



Glimpses

Items of recent and historical interest
from members of The Heritage Library

Vol. 2, No. 1

February 2010



This depiction of the Battle of Port Royal graced sheet music composed by Ch. Grobe and dedicated to "Commander S.F. DuPont and his brave associates." <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/sheetmusic/>.

Anticipating the Battle

The battle of Port Royal on November 7, 1861, was no surprise to either the North or the South. *The New York Times* had been printing articles about the assembly of an armada to blockade the South for weeks before the battle, remarking on October 25 about the impatience of those eager for action. The paper also speculated about the dangers to the ships from storms, especially off Hatteras. On November 3, the paper published an article laying out the entire battle plan.

According to *Wikipedia*, "Although Du Pont and others muttered aloud about treason and leaks in high places, the article was in fact the product of straightforward journalism." The destination of the armada was supposed to be a secret, but the CSA Secretary of War had already (on November 1) telegraphed authorities in South Carolina warning that the expedition was headed for Port Royal.

Meanwhile at Port Royal the defenders were scrambling to improve their defenses and call up more men. Accounts rendered afterwards show that communications often went awry and that some of the anticipated reinforcements, a day late in departing, were cut off by the Union forces and never arrived.

Battle of Port Royal and its Aftermath

By Lyman D. Wooster



In the military history of America's Civil War, the Battle of Port Royal Sound was in itself a relatively minor engagement but, as with most battles, what followed was anything but minor.

At the outset of the war, an immediate Union objective was to prevent Confederate coastal states from receiving arms from abroad and from exporting goods—particularly cotton—and thereby raising funds for the support of the South's Army. With that goal in mind, Federal naval forces, under the command of Captain Samuel F. DuPont (subsequently an admiral), set sail from Hampton Roads on October, 29, 1861, to take control of South Carolina's Port Royal Sound.

The Sound was guarded by two Confederate forts: Fort Walker, to the south of the Sound (in an area now known as Port Royal Plantation on Hilton Head), and the other, Fort Beauregard, to the north of the sound on St. Phillips Island.

The Union Fleet—at that time the largest ever assembled—lost a number of ships to a heavy storm as it sailed south toward the South Carolina coast. Even so, when it reached the Sound and began action on the morning of November 7, 1861, it was capable of firing 153 guns against the two forts while the forts were capable of firing but 39 guns. Moreover, the forts were firing at new steam-powered ships that were moving targets—making the forts' aim erratic—while the fleet was hitting stationary targets and firing from calm waters on a calm day. By mid-afternoon Ft. Walker was abandoned by the Confederates and shortly thereafter the troops at Ft. Beaure-

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Battle of Port Royal: Cont'd from Page 1

guard also departed. A Union expeditionary force under the command of Brig. Gen. T. W. Sherman, in one of the earliest amphibious operations of the Civil War, occupied Hilton Head, Port Royal, Beaufort, and St. Helena Island, and established itself on the outskirts of Charleston, laying siege to that city, a situation lasting throughout the war.

Casualties in the Battle of Port Royal Sound were relatively light, an unusual statistic for the horrendous War between the States. Eight persons were killed in the fleet and 23 were wounded, while on shore in the forts 11 were killed and 47 wounded. Total casualties amounted to less than 100.

*Thomas Drayton**Percival Drayton*

A sidelight of the ships-versus-forts engagement is that it pitted brother against brother, a not uncommon event in a civil war. In this case, it was Brigadier General Thomas F. Drayton, a graduate of the US Military Academy, the commander of Ft. Walker, and a plantation owner on Hilton Head, against his brother Commander Percival Drayton, captain of the *Pocahontas*, a ship in the attacking armada. After his defeat, General Thomas Drayton continued to serve the Confederate Army but in administrative posts; he was said to be incompetent in

the field. His brother Percival served in the navy throughout the war and served well.

The Battle of Port Royal Sound accomplished its primary goal; it succeeded in effecting a blockade from Charleston to Savannah, an area rich with cotton. Hilton Head became the headquarters for the Department of the South. In addition, the occupation of Hilton Head by

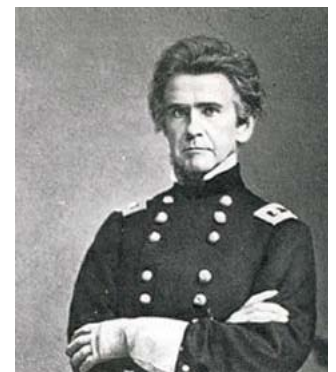
Union forces led to an event that, at the local level, preceded by eight months President Lincoln's January 1863 announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Two days after the arrival of Federal troops on Hilton Head, according to one report, about 150 slaves showed up at the army encampment; by December 15, 320 slaves had sought refuge there; and by February 1862 there were around 600 "contrabands of war" or simply "contrabands," as the escaped slaves were called by Union forces. As for the white plantation owners and their families, they had left the island in anticipation of the invasion by Federal troops.

