

# THE BATTLE OF HATTERAS

## The Fighting at Chicamacomico During The Civil War; The Capture of Hatteras, and Other Details of The Campaign

From an Eyewitness Account as Published in the Book: THE GREAT CIVIL WAR, by Robert Toms and Benjamin G. Smith.

1861. The Federal Government, with a well-organized navy at its command and the enormous commercial marine of the North at its service, possessed a powerful means of carrying on the war, which the insurgent slave States, with their meagre naval resources, had great reason to dread; but, with its ships of war designedly scattered, as it was suspected, over the seas of the world, by an administration under the control of men conspiring to dissolve the Union, and suddenly confronted with an enemy whose hostility and power our statesmen persistently continued to underrate, was slow in deriving advantage from its superiority on the sea. Aroused at last to the necessity of exercising its full power in a war the formidable character of which could no longer be concealed, the Government brought to bear the powerful means of offense offered by its navy and the commercial marine. The men-of-war were recalled from remote foreign stations and employed in the blockade of the extensive coast of the insurgent slave states; merchant craft, sailing vessels, and steamers of all kinds were chartered and purchased, and fleets of gun-boats rapidly constructed.

It was thus that the Federal Government was enabled, in addition to giving efficiency to the blockade, to commence a series of expeditions to the southern coast. The first was that to Hatteras, off North Carolina, which will now be described.

Aug. 26. Fortress Monroe having been made the rendezvous for the various vessels, the expedition sailed thence on the 26th of August. It was composed of two steam frigates, the Minnesota, Captain G. A. Van Brunt—the flagship of Commodore Stringham, who was the naval chief in command—and the Wabash, Captain Mercer; three gun-boats, the Pawnee, Captain Rowan; the Monticello, Commander Gillis; and the Harriet Lane, Captain Faunce; and two transports, the Adelaide and the George Peabody. To these were added several old hulks, to be filled with stones and sunk in the channels, and a number of surf and flat boats for landing the troops. The steam frigate Susquehanna subsequently joined the fleet. The troops, which for the most part embarked on the transports, were composed of 500 men of the Twentieth Regiment of New York Volunteers, Colonel Max Weber; 220 of the Ninth Regiment of New York Volunteers, Colonel Hawkins; 100 of the Union Coast Guard, Captain Nixon, and one company of the United States Artillery, Lieutenant Larned, making in all about 900 soldiers. To General Butler had been intrusted the military and to Commodore Stringham the naval command of the expedition. Of the former, the readers of this history have been duly informed, of the latter a veteran naval commander, there is an honorable record of service which it is proper now to exhibit.

Silas H. Stringham was born at Newburg, in the State of New York, in the year 1795. His first naval service was as midshipman on board the frigate President, Commodore Rodgers, in 1809. In 1820 he commanded the Palmyra, on the West Indian station. From 1835 to 1837 he held a command in the Mediterranean; at its close he was ordered to the Porpoise and sent in search of a pirate then cruising on our coast. In 1842 he commanded the Independence, attached to the home squadron, and in 1847 he took command of the Ohio, dispatched on special service to Brazil. He was subsequently placed in command at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where he remained until the Mexican War, when he again took charge of the Ohio, and led the squadron in the successful bombardment of Vera Cruz and the capture of the castle San Juan d'Ulloa. In 1852 he sailed in command of the Mediterranean squadron, and on his return in 1855 was appointed commandant of the Navy Yard at Charlestown, in Massachusetts. At the commencement of the war he was ordered to the chief command of the naval force blockading the coast of the hostile States. It was while on this service that he was called to conduct the first naval expedition.

