculously killed no one and wounded only three. Page's Confederates began holding prayer meetings every morning at the sally port. Even religious services provided no protection because one

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37 Austill, "Fort Morgan," 265.

38 Wilkinson Diary, Aug. 9, 1864.

39 Austill, "Fort Morgan," 261.
morning a shell fragment struck and killed a soldier on his way to the meeting. Sentries on the fort's walls tried to warn their comrades of incoming shells whenever possible. In one instance, a man had barely called out to those below him when a Parrott shell tore his head off. Despite the hardships, the men kept up their morale, and relatively few deserted. An officer summed up the situation:

...Entirely cut off & with 350 men hemmed in by a fleet of Forty vessels besides a large land force, confined in a small circle scarce large enough to drive a cart in, with a certainty of captivity & perhaps death before us, resistance is heroism & it is our unanimous resolve to sell this Post at a costly price--...

40 Wilkinson Diary, Aug. 15, 16, 1864.

41 Austill, "Fort Morgan," 264-65; Wilkinson Diary, Aug. 15, 1864.
of debris." The bombardment had such force that the Federal soldiers as far away as Fort Gaines could feel the concussions. Fearing that his magazine might be hit, Page ordered most of his powder destroyed. He also directed his men to spike all of the fort's artillery. The enemy shells set fire to the citadel, and the fire caused the Federals to increase their barrage, which they had reduced considerably as night fell. After consulting a number of his officers and seeing his men fight a second fire at the citadel, Page decided on the morning of the twenty-third to surrender. The ceremonies occurred at 2:00 P.M., and a Federal officer recorded this description of the Confederate commander:

...Page, in a plain suit of citizen's clothing, looked very stiff....From the starched manner in which the late lord of Fort Morgan bore himself, I could well understand why our sailors had dubbed him "Ramrod Page."...

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Page surrendered Fort Morgan because, as he put it, he "had no means left of defense." The enemy's fire, both from artillery and sharpshooters, and the smoke and flames from the burning citadel made it impossible for the Confederates to man their guns or make any kind of effective reply to the bombardment. With all of the casemates at least partially breached, the men had little protection from the Federal shells. After the war, Von Sheliha wrote: "A bombardment of another twenty-four hours would have changed the place into a shapeless pile of rubbish...." Some 600 men and 46 artillery pieces fell into Union hands when the fort's garrison capitulated to them. Page had lost only about three killed and sixteen wounded during the siege, but the loss of life would have mounted if the enemy bombardment had continued. On the eve of the battle of Mobile Bay, Maury had seemed disposed to replace Page: "...General Page is too despondent. He seems to see only the weak points of these forts. We need a buoyant man there...."

Following the siege of Fort Morgan, however, Maury could not fault Page's actions:

...From all that is known of the conduct of this officer and the garrison under his orders, it is believed that they nobly strove to redeem the disgrace upon their arms inflicted by the hasty and unsoldierlike surrender of Fort Powell and Gaines.  

The operations in Mobile Bay resulted primarily in the termination of the blockade running at the port. Canby did not have a sufficient infantry force for a land campaign against the city, and Farragut's fleet could do nothing without land support. Both Sherman and Farragut expressed opposition to a direct attack on Mobile. The general preferred to have a Confederate garrison tied up there than a Union garrison, while the admiral believed "it would be used by our own people to flood rebeldom with all their supplies." It is impossible in the absence of accurate importation statistics for the Confederacy to assess the exact impact of the cessation of the flow of supplies into Mobile, but the Confederate war effort must have suffered. The conduct of the Confederate army and navy commanders involved in the various

48 Maury to Cooper, Sept. 1, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 1, p. 430. 

49 Sherman to Halleck, Aug. 20, 1864, ibid., XXXVIII, Pt. 5, p. 610; Canby to Farragut, Aug. 24, 1864, ibid., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 299; Farragut to Canby, Sept. 5, 1864, ibid., 344.
actions is also difficult to analyze. Maury probably made a correct assessment when he wrote that the commanders and officers of the forts had been psychologically prepared for a surrender by constant talk of the weakness of the forts. But Buchanan did what any fighting admiral would have done. He might, however, have provided more assistance in defending the forts if he had attempted to keep his squadron, particularly the Tennessee, under the guns of Fort Morgan. If Fort Powell and Fort Gaines had held out longer, they might have delayed their capture but only by risking the sacrifice of lives.
CHAPTER XIII
"...TIME IS EVERYTHING TO US NOW..."

In anticipation of Farragut's passage of the lower bay forts, Maury and his subordinates made hasty preparations to defend Mobile. The need for experienced troops occupied a prominent place in Maury's plans. Since all of his regular veterans except the 22nd Louisiana had rushed into Fort Gaines in time to be captured there, the need was particularly acute. Patton's 22nd Louisiana occupied a half dozen works upon its arrival in the city. Maury requested of Bragg that he order the return of the 1st Louisiana and 1st Mississippi artillery regiments to Mobile. The former regiment reached Mobile from Montgomery on August 6 and took positions along the city line. Bragg directed the 1st Mississippi Artillery to move from Atlanta back to the city. En route the regiment's train ran into a landslide between Pollard and Tensas Landing, and the accident resulted in the killing or wounding of 87 men. Instead of keeping the Mississippians in Mobile, Maury ordered them on picket duty below Blakely on the eastern shore. Even the officers and crew of the Gaines found themselves assigned to a bay battery since their vessel had been destroyed. All of these men helped fill gaps the local defense troops and
convalescents could not cover, but Maury still desired further reinforcements: "...Veteran troops should be sent here as soon as they can be spared elsewhere and they should be troops not connected by any ties with Mobile."  

Maury appealed to all of the men in Mobile to organize to defend the city. He ordered Andrew S. Herron and Thomas J. Judge, both colonels and judges on the military court, to supervise the organization of these men. Herron had as his responsibility the Louisianians and government employees, while Judge had all remaining men. Maury asked those men who had arms and ammunition to furnish them and promised that unarmed men would find weapons available. The city papers urged the city's men to comply with Maury's request: "All men within the city capable of bearing arms, are bound, and will be obliged, to shoulder them."  

Maury ordered city defense troops

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2General Order No. 96, Headquarters District of the Gulf, Aug. 4, 1864, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Aug. 7, 1864; Daily Tribune, Aug. 6, 7, 1864.
which had not gone to Fort Gaines organized into a battalion for permanent guard duty under Lieutenant Colonel Stewart W. Cayce. Even the men of the city police department formed themselves into a military company and elected Mayor Slough as their captain. Governor Watts sent available state reserves to Mobile after receiving requests from Maury and Davis. These reserves arrived in the city very slowly, however. By August 9, Maury could report only 4,000 troops of all types on duty in the District of the Gulf. ³

Because he was exercising temporary departmental command, Maury needed a capable subordinate to fill in for him at Mobile. He had little confidence in Higgins, the only other general officer in the district:

"...while he is well qualified to fight ships, he is possessed of such an infirmity of temper as sets the whole community, including the officers under him, against him." ⁴ On August 12, Major General Franklin Gardner


⁴ Maury to Bragg, Aug. 14, 1864, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve.
arrived in Mobile, and Maury requested of the War Department that it allow him to retain Gardner for temporary duty. In a letter to Bragg, Maury explained his request: "...he will be very useful, and has the confidence of the people and Troops." Gardner's previous experience at Mobile and his defense of Port Hudson certainly qualified him for duty under Maury. The War Department approved the latter's request, and on August 17 he assigned Gardner to temporary command of the District of the Gulf. In addition to a temporary district commander, Maury wanted two brigade commanders and recommended Colonel Henry Maury and Major Bryan M. Thomas, the latter then serving in the Alabama State Reserve. Thomas received a promotion to brigadier general and orders to report to Maury. Instead of promoting Henry Maury, the War Department directed Brigadier General St. John R. Liddell to Mobile. Liddell had recently crossed the Mississippi

5Para VII, Special Order No. 193, Headquarters Department of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, Aug. 4, 1864, quoted in Compiled Service Record of Gardner; Maury to Cooper, Aug. 12, 1864, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Maury to Bragg, Aug. 14, 1864, Bragg Papers, Western Reserve.

River from western Louisiana, where he had served under Major General Richard Taylor. 7

Von Sheliha and his engineers concentrated on preparing the eastern shore and bay batteries for a possible attack once they knew Farragut had passed the lower bay line. Because the bay batteries had received so much attention in the past, the Confederates put most of their energy into work on the eastern shore. Von Sheliha admitted that the defenses there had been neglected and were unreliable. He ordered all gaps in the obstructions in the Apalachee and Blakely rivers closed and the obstructions themselves strengthened. At Battery Huger, Von Sheliha mounted five additional heavy guns and thickened the fort's walls. He began preparing Battery Tracy for new guns also. To support these two works, Von Sheliha recommended that the navy move either the Huntsville and Tuscaloosa or three blockade runners mounted with heavy guns into position near the forts. 8 He also initiated


8Von Sheliha to Gilmer, Aug. 6, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 759; Von Sheliha to Gilmer, Aug. 6, 1864, ibid., 760; Von Sheliha to Gilmer, Aug. 10, 1864, ibid.,
constructing works on the heights east of the two batteries to protect their land approaches. Batteries at Blakely would stand too far north to provide effective protection alone, so, on the recommendation of Colonel John H. Gindrat, Von Sheliha chose the site of an old Spanish fort as the position for another permanent work:

...I propose to countersink our guns commanding the river, and to protect the battery by a bastion line in rear. Time is everything to us now, and we have to make the best use of the short respite the enemy seems willing to grant....

Maury and Von Sheliha disagreed on the best means of defending the direct water approaches to the city. The former wished to place two ironclad floating batteries near Choctaw Spit to guard the lower line of obstructions even though these batteries remained uncompleted. Von Sheliha thought all of the Confederates' firepower should be concentrated at the upper obstructions. He saw the Choctaw Spit position as too isolated and weak to resist a strong enemy attack. He persuaded Gilmer to

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9Gilmer to Maury, Aug. 6, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 759; Von Sheliha to Gilmer, Aug. 10, 1864, ibid., 769; Von Sheliha to Gindrat, Aug. 11, 1864, ibid., 772; Von Sheliha to Gilmer, Aug. 12, 1864, Letters Sent, Engineer Office, Gulf, Chap. III, Vol. 16, p. 169; Von Sheliha to Gindrat, Aug. 12, 1864, ibid., 170.
intercede with Maury in behalf of his ideas, but Maury maintained his position, to which the Prussian had to accede.\textsuperscript{10} Along the city works and bay batteries the engineers strengthened and put in order all existing works. They placed torpedoes in Garrow's Bend and in the main channel below the obstructions. The only operations of note in this area involved the clearing of land in front of the outer city line. Higgins ordered all persons living within one thousand yards of the line to evacuate their homes. Then Von Sheliha put nearly 200 men to work cutting down all of the trees in this zone. By mid-August, Von Sheliha expressed confidence that the works could resist at least any water attack on the city.\textsuperscript{11}

Several things hampered the engineers' efforts to prepare the city defenses for an assault. Rainy weather

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prevented them from working on certain parts of the city line. Von Sheliha's officers had to locate cannons at various depots, transport them with carriages and chassis to the forts, and then mount them. The most serious problem continued to be a shortage of necessary laborers. Von Sheliha's requests for men and attempts to hire the services of slaves had failed. He appealed to Governor Watts to furnish at least two thousand slaves to work on the defenses:

...Forts Powell and Gaines would be in our possession yet had my calls and appeals been heeded. Mobile will follow unless planters send us laborers.... 12

If the planters would furnish these slaves, Von Sheliha felt he could make the city's defenses tenable within twenty days. By mid-month, however, Watts still had not found the needed laborers. Gilmer advised Maury to impress Negroes. At Von Sheliha's urging, Maury ordered all engineer work at Montgomery stopped so that the slaves and tools there could move to Mobile. Planters in Clarke, Baldwin, and Monroe counties sent 375 slaves to the city on August 12 for use by Von Sheliha and his men.

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This small contingent still did not meet the engineers' needs, however.\textsuperscript{13}

The Confederate authorities made other, less important preparations to defend Mobile. Maury had no more luck at this time than previously in getting non-combatants to leave the city. After the initial alarm caused by the passage of the forts, the excitement among the civilians subsided quickly, and their morale remained high. Higgins finally ordered all soldiers and sailors who had families in the city to send them to the interior.\textsuperscript{14} Maury's inspector of field transportation, Captain John T. Purves, attempted to obtain horses and mules for field artillery and wagons but found few persons willing to sell their animals. When Purves received authorization to impress animals, he experienced further


frustration because he had no cavalrymen to assist him. Higgins, spurred by the evacuation of Fort Powell and surrender of Fort Gaines, issued strict orders pertaining to defense of the forts and batteries around Mobile. He forbade all commanders from communicating with the enemy without his authority and required them to hold their works "to the last extremity." Finally, Higgins placed restrictions on boats and vessels plying the waters of the upper bay. Any boats in transit to the eastern shore had to report to the naval ships anchored near the obstructions or to Battery Gladden and could not pass in front of any of the batteries. Sailing vessels coming into port from the obstructions had to report to the officer of the guard at the navy yard.