On Hilton Head, General T. W. Sherman (no relation to General William Tecumseh Sherman), the commander of the 13,000 Union troops that initially occupied Hilton Head, wrote to Washington D. C. in February 1862 asking for guidance regarding the handling of the contrabands. Then in April, he issued a military order freeing Sea Island blacks, an action that nullified the term "contraband" and introduced the term "freedman." In spite of the fact that the order was beneficent and had the approval of high Federal authorities, Sherman was reassigned; his abrasive personality evidently made him difficult to work with. While he served in various capacities throughout the war, he did so without distinction.

The influx of slaves from nearby off-island plantations seeking refuge and freedom so increased the number of African-Americans on Hilton Head it created a serious housing problem for the occupying forces. Initially, barracks were built, but by October 1862 they were described as "sties" and considered a failure.

Major General Mitchel assumed command of the headquarters on Hilton Head in September 1862; it was he who envisioned the creation of a town of former slaves. A cotton field near the military camp on what had been the Drayton plantation was selected as the site of a village; by

*Ormsby Mitchel*

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President: Robert P. Smith 843-686-6560 • smith9697@roadrunner.com
Editor: Barbara Muller • 843-715-0153 • barbaraguild@earthlink.net



"Refugee quarters" in Mitchelville. From the National Archives

late 1862 the creation of a town was under way. It was named Mitchelville in honor of the general, who had died of malaria or yellow fever on October 30, 1862.

Mitchelville was developed as an actual town, the first American town to be created and settled by freedmen; it had named streets, one-quarter acre lots, elected officials, several stores, and churches. There were laws dealing with community behavior and sanitation; some officials were elected and others were appointed by the military; taxes were levied and collected; and a compulsory education system for children between the ages of six and fifteen was established, perhaps the first such system in the South. The typical house was about 12 feet by 12 feet in size, a rather simple structure constructed by the freedmen from lumber donated by the Army that operated the sawmills.

Begun in late 1862, Mitchelville more than doubled in size in three years; there were about 1,500 residents by 1865. Residents earned money by working for the military; wages ranged from four to twelve dollars a month depending on the worker's skill. The freedmen also had garden plots in which they could grow vegetables; farming became more important to the island's economy when the Army left in 1868.

By 1866 there were three churches in Mitchelville: the First African Baptist Church, a Free Will Baptist Church, and a Methodist Church. During the war, there were several missionary groups on Hilton Head, but by 1866 all had left except the American Missionary Association, which had been funded by Wesleyan Methodists, Free Presbyterians, and Free Will Baptists.

In that year, the island was divided into five school districts: Mitchelville, Marshland, Seabrook, Stoney, and Lawton. In the Mitchelville district, the missionary association supplied most of the teachers and offered primary, intermediate, and high school classes at the various churches. There were as many as 238 students being taught at one time in the district with classes meeting for up to

five hours each day.

The town of Mitchelville existed into the 1870s, but sometime in the early 1880s it apparently ceased being a true town and became a small, kinship-based community centered around a church.

The initial 13,000 Union troops on Hilton Head eventually became 50,000; their mission was to enforce the blockade of the South Carolina coast from Charleston to and including Savannah, Georgia. The blockade was never perfect; blockade runners got through. Even so, the difference between the large number of cotton bales shipped in the pre-war period and the much smaller number that got through the blockade during the war was substantial. Reducing the amount of cotton exported during the war was a strategic accomplishment of considerable consequence.

The decision to free the slaves on the Sea Islands was, of course, of major importance to the local African-Americans. While there is no evidence of wider impact, it is conceivable that the ability of freedmen to establish on Hilton Head a viable town, Mitchelville, had some influence in Washington when it came to the formulation of policies regarding African-Americans, their emancipation and subsequent treatment.

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FEBRUARY IN HISTORY

The Territory of Arizona

On February 2, 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed, ending the Mexican War. General Winfield Scott had captured Mexico City the previous August, and the Mexican government had fled to the town of Guadalupe Hidalgo, a city north of the capital.