Confederates Fortified It Though studious efforts had been made to conceal the place of attack, the public at the North, and more especially the enemy at the South, had discovered it. The object of the expedition was to take possession of Hatteras and the other inlets on the coast of North Carolina, which the enemy had defended by various fortifications. These inlets are passages from the Atlantic Ocean to the sounds or lagoons shut in from the seas by those long stretches of

sand beaches peculiar to the coast of North Carolina. The command of these sounds, of which the principal are Pamlico and Albemarle, was of eminent advantage to the enemy, as they afforded not only means of ready exit and entrance through the inlets to privateers and vessels desirous of eluding the Federal cruisers, but an interior communication by the Dismal Swamp Canal with the Chesapeake. To secure the possession of these inlets, the principal ones had been protected by fortifications. Old Topsail inlet, leading to Beaufort (N. C.), was defended by a granite fort, strongly built and mounted with forty guns. This was originally constructed at the expense of the Federal Government, but was seized by the insurgents of Carolina. Ocracoke Inlet, farther north, was also defended by a work built by the United States, termed Fort Morgan. Hatteras Inlet, some twenty miles still further north, near the cape whence it derives its name, had been but recently formed by the action of the sea on these ever-shifting sand beaches. This new channel, connecting the ocean with Pamlico Sound, and allowing the passage of vessels drawing fifteen feet of water, was much used by the enemy in their restricted commerce, and they had made great efforts to secure it. They had here constructed two forts, called Hatteras and Clark. The chief object of the naval expedition was to destroy or gain possession of them, and thus wrest the command of Hatteras Inlet from the enemy.

Landing Three Miles From Inlet On the evening of the 27th of August, the fleet, with the exception of the Susquehanna, arrived off Hatteras, and the object of the expedition was officially announced to those engaged in it. Continuing to close in with the land, on the next morning all the vessels, with the exception of the Susquehanna, which did not arrive until later in the day, were in position to prepare for landing the troops. The place selected for the disembarkation was about three miles from Hatteras Inlet. The two hulks which had been towed from Fortress Monroe for the purpose, were now filled with troops, and the iron surf-boats and others began to convey them to the shore. In the mean time, the guns of the men-of-war were so directed as to cover their landing. The breakers were high and beating powerfully, so that the iron boats conveying the first two companies of soldiers were nearly capsized and thrown violently upon the beach, with the surf pouring in torrents over their sterns. The men were forced to leap out of the boats and wade breast-deep to the land. A boat from the Pawnee had been more successful, and had succeeded on her first trip in landing her load of men high and dry, but on the second she capsized, turning every man into the water, but no one, fortunately, was drowned. The iron surf-boats it was found impracticable further to use, and every other boat which attempted to land was either upset or crushed by the breakers upon the shore. After, therefore, landing about 300 men, no other attempt was made on the first day to disembark the troops. Those landed consisted of two companies of the Twentieth New York Regiment, with Colonel Weber and Lieutenant Colonel Harris; a company of the Ninth New York, Captain Jardine; a company of regular artillery, Captain Larned; a detachment of marines from the men-of-war, commanded by Majors Doughty and Shuttleworth, some sailors from the Pawnee, under Lieutenants Crosby and Blue, and two sergeants, Drs. King and Jones. This small force was provided with only two rifled howitzers, one of which had been disabled by the loss of a wheel in the course of the difficult landing. Much of the ammunition, moreover had been damaged by the water, and no supply of provisions had been yet brought off from the ships. The troops were, however, formed into line, and organized as well as circumstances would allow, but owing to their isolation, their small numbers, and their pitiable condition from the drenching in sea water to which they had been exposed, and their want of necessities, were greatly embarrassed how to act.

Fort Clark Abandoned In the mean time, the war vessels had taken up their position in front of the forts, and the Wabash, taking the lead, had opened fire upon Fort Clark. The naval cannonade was very heavy, and nonade was very heavy, and though the enemy's batteries responded at first with great spirit, they gradually relaxed altogether at about two o'clock in the afternoon, and finally ceased altogether at about two o'clock in the afternoon. At this time, the Monticello, having a comparatively small draft of water, closed in with the shore and moved toward the entrance of

the inlet, within fire of the other work of the enemy, Fort Hatteras. The fleet now ceased to fire, and General Butler, landing at the opened a heavy fire upon her. The While in this position she got Monticello, however, responded with great spirit, and after firing fifty-five shells in fifty minutes, nearly silenced the fort. At the close, she fortunately succeeded in floating again, and moved out of range, but not until she had received seven eight-inch shot in her hull, though without serious damage to the ship or the loss of a single man.