Two small military operations briefly interrupted the operations conducted by Maury's men. The first of these involved an attempt by Maury to relieve Fort Morgan. He ordered the 1st Mississippi Artillery, then


16 Para I, General Order No. 16, Headquarters Higgins' Brigade, Aug. 9, 1864, quoted in Daily Tribune, Aug. 12, 1864.

17 General Order No. 1, Headquarters Defenses of Mobile, Aug. 10, 1864, quoted in ibid.; General Order No. 2, Headquarters Army of Mobile, Aug. 12, 1864, quoted in ibid.
stationed at Tensas Landing, to begin moving down the eastern shore with the idea of creating a diversion in the rear of Granger's land forces besieging Fort Morgan. He hoped to either force the Federals to break off the land siege or at least delay its progress. On August 13, 1864, Brigadier General Alexander Asboth left Pensacola with 1,400 Federal infantry, cavalry, and artillery on a march toward the Perdido River. Maury feared the Federal move might threaten Blakely and ordered the Mississippians back to a point just south of that place. Asboth's Federals returned to Pensacola without having crossed the Perdido. Even so, Maury abandoned any further ideas of trying to relieve Page's men at Fort Morgan because he did not have enough men to dispatch there and defend the approaches to Mobile at the same time. 18

On August 15, 1864, Farragut conducted a reconnaissance of the obstructions below the bay batteries. Granger accompanied the admiral, and the two planned to study both the land and naval defenses of Mobile. Four gunboats, one of them the former Confederate vessel Selma, and two monitors moved to within three and a half

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miles of the city. At 2 o'clock that afternoon, the Federal gunners opened fire on the bay batteries and the gunboat Morgan, which was anchored behind the line of obstructions. This bombardment continued for two hours although the Federals did not put out a heavy fire. The Confederate batteries did not reply to the Federals, but the crew of the Morgan did send an occasional shell toward the enemy. None of the Federal shots did any damage to the Confederate defenses. At sunset Farragut ordered his force back down the bay. He had found the channel into Mobile completely obstructed. The Confederates had sunk the unfinished ironclad Phoenix in the only gap which had remained in the line of piles. In his report to the Navy Department, Farragut reported that unless his men could remove these obstructions there seemed no possibility of even his light-draft gunboats getting close to Mobile. A Vermont native living in Mobile witnessed the brief action and pronounced this verdict:

...So effective was this water line, protected as it was by water batteries, that Farragut's fleet might as well have attempted to sail through the Green Mountain range....

19Farragut to Canby, Aug. 14, 1864, O.R.N., XXI, 528; Farragut to Welles, Aug. 16, 1864, ibid., 529-30; Richmond Sentinel, Aug. 17, 1864, quoted in Butler to Fox, Aug. 17, 1864, ibid., 530; Abstract log of the U.S.S. Metacomet, Aug. 15, 1864, ibid., 828; Mumford
Von Sheliha and his engineers continued their operations through the end of August. He received some opposition in one phase of his work, that of clearing the land in front of the city defenses. Various military headquarters issued orders preventing the axe parties from cutting down some of the trees. He requested that subordinate commanders inform him of any further exemptions. The engineers built two new batteries on the bay shore where they could assist in guarding the obstructions. Each of these works contained heavy rifled guns or columbiads. The former crew of the gunboat Gaines assisted in mounting the guns. Even though these fortifications and the other bay batteries appeared in good shape for defensive fighting, some of the garrisons found themselves in less than an ideal situation.

An officer at Battery McIntosh described his fort:

...The quarters are not very good and very much crowded. The water is very bad and

Diary, Aug. 15, 1864; Victor von Scheliha, A Treatise on Coast-Defence (London: E. & F. N. Spon, 1868), 189-90; William Rix, Incidents of Life in a Southern City During the War (Mobile: Iberville Historical Society Papers, 1865), [17].

unhealthy. Most of the garrison are suffering from diarrhea....

Von Sheliha did not like the construction or location of Battery Huger and Battery Tracy but strengthened their walls and placed heavier guns in them. These improvements he felt would enable the works to put up stiff resistance to any attack.\(^{22}\)

The problems which Von Sheliha faced, particularly the shortage of slave labor, weighed heavily on him and undoubtedly caused him to become somewhat pessimistic. His letters to Gilmer indicated that he felt that Governor Watts was helpless to aid him and that Maury could not impress the needed labor. In one communication he wrote: "If not sustained by my Government, I will resign unconditionally and immediately."\(^{23}\) Obviously spurred by Von Sheliha's attitude, Maury asked Gilmer to send another engineer officer to his district. Because the man Maury requested was ill, Gilmer recommended that the War Department order Lieutenant Colonel Samuel H. Lockett to Mobile. Lockett at that time held the

\(^{21}\)Mumford Diary, Aug. 27, 1864.


\(^{23}\)Von Sheliha to Gilmer, Aug. 16, 1864, Letters Sent, Engineer Office, Gulf, Chap. III, Vol. 16, p. 188; Von Sheliha to Gilmer, Aug. 17, 1864, ibid., 193.
position of chief engineer for the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana and had served at Mobile early in the war. Von Sheliha outranked Lockett, so Gilmer got a promotion to full colonel for Lockett. Gilmer possibly did not intend for Lockett to supersede Von Sheliha completely because the former's orders called for him to continue his duties with the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana. When Von Sheliha learned of Lockett's assignment, he submitted his resignation but offered to remain in Mobile until the threat to the city had ended. The War Department turned down his resignation request.  

In numerous small ways the Confederate authorities at Mobile continued preparing for the defense of the city. Governor Watts closed all of the whiskey and alcohol distilleries in Mobile County and threatened to revoke the licenses of any persons who did not obey his instructions. Gardner formed a special company of cavalry scouts (some of whom were Negroes) to watch the

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enemy forces at Fort Powell and on Dauphin Island. He also issued orders restricting personal movement around the defenses. One of these orders prohibited persons from passing outside the picket line toward the enemy without passports issued by district headquarters. Another regulation forbade persons from visiting the various batteries unless they did so on duty. Captain Purves continued to seek horses and mules but still with little success. A citizen living near the city wrote a friend that, even though the government offered $1,000 to $2,500 for mules and horses, the people in the vicinity could not supply their needs. Following a prior recommendation by Von Sheliha, Gardner ordered the seizure of the blockade runners *Mary*, *Virgin*, and *Red Gauntlet* in late August. The Confederates mounted two 6-pounder guns

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25 *Daily Tribune*, Aug. 21, 1864; Gardner to Cooper, Aug. 19, 1864, Telegrams Received, Secretary of War; Mumford Diary, Aug. 18, 1864.


on the Red Gauntlet and ordered her on picket duty near the eastern shore.\textsuperscript{28}

Maury's difficulties with the city's non-combatants did not abate. Despite Farragut's run into the bay and the fall of the lower bay line, the civilian population did not leave Mobile in significant numbers. Maury reported that the people seemed in good heart and not willing to leave. An aide to Governor Watts wrote Davis that he found the citizens confident in their generals and unafraid. In a letter to his son-in-law, a man living near Mobile expressed some of the reasons why the non-combatants would not leave:

...The citizens do not appear to be alarmed.
...Some families are leaving for the up country but not in a panic. Most of the women and children even are determined to remain and risk the dangers of a bombardment....

Some of the people told Maury they would not leave because they had no place to go. He wrote to editors of inland newspapers and asked them to have neighboring


planters inform the Mobile papers of available places of refuge. The Mobile papers did not greatly aid Maury's cause, however; they expressed confidence that the city was safe and that the people should not "trouble themselves with doubts and apprehensions."\(^{30}\)

As August ended and September began, Maury continued looking for troops to defend the city. Although Governor Watts urged him to leave Mobile "a heap of ashes" if he could not hold it, Maury remained confident that he could conduct a successful defense with enough troops. The War Department tried to aid Maury by requesting that Watts call out as many state militiamen as possible and send them to Mobile. State troops alone would not suffice for Maury's needs, however. One problem was that these units arrived very slowly from their scattered mustering places. More seriously, many of the men fell ill once they reached the city. Maury requested some veteran infantrymen from General John Bell Hood, commander of the Army of Tennessee. Hood responded with a brigade of four Alabama regiments (some 700 men) commanded by Brigadier General Alpheus Baker. When they arrived at Mobile on August 28, Gardner ordered these troops to Spanish Fort to defend that position and to

\(^{30}\)Maury to R. G. Scott, Aug. 12, 1864, quoted in Daily Tribune, Aug. 23, 1864; Editorial in ibid., Aug. 25, 1864.
picket the eastern shore. One of Baker's regiments took up its station at Pollard so that it could guard the railroad.\(^{31}\)

At the same time that he asked Hood for men, Maury requested Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest to come south from northern Mississippi with some of his cavalry if his situation permitted it. Forrest ordered 2,000 men to Mobile even though he undoubtedly did not favor such a move. Before these troops could move southward, Davis telegraphed Maury that he could best use Forrest's men in a raid on Sherman's line of communications in Tennessee and that state reserves would do as well in the trenches as dismounted cavalymen. Maury acceded to the president's wishes and suspended the movement of Forrest's men.\(^{32}\)


\(^{32}\) Maury to Forrest, Aug. 24, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 2, pp. 796-97; Forrest to Brigadier General James R. Chalmers, Sept. 4, 1864, ibid., 815; Davis to Maury, Sept. 2, 1864, quoted in Dunbar Rowland (ed.), Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist: His Letters, Papers and
of the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, reached Meridian and assumed command on September 6. He decided to send Forrest's cavalry into Tennessee to operate against Sherman's supply lines: 

"...it is better to risk the fall of Mobile than to leave any reasonable efforts and means untried to defeat Sherman."  

To give Maury some support, Taylor agreed to send one of Forrest's brigades to Mobile. Colonel Robert McCulloch and his brigade, nearly 1,000 strong, moved southward from Meridian to the Gulf city.  

Despite these additions, the troop strength in the District of the Gulf did not satisfy Maury. Sickness, still prevalent among the new troops at Mobile, had reduced the force by about 2,000 men. The governors of Alabama and Mississippi withdrew or disbanded militia units totaling nearly 2,000 more men. Toward the end of September, Maury received through Taylor a request by

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Speeches, 10 vols. (Jackson, Miss.: Department of Archives and History, 1923), VI, 330; Davis to Maury, Sept. 4, 1864, ibid., 331.


34 Para III, Special Order No. 119, Headquarters Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, Sept. 6, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 818.
Hood for the return of Baker's brigade to the Army of Tennessee. Maury explained his situation to Taylor and stated that he did not feel justified in reducing his army by detaching Baker's men. He pointed out that the unit composed his sole veteran infantry force and held the important works on the eastern shore. Taylor supported Maury and passed on word that Baker's brigade could not be spared. Maury did agree to send one of his Alabama cavalry regiments to northern Mississippi to help guard that region in the absence of Forrest's cavalry. By the end of September, the effective force in the District of the Gulf numbered only 6,600 men.  

By the end of September 1864, the engineers at Mobile had made good progress in preparing the various defensive works for active service. They did not have a great deal of construction to do along the city line because they had completed most of the redoubts and redans along it. Their primary concern here consisted of dressing up the forts, strengthening their magazines, and connecting the forts with trenches. Redoubt "N" received

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the attention of most of Von Sheliha's work force. This position, also known as Fort Sidney Johnston, anchored Von Sheliha's line to Garrow's Bend and, with Battery Missouri, Mound Battery, and Battery Buchanan, covered the water obstructions from the west. So important did Von Sheliha feel the completion of this redoubt that he employed a force of 500 slaves on it day and night. A citizen who made a brief excursion along the Shell Road gave this description of what he witnessed:

...It would be a novel sight to one unaccustomed to the presence of the sable race, to witness the crowds of darkies employed in building the fortifications. They are in such numbers, that they look like ants on the side of an ant hill. Just as we passed, the signal to "knock off" work was given, & they obeyed the summons with alacrity, forming at once into companies, to march into the city, where they are quartered....

Battery Gladden and Battery McIntosh received minor repairs and several new guns. The engineers placed one 7-inch Brooke rifle in the latter. They also prepared a platform in McIntosh for a 10-inch columbiad. This fort seemed susceptible to an attack by enemy launches, so the engineers used a pile driver to place obstructions in

front of the work, while they strung a boom out along the western face. An officer in the garrison at Battery McIntosh wrote in his diary that they could not make much of a defense at the battery unless they received strong reinforcements. The men suffered from chills and fever: "Thirty six men out of three companies are all we have for duty today." To further strengthen these two batteries, the engineers moved two floating batteries to the vicinity. They transferred an ironclad battery up from the lower obstructions and placed it in the channel between the batteries. In the rear of McIntosh, the engineers anchored a wooden battery (called Camel Battery) that mounted two 42-pounder rifles.

Lockett placed Colonel Gindrat in charge of all engineer operations east of Tensas River, and Gindrat made good progress there. His men did little on Battery Tracy and Battery Huger except place more earth over their magazines and keep them clean. The engineers had almost completed the main work at Spanish Fort by the end of September and mounted two guns in it. They finished the largest of the four redoubts (No. 2) on the line in

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rear of Spanish Fort but did not have it ready for guns. Practically all of Redoubt No. 3 and Redoubt No. 4 they had pushed toward completion by the end of the month. The laborers dug more than 250 yards of rifle pits and cleared the timber for about 300 yards in front of the entire line. To aid in an evacuation of the works if it became necessary, Gindrat's men began construction of a road through Bay Minette swamp to a point across Apalachee River from Battery Tracy. At Von Sheliha's suggestion, a portion of Gindrat's force erected a battery at Blakely and began clearing land for a supporting line similar to that at Spanish Fort. In the Blakely and Apalachee rivers, the engineers placed additional piles and constructed rafts to block the streams. These operations in the eastern division completed the basic framework of the Mobile defenses, and subsequent work would only complete or strengthen what the engineers had already begun.

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CHAPTER XIV

"...STEADY AND ENERGETIC PREPARATIONS..."

From October 1864 until the commencement of the final Federal campaign against Mobile in March 1865, the Confederate command in the city concentrated on strengthening their defenses and preparing them to meet an enemy attack. Maury remained concerned about obtaining a sufficient military force to man his numerous works in the event of a siege. The small force at his disposal suffered from various illnesses, primarily chills and fever, which reduced its effective strength. In early October, out of 900 men present, Colonel Patton could count only 100 men fit for duty in his brigade. Maury reported in mid-November that he had only about 700 men to defend the land lines around Mobile. By the latter part of that month, his entire effective force in the District of the Gulf numbered slightly less than 3,000 men.¹ He asked the War Department for 4,000 or 5,000 veteran troops, preferably men from states other than


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Alabama: "A few Virginia regiments would be particularly well suited for a tour of service here." Taylor echoed Maury's request but recognized that few available units existed. He stated that Mobile would fall if attacked in its weakened condition. As Taylor anticipated, the War Department could then find no troops to send to Maury. Seddon wrote: "Re-enforcements cannot under more pressing exigencies elsewhere be spared for the doubtful contingency of an unreported attack."