Article I of the treaty stated: "There shall be firm and universal peace between the United States of America and the Mexican Republic, and between their respective countries, territories, cities, towns, and people, without exception of places or persons."

The treaty also provided for Mexico to cede 55% of its territory (present-day Arizona, California, New Mexico, and parts of Colorado, Nevada and Utah) in exchange for fifteen million dollars in compensation for war-related damage to Mexican property.

However, the map that was part of the treaty turned



James Gadsden was born in 1788 in Charleston, SC, the son of Revolutionary patriot Christopher Gadsden. He served in the U.S. Army under Andrew Jackson and also served as Adjutant General of the Army.

out to be wrong, and both the United States and Mexico wound up claiming the Messilla Valley, just west of present-day Las Cruces. This valley was considered part of the best southern route for building a railroad to the west and California.

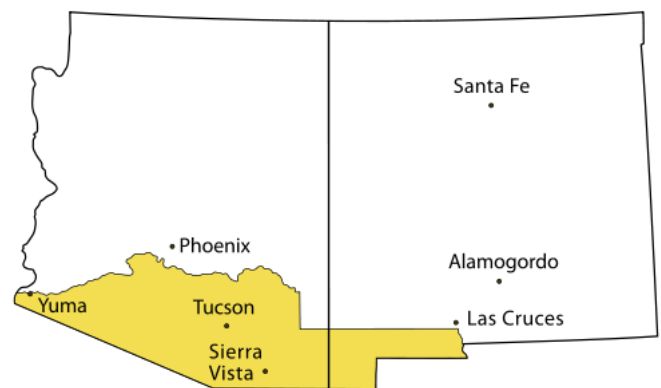
Although there was not much appetite in the South for such a railroad (most southerners were mostly concerned with shipping cotton, for which existing transportation was quite satisfactory), James Gadsden, a Charleston, South Carolina native with railroad experience, was more far-sighted.

In 1853, President Franklin Pierce, grieving over the death of his young son in a train derailment which he had witnessed, leaned heavily on his friend, Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, for support and advice. Davis sent James

Gadsden, a native of South Carolina and U. S. Minister to Mexico, to negotiate with Mexican president General Antonio López de Santa Anna to purchase the land in question. Gadsden, who had been president of the South Carolina Railroad from 1840 to 1850, had long been favorable to the idea of a railroad connecting east to west using this southern route.

The treaty was signed in Mexico City on December 30, 1853. It gave the United States 29,000 square miles of what is now southern Arizona and New Mexico for ten million dollars. At the time, the land was called New Mexico Territory, though discussion of dividing it began as early as 1856.

PART OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA



Present-day Arizona and New Mexico. The area in yellow was added to what was then the Territory of New Mexico through the Gadsden purchase of 1853.

As the Civil War began, there was considerable sentiment favoring the South, especially in the southern part of the Territory. Settlers on part of this land organized themselves as the Territory of Arizona and petitioned the Confederate States of America for admission as the Territory of Arizona. The Confederate Territory of Arizona became officially recognized when President Jefferson Davis signed the proclamation on February 14, 1862.

The following year, the United States Congress, without recognizing the CSA claim or its boundaries, passed a bill which was signed by President Abraham Lincoln on February 24, creating the Union's own version of Arizona Territory.

The memory of the Confederate States of America lingers in the official date of Arizona's statehood, February 14, 1912, the fiftieth anniversary of Jefferson Davis' acceptance of the Arizona Territory into the CSA.



The battle of Cowpens occurred in January, 1781; this painting, done by William Ranney in 1845, shows an unnamed black soldier on a Marsh Tacky (left) firing his pistol, thus saving the life of Colonel William Washington (George Washington's second cousin, on white horse in center). Note the comparative sizes of the horses.

The Marsh Tacky in History

Small-boned, sure-footed in the marshes, and often described as thoughtful, the Marsh Tacky has played a definite role in South Carolina history. Even now, a bill is pending in the South Carolina legislature to make the Marsh Tacky the state's official horse.

Descendants of horses left here by Spanish colonists in the 1500s, Marsh Tackies survived as feral or semi-feral horses, but were said to be so gentle-natured they could be tamed by simply placing a saddle on them.

During the Revolutionary War, these savvy horses helped Francis Marion elude his English pursuers in swampy country. British Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton gave Marion his nickname, "Swamp Fox." Following a fruitless 26-mile, seven-hour, chase of Marion, Tarleton swore, "As for this damned old fox, the Devil himself could not catch him." The Marsh Tacky could go where the larger, British mounts could not or would not.