In the mean time, the troops on shore having discovered, by means of their scouts, that Fort Clark had been abandoned, proceeded to take possession of it and hoist upon the ramparts the United States flag; but the ships of war not recognizing their own standard, again directed a heavy fire upon the fort, so that our men were obliged to evacuate it.

"In mistake," says a suffering campaigner, "the fire was thus kept up on our forces until they were compelled to retreat and leave there the stores, in the quartermaster's department, which they had found, and which they now so much needed, for they had become exhausted in their exertions to land the forces, and had then marched to the fort in wet clothes and without anything to eat since five a. m., and it was now about five p. m., and it became necessary to fall back to the landing. In doing so they captured some negroes who had been acting as cooks for the forces there, and other prisoners in arms. From these it was found that their forces were greater than ours, and that they were expecting reinforcements. No alternative was left but to be resigned to whatever fate was in store, and all tried to be as cheerful as possible. Some sheep and geese were found and "acquired" (to use a secession phrase) by our troops, and dispatched very unceremoniously. Camp fires were then built, and our prey was roasted (or rather burned) on the bayonets and cutlasses, and on this the troops made their supper and breakfast. The manner in which it was served did not make it particularly inviting, but yet it was evidently very much relished in the absence of everything else. Night was now upon us, and bade fair to be stormy. Every now and again a little rain would fall and dampen our clothes, which had not become dry from the experience of the morning. Our pickets were posted around in different positions to prevent a surprise, and we bivouacked on the beach. It was an anxious night to all. While we were lying on the beach, discoursing the command that it would afford us to be taken prisoners and marched to Richmond, they were getting reinforcements into Fort Hatteras and were arranging to attack us, which would have resulted in our capture, for they outnumbered us, and they were on their own ground, and better organized than we were. Fortunately their pickets reported that we were moving forward in large numbers to attack them, and they waited until morning for our approach. We, however, were quite willing to remain in safety where we were, and when morning dawned we saw the vessels coming in again from sea, whether the high winds compelled them to retreat for the night, and we took our march for Fort Clark, and at the same time the vessels advanced and opened such a hail-storm of shells as caused us to halt outside of Fort Clark, as it was necessary for our vessels to fire over the fort to reach Fort Hatteras. During the firing the troops took a position about half a mile from Fort Clark, and planted the rifled howitzer so as to command some steamers which were lying off Fort Hatteras, in the bay, either to land more troops or remove those in the fort, if they could no longer hold it. Happily for us they were within the range of our fire, and we compelled them to remain there, and thus we prevented any communication with the fort except by signals. While holding that position, the Pawnee by accident opened fire, and her shells fell so near the troops as to compel them to retire from their position and remain between the two fires until the white flag was hoisted on Fort Hatteras, when the troops advanced toward the fort and all firing ceased."

Confederates Surrender Aug. 29. The men-of-war had, in the early morning, begun the bombardment, whose effective service was relieving the suffering campaigners on shore from their anxiety. The Susquehanna had shell, which was immediately followed by destructive broadsides from the Minnesota and the Wabash, almost every shell falling and bursting within the work. About two hours subsequently the Harriet Lane and the Cumberland joined in, and greatly added to the severity of the fire. The enemy continued to resist pertinaciously until an eleven-inch shell, having made its way through a ventilator, exploded within the bomb-proof, in the middle of the battery, where the garrison had sought refuge from the shower of shot which our ships continued to pour upon them. This last shot settled the day, for it struck within their only cover and burst near the magazine. The enemy now gave up all hope and raised upon the ramparts the white flag of truce.