The only source from which it seemed that Maury could draw reinforcements appeared to be Alabama State Troops. Practically all of these men then in service had already moved to Mobile. The Confederate command finally agreed to enroll free Negroes in the city for local defense, but no evidence exists of units forming at this time. Taylor urged Maury to allow portions of the militia and reserves to return home for short periods when he could spare them. These furloughs, Taylor felt, might encourage the men to turn out more readily when an attack became imminent. Maury requested 4,000 more men from

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2 Maury to Cooper, Nov. 10, 1864, O. R., XXXIX, Pt. 3, p. 910.

3 Ibid., with endorsements by Taylor, Nov. 14, 1864, and Seddon, Nov. 21, 1864, pp. 910-11.

4 Endorsement by Taylor, Nov. 14, 1864, on Maury to Cooper, Nov. 10, 1864, ibid., 910; Evening News, Oct. 22, 1864; Surget to Maury, Oct. 1, 1864, Letters Sent,
Governor Watts and pointed out that necessities elsewhere made it impossible for regular Confederate units to come to Mobile. Taylor also addressed an appeal to Watts. He asked the governor to urge the state legislature to pass laws which would make possible the raising of an adequate force for Mobile's defense. Taylor pointed out that the Gulf coast presented the only threat of invasion of the state. Sherman's "March to the Sea" had ended any threat from the east, while Hood's invasion of Tennessee had secured the state's northern border. Until Watts and the Alabama legislature could act, Taylor searched his department for men to send Maury. The only unit he could find consisted of "galvanized Yankees"—foreigners who had deserted the Union army—and this unit numbered only 450 men of dubious reliability.5

In the waning months of 1864, several general officer changes occurred at Mobile. Taylor had requested in September the assignment of Gardner to command of southwestern Mississippi and eastern Louisiana, where Taylor hoped he would succeed in correcting a chaotic situation.

The War Department acceded to Taylor's request and in October ordered Gardner to Meridian and to report to Taylor for orders. Maury also lost the services of Higgins in October but did so willingly. Higgins had left his command without orders in September when he thought the enemy would attack Mobile, and Maury removed him from duty. When Higgins applied to Taylor for reinstatement, Maury informed the latter of Higgins' conduct and asked that Taylor not allow him to return to Mobile. Taylor supported Maury in his wishes. In late November General Gustave Toutant Beauregard, now in charge of all western armies, ordered Major General Martin L. Smith to report to Maury for temporary duty commanding the Mobile defenses. Maury wrote to Beauregard explaining that he would assign Smith as temporary commander of the District of the Gulf while he acted as departmental commander during Taylor's absence in Georgia. When Smith arrived at Mobile, however, Maury decided to make him chief engineer

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6Taylor to Bragg, Sept. 24, 1864, O.R., LII, Pt. 2, p. 747; Para IX, Special Order No. 277, Headquarters District of the Gulf, Oct. 3, 1864, ibid., XXXIX, Pt. 3, p. 786; General Order No. 126, Headquarters Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, Oct. 4, 1864, General Orders, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, RG 109, National Archives; Mumford Diary, Oct. 4, 1864.

of the Mobile defenses and to turn the district over to Smith only when he (Maury) had to go outside its boundaries.  

Von Sheliha and his engineers did a considerable amount of work on the line of city defenses during the last months of 1864. For the most part, they made repairs and added earth to strengthen walls and magazines during October and November. The largest portion of the labor force of the city works concentrated their efforts in Redoubt "N" (Fort Sidney Johnston) to ready it for service against the enemy's gunboats. Heavy rains, cold weather, a shortage of workers, limited transportation, and a shortage of construction materials prevented Von Sheliha from making the progress he desired. To help alleviate the shortage of slave laborers, Taylor authorized Maury to employ his soldiers in completing the fortifications at Mobile. In early December Von Sheliha

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8 Beauford to Taylor, Nov. 16, 1864, O.R., XLV, Pt. 1, p. 1213; Maury to Gardner, Nov. 22, ibid., 1239; Beauford to Brent, Nov. 26, 1864, ibid., 1248; Brent to Major General Martin L. Smith, Nov. 27, 1864, ibid., LI, Pt. 2, p. 791; Maury to Brent, Nov. 28, 1864, Letters Sent, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, Chap. II, Vol. 14, p. 198; Maury to Brent, Dec. 1, 1864, ibid., 206.

shifted most of his work force to the redans located between the redoubts on the city line. He wanted to put them in good condition so that they could give the necessary support to the larger earthworks in the event of an attack. The engineers had placed all of the redans in fighting condition by the end of the month. General Smith ordered Von Sheliha to prepare *chevaux-de-frise* (sharpened stakes driven at right angles through logs) for placement in front of the lines to protect them against infantry assault. By the end of 1864, the city line seemed ready for active defense.10

The bay batteries required less work than the city works. At Battery Gladden the engineers replaced an 8-inch gun with a 10-inch gun, made repairs necessitated by heavy rains, constructed a new wharf, and drove obstructions in the waters in front of the work to stop boat attacks. Von Sheliha's men constructed gun pits and

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mounted two new 10-inch columbiads at Battery McIntosh. They also brought in additional earth to strengthen the walls and traverses of the fort. As was the case at Gladden, severe storms had eroded some of the sand and earth at McIntosh and made repairs necessary. To protect Gladden's left flank, Von Sheliha ordered an octagonal floating battery placed 500 yards northeast of the fort. This battery would mount two guns when completed. The engineers also employed two ironclad floating batteries and a battery constructed on camels (wooden caissons)—each mounting several heavy guns—in support of Gladden, McIntosh, and the bay obstructions. Because the bay batteries and eastern shore works had to share a steamboat for transporting supplies, Von Sheliha could not do as much strengthening and repair work as he had hoped, but by the end of December, he had all of the bay batteries in fair fighting order.11

Of the works on the eastern shore, Battery Huger and Battery Tracy received less attention than Blakely and Spanish Fort because the engineers had practically completed the two former forts. Tracy required only minor repairs and additional sodding. Von Sheliha began erection of a new, stronger magazine at Battery Huger. After the engineers covered it with about eight feet of earth, Von Sheliha mounted a gun atop it. Because Huger lay closer to the enemy's fleet, making it more vulnerable in case of an attack, Von Sheliha wanted to make its walls as strong as possible. He ordered his men to raise and thicken the parapet, especially on the work's south face. He also instructed his engineers to place additional sand on various parts of Huger's interior. Whenever possible, Von Sheliha had his labor force place sod on the walls to cut down on erosion. Likewise, he had them drive piles in front of Huger to reduce damage by tidal action. Some limited work remained to be done on Battery Tracy and Battery Huger, but Von Sheliha and Lockett felt they could put up a satisfactory defense.\footnote{Weekly Report...Oct. 15, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 3, p. 840; Weekly Report...Oct. 22, 1864, \textit{ibid.}, 851; Monthly Report...Oct. 1864, \textit{ibid.}, 885; Weekly Report...Nov. 5, 1864, \textit{ibid.}, 895; Report...Nov. 12, 1864, \textit{ibid.}, 916; Weekly Report...Nov. 19, 1864, \textit{ibid.}, XLV, Pt. 1, p. 1231; Weekly Report...Nov. 26, 1864, \textit{ibid.}, 1250; Weekly Report...Dec. 10, 1864, \textit{ibid.}, Pt. 2, p. 678; Weekly Report...Dec. 17, 1864, \textit{ibid.}, 708.}
For practically all of October and much of November 1864, the Confederate engineers accomplished little construction at Blakely. Maury had ordered them to cease work on the water battery there to make all supplies available for use at Spanish Fort. During October, the small labor force at Blakely divided its time between clearing land for the line of redoubts and trenches in the rear of the water battery and loading barges with earth and sod for use at Battery Huger and Battery Tracy. In mid-November, fifty laborers had to be diverted to make repairs on the Mobile and Great Northern Railroad. The engineers began more intensive work on the fortifications in December, although some of their men still had to provide some sod and earth for Huger and Tracy. By mid-month Lieutenant E. A. Ford, engineer in charge of the Eastern Division, could report that he had completed two redoubts on the land line. This progress did not please Lockett, however, because he expected Ford to have all of the redoubts in fighting order before any of them reached completion. Ford got two more redoubts ready for platforms by Christmas and fifty yards of infantry rifle pits dug. The engineers would have to do
considerable work in the new year to have Blakely ready for troops and all its guns.13

Lieutenant John T. Elmore, in charge of engineer operations at Spanish Fort, had plenty of work to keep his men busy. The men mounted all of the guns Von Sheliha planned for the main water battery (called No. 1 or Spanish Fort) and completed the work's main magazine. They also strengthened the face of the fort on the land side and began erecting traverses around the guns. Redoubt No. 2 (later called Fort McDermott) received almost as much attention as Spanish Fort since it was the largest fort on the land line. Elmore's laborers strengthened the fort's walls, placed a thick cover over its magazine and made the ditch deeper and wider. By mid-December, they had completed embrasures for six guns. Work slackened in late December because of a shortage of slave labor. Along the entire land line, the engineers began erecting a line of abatis (felled trees with sharpened branches facing the enemy) to protect the works against an infantry assault. Smith still saw a

need for a lot of work on the various fortifications as
the year ended. He recommended light artillery positions
at various points to cover the approaches to the main
redoubts. He also recognized the need for safe communi-
cation routes between the redoubts and from the land line
to a source of fresh water. As at the city works, Maury
authorized the engineers to use the soldiers stationed
at Spanish Fort to do needed construction.14

Maury faced no serious enemy attacks in his district
in late 1864, although the Federals did conduct several
raids or feint attacks. One of these raids occurred in
mid-December and had Pollard as its objective. A force
of about 800 Negro troops moved from Barrancas, Florida,
with orders to break up the railroad at Pollard. They
brushed aside the weak Confederate force under Brigadier
General James H. Clanton and reached the village on
December 16. After destroying part of the tracks and
burning several government buildings, the Federals began
returning to Barrancas. The Confederates gathered troops
from various locations to oppose the raid. Liddell took

14Weekly Report...Oct. 15, 1864, O.R., XXXIX, Pt. 3,
p. 840; Weekly Report...Oct. 22, 1864, ibid., 851;
Monthly Report...Oct. 1864, ibid., 885; Weekly Report...
Dec. 10, 1864, ibid., XLV, Pt. 2, p. 678; Weekly Report...
Dec. 17, 1864, ibid., 708; Weekly Report...Dec. 24, 1864,
ibid., 735; Smith to Lockett, Dec. 29, 1864, ibid., 746-
47; Maury to Lockett, Nov. 27, 1864, Letters Sent, Engi-
neer Office, Mobile, Chap. III, Vol. 11, p. 70.
a mixed force of infantry and cavalry from Baker's and Colonel Charles G. Armistead's brigades, respectively, from Blakely and caught the enemy about six miles below Pollard, where a running fight began. The pursuit continued for about thirty miles, ending only because the Confederates' horses became too exhausted to go farther. While the Federals admitted losing 81 men killed and wounded, one Confederate newspaper report placed the enemy casualties at 200. Liddell's men captured ten enemy wagons and much of their supplies. The Federals had done little damage to the railroad, and by December 24 repair crews had it in operation again.\textsuperscript{15}

Two other Federal forays occurred on the western side of Mobile Bay. On November 27, 1864, Brigadier General John W. Davidson rode out of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, with a force of about 4,000 cavalrmen, headed for southern Mississippi. Davidson hoped to strike the Mobile and Ohio Railroad northwest of Mobile and tear up as much of the track as possible. A brigade of Louisiana cavalrymen pursued the Federal column but lacked strength enough

\textsuperscript{15}Brigadier General Thomas J. McKean to Christensen, Dec. 19, 1864, O.R., XLIV, 449; Beauregard to Cooper, Dec. 22, 1864, Ibid.; Brent to Taylor, Dec. 14, 1864, Ibid., XLV, Pt. 2, p. 688; Brent to Cooper, Dec. 16, 1864, Ibid., 695; Brent to Taylor, Dec. 16, 1864, Ibid., 697; Brent to Cooper, Dec. 17, 1864, Ibid., 699; Brent to Beauregard, Dec. 19, 1864, Ibid., 709; The Army Argus and Crisis, Dec. 24, 1864.
to risk an engagement. Maury ordered McCulloch to deploy his brigade and the 15th Confederate Cavalry to oppose the enemy, and he scraped together a small infantry force at Meridian to serve under General Thomas. Rain turned the roads into quagmires and all the streams and rivers overflowed their banks. These circumstances impeded Davidson's movements. Only a small detachment of the Federal force actually threatened the rail line, but McCulloch's men repulsed the detachment in a skirmish on December 10. Unable to cross the Pascagoula River and fearing the Confederate forces gathering against him, Davidson decided to take his men to West Pascagoula where they could get transports to East Pascagoula and be available if further threats were made against the railroad.  

General Gordon Granger, commanding Union forces around Mobile Bay, proposed a demonstration against Mobile from East Pascagoula to force the Confederates to keep their troops in the city instead of sending them against Davidson or the troops moving against Pollard. After landing at East Pascagoula on December 15, 1864, with 3,000 infantry, Granger began his march toward Mobile.

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He asked Canby to allow him to use Davidson's cavalry, which had just arrived at West Pascagoula, so that he could try to destroy part of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad. Canby ordered only two regiments to Granger because he intended to use the rest of Davidson's men in a raid from Memphis against Hood's communications in Tennessee. The Federal advance halted at Franklin Creek, about 12 miles from East Pascagoula, without encountering any opposition. At Franklin Creek, the Federals threw up some light entrenchments and began stripping sawmills in the area of all their lumber. Granger gave up any plans for a strong push against the railroad and contented himself with keeping the Confederates' attention on him.

To oppose the Federals at Franklin Creek, Maury ordered a small infantry force and three cavalry regiments to the area. Taylor wanted Gardner to concentrate all available men from southern and central Mississippi

17 Granger to Christensen, Dec. 3, 1864, ibid., XLI, Pt. 4, p. 752; Granger to Christensen, Dec. 14, 1864, ibid., 853; Granger to Christensen, Dec. 15, 1864, ibid., 862; Christensen to Granger, Dec. 15, 1864, ibid., 863; Christensen to Davidson, Dec. 15, 1864, ibid.; Para VI, Special Order No. 14, Headquarters Cavalry Forces, Military Division of West Mississippi, Dec. 17, 1864, ibid., 875.