An anecdote about the Battle of Cowpens led painter William Ranney to immortalize the Marsh Tacky, shown in the painting above.

The Marsh Tacky also was present in another battle during the Revolution. According to Jackie Macfadden of the Carolina Marsh Tacky Association, General Tarleton impressed Marsh Tackies into service when he took Charleston. Many of the English horses had been

lost during a storm at sea, and the soldiers took Marsh Tackies from the locals for their own use.

After the Civil War, they were commonly used by members of the Gullah community on the Sea Islands off the South Carolina shore for use in fields and gardens. The "tacky" part of its name from the English word meaning "common" in the sense of everyday, as these horses were the most common breed in their area of the country for most of their history. During the height of their popularity they ranged from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina to St. Simon's Island in Georgia. During World War II, when the Coast Guard patrolled the beaches of Hilton Head watching for Nazi U-boats, the Tackies were often called into service when those patrolling brought their own horses. During the 1960s, Marsh Tackies were used in races on the beaches of Hilton Head, a tradition that has recently been revived.

Caroline Maffry, writing in *Equitrekking*, says the Marsh Tacky is "more than a horse. [It] represents a connection to the land and culture for South Carolinians and a way of living, surviving, and adapting to conditions that ultimately became home." Even today, the Marsh Tacky is used to traverse the swamps and rough terrain hunting and trail riding, continuing to work and live as it has for the last 500 years.

It is estimated that only about 150 Tackies remain today, but the Carolina Marsh Tacky Association and the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy are hoping to preserve these gentle, thoughtful horses.



This photo of a Marsh Tacky mare and foal is from the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy, an organization devoted to preserving rare breeds and genetic diversity in livestock.

Eliza Lucas Pinckney and the Indigo Bonanza



Eliza Lucas Pinckney in a miniature painted by Edward Greene Malbone

Eliza Lucas was only sixteen when in 1738 she took over the management of three South Carolina plantations. Her father, Lt. Col. George Lucas of Antigua, had moved the family from Antigua to South Carolina because of his wife's poor health. He had inherited three plantations there from his father. However, the family had only been

there a year when Lucas was recalled to Antigua to be its governor, and Eliza took up the responsibilities of the household, her younger siblings, and the management of the plantations.

Well-read, educated in England, and an amateur botanist, Eliza was to prove herself a capable manager. Her efforts were partially responsible for a dramatic change in the fortunes of South Carolina planters.

One of the plantations, near Charleston, was too close to the ocean for rice-growing, and Eliza began to experiment with other crops, writing her father to send her seeds for ginger, cotton and alfalfa.

She held out the most hope for indigo, native varieties of which grew in the colonies but which had never been of economic importance. It took her four years to develop a suitable variety, and she used the entire crop for seed, which she shared with other planters. The other planters quickly began their own crops, and what some have called the "Indigo Bonanza" had begun. Indigo shipments from South Carolina rose from five thousand pounds in 1750 to over a million pounds in 1775. In that year, indigo was responsible for over a third of South Carolina's income. Planters could double their money every three to four years.

Eliza had married a local widower, Charles Pinckney in 1744, to whom she bore two sons.

The use of indigo dyes goes back millennia. Mentioned in ancient Indian manuscripts, it is made from the leaves of a leguminous plant. Indigo was also used by the ancient Romans to make ink.



She personally managed the marketing and sale of her crop, acting as her own agent when she accompanied her sons to England for their education.

By the time of the American Revolution, Eliza was a widow, Charles Pinckney having died in 1758. Eliza and her two sons were ardent supporters of the American cause. The British destroyed her plantations; her sons fought in the continental army. Both were captured by the British,

both were destined to figure prominently in South Carolina history, and both would also run for national office.

In 1775 Thomas Pinckney was commissioned as captain in the First South Carolina Regiment of the Continental Army. He was captured by the British at the Battle of Camden in 1780 and was later



Thomas Pinckney

released in a prisoner exchange.

After the war, Thomas was governor of South Carolina 1787-1789. He was a candidate for president in 1796, the year John Adams was elected president and Thomas Jefferson vice president.

Charles Cotesworth Pinckney served in George Washington's Continental Army. He raised and led the Grenadiers of the 1st South Carolina Regiment. He participated in the successful defense of Charleston in the Battle of Sullivan's Island in June 1776, when British forces under General Sir Henry Clinton staged an amphibious attack on the state capital. He commanded a regiment in the cam-

paign against the British in the Floridas in 1778 and at the siege of Savannah. When Charleston fell in 1780, he was taken prisoner and held until 1782.