The fleet now ceased to fire, and General Butler, landing at the fort, demanded an unconditional surrender. To this Commodore Barron who had commanded in the with great spirit, objected, and proposed that the officers be allowed to march out with their side-arms, and that the men be permitted, after laying down their arms, to return to their homes. Butler, refusing these demands, insisted upon a surrender to which he was willing to grant only one condition, that the officers and men should be treated as prisoners of war. Barron no longer hesitated to comply, and articles of capitulation were drawn up on board the Minnesota, and signed by Commodore Stringham and General Butler on the part of the United States, and on that of the Confederates by Commodore Barron, Colonel Martin, and Major Andrews.

General Butler's Account The official reports contain the most authentic and detailed narrative of the affair. Here is that of General Butler:

"United States Flag-Ship Minnesota, August 30, 1861.

"Major-General J. E. Wool, Commanding Department of Virginia:

"General: Agreeably to your orders, I embarked on the transport steamer Adelaide and George Peabody 500 of the Twelfth Regiment New York Volunteers, Colonel Weber commanding; 220 of the Ninth Regiment New York Volunteers, Colonel Hawkins commanding; 100 of the Union Coast Guard, Captain Nixon commanding; 60 of the Second United States Artillery, Lieutenant Larned commanding, as a force to operate in conjunction with the fleet, under the command of Flag Officer Stringham, against the rebel forts at Hatteras Inlet.

"We left Fortress Monroe on Monday, at one o'clock p. m. The last ship of our fleet arrived off Hatteras Inlet about four o'clock Tuesday afternoon. Such preparations as were possible for the landing were made in the evening, and at daylight next morning dispositions were made for an attack upon the forts by the fleet and for the landing of the troops. Owing to the previous prevalence of southwest gales, a heavy surf was breaking on the beach. Every effort was made to land the troops, and after about 315 were landed, including 55 marines from the fleet and the regulars, both the iron boats upon which we depended were swamped in the surf, and both flat boats stove, and a brave attempt made by Lieutenant Crosby of the United States Army (serving with the army as port captain at Fortress Monroe), who had volunteered to come down with the steam-tug Fanny, belonging to the army, to land in a boat from the war-steamer Pawnee, resulted in the beaching of the boat, so that she could not be got off. It was impracticable to land more troops because of the rising wind and sea. Fortunately, a twelve-pound rifled boat gun, loaned us by the flag-ship, and a twelve-pound howitzer were landed, and the last slightly damaged. Our landing was completely covered by the shells of the Monticello and the Harriet Lane. I was on board the Harriet Lane, directing the disembarkation of the troops, by means of signals, and was about landing with them at the time the boats were stove. We were induced to desist from further attempts at landing troops by the rising of the wind, and because, in the mean time, the fleet had opened fire upon the nearest fort, which was finally silenced, and its flag struck. No firing had opened upon our troops from the other fort, and its flag was also struck. Supposing this to be a signal of surrender, Colonel Weber advanced his troops, already landed, upon the beach. The Harriet Lane, Captain Faunce, by my direction, tried to cross the bar to get in the smooth water of the inlet, when fire was opened upon the Monticello (which had proceeded in advance of us) from the other fort. Several shots struck her, but without causing any casualties, as I am informed. So well convinced were the officers of both navy and army that the forts had surrendered at this time, that the Susquehanna had towed the frigate Cumberland to an offing. The fire was then reopened—as there was no signal from either—upon both forts. In the mean time, a few men from the Coast Guard had advanced up the beach, with Mr. Wiegall (who was acting as volunteer aid, and whose gallantry and took possession of the smaller fort, which was found to have been abandoned by the enemy, and raised the American flag thereon. It had become necessary, owing to the threatening appearance of the weather, that all ships should make an offing, which was done with reluctance, from necessity, thus leaving the troops upon shore—a part in possession of the small fort (about seven hundred yards from the larger one), and the rest bivouacked upon the beach, near the place of landing, about two miles north of the forts. Early the next morning the Harriet Lane ran in shore for the purpose of covering any attack upon the troops. At the same time a large steamer was observed coming down the sound, inside the land, with reinforcements for the enemy, but she was prevented from landing by Captain Johnson of the

Coast Guard who had placed the two guns from the ship and a six-pounder captured from the enemy in a small sand battery, and opened fire upon the rebel steamer.