18 Granger to Christensen, Dec. 17, 1864, ibid., 876; Granger to Christensen, Dec. 20, 1864, ibid., XLV, Pt. 2, pp. 291-92.
and eastern Louisiana and to station them between Meridian and Mobile to cooperate with Maury. One of Taylor's dispatches expressed his evaluation of the city's status at this stage of the war. He regarded "the lines of communication with Mobile and the safety of that city as of vital importance, not only to this department, but to the maintenance of General Hood in Tennessee...."¹⁹ Several skirmishes between the opposing forces at Franklin Creek convinced Maury that Granger would not advance any farther and that he could not attack the Federals successfully behind their trenches. He then advised Taylor that he did not need to send any more men from Gardner's command toward Mobile. By Christmas, Maury no longer saw Granger's force as a real threat to the city. The retreat of the Federals on December 26 because of a lack of supplies confirmed Maury's opinion. Taylor requested Governor Watts and Governor Charles Clark of Mississippi to send available reserves to Maury in case another threat occurred.²⁰


²⁰ Major James E. Montgomery to Christensen, Dec. 19, 1864, O.R., XLI, Pt. 4, p. 884; Granger to Christensen, Dec. 24, 1864, ibid., 925; Granger to Christensen, Dec. 27, 1864, ibid., 941; Colonel Henry Bertram to Montgomery, Dec. 22, 1864, ibid., XLV, Pt. 1, p. 843; Levy to Maury, Dec. 27, 1864, ibid., Pt. 2, p. 743; Brent to
The news reaching Taylor from Tennessee certainly seemed to forebode a future threat to Mobile. Informing Maury that he had become "satisfied that Genl. Hood has suffered a severe reverse," Taylor made the following prediction:

...for the first time, that Mobile will be seriously threatened—not immediately, but so soon as the enemy, having pressed his pursuit of our army as far south of the Tennessee as the condition of the roads will permit, shall be in a position to return the force—some 20,000 men—which he obtained from Canby.  

Taylor urged Maury "to make steady and energetic preparations for the anticipated movement." He stressed the importance of completing Mobile's defenses and having enough mills set up to supply the garrison with corn meal. Maury replied that Smith found the works defensible and close to completion. He had six mills with a total capacity of 2,200 bushels of meal per day, but most of the corn in the city did not seem fit for issue. Maury hoped Taylor would send proper supplies in time to meet the demands of a siege. Maury also stressed that the troops then in the city could not make a successful


22 Ibid.
defense against an attack. Only men from field armies would constitute "a good and proper garrison."\textsuperscript{23}

In view of the possible threat to Mobile, Taylor began shifting troops from Hood's Army of Tennessee to the District of the Gulf in January 1865. Brigadier General James T. Holtzclaw received orders to take his Alabama brigade of Major General Henry D. Clayton's division to Mobile to relieve Baker's brigade, which would replace Holtzclaw's in the division. Maury preferred to have a brigade of troops from another state because he felt they would be less likely to desert and would not be distracted by being so near their homes. Still, he did not adamantly oppose the assignment of Holtzclaw's men to his district. When the Alabamians reached the city, he ordered them to the eastern shore to garrison Spanish Fort and Blakely.\textsuperscript{24} Another of Clayton's brigades--

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{23}Ibid.; Levy to Maury, Dec. 15, 1864, Letters Sent, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, Chap. II, Vol. 14, p. 225; Endorsement of Major John J. Walker, Dec. 17, 1864, on Levy to Maury, Dec. 15, 1864, Letters and Telegrams Received, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana; Maury to Watt, Dec. 28, 1864, Brent Collection.
  \item \textsuperscript{24}Para I, Special Field Order No. --, Headquarters Military Division of the West, Jan. 19, 1865, Special Field Orders, Military Division of the West, RG 109, National Archives; Bullock to Maury, Jan. 20, 1865, O.R., XLV, Pt. 2, p. 801; Bullock to Maury, Jan. 27, 1865, ibid., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 938; Para V, Special Order No. 28, Headquarters District of the Gulf, Jan. 28, 1865, ibid., 940; Maury to Taylor, Jan. 25, 1865, Brent Collection; Maury to Surget, Jan. 27, 1865, ibid.; Maury to Bullock,
Brigadier General Randall L. Gibson's Louisianians—also received orders for Mobile. Gibson's men arrived in early February and camped in the city suburbs. Initially Taylor had received permission to retain all of Lieutenant General Alexander P. Stewart's corps of Hood's army for use in his department, but he felt that the men should go to the Carolinas to fight Sherman. Taylor retained Major General Samuel G. French's division (now under Brigadier General Francis M. Cockrell) for duty at Mobile and ordered the rest of Stewart's corps eastward. Cockrell's three brigades occupied a camp on the Shell Road about five miles below the city. In all, some 3,000 veteran troops had augmented Maury's force at Mobile.

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In addition to these infantry units, Taylor ordered approximately 1,500 artillerists to Mobile. These men had manned light batteries in Hood's army but had lost their guns during the disastrous Tennessee campaign. Taylor intended Maury to use these men as infantry until he could find guns for them. Maury, however, planned to place the men in the works on the city line to man the siege guns. Most of the men did receive infantry weapons, however. All of the men had to undergo training and drill in handling heavy artillery and mortars. The captain of one battery wrote to his wife that his men drilled four times a day and worked around the fort the rest of the day. The men of Lumsden's Alabama Battery practiced with their coehorn mortars by firing at targets set out in the marsh in front of their redoubt. These new duties did not satisfy all of the men involved. The officers of the Fifth Company, Washington Artillery, for example, wrote to Joe Johnston asking for a transfer to his command. Even the batteries fortunate enough to get field guns still faced shortages of animals to pull their guns. Attempts to find necessary numbers of horses and mules failed. 27

27 Bullock to Maury, Jan. 31, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 947; Taylor to Maury, Feb. 1, 1865, Ibid., 951; Maury to Taylor, Feb. 3, 1865, Brent Collection; George Little and James R. Maxwell, A History of Lumsden's Battery, C.S.A. (Tuscaloosa: United Daughters of the
The revival of war spirit which swept the South following the Hampton Roads peace conference found expression at Mobile in a mass meeting held at Temperance Hall on February 13, 1865. Forty-six citizens issued the call for a gathering to "bring to the aid of our cause and country all the available means at our disposal." The editor of the Advertiser and Register supported the call wholeheartedly:

...It is the proper and manly response to the slavish ultimatum of Lincoln. It is, we fondly hope, the beginning of a revival in the war spirit of the country, to end in a united and undying resolution to resist that ultimatum to the death and to consecrate anew all we have of manhood and means to the sacred cause of Freedom....

Although no attendance figures are available, newspaper accounts spoke of the meeting as the largest assemblage ever held in Mobile. Several persons made patriotic speeches, and then all the participants approved a series of resolutions in support of the civil and military authorities of the Confederacy. These resolutions included

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Confederacy, 1905), 63; Captain Stouten H. Dent to Anna Beall Young Dent, Feb. 10, 1865, in Dent Confederate Collection, Auburn University Archives, Auburn University, Auburn, Ala.; William Miller Owen, In Camp and Battle with the Washington Artillery of New Orleans (Boston: Ticknor and Co., 1885), 420; Captain John B. Grayson to Major John A. A. West, Feb. 26, 1865, in Compiled Service Record of John B. Grayson.

28Advertiser and Register, Feb. 11, 1865.

29Ibid.
support for arming slaves for military service and for the reinstatement of Joe Johnston to command of the Army of Tennessee. 30

In anticipation of an enemy campaign against Mobile, Taylor and Maury concentrated their efforts on preparing the city and its defenses for a protracted siege. Taylor urged Maury to have a proper supply of foodstuffs on hand to feed 10,000 men for four months. In reply, Maury stated that the quartermasters had failed to accumulate a sufficient amount of corn and reminded him that he had no control over supply agents or means of transporting supplies. Taylor pointed out that Pemberton at Vicksburg had been deceived by his commissaries and quartermasters on the quantity of supplies in that beleaguered city. He ordered Maury to have one of his staff officers inspect his supplies daily and make a report to Taylor. He promised to aid Maury in removing any obstacle in the way of accumulating fuel, forage, and other supplies. Maury employed the former blockade runner Virgin to bring foodstuffs down the Tombigbee River. Once subsistence supplies reached Mobile, he had them stored in five

different warehouses located in areas of the city least likely to be exposed to enemy fire.  

Maury did not feel that he had an adequate supply of ordnance stores or small arms ammunition, but a report by Lieutenant Colonel J. R. Waddy indicated that Maury had little cause for concern. Waddy found a small armory in the city employing six men. These workmen could repair between 75 and 100 small arms a week. Maury's chief of ordnance had accumulated enough caps, powder, paper, and other material needed to make 1,000,000 cartridges. He lacked only a sufficient supply of lead. To make up for the shortage of lead, Maury had made arrangements with the city government to take up the pipes of the city's water works. Waddy stated that there was an average of 115 cartridges per man on hand in Mobile. Some of the troops, however, did not receive ammunition until early March. A soldier of the 46th Mississippi Infantry wrote in his diary that although his brigade had gotten new Austrian rifles on its arrival in Mobile, the men did

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picket duty with empty weapons.\textsuperscript{32} Except for three types of guns, Waddy reported that most of the 209 heavy artillery pieces in the District of the Gulf had an ample supply of ammunition. In fact, Waddy discovered that "in many instances the number of rounds per gun is too great, or rather, greater than our present limited resources would authorize."\textsuperscript{33}

In early March 1865, as it became more evident that the enemy intended to move against Mobile soon, Maury issued orders and circulars outlining actions for soldiers and civilians to take when the attack came. He instructed the artillery commanders along the city line to destroy or remove any buildings, trees, or other obstacles to the effective fire of their guns. He advised those people living outside the works within range of these guns to move their belongings to a safe place. Because a siege would expose the city to heavy enemy fire and cause a shortage of provisions, Maury urged all non-combatants to leave if possible and asked them to at least send their slaves to the interior.

\textsuperscript{32}Maury to Surget, Jan. 27, 1865, Brent Collection; Lieutenant Colonel J. R. Waddy to Brent, Jan. 21, 1865, in George W. Brent Papers, Duke University Archives; Chambers, "My Journal," 364.

\textsuperscript{33}Waddy to Brent, Jan. 21, 1865, Brent Papers; "Tabular Statement of the Artillery in the District of the Gulf, Mobile, Ala., Jan. 10th, 1865," Palmer Civil War Collection.
In compliance with instructions from Taylor, Maury took steps to send out all government Negroes not necessary for siege operations. Also in accord with orders from Taylor, Maury made preparations to burn all state-owned cotton within the city limits as soon as a siege began. He expressed confidence in being able to defend the city:

Our fortifications are strong—our stores are abundant and good—our troops are veterans—and with the cordial support of the people in all measures required for the public safety, and, with the blessing of Almighty God, are confident of victory.


35Butler to his sister, Mar. 13, 1865, Butler Family Papers; Para IV, General Order No. 8, Headquarters District of the Gulf, Mar. 12, 1865, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Mar. 14, 1865.
CHAPTER XV
"WE HAD TO STAND AND TAKE IT"

The Union high command began making plans for a serious attack on Mobile in early 1865. Even then, however, neither Grant nor Halleck saw the city as the chief objective of a campaign by Canby's forces. Grant expected Canby to capture Mobile, if he could take it without an extensive siege, and then move against Selma or Montgomery in conjunction with a cavalry force riding southward from Tennessee. Mobile would serve only as a base for these subsequent marches. If Canby encountered much delay at the city, he could bypass it and go on to his real objective: the industrial area around Selma.\(^1\) Grant agreed to send 18,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry troops from Tennessee to reinforce Canby. The latter concentrated approximately 26,000 men of his command at Barrancas, Florida, and on Dauphin Island. Because the fortifications around Mobile itself seemed so strong, Canby decided to reduce the works on the eastern shore

\(^{1}\) Grant to Halleck, Jan. 4, 1865, O.R., XLV, Pt. 2, p. 506; Halleck to Canby, Jan. 19, 1865, ibid., XLVIII, Pt. 1, p. 580; Canby to Halleck, June 1, 1865, ibid., XLIX, Pt. 1, pp. 91-92; Halleck to Canby, Jan. 26, 1865, ibid., 593; Christopher C. Andrews, History of the Campaign of Mobile (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1867), 21, 31-32.
and either move against the city by the Tensas and Alabama rivers or cut it off from above. He ordered the force at Barrancas, under Major General Frederick Steele, to march first against Pollard to cut the railroad there and create the impression of a march toward Montgomery. Steele began his movement on March 20. The remainder of Canby's army began congregating near Fish River and commenced its march toward Spanish Fort and Blakely on March 25.²

Maury had only about 9,000 men in the District of the Gulf to defend Mobile in early March 1865.³ Despite the heavy disparity in numbers between his force and that of the enemy, he and Taylor determined to hold Mobile. General Robert E. Lee advised Taylor to evacuate the city if such a strong enemy army moved against it that he could not defeat the enemy in the field. Nevertheless, he told Taylor: "...the defence of your Department must

²Grant to Halleck, Jan. 26, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 584; Halleck to Major General George H. Thomas, Jan. 26, 1865, ibid.; Canby to Halleck, June 1, 1865, ibid., 91-93; Major General Frederick Steele to Christensen, Apr. 12, 1865, ibid., 279; Andrews, Campaign of Mobile, 21-22, 25-26, 31.

be left entirely to your own judgment."\(^4\) Davis agreed with Taylor's ideas on the importance of holding Mobile and wrote Lee that he thought the garrison there strong enough to defend against any attack from the Gulf. When Canby's campaign began to develop, Taylor reported to Lee: "I am ready to receive any attack he may make at Mobile."\(^5\) Taylor planned to use Forrest's cavalry to defeat enemy raids into northern Alabama and then send Forrest's men south to aid in the defense of Mobile. However, by the time the cavalrymen disengaged themselves in central Alabama, Canby had already invested the eastern shore defenses, so Taylor kept Forrest's forces near Meridian. Maury had to do the best he could against adverse odds.\(^6\)

As I indicated earlier, Taylor and Maury made various preparations to ready Mobile for a possible siege throughout the early months of 1865. Once they became aware that Canby's army had begun actual operations, the Confederate authorities issued additional orders to assist

\(^4\) General Robert E. Lee to Taylor, Mar. 15, 1865, Taylor Papers.