Charles Cotesworth Pinckney

C. C. Pinckney was one of the leaders at the Constitutional Convention, strongly advocating a powerful national government. His proposal that senators should serve without pay was not adopted, but he was influential in such matters as the power of the Senate to ratify treaties.

Between 1789 and 1795 he was offered several top positions: commander of the United States army, a position on the Supreme Court, Secretary of War, and Secretary of State. He declined them all, but ran for president in 1800. The other candidates that year were the incumbent John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr. That election was a turning point in American history, for a tie in electoral votes between Jefferson and Adams threw the election into the House of Representatives. But that is another story, for another day.

The memory of Charles Cotesworth Pinckney is preserved in the Pinckney Wildlife Preserve established in 1945; Pinckney Island was once part of a plantation owned by C.C. Pinckney.

AFTER THE BATTLE:

Northerners Come to Hilton Head to See for Themselves

The occupying Union army described by Lyman Wooster in the article beginning on Page 1, and the fleeing slaves, were not the only ones to flock to Hilton Head shortly after the Battle of Port Royal. Writers and journalists came and reported back to a nation fascinated with these glimpses into southern life.

A correspondent for the New York Times, known only by his initials H. J. W., filed a breathless report days after the battle.

. . .Evidences of the wild confusion . . . in which the rebels had left the fort were abundant everywhere. .

The encampment . . .about eighty tents . . indicated . . . how hurriedly its late occupants had decamped. Most of the tents had been undisturbed. Officer's furniture, uniforms and other clothing, dress swords, small stores . . . were left as significant tell-tales of a sudden departure. . . . Over the meadow . . . were scattered blankets, knapsacks . . bayonets, cartridge boxes, and a few dead mules and broken vehicles

The correspondent reported that he was told that the "rebels," believing their position to be impregnable, and confident of sinking the ships, had invited the ladies of the neighborhood to come down and see the "chastisement" of the invaders. Many did so, only to have their carriages impounded to carry off the dead and wounded. (The correspondent did not say how the ladies got home.)

Charles Nordhoff (journalist and father of the Charles Nordhoff who wrote, with James Hall, *Mutiny on the Bounty*) was one of those to publish a small booklet, *The Freedmen of South Carolina*. He arrived in Hilton Head in March, 1863. His booklet is mainly interesting for its mentions of familiar Hilton Head locations and his arguments against some popular myths about the Freedmen. It's available online at [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbaapc:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(rbaapc2110](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbaapc:@field(DOCID+@lit(rbaapc2110).

Of Michelville, he wrote:

General Mitchel caused a village to be laid out, where there are now upwards of a hundred houses... General Mitchel's village was unfortunately laid out on too contracted a scale. The plot of ground assigned to each cot-

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tage is not large enough to furnish support to the owners, ...It seemed to me, too, that the site chosen was the least fertile I saw. I am afraid some city-bred surveyor was engaged to do the work, more used to measuring mother earth by the inch than by the rood.

Whitelaw Reid, editor of the New York *Herald Tribune*, toured the area in 1865. He wrote of the area:

General Saxton has, within his present district, over a hundred thousand negroes. He claims that all are now absolutely self-sustaining, save those swept in the wake of Sherman's march. Even the rations issued to these are charged to them, and the thrifty negroes make all haste to quit leaning on the Government, lest their debt should swell to too great proportions. Most of the older-settled negroes, who were originally dependent on

Government support, have already repaid the advances thus made them, and many have, besides, accumulated what is, for them, a handsome competence

Whitelaw Reid also noticed that there were some unscrupulous people who tried to take advantage of

the freedmen by establishing a sort of peonage —so many, in fact, that it was necessary to issue a special order protecting them. Part of General Order Number 9 read:

Any contract made under the above authority, which contains provisions tending to peonage, will be considered null. The officers having charge of contracts, will examine them carefully; and when they are found to contain such a clause, will notify the planters that new contracts must be made, in which the objectionable feature will be omitted. Contracts will be simply worded. Whilst acknowledging the freedom of the colored man, such expressions as 'freed by the acts of the military forces of the United States' will not be permitted. The attempt to introduce anything into the contract which may have the appearance of an intention, at some future day, to contest the question of the emancipation of the negroes, will be reported to the commander of the sub-district, who will examine into the antecedents of the person making the attempt, and report upon the case to district headquarters.

By command of Brevet Major-General John P. Hatch.

The Heritage Library
852 Wm. Hilton Parkway, Suite 2A
Hilton Head Island SC 29928