Bombardment Begins "At eight o'clock the fleet opened fire again, the flag-ship being anchored as near as the water allowed, and the other ships coming gallantly into action. It was evident, after a few experiments, that our shots fell short. An increased length of fuse was telegraphed, and firing commenced with shells of fifteen second fuse. I had sent Mr. Fiske, acting aide-de-camp, on shore, for the purpose of gaining intelligence of the movements of the troops and of the enemy. I then went with the Fanny, for the purpose of effecting a landing of the remainder of the troops, when a white flag was run up from the fort. I then went with the Fanny over the bar into the inlet. At the same time the troops, under Colonel Weber, marched up the beach, and signal was made from the flag-ship to cease firing. As the Fanny rounded in over the bar, the rebel steamer Winslow went up the channel, having a large number of secession troops on board, which she had not landed. We threw a shot at her from the Fanny, but she proved to be out of range. I then sent Lieutenant Crosby on shore to demand the meaning of the white flag. The boat soon returned, bringing Mr. Wiegall, with the following written communication from Samuel Barron, late captain in the United States Navy: "MEMORANDUM.

"Fort Hatteras, August 29, 1861. "Flag Officer Samuel Barron, Confederate States Navy, offers to surrender Fort Hatteras, with all the arms and munitions of war. The officers allowed to go out with side-arms, and the men without arms to retire.

"S. BARRON, "Commanding Naval Defense, Virginia and North Carolina."

"And also a verbal communication stating that he had in the fort 615 men and 1,000 more within an hour's call, but that he was anxious to spare the effusion of blood. To both the written and verbal communications I made the reply which follows, and sent it by Lieutenant Crosby:

"MEMORANDUM. "Benjamin F. Butler, Major-General United States Army, commanding, in reply to the communication of Samuel Barron, commanding forces at Fort Hatteras, cannot admit the terms proposed. The terms proposed are these: full capitulation, the officers and men to be treated as prisoners of war. No other terms admissible.

"Commanding officers to meet on board flag-ship Minnesota to arrange details.

"August 29, 1861."

"After waiting three-quarters of an hour Lieutenant Crosby returned, bringing with him Captain Barron, Major Andrews, and Colonel Martin, of the rebel forces, who, on being received aboard the tug Fanny, informed me that they had accepted the terms proposed in my memorandum, and had come to surrender themselves and their command as prisoners of war. I informed them that, as the expedition was a combined one from the army and navy, the surrender must be made on board the flag-ship to Flag Officer Stringham, as well as to myself. We went on board the Minnesota for that purpose. On arriving there the following articles of capitulation were signed, which I hope will meet your approval:

NEXT WEEK: Read the terms of surrender, conditions imposed on the defeated southerners. The articles were drawn up by General Benjamin F. Butler, on the Flag-ship Minnesota on August 29, 1861. This and other chapters will tell what the Federal observers said of

the people and their manner of living, also other events of the Civil War in that vicinity.

### AN INSPIRING STORY FOR COAST LIBRARIES

(Continued from Page Two)

City of Philadelphia in 1922 for his invention in "Continuous Wave Telegraphy and Telephony," and the Scientific American medal in 1929 for his numerous inventions relating to safety at sea.