\(^5\) Davis to Lee, Mar. 22, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 2, p. 1139; Taylor to Lee, Mar. 27, 1865, ibid., 1161.

in the defense of the city. The post commander, Colonel Thomas H. Taylor, issued circulars directing all able-bodied men to join local defense units or face expulsion from Mobile. Colonel Taylor also called for the organization of free Negroes into local defense companies. Maury assigned a person to organize the free blacks who reported for duty and authorized these men to elect their company officers, as long as the men chosen were white. By April 8, one company, known as the Native Guards, had formed itself. Although the city's assistant chief of police served as company commander, the other company officers were all "Creoles." Maury forbade persons from going to or from the enemy's lines without special permission. Mayor Slough ordered a registration of all male slaves between 18 and 45 years old so they could be located if required for work around the city.

Liddell, commanding on the eastern shore, informed Maury on March 20 of the enemy landing at Fish River.

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7Circular, Headquarters Military Post, Mobile, Mar. 20, 1865, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Mar. 21, 1865; Circular, Headquarters Military Post, Mar. 21, 1865, quoted in Army Argus and Crisis, Mar. 25, 1865; Para II, Special Order No. 35, Headquarters District of the Gulf, Mar. 26, 1865, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Mar. 28, 1865; ibid., Apr. 8, 1865.

8General Order No. 11, Headquarters District of the Gulf, Mar. 21, 1865, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Mar. 22, 1865; Order, Mayor's Office, Mar. 21, 1865, quoted in ibid., Mar. 23, 1865.
He requested reinforcements to hold the works at Blakely and Spanish Fort. To contest the enemy's advance, Maury sent his entire infantry force across the bay to Liddell. The latter stationed his men south and east of Spanish Fort along D'Olive's Creek and planned to give battle on March 26. He thought that only a small portion of Canby's army was in front of him, and he hoped to attack and defeat this detachment before reinforcements could reach it. The Federals had a much stronger force than Liddell anticipated, however. In addition, instead of advancing directly toward Spanish Fort, Canby's men began outflanking Liddell in the direction of Blakely. Liddell withdrew most of his force toward Blakely and ordered General Gibson to assume command of Spanish Fort. To hold the lines at the latter place, Gibson had 500 men of his own Louisiana brigade, 950 men of Thomas' brigade of Alabama Reserves, and 360 artillerymen: a total force of approximately 1,810 men. Gibson found six heavy guns, fourteen field pieces, and twelve coehorn mortars located in the various redoubts at Spanish Fort.  

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Soon after the occupation of the works, Gibson conducted an inspection of the lines. He reported later: "It was apparent that an immense work with the spade, pick, and ax was before us,..."\(^{10}\) Gibson ordered his men to dig rifle pits and strengthen existing works. The men constructed bombproofs behind the works to use as magazines, temporary hospitals, and living quarters:

...We cut down great trees, rolled the trunks over the mouth, then put a layer of brush and dirt; then came another layer of heavy logs crosswise, then a layer of brush and dirt, until the roof was six to eight feet thick.\(^{11}\)

To delay the enemy advance and give his men extra time to dig in, Gibson ordered an attack on the enemy's pickets on the morning of March 27. Lieutenant Colonel Robert H. Lindsay led 550 men in the attack, which broke through the enemy skirmish line for a short time. Lindsay's men fell back after observing the main Federal force fall into line of battle. The losses on both sides were

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Collection; Maury to Beauregard, June 1, 1865, Dabney H. Maury Letter, Louisiana State University Department of Archives and Manuscripts. Coehorn mortars were small, bronze mortars used in trench warfare.

\(^{10}\)Gibson to Flowerree, Apr. 16, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 314.

\(^{11}\)Stephenson, "Defence of Spanish Fort," 121.
light, but Gibson's tactics succeeded in slowing the enemy's advance.12

The Federals did begin easing their lines forward on the afternoon of the twenty-seventh. Where Gibson's skirmishers had entrenching tools, they held their positions by digging in, but where the men did not have tools, they had to fall back within the main trench line. Despite the cautious advance, the Federals completed the investment of Spanish Fort by nightfall. Gibson reported his losses for the day at 5 killed and 44 wounded.13 Thomas' Alabama Reserves, most of them young boys, performed well in the fight. One veteran, however, felt they did not protect themselves as well as they might have: "They thought it was 'not soldierly,' and they stood up and were shot down like sheep."14 During the night, Gibson

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12Andrews, Campaign of Mobile, 49-50; Gibson to Flowerree, Apr. 16, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, pp. 314-15; Gibson to Liddell, Mar. 26 [27?], 1865, in Randall Lee Gibson Papers, Louisiana State University Department of Archives and Manuscripts; Randall L. Gibson to John McGrath, Sept. 26, 1884, in Randall Lee Gibson Letters, Special Collections, Tulane University Library; Army Argus and Crisis, Apr. 1, 1865.

13Gibson to Liddell, Mar. 27, 1865 (several items), O.R., XLIX, Pt. 2, pp. 1162-64; Thad Holt (ed.), Miss Waring's Journal: 1863 and 1865 (Chicago: The Wyvern Press, 1964), 9; Maury to Taylor, Mar. 27, 1865, Brent Collection; Advertiser and Register, Mar. 26, 1865; Army Argus and Crisis, Apr. 1, 1865.

sent off all his horses and wagons. He asked Maury and
the district ordnance officer for rifle and cannon
ammunition and for whiskey and tobacco for the men. To
Liddell he sent a request for more entrenching tools.
Gibson expressed a desire to keep the men of Thomas'
brigade, which Liddell wanted to move to Blakely, because
he did not know whether or not the enemy would assault
his lines the next morning. Liddell allowed Gibson to
retain the men temporarily.  

During March 28 and 29, the Federals contented them­selves with erecting batteries and advancing their skir­mish line. A Confederate officer wrote in his diary that
the enemy siege lines were about 1,000-1,200 yards from
the trenches, while the enemy skirmishers had worked
their way to points from 250-300 yards of the Confederate
lines. The Confederate artillery remained superior in
its fire to that of the Federals during these two days.
To protect the gunners from enemy sharpshooters, the
engineers constructed screens over each embrasure.

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15Gibson to Liddell, Mar. 27, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 2, p. 1162; Gibson to Liddell, Mar. 27, 1865, ibid., 1163; Circular, Headquarters Forces at Spanish Fort, Mar. 27, 1865, in Record Books of Brigadier General Daniel W. Adams' and Brigadier General Randall L. Gibson's Brigade, Chap. II, Vol. 304, p. 301, RG 109, National Archives, hereinafter cited as Adams-Gibson Record Books; Gibson to Liddell, Mar. 27, 1865 (two items), ibid., Vol. 302, p. 359; Gibson to Maury, Mar. 27, 1865, ibid., 361; Gibson to Myers, Mar. 27, 1865, ibid., 362.
These screens consisted of steel plates two feet by three feet square and about one-half-inch thick: "...they were so secured to the inner faces of the embrasures that they were quickly lowered and raised as the gun ran into battery or recoiled." 16 Maury visited Spanish Fort on the twenty-eighth and decided to begin strengthening the garrison with troops from Blakely. Under orders from Maury, Liddell directed one regiment from Holtzclaw's brigade to move to Spanish Fort and relieve one of the Alabama reserve regiments. Liddell also ordered a detachment of sharpshooters armed with Whitworth rifles to Gibson. 17

March 30 saw only dissolatory firing by sharpshooters and a few artillery pieces. The Federals did succeed in pushing some of their pickets to points within 50 yards of the Confederate pickets. Much of the artillery fire on this day centered on Battery Huger and Battery Tracy. These two forts had added their firepower to that of the redoubts around Spanish Fort from the start of the siege.

16 Army Argus and Crisis, Apr. 1, 1865; Diary of a Confederate Officer, Mar. 28, 29, 1865, quoted in Andrews, Campaign of Mobile, 68, n. 2, 77, n. 1; Maury "Defence of Mobile," 12.

17 Maury to Taylor, Mar. 28, 1865, 4 P.M., Brent Collection; Lewis to Holtzclaw, Mar. 28, 1865, Letters Sent, Eastern Division, District of the Gulf, Chap. II, Vol. 99, p. 43, RG 109, National Archives; Lewis to Cockrell, Mar. 28, 1865, ibid.; Liddell to Gibson, Mar. 28, 1865, ibid., 100.
The Federals began erecting a heavy battery on the north shore of Bay Minette to bombard the two forts and succeeded in virtually ending steamship communication between Huger and Tracy and Mobile.¹⁸ Maury paid another visit to Spanish Fort on the thirtieth and again recognized the need to reinforce Gibson. The garrison had lost approximately 320 men through March 30. Maury ordered Holtzclaw's and Colonel Julius A. Andrews' brigades from Blakely to Spanish Fort to relieve the remaining Alabama Reserves. Two steamers transferred the men during the night of the thirtieth. Gibson assigned Holtzclaw to command of the two brigades, which then made up his left wing.¹⁹

The Federal sharpshooters became particularly obnoxious on March 31. Their fire struck down several men, including Maury's chief of artillery, Colonel William E.

¹⁸ Confederate diary, Mar. 30, 1865, quoted in Andrews, Campaign of Mobile, 80, n. 2; Army Argus and Crisis, Apr. 1, 1865.

Burnett, who was conducting a reconnaissance of the enemy's lines with Gibson. The latter requested 400 "Beauregard screens" to protect his own sharpshooters. These "screens" were wooden embrasures covered by sandbags and had been invented by Beauregard at Charleston. Maury reported that the "screens" provided "great security to the sharpshooters." Gibson decided active measures would also be needed to protect his men. He ordered a bombardment of the nearest enemy force, which lay about 150 yards outside the Confederate lines, and asked for volunteers to conduct a sortie against this force that night. Captain Clement Watson, Lieutenant A. E. Newton, and fifteen volunteers from Gibson's brigade rushed the Federal rifle pits just after dark. They succeeded in capturing one captain and 21 men and drove back the rest of the enemy force without any loss to their own party. Maury formally congratulated the men for their "brilliant and successful sortie." 

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Life for the men in the garrison at Spanish Fort became more difficult as each day passed. One soldier recalled: "Every day was full of incident, and it soon got so that we had no rest day or night." The men experienced great danger as well as discomfort:

Artillery duels became of daily occurrence, our 'head logs' were constantly knocked down upon us, bruising and crippling us; squads of sharpshooters devoted their especial attention to our port holes or embrasures and poured a steady stream of bullets through them from early morn till dewy eve;...

Another veteran remembered that during daylight men could only move about by crawling through areas where no communication trenches had been dug. The people of Mobile made liberal donations of many food items and did keep the men well fed. Naturally, however, the morale of the men began to sag, and Gibson urged his officers to cheer and encourage their men. He also asked that they set examples for the men to give them confidence: "It is morale that defeats a charge--it increases as the great Napoleon said--a resisting power tenfold." Gibson made

22Stephenson, "Defence of Spanish Fort," 122.
23Ibid., 122-23.
25"H.A.J." to Editors, Apr. 1, 1865, inAdvertiser and Register, Apr. 4, 1865; Circular, [Headquarters Spanish Fort], Apr. 6, 1865, Gibson Papers; Circular, Headquarters Forces at Spanish Fort, Apr. 5, 1865, Adams-Gibson Record Books, Chap. II, Vol. 304, p. 310.
frequent visits to the trenches and thereby exposed himself to enemy fire. 26  

The strength of the garrison never did please Gibson, and he frequently asked for reinforcements. In one letter to Maury, he stated that his men had wider gaps between each soldier on the line than they had ever had under Johnston and Hood in the Atlanta campaign. Gibson issued orders and circulars designed to place his men in the safest positions possible while still maintaining vigilance and the ability to respond quickly in case of an assault. One order established a force of sharpshooters for each artillery piece. Their responsibility was to keep up a steady fire on the enemy skirmishers to prevent them from picking off the Confederate gunners. 27 Gibson tried to get his men to conserve their ammunition as much as possible. On April 5, he pointed out that the men had expended nearly 54,000 rounds in two days and that at that rate the limited supply of ammunition would


27 Gibson to Maury, Apr. 1, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 2, pp. 1184-85; Gibson to Maury, Apr. 5, 1865, ibid., quoted in Andrews, Campaign of Mobile, 142, n. 2; Gibson to Maury, Apr. 6, 1865, Adams-Gibson Record Books, Chap. II, Vol. 302, p. 378; Special Order No. 7, Headquarters Forces at Spanish Fort, Apr. 3, 1865, ibid., Vol. 304, p. 307; Circular, Headquarters Forces at Spanish Fort, Apr. 4, 1865, ibid., 308; Circular, Headquarters Forces at Spanish Fort, Apr. 5, 1865, ibid., 311.
soon run out.  

Gibson and Maury both encouraged the men to collect "solid shot, shell, bullets, and misses of every description" to send to the ordnance department in Mobile for recycling.  

Throughout much of the siege, the Confederate troops had to bear artillery bombardments by the enemy. One of the most severe bombardments occurred on April 4. Even in Mobile the people could feel the vibrations of the shells striking the earth and could hear the reports of the heavy guns: "This evening the firing is terrific, not a moment elapsing between the booming of 'heavy artillery.'" The cannonading lasted for about two hours, and Gibson and his artillery officers estimated the enemy used thirty to forty heavy guns and at least a dozen mortars. Redoubt No. 3, manned by veterans of the Fifth Company, Washington Artillery, of New Orleans, received the brunt of much of the Federal fire. Two shells disabled the redoubt's heaviest gun, an 8-inch

28 Gibson to Maury, Apr. 2, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 2, p. 1192; Circular, [Headquarters Spanish Fort], Apr. 5, 1865, Gibson Papers.  


30 Confederate diary, Apr. 4, 1865, quoted in Andrews, Campaign of Mobile, 137, n. 1; Holt (ed.), Miss Waring's Journal, 12.
columbiad named "Lady Slocumb," and the bombardment practically levelled the parapets. When Maury offered to relieve the Louisianians with a fresh unit from the city, Captain Cuthbert H. Slocumb submitted the proposal to his men and reported back:

...'General, the company, grateful for your kind intention, desire to hold this position to the end. We respectfully decline to be relieved.'...

Gibson's left flank became the scene of increasing enemy activity during the last days of the siege. The marshy, densely wooded ground there made it almost impossible for the men to erect any kind of earthworks for protection. Federal batteries established on high ground north of this flat dominated the area. The enemy also began moving launches to the area so that they could operate on Bay Minette and the Apalachee River. A battery from Liddell's command at Blakely and the gunboats Nashville and Morgan provided some relief to Gibson's hard-pressed left but increasing numbers of enemy heavy guns in the area drove these supports back. Federal Parrott guns partially disabled the Nashville and kept the

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gunboats from the area during daylight hours.\textsuperscript{32} Gibson developed a plan to attack the enemy troops opposite his left but cancelled the plan when he could not get an ironclad to enfilade the Federal flank. He did station additional men and two field pieces on his extreme left to guard against a surprise attack. Gibson finally got the assistance of several navy picket boats to help watch his flank.\textsuperscript{33}

By April 7, the enemy had dug almost up to the main Confederate works around Spanish Fort. The Federals had concentrated so much heavy artillery and so many mortars around the position that the Confederate gunners could reply but briefly to the bombardment. To give themselves added protection, the men of the garrison threw up more traverses and bombproofs. Gibson found that the Negroes at the fort's cooking yard did not have enough work to keep them busy all day, so he ordered them to the front

\textsuperscript{32}Gibson to Flowerree, Apr. 16, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 316; Bennett to Farrand, Apr. 25, 1865, ibid., 319-20; Lewis to Colonel Isaac W. Patton, Apr. 1, 1865, ibid., Pt. 2, p. 1184; Gibson to Liddell, Apr. 1, 1865, ibid.; Confederate diary, Apr. 1, 1865, quoted in Andrews, Campaign of Mobile, 91n.

\textsuperscript{33}Gibson to Maury, Apr. 2, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 2, p. 1192; Gibson to Maury, Apr. 4, 1865, ibid., 1200; Liddell to Bennett, Apr. 6, 1865, ibid., 1209; Liddell to Captain Joseph Fry, Apr. 6, 1865, ibid., 1210; Gibson to Maury, Apr. 2, 1865, Gibson Papers; Lewis to Fry, Apr. 4, 1865, Letters Sent, Eastern Division, Gulf, Chap. II, Vol. 99, p. 53; Liddell to Gibson, Apr. 4, 1865, ibid., Vol. 100, p. 98.
lines to assist in erecting the new defenses and provide relief for his exhausted soldiers. Gibson also renewed his requests to Maury for hand grenades, engineer troops, subterranean shells, and more Negro laborers. He warned: "I must have the things I have asked for within the last three days, else disaster may happen." A shortage of ammunition forced Gibson to order the cessation of rifle fire from the main line except by sharpshooters. Only the skirmishers located in advanced rifle pits could continue to fire regularly. Gibson directed his officers to make sure these advanced pits had the "Beauregard screens" and to see that the positions were safe from a sudden enemy rush.

Maury sent Gibson several howitzers, some hand grenades, and an undetermined number of laborers on the night of April 7-8. Unusually heavy activity by the Federals early on the eighth prompted Gibson to order his skirmishers to keep up a steady small arms fire on the enemy work parties. He also urged his commanders to


exercise vigilance and monitor all movements on their fronts: "Every precaution must be taken to prevent a surprise...." During the afternoon, Gibson ordered the men in Fort McDermott to open fire with their artillery on the Federal working party on their front. In reply, the enemy poured such a concentrated fire into the fort that the Confederates soon had to cease fire. The Federal shelling disabled one gun and destroyed an ammunition chest. Gibson decided to test the enemy's strength and determine his intentions. Accordingly, he ordered all of his batteries to be ready to open up at sunset. His officers would watch the Federal lines closely for their reaction and prepare the defenses for anything which might occur. Gibson feared that "the moment had at length arrived when I could no longer hold the position without imminent risk of losing the garrison."

Unknown to Gibson, Canby planned a bombardment of his own for sundown on the eighth. The Federals had fifty-three siege guns in position and Canby ordered his

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36 Gibson to Maury, Apr. 8, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 2, p. 1217; Circular, Headquarters Spanish Fort, Apr. 8, 1865, ibid., 1219; Special Order No. 11, Headquarters Forces at Spanish Fort, Apr. 8, 1865, ibid.; William Rix, Incidents of Life in a Southern City During the War (Mobile: Iberville Historical Society Papers, 1865), [19].

37 Gibson to Flowerree, Apr. 16, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 316; Gibson to Maury, Apr. 8, 1865, ibid., Pt. 2, p. 1218.
infantry commanders to be ready to exploit any favorable situation.  

Gibson's gunners opened first, about 5:30, but got off only a few rounds before the Federal bombardment silenced them. The enemy fire became so heavy that the men of the garrison found no safety in their bombproofs and had to find shelter wherever they could behind their works. Shells from the Federal fifteen-inch mortars caused particular destruction, being able to penetrate six feet of solid earth, or the strongest bombproof, before exploding. One member of the garrison remembered that the men could see these big shells dropping into the works, but "we had to stand and take it."  

Few men could recall such a severe hail of shot and shell. The enemy musket fire and the dense smoke generated by firing cannons and exploding shells added to the confusion:

...it was though the mouth of the pit had yawned and the uproar of the damned was about us. And it was not taking away from this infernal picture to see men, as I did, hopping about, 'raving, distracted mad,' the blood bursting from eyes and ears and mouth, driven stark crazy by concussion or some other cause.

38 Canby to Halleck, June 1, 1865, ibid., Pt. 1, p. 96.

39 Gibson to Flowerree, Apr. 16, 1865, ibid., 316; Stephenson, "Defence of Spanish Fort," 123-25.

During the bombardment and as darkness fell, the 8th Iowa Infantry advanced against the works on Gibson's left. There they struck Andrews' Texans and drove them from their positions. A small force under Captain James A. Howze of the 14th Texas Dismounted Cavalry charged the Iowans to try to stop their advance. When the color bearer fell, however, the Texans retired with the rest of the brigade: "...they were retreating in great confusion, every man pretty much his own commander." The Federals captured several hundred men and overran 300 yards of trenches. Lieutenant Alfred G. Clark led the garrison's 100-man provost guard to the scene of action and delivered a counterattack. Although Clark fell mortally wounded, his assault stopped the enemy advance. The Federals threw up light trenches and awaited further developments. Holtzclaw reported to Gibson that his force was not strong enough to push the enemy back, and Gibson decided, in accordance with standing orders from Maury, to abandon his works rather than risk the capture of his men. He ordered his brigade withdrawn from the

right, posted part of the men to watch the left, and stationed the remainder of the brigade in position to cover the retreat.  

The men in the various redoubts spiked their guns, and the entire garrison, including the sick and wounded and Negro laborers, assembled on the beach. Maury and his engineers had made preparations for an evacuation by erecting a wooden treadway from the rear of Spanish Fort across the marsh to a point on the Apalachee River opposite Battery Huger. Gibson ordered the men to remove their shoes and boots and to carry their weapons on their side away from the enemy. Filing silently down the treadway under the cover of darkness, the troops reached the end of the planks without alerting the enemy to their movement. Steamers conveyed the garrison from Battery Huger to Blakely. A few men had to travel across the marsh directly to Liddell's lines. After a short rest there, the soldiers travelled on the steamers to Mobile. There the people first became aware of what had happened. Many of the citizens expressed disbelief at first: "Still I had to believe the evidence of my own eyes, for our

42 Geddes to Wilson, Apr. 9, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 275; Gibson to Flowerree, Apr. 16, 1865, ibid., 316-17; Gibson to McGrath, Sept. 26, 1884, Gibson Letters; Stephenson, "Defence of Spanish Fort," 125-26; Andrews, Campaign of Mobile, 155-58.
soldiers were passing by in squads, from an early hour, dirty, wet and completely worn out,..."\(^{43}\)

Gibson reported his casualties during the siege of Spanish Fort as 73 killed, 350 wounded, and 6 missing. In the final bombardment and assault, he lost 20 killed, 45 wounded, and 250 missing. The number of men captured on April 8 may have numbered as many as 325.\(^{44}\) The Federal losses at Spanish Fort were 52 killed, 575 wounded, and 30 missing.\(^{45}\) In his memoirs, Taylor praised the stand made at Spanish Fort: "Gibson's stubborn defense and skillful retreat make this one of the best achievements of the war."\(^{46}\) Maury echoed this assessment:

...It is not too much to say that no position was ever held by Confederate troops with greater hardihood and tenacity, nor evacuated

\(^{43}\)Gibson to Flowerree, Apr. 16, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 317; Liddell to Gibson, Apr. 8, 1865, ibid., Pt. 2, p. 1219; Gibson to Maury, Apr. 8, 1865, ibid.; Stephenson, "Defence of Spanish Fort," 126-28; Maury, "Defence of Spanish Fort," 131; Maury to Taylor, Apr. 8, 1865, Taylor Papers; Maury to Taylor, Apr. 9, 1865, Brent Collection; Holt (ed.), Miss Waring's Journal, 13.


\(^{45}\)Comparative statement of killed, wounded, captured, and missing during the campaign from March 17 to April 12, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 102.

\(^{46}\)Taylor, Destruction and Reconstruction, 270.
more skillfully after hope of further defense was gone.

Gibson praised all of his officers and men for their "steady valor and cheerful endurance" and disavowed any personal recognition: "...if any credit shall attach to the defense of Spanish Fort, it belongs to the heroes whose sleep shall no more be disturbed by the cannon's roar." The defense of this position for two weeks by less than 3,000 men against eight times as many Federals certainly should stand as one of the most heroic episodes of the war.

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47 Maury, "Defence of Spanish Fort," 130.

CHAPTER XVI

"...MOBILE WAS LEFT WITH GREAT RELUCTANCE..."

When Canby's army laid siege to Spanish Fort, Liddell occupied his forces in preparing the lines at Blakely for an attack. He also kept scouts out on the approaches from Pillard to watch for Steele's forces, which he expected might move against Blakely. Initially, Liddell had under his command a small artillery force, Holtzclaw's brigade, and three brigades of Cockrell's division. The latter units had arrived from Mobile late on March 24, 1865. As the siege of Spanish Fort progressed, Liddell detached Holtzclaw's brigade and Ector's brigade (under Colonel Andrews) of Cockrell's division and sent them to Gibson. He received in exchange Thomas' brigade of Alabama Reserves. On April 1, the 1st Mississippi Light Artillery Regiment, its men armed with rifles, reported to Liddell. He thus had approximately 2,700 effectives to defend his works.\(^{1}\) The position at Blakely

\(^{1}\)Maury to Davis, Dec. 25, 1871, quoted in Maury, "Defence of Mobile," 8; Maury to Beauregard, June 1, 1865, Maury Letter; James Bradley, The Confederate Mail Carrier (Mexico, Mo., 1894), 224; Chambers, "My Journal," 367; Edward W. Tarrant, "Siege and Capture of Fort Blakely," Confederate Veteran, XXIII (1915), 457; Liddell to Garner, Apr. 1, 1865, Telegrams Sent, Eastern Division, Gulf, Chap. II, Vol. 100, p. 84.
consisted of nine lunettes connected by rifle pits, the whole line covering some 3,000 yards. Advanced rifle pits, abatis, and land mines helped protect the ground in front of the works. Liddell assigned Sears' Mississippi brigade (Colonel Thomas N. Adaire) to the left, Cockrell's brigade (Colonel James McCown) to the center, and Thomas' Alabamians to the right. He did not have enough men to adequately fill the works, so at some points on the line ten paces separated each soldier.  

Steele's Federals did not reach the vicinity of Blakely until April 1. Early on that morning, Steele's cavalry encountered one of Liddell's outposts near Wilkins' plantation on the Stockton Road, about four miles north of Blakely. This outpost consisted of 100 men of the 46th Mississippi Infantry under Captain J. B. Hart. The Mississippians watched one regiment dismount and advance on foot, while another regiment followed closely behind with drawn sabers and on horseback. Taking advantage of fences and other obstructions, Hart's men fell back slowly for about one mile. At that point, the mounted enemy troops charged and routed the Confederates. Three officers, 71 men, and the regimental colors all

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fell captive to the Federals. The Federal pursuit continued almost up to the Confederate trenches at Blakely. Colonel McCown's Missourians had also been on outpost, and he stationed one of his regiments in a ravine across the road to stop the enemy advance. The fire of this unit, supported by artillery in the works, broke the Federal pursuit and forced them to fall back. A Missouri officer wrote: "'...it must have been a downfall to their pride to know that they had been whipped and routed by less than an hundred ragged Missouri infantry.'"

Liddell anticipated that Steele would attempt to storm his lines during the day. He telegraphed Maury and asked for 150 rifles for distribution to the artillerymen who had none. He ordered Cockrell to put men from his Missouri brigade in all of the advanced skirmish pits on his front:

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...they are the only ones here that can be relied upon thoroughly...and therefore it is necessary to have the best men in those pits.5

Thomas received similar instructions, including directions to station six men in each pit. Liddell informed Thomas that most of Steele's men were Negro troops who would not "spare any of our men should they gain possession of our works" and urged him:

...impress upon their [Thomas' men] minds the importance of holding their position to the last, and with the determination never to surrender....6

Steele's men did not attack on April 1, but Liddell attempted to have Ector's brigade returned from Spanish Fort that night. Maury, however, decided the Texans should remain with Gibson.7

The Confederate skirmishers on the Stockton Road tried to drive in the Federal cavalry pickets on the morning of April 2. Brigadier General John P. Hawkins, commander of the First Division, U. S. Colored Troops, quickly threw his men into line of battle. With a heavy

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6Lewis to Thomas, Apr. 1, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 2, p. 1188.