Time after time the fruits of his genius had been denied the man who lived in Tomorrows. And finally when he was old, a quarter of a century after he had created the thing that broadened man's horizons, and brought all lands closer together, he won a settlement in 1928, which enabled him to go to Bermuda, broken in health from his long years of toil, and there he lived in peace and sanctuary. Four years of this, and the man who added his genius to the knowledge of the day, for the welfare of the people of tomorrow, gave up and his spirit merged with that Infinite which he understood more aptly than most men of his time. He rests under a marble slab in Bermuda, under an epitaph carved by his only son:

"By his genius distant lands converse, And men sail unafraid upon the deep."

There in Bermuda, lives his life companion, who shared with him in adversity; whose well-rounded mind and nature was the complement to his genius; who stood loyally with him when his hopes were dashed, or wielded the sword, so to speak, when he battled for his life. Never has it been our pleasure to read so much that was not written, too, from a book about one whose genius and spirit was so worthy of admiration. It is a book that will never be forgotten; a story that will be a continuous inspiration; and no child who ever dreams of an American future, and America's opportunities should be denied the privilege of reading, and re-reading the story of this man's labors. All of us who daily make use of and enjoy the fruits of his genius, for that matter can find much of value in the book.

BUYING FURS—Mink, Raccoon, Muskrat, Opossum, etc. Top market prices—Spot cash. W. C. GLOVER, Elizabeth City, N. C.

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REPORT OF CONDITION OF **ENGELHARD BANKING AND TRUST CO.**  
of Engelhard in the State of North Carolina at the close of business on December 31, 1940.

ASSETS	
Loans and discounts	\$181,084.54
United States Government obligations, direct and guaranteed	15,150.00
Obligations of States and political subdivisions	46,658.20
Cash, balances with other banks, including reserve balances, and cash items in process of collection	222,999.40
Bank premises owned \$3,079.50, furniture and fixtures \$717.17	3,796.67
Other assets	379.19
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>470,068.00</b>
LIABILITIES	
Demand deposits of individuals, partnerships, and corporations	\$213,187.71
Time deposits of individuals, partnerships, and corporations	102,399.02
Deposits of United States Government (including postal savings)	6,582.55
Deposits of States and political subdivisions	71,224.28
Deposits of banks	15,000.00
Other deposits (certified and officers' checks, etc.)	1,808.73
<b>TOTAL DEPOSITS</b>	<b>\$410,202.29</b>
Other liabilities	1,470.00
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES (not including subordinated obligations shown below)</b>	<b>411,672.32</b>
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	
Capital *	\$25,000.00
Surplus	20,000.00
Undivided profits	9,455.68
Reserves (and retirement account for preferred capital)	3,940.00
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS</b>	<b>\$58,395.68</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS</b>	<b>\$470,068.00</b>

\* This bank's capital consists of first preferred stock with total par value of \$12,500.00, total retireable value \$12,500.00; and common stock with total par value of \$12,500.00.

**MEMORANDA**

(a) U. S. Government obligations, direct and guaranteed, pledged to secure deposits and other liabilities..... \$2,600.00

(b) Other assets pledged to secure deposits and other liabilities (including notes and bills rediscounted and securities sold under repurchase agreement).... 38,390.72

(c) **TOTAL** ..... \$40,990.72

Secured and preferred liabilities:

(a) Deposits secured by pledged assets pursuant to requirements of law ..... \$40,990.72

(c) **TOTAL** ..... \$40,990.72

(a) On date of report the required legal reserve against deposits of this bank was ..... \$55,160.39

(b) Assets reported above which were eligible as legal reserve amounted to ..... 222,999.40

I, M. A. Matthews, Cashier of the above-named bank, do solemnly swear that the above statement is true, and that it fully and correctly represents the true state of the several matters herein contained and set forth, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Correct.—Attest:  
M. A. MATTHEWS, Cashier.  
R. S. SPENCER,  
J. H. JARVIS  
S. S. NEAL, Directors.

STATE OR NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF HYDE

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 9th day of January, 1941, and I hereby certify that I am not an officer or director of this bank.  
E. C. MILLER, Jr., Notary Public.

My Commission expires June 9, 1941.

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