7Liddell to Gibson, Apr. 1, 1865, ibid., 1185; Gibson to Maury, Apr. 1, 1865, ibid.; Gibson to Maury, Apr. 1, 1865, ibid.; Lewis to Cockrell, Apr. 1, 1865, ibid., 1187.
force of skirmishers in front, the Negro troops advanced toward the sound of battle. Confronted by such overwhelming numbers, the Confederates began falling back slowly toward their main line. The Federals followed until the Confederates reached their advanced rifle pits and the protection of their artillery. At that point, about a half mile from the Confederate works, the enemy halted and began digging rifle pits of their own. Several hours later, Steele's division of white troops took position on the left of Hawkins' men and began entrenching. Liddell again feared an attack on Blakely and asked Maury to send him any light artillery which he could spare and some coehorn mortars to use on his flanks. Liddell also requested the services of the gunboat Morgan to bombard the Federals' right flank. The ironclad Huntsville was in the vicinity, but her guns could not be elevated enough to fire over the bluff. The attack Liddell feared did not occur.

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8Major General Frederick Steele to Christensen, Apr. 12, 1865, ibid., Pt. 1, p. 282; Brigadier General John P. Hawkins to Lacy, Apr. 16, 1865, ibid., 287; Liddell to Maury, Apr. 2, 1865, ibid., Pt. 2, p. 1190; Bradley, The Confederate Mail Carrier, 225.

Two divisions from the force in front of Spanish Fort joined Steele on the third, and the Federals completed the investment of Blakely. From the third to the eighth, they occupied themselves advancing their siege approaches and erecting batteries. Liddell's men kept up a steady fire from their skirmish pits and batteries to try to slow the Federal work parties. The ironclads Nashville and Huntsville and the gunboat Morgan all added their firepower in defense of the land lines. Steele reported that the bombardment of these vessels "was very harassing and destructive, especially to Hawkins' division" on the Federal right.¹⁰ Liddell's artillery suffered little inconvenience from the Federals because it had protection by wooden screens and because the enemy at first had only a few light guns. To illuminate the area in front of their works at night, the Confederate gunners employed fireballs sent up by coehorn mortars. These fireballs enabled the men to keep up an accurate rifle and artillery fire even after sundown. Toward the end of the siege, Liddell received three heavy guns from

¹⁰Steele to Christensen, Apr. 17, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 283; Bennett to Farrand, Apr. 25, 1865, ibid., 320-21; Bradley, The Confederate Mail Carrier, 225.
Mobile but barely got them mounted in time for use against the enemy.¹¹

Activities in the siege of Blakely did not have the intensity of those at Spanish Fort. Both sides conducted occasional operations against each other's advanced rifle pits. Usually these skirmishes resulted in few casualties and no lasting tactical success. On the morning of April 7, for example, Federal troops attacked the pits held by the Alabama Reserves, but the boy soldiers succeeded in driving the enemy back. Liddell decided to retaliate and ordered a sortie for the next morning before daylight. About midnight, the Confederate artillery opened fire on the Federal lines. After a bombardment of nearly an hour, Lieutenant Colonel Junius A. Law's 2nd Alabama Reserves charged the enemy pickets. They got to within 40 yards of the Federal pits before they received any enemy fire. At that point, however, the enemy poured heavy musketry at them and threw them back with a loss of 15 killed and 22 wounded.¹² When not

¹¹Liddell to Maury, Apr. 3, 1865, Telegrams Sent, Eastern Division, Gulf, Chap. II, Vol. 100, p. 91; Liddell to Garner, Apr. 3, 1865, ibid., 93; Liddell to Myers, Apr. 5, 1865, ibid., 100; Liddell to Maury, Apr. 3, 1865, quoted in Andrews, Campaign of Mobile, 171, n. 1; Liddell to Maury, Apr. 7, 1865, quoted in ibid., 183, n. 1.

¹²Maury to Taylor, Apr. 7, 1865, Taylor Papers; Colonel Charles L. Harris to Major James B. Sample, Apr. 10, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 261; Lieutenant Colonel
on the skirmish line, Liddell's men had to use spades and
picks to strengthen their works. Naturally, all of these
activities sapped the men's energies, and Liddell
requested that Maury send him 100 Negro laborers to
relieve his soldiers from the engineer work.\textsuperscript{13}

Conditions for the Confederate soldiers at Blakely
were similar to those at Spanish Fort, but some differ­
ences did exist. The men apparently had no extensive
system of bombproofs to use as quarters at Blakely. In
fact, one officer wrote his mother that the soldiers
lived in caves and holes and were generally exposed both
to enemy fire and the elements. This same officer asked
his mother to have a servant gather up rags to send to
Blakely: "We fire constantly & the men have literally
nothing to wipe out their rifles with...."\textsuperscript{14} As if the
regular rifle and artillery fire by the Federals were not
dangerous enough, Blakely's garrison suffered from the
fire of sharpshooters as well. Liddell reported that

\begin{footnotes}
\item Zalmon S. Main to Captain Riel E. Jackson, Apr. 10,
1865, \textit{ibid.}, 264; Brigadier General Christopher C.
Andrews to Lacey, Apr. 8, 1865, \textit{ibid.}, Pt. 2, p. 282;
Brigadier General Kenner Garrard to Lacey, Apr. 8, 1865,
\textit{ibid.}, 284.
\item Liddell to Maury, Apr. 7, 1865, quoted in Andrews,
\textit{Campaign of Mobile}, 183, n. 1.
\item Captain J. L. Bradford to mother, Apr. 8, 1865,
typed copy in Confederate Pension Application file of
Mrs. Sallie Slatten, Louisiana State Archives and Records
Service.
\end{footnotes}
these sharpshooters could hit men at the wharf from behind the Federal lines. Captain J. L. Bradford of the 1st Mississippi Light Artillery related that a sharpshooter's bullet struck one of his men in the head and killed him instantly. Bradford himself had barely escaped death when a bullet hit him near the heart but was stopped by two letters folded in his pocket. In spite of all the dangers and privations, the men maintained high morale:

...If we only had plenty of ammunition we could hold the dogs at bay forever, but we are stinted, & they will gain on us little by little I fear.\(^5\)

The Federal artillery began a heavy fire on Blakely on the morning of April 8 in conjunction with the bombardment of Spanish Fort. Liddell had planned an artillery barrage of his own to start at 8 P.M. The enemy replied briskly to his fire, and he found that his guns could not silence those of the enemy. A masked battery of heavy Parrott guns opened on the Confederate naval squadron during the afternoon. The Morgan received several hits, one near the waterline, and had to withdraw when her ammunition ran out. The Nashville also ran out

\(^5\)Liddell to Gibson, Apr. 5, 1865, Telegrams Sent, Eastern Division, Gulf, Chap. II, Vol. 100, p. 100; Bradford to mother, Apr. 8, 1865, Slatten Pension Application.
of shells and fell back even though she had not been struck.\textsuperscript{16} Liddell ordered his gunners and skirmishers to fire, with the aid of fireballs, on the enemy on the night of the eighth to help cover the evacuation of Spanish Fort and to discover the intentions of the enemy on his front. On the morning of April 9, the Federals renewed their bombardment in preparation for an assault. This bombardment did little damage except to dismount two guns. Liddell issued orders for his men to prepare for an attack.\textsuperscript{17}

Following the evacuation and fall of Spanish Fort, Canby began shifting his forces there toward Blakely and ordered Steele to be prepared to assault Liddell's lines. The attack opened at 5:30 P.M., and the four Federal divisions which had been in the trenches since April 3 all advanced simultaneously. With a shout the Federals rushed forward and drove Liddell's skirmishers back to their main line. A short time only had expired before


\textsuperscript{17} Liddell to Maury, Apr. 9, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 2, p. 1222; Lewis to Cockrell, Apr. 9, 1865, ibid., 1222-23; Lewis to Cockrell and Thomas, Apr. 8, 1865, quoted in Andrews, Campaign of Mobile, 188, n. 2.
the enemy force carried the entire line of works. Many Confederates surrendered at that point, while others fell back to the wharf before being captured. Some 3,700 men fell into enemy hands, but between 150 and 200 managed to escape to the naval squadron by swimming or floating on pieces of wood. All three Confederate brigadiers—Liddell, Cockrell, and Thomas—surrendered. The Federals lost fairly heavily in the assault—105 killed and 466 wounded. Total Federal casualties during the siege of Blakely numbered 116 killed, 655 wounded, and 4 missing. Maury had planned to evacuate the Blakely garrison on the night of the ninth, but he did not pull the men out on the night of the eighth with the Spanish Fort garrison because he felt Liddell could hold out throughout the next day.

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18 Canby to Halleck, June 1, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, pp. 97-98; Bennett to Farrand, Apr. 25, 1865, ibid., 321-22; Maury to Davis, Dec. 25, 1871, quoted in Maury, "Defence of Mobile," 8; Bradley, The Confederate Mail Carrier, 225; Tarrant, "Siege and Capture of Fort Blakely," 457-58; Ephraim McD. Anderson, Memoirs: Historical and Personal; Including the Campaigns of the First Missouri Brigade (St. Louis: Times Printing Co., 1868), 399-400; Bevier, History of the First and Second Missouri Confederate Brigades, 265-67.

19 Consolidated report of casualties from March 25 to April 10, 1865, Army and Division of West Mississippi, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 101; Consolidated statement of killed, wounded, captured, and missing during the campaign from March 17 to April 12, 1865, ibid., 102.

The fall of Blakely left only the small garrisons at Battery Huger and Battery Tracy to prevent the Federals from moving through the rivers toward Mobile. Two hundred men of Companies B and K, 22nd Louisiana Infantry, and Company C, 1st Mississippi Light Artillery, held Battery Huger. Major Washington Marks, commander of Huger, had eleven guns in his work. At Tracy, 120 men of Companies G, H, and I, 22nd Louisiana, manned the five guns of that fort, and Captain Ambrose A. Plattsmier had charge of Tracy. Lieutenant Colonel John A. Brown commanded both Huger and Tracy until April 3, when he reported to Maury as inspector of artillery. Major Marks then assumed direction of the two forts. Both garrisons fired their guns in support of Spanish Fort in the first few days of the siege of that place, but a shortage of ammunition in the works led Maury to order the men not to fire throughout the remainder of the siege. From March 31 to April 8, the two forts endured daily bombardments from an enemy Parrot gun battery on Bay Minette and occasional fire from the Federal fleet in Mobile Bay. The enemy shells did little damage to the

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earthen walls, and the men filled shell holes and strengthened the parapets with sandbags floated down to the forts on flatboats at night.\textsuperscript{22}

Colonel Patton of the 22nd Louisiana took his four companies from the Spanish Fort garrison and assumed command of Huger and Tracy on April 9. The men in the forts had to hold those positions at first to prevent the Federal fleet from cutting off retreat from Blakely and later to prevent the enemy from interfering with the evacuation of Mobile. Maury gave Patton permission to use his guns: "'Open all your guns upon the enemy, keep up an active fire, and hold your position until you receive orders to retire.'"\textsuperscript{23} The Louisianians faced the fire not only of the guns in the Bay Minette battery and the fleet but some of the guns abandoned at Spanish Fort and Fort McDermott. The men kept up a heavy, accurate fire against the Federal land batteries from April 9-11. The men endeavored to expend every round they had before

\textsuperscript{22}Maury to Davis, Dec. 25, 1871, quoted in Maury, "Defence of Mobile," 9-10; "Ebenezer R. F. S." to Editor, Mar. 31, 1865, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Apr. 4, 1865; Confederate diary, Apr. 2-7, 1865, quoted in Andrews, Campaign of Mobile, 135, n. 1, 136n, 137, n. 1, 143, n. 2, 145, n. 1.

\textsuperscript{23}Liddell to Patton, Apr. 8, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 2, p. 1219; Mumford Diary, Apr. 9, 1865; William Rix, Incidents of Life in a Southern City During the War (Mobile: Iberville Historical Society Papers, 1865), [20]; Maury to Davis, Dec. 25, 1871, quoted in Maury, "Defence of Mobile," 10.
they had to abandon their works. On the night of the eleventh, Maury sent a staff officer to Patton with orders to retire. The first steamer sent to pick up the men ran aground at Conway Bayou, but a second vessel succeeded in bringing the men off. They spiked all the guns before leaving. Maury wrote later: "These garrisons fired the last cannon in the last great battle of the war for the freedom of the Southern states." A Unionist living in Mobile expressed his admiration for the defense of Huger and Tracy: "Never was a devoted garrison more bravely defended, and never was [there] a finer display of scientific gunnery...."

In Mobile, Maury had begun preparations for a siege about the time the Federals invested Spanish Fort. On March 30, he declared the city to be in a state of siege, which enabled the military to arrest and hold suspicious persons. Taylor issued orders forbidding non-combatants from visiting the city without permission from his headquarters but removed this restriction after five days. Maury notified slave owners that they had to remove all their slaves from the city. Those persons not complying with these instructions faced the seizure and enrollment

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25 Rix, Incidents of Life, [20].
of their slaves in government service. The state of siege enabled the post commandant to close all saloons and drinking establishments in Mobile. Finally, the military began gathering up all cotton in the city for burning. Major William H. Ketchum impressed every dray he could find and hauled the bales out to a plain north of Mobile. A citizen reported:

...Going home, one day, I was surprised to see bales of cotton tumbling from the attic windows of some of the best mansions in the city. Almost everybody had secreted a little of that commodity in their homes to serve their wants when the Confederate money should collapse....

The losses suffered at Spanish Fort and Blakely caused Maury to begin planning for the evacuation of Mobile. Not only had the casualties in the two garrisons cost Maury half of his effective force, but a considerable amount of artillery and small arms ammunition had been expended. Forrest's defeat in central Alabama removed any real hope of relief. In a telegram to

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26 Para II, General Order No. 15, Headquarters District of the Gulf, Mar. 30, 1865, Gibson Papers; Major Joseph D. Sayers to Colonel Thomas Taylor, Mar. 31, 1865, Letters Sent, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, Chap. II, Vol. 14, p. 423; Surget to T. Taylor, Apr. 5, 1865, Telegrams Sent, Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, Chap. II, Vol. 11, p. 63; General Order No. 16, Headquarters District of the Gulf, Mar. 31, 1865, quoted in Army Argus and Crisis, Apr. 8, 1865; Circular, Headquarters Military Post, Mobile, Apr. 1, 1865, quoted in Advertiser and Register, Apr. 2, 1865; Major William H. Ketchum to T. Taylor, Apr. 20, 1865, Brent Collection; Rix, Incidents of Life, [20].
Taylor, Maury stated that he would be unable to hold Mobile for even a day if the enemy attacked it.\textsuperscript{27} With so many men tied down defending Spanish Fort and Blakely, the city had long had only a few artillerymen and home guards manning the works. An officer at Battery Gladden recognized the susceptibility of the defenses to assault:

\ldots The Federal Comr. has displayed a great want of knowledge by not landing on this side of the bay some time since. The entrance to the city has always been open.\textsuperscript{28}

Maury stated in later years that he would have been unable to hold the city for long if Canby had moved directly against it rather than operating on the eastern shore. Canby might even have bagged most of Maury's army:

\ldots The city was level and exposed throughout the whole extent to fire from any direction. There were near 40,000 non-combatants within its lines of defence, whose sufferings under a siege would soon have paralyzed the defence by a garrison so small as ours was; and the early evacuation would have been inevitable, while it would have been exceedingly difficult of accomplishment.\textsuperscript{29}

The ringing of alarm bells broke the stillness of the city on the morning of April 10. The bells pealed

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\textsuperscript{27}Maury to Surget, Apr. 15, 1865, Department of the Gulf Records, LHA Collection; Maury to Beauregard, June 1, 1865, Maury Letter; Maury to Taylor, Apr. 9, 1865, Taylor Papers; Bullock to Maury, Apr. 10, 1865, \textit{ibid.}; Maury to Taylor, Apr. 10, 1865, \textit{ibid.}

\textsuperscript{28}Mumford Diary, Apr. 10, 1865.

\textsuperscript{29}Maury, "Defence of Mobile," 1-2.
\end{flushright}
to call out the local defense troops so they could participate in preparations for the evacuation. Maury had about 18 steamers at the city, and the home guards and regulars began loading them with ordnance and commissary stores. The soldiers appropriated the drays which had carried cotton out of the city and used them to move the stores to the landing. The men put some supplies on the few railroad cars remaining in the city. Many of the troops departed that day, while Maury kept a small infantry and cavalry force in the city as a rear guard. A number of sick and wounded soldiers could not be evacuated, so the authorities arranged to place these men in the City Hospital and Marine Hospital under the care of the Sisters of Charity. Maury hoped the men would not be molested by the enemy while under the care of this religious order.\(^30\) The cloudy, dismal weather conditions reflected the feelings of many of the city's residents:

...Never have I experienced such feelings as now take possession of me—perfectly miserable, as may be imagined. Every body is

excited and running around, gathering what information they can.\textsuperscript{31}

Fortunately, the depression did not spread to the soldiers: "Amidst all the reverses, the men seem to be in good spirits."\textsuperscript{32}

On April 11, the removal of men and supplies continued, and the few remaining officers and men prepared to disable the artillery and ammunition which they could not get out. Confusion marred the orderly conduct of these operations. The local defense troops did not surrender their weapons and seemed ill disposed to obey any orders by regular officers. Lieutenant Daniel Geary took it upon himself to put out of order the forts on the city lines. He requisitioned spikes and had them distributed to the various batteries for spiking the guns. He instructed the battery commanders to dump their ammunition into the moats, burn the gun carriages, and set the bomb-proofs afire.\textsuperscript{33} The garrisons of the bay batteries evacuated their works last. At Battery Gladden, the men emptied their powder into the bay, threw shells into the water, and broke all tools. Rather than spiking their

\textsuperscript{31}Mumford Diary, Apr. 10, 1865; Holt (ed.), Miss Waring's Journal, 13.

\textsuperscript{32}Mumford Diary, Apr. 10, 1865.

\textsuperscript{33}Maury to Taylor, Apr. 11, 1865 (several items), Taylor Papers; Holt (ed.), Miss Waring's Journal, 14; Diary, Apr. 11, 1865, Geary Papers.
guns, the soldiers threw the elevating screws and wheels into the bay, which prevented the enemy from using the guns. Some delay occurred in evacuating the men because the engineers and Negro firemen on several steamers deserted. The soldiers had to collect wood and navigate the steamers as best they could. Finally, the last of the garrisons steamed away from the wharf: "Mobile was left with great reluctance by both officers and men. The men, though low-spirited, behaved well...." 34

Maury left Mobile early on the morning of April 12 with the rear guard of 300 Louisianians commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Lindsay. Maury left Gibson behind with Lieutenant Colonel Philip B. Spence's 12th Mississippi Cavalry Regiment and a section of an artillery battery. This rear guard left Mobile about 11 A.M. and set fire to the cotton bales piled up north of the city. A citizen reported that when the cavalry had departed from the scene of the conflagration, the home guards or municipal officials rang the alarm bells so that the people could rush out and try to save some of the cotton. They reportedly saved nearly 1,500 of the 3,500 bales which the military had stacked up. 35 Maury's commissary

34 Rix, Incidents of Life, [21]; Mumford Diary, Apr. 11, 1865.

35 Maury to Taylor, Apr. 12, 1865, Taylor Papers; Maury to Surget, Apr. 15, 1865, Department of the Gulf
officer had turned over to Mayor Slough some supplies for
distribution to the poor of the city. A young lady
described the scene which occurred after Spence's caval-
rymen left the city:

...each one of that class [the poor], help­
ing herself freely, and endeavoring to carry
off as much as possible—each one tries to
be first, and consequently much scuffling
and rioting ensues—...36

Eventually some home guards and armed citizens restored
order.

Canby ordered two divisions under Granger to cross
Mobile Bay and occupy Mobile. Granger's men landed at
Catfish Point, about five miles below the city, at
10:30 A.M., and Granger sent a dispatch to Slough demand­
ing the unconditional surrender of Mobile. At noon,
Slough and several citizens rode down the Shell Road in
a carriage to near the Magnolia Racetrack. With a large
sheet as a flag of truce, Slough informed Granger that
the Confederate troops had left the city, and he formally

Records, LHA Collection; Maury, "Defence of Mobile," 8;
Maury to Beauregard, June 1, 1865, Maury Letter; Ketchum
to T. Taylor, Apr. 20, 1865, with endorsements by Taylor,
Apr. 20, 1865, Brent Collection; Maury to Taylor, Apr.
13, 1865, ibid.; Rix, Incidents of Life, [21].

36Maury to Taylor, Apr. 12, 1865, Taylor Papers;
Rix, Incidents of Life, [22]; Holt (ed.), Miss Waring's
Journal, 15.
surrendered to the Federals. A regiment from Granger's force occupied the town during the afternoon and raised the United States flag over the customhouse. About sundown, a small number of Confederate cavalry scouts made a quick raid on the city and captured several Federal soldiers. Granger then ordered an entire brigade into Mobile to occupy the former Confederate works. One citizen described the entry of these soldiers:

...The city was resonant with every patriotic refrain, from the Star Spangled Banner to John Brown's Soul is Marching On. Every one realized for the first time, as he listened to the 'tramp, tramp' of the orderly files, that 'the boys' had come.

Indeed, it was only the strains of tunes like "Yankee Doodle" and the cheers of the Federal soldiers that made many citizens realize that Mobile had finally fallen to the enemy: "...I began to realize what had and was taking place, as before that, I had been so much

37 Granger to Christensen, Apr. 24, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 143; Granger and Thatcher to Slough, Apr. 12, 1865, ibid., 144; Slough to Granger and Thatcher, Apr. 12, 1865, ibid., 144, 146; Maury to Taylor, Apr. 13, 1865, Brent Collection; Holt (ed.), Miss Waring's Journal, 15; Peter Joseph Hamilton, A Little Boy in Confederate Mobile (Mobile: Colonial Mobile Book Shop, 1947), 26; Cox, "Mobile in the War Between the States," 210.

38 Brigadier General Elias S. Dennis to Captain Robert G. Curtis, Apr. 22, 1865, O.R., XLIX, Pt. 1, p. 175; Cox, "Mobile in the War Between the States," 210-11; Rix, Incidents of Life, [24].
excited that I hardly had time for thought...."  Three
days after Lee's surrender at Appamattox Courthouse, the
war ended for the Gulf city. Many days, however, would
elapse before life in Mobile returned to a semblance of
normality and even longer before she recovered something
akin to her former status. Twelve days after the surren­
der of Mobile, a northern newspaper correspondent penned
the following description of what the war had brought
the city:

The city is a sad picture to contemplate. The stores look a thousand years old. They
wear something of the appearance of the old castles to be seen in some of the countries
of Europe. They are empty and forsaken, except here and there an old man seated like
some faithful sentinel at his post. Shelves are forsaken of their silks, and occupied
only with the flies and the dust. The people look sad and sorry. The best people of the
city are poor, and poorly clad. There is no money save the scrip of the confederacy. The
people are distressed. No money except coin and greenbacks will pass. They have little
of the former--none of the latter. We have witnessed such sorrow over this order of
things as we do not desire again to behold.

40 Cincinnati Daily Commercial, May 10, 1865.
EPILOGUE

The defense of Mobile was an integral part of the southern war effort. Jefferson Davis certainly recognized Mobile's strategic position in the Confederacy and strove to keep competent, trustworthy men over the territorial command which included the city. He needed generals at Mobile who would not only push the construction of strong defenses but who would also be selfless when called upon to send men or supplies to other points. So long as Mobile's commander recognized the city's place in the Confederacy's overall war strategy and acted accordingly, it made little difference whether he directed an independent department or a subordinate district. The president and the War Department would see that he received needed supplies and that he would have enough men to defend the city if those men were not required elsewhere. The command at Mobile could not have been an easy one to hold, however. It required patience both because of the demands frequently made upon it for men and supplies that might be needed to defend the city and because the position offered no opportunities for active service which might lead to promotion. All of the men who commanded at Mobile deserve credit for accepting their role and performing their job capably.
For four years, the best engineering minds in the Confederacy—Leadbetter, Von Sheliha, Lockett, and Gilmer—planned, designed and supervised the construction of defensive works around Mobile. Thousands of slaves toiled, sweated, and suffered to erect the earthworks. Engineer troops and Negro laborers struggled to place cannons in the forts, obstruct the rivers around the city with pilings, and float deadly torpedoes in those rivers and Mobile Bay. Weeks and months of work went into arming and strengthening the two masonry sentinels guarding the entrance to the bay. With the resources available to them, the Confederates did everything possible to construct proper defenses for the area. Despite all these preparations, however, the Mobile defenses fell fairly easily to the enemy—Fort Powell in one day, Fort Gaines in two days, Fort Morgan in fifteen days, Spanish Fort and Blakely in fifteen days, Battery Huger and Battery Tracy in three days, and the bay batteries and city lines without a fight. Yet the Mobile defenses served a useful purpose through most of the war because they undoubtedly helped deter an enemy attack. Thus, the tons of earth and masonry and hundreds of heavy guns kept the port open for vital blockade running activities and kept functioning the strategic railroad lines through the city. The fall of Mobile early in the war might well have been a crippling blow the Confederate war effort.
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APPENDIX

Mobile Confederate Military Commands

The following chart traces the chronological evolution of the military territorial commands that had the responsibility for the defense of Mobile and includes the names of commanding officers.

Confederate forces at Fort Morgan
  Expanded to include Fort Gaines, Grant's Pass, and approaches to Mobile in April 1861. Placed in District of Alabama September 12, 1861.
  Colonel William J. Hardee, March 28, 1861.
  Colonel Henry Maury, June 18, 1861.

District of Alabama
  Created September 12, 1861. Placed in Department of Alabama and West Florida October 14, 1861. Designated Army of Mobile January 27, 1862.
  Brigadier General Jones M. Withers, September 12, 1861.

Department of Alabama and West Florida
  Established October 14, 1861. Discontinued June 27, 1862, and included in Department No. 2 (Western Department).
Major General Braxton Bragg, October 14, 1861.
Brigadier General Samuel Jones, March 3, 1862.
Brigadier General Thomas J. Butler (temporary),
March 29, 1862.
Brigadier General Samuel Jones, April 2, 1862.
Brigadier General John H. Forney, April 28, 1862.

District of the Gulf

Established July 2, 1862, as part of Department No. 2 (Western Department). Transferred to Department of the West, November 24, 1862.
Known as Department of the Gulf June 8, 1863-January 28, 1864. Merged into Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana January 28, 1864.
Brigadier (later Major) General John H. Forney, July 2, 1862.
Brigadier General William W. Mackall (temporary), December 14, 1862.
Major General Simon B. Buckner, December 23, 1862.
Brigadier General James E. Slaughter (temporary), May 8, 1863.
Major General Dabney H. Maury, May 19, 1863.
Major General Franklin Gardner (temporary), August 17, 1864.
Major General Dabney H. Maury, September 6, 1864.
VITA

Arthur William Bergeron, Jr., was born in Alexandria, Louisiana, on December 5, 1946. He completed both his elementary and secondary educations at Lecompte High School in Lecompte, Louisiana, from which he graduated in 1964. He entered Louisiana State University at Alexandria in September 1964, and graduated with a Batchelor of Arts degree from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge in May 1968. In September 1968 he entered the Louisiana State University Graduate School and served as a graduate assistant in the Department of History. He entered the United States Army in February 1969 and served one year in the Republic of Vietnam. In January 1971 he was released from active duty. He married Phyllis Dianne Martina in June 1969, and they have two children.

Returning to Graduate School at Louisiana State University in February 1971, he again served as a graduate assistant in the Department of History and taught the course in the History of Louisiana for four semesters. He received the Master of Arts degree in American history in August 1972. Since March 1977 he has been Archivist at the Louisiana State Archives and Records Service in Baton Rouge. He is a candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in American history at the summer commencement, 1980.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

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Major Field: History

Title of Thesis: THE CONFEDERATE DEFENSE OF MOBILE, 1861–1865

Approved:

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May 12, 1980