



# PVT. LUCIUS L. MITCHELL CAMP 4

December 2016

## Camp Communicator

Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War



### A Message From the Commander

We just had our first meeting in six months and we are looking forward to a new slate of officers next year. Some brothers will return to positions that they have had before. There is some “new blood” and that is good too. In the next few weeks before the next meeting please think about what contributions you can make to our L. L. Mitchell Camp. It is not unreasonable to think that in the near future the Grand Army of the Republic Memorial Hall will become active again and we, the Congressionally approved heirs of the GAR can have a role in that wonderful building.

But, the town has to know who we are and that we are truly interested in preserving this tradition. What can you do? I’ll let you figure that out. Roger Heiple and I have worked on the wording for the Florida State Historical Marker, gotten to know the new Town Manager Joseph Heffenberger and informed him about the possibilities of the Hall and attended a town meeting about trails around St. Cloud. We are also starting a schedule of presentations with the newly renovated public Library. How can you keep the Hall in everyone’s minds?

With Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

Mike Urell, L. L. Mitchell Camp 4 Commander

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### NEXT CAMP MEETING

SATURDAY December 3, 2016

1 PM

St. Cloud Community Center

716 Indiana Avenue

St. Cloud, FL 34769



## ROTC/JROTC Award

### How the program works:

Camp and Departments of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, through this program, are encouraged to participate in recognizing deserving cadets. Such participation is voluntary.

Where a Camp and Department chooses not to participate, or in locales where no Camp or Department exists, the ROTC/JROTC Award may be purchased by the unit using the Form 7 application / order form. - - [http://www.suvvw.org/?page\\_id=2076](http://www.suvvw.org/?page_id=2076)

### WHY WE HONOR THE CADETS OF THE ROTC/JROTC:

The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War Preamble reads –

We, the descendants of soldiers, sailors, or marines who served in the Army or Navy of the United States of America during the War of the Rebellion of 1861 to 1865, have formed this patriotic and fraternal Order, for the purpose and objects in this Constitution set forth; and in so doing pledge ourselves to commemorate our fathers' deeds; to render loyal service to our Country, and to promote the maintenance of unqualified American citizenship with respect for and honor to the flag.

By honoring deserving cadets, we help promote the maintenance of unqualified American citizenship because it will be these young people who will eventually serve in our Nation's military, under the flag our forefathers fought to preserve.

### Our Purpose and Objects include –

... to cooperate in doing honor to all who have patriotically served our country in any war; to teach patriotism, and the duties of citizenship, the true history of our country, and the love and honor of our Flag; to oppose every tendency or movement that would weaken loyalty to, or make for the destruction or impairment of our constitutional Union; and to inculcate and broadly sustain the American principles of representative government, of equal rights, and of impartial justice for all.

We believe it right to award those who have stepped forward to accept the challenge of leadership in defending our Nation's flag, principles and freedoms. By honoring those who serve today, we show our respect for those who have served in all others war in the past.

### THE CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING OUR AWARD:

Our definition of a deserving cadet is one that “shows a high degree of patriotism to his/her Nation and has demonstrated a high degree of academic performance and leadership.”

ROTC/JROTC units are encouraged to work with their local (participating) Camps and Departments in determining any additional requirements that may be used to determine a “deserving cadet.”



### Officers 2016 - 2017

*Camp Commander : Michael Urell*

*SVC: Connie Landry*

*JVC: Timothy Wiff*

*Secretary : Clair D.  
"Skip" Whitlam*

*Treasurer : Clair D.  
"Skip" Whitlam*

*Council 1: Ronnie G. McCracken*

*Council 2: Roger L. Heiple*

*Council 3: James G. Ward*

*Patriotic Instructor : Roger Heiple*

*Chaplain : Ronnie G. McCracken*

*Graves & Memorials : Ron-  
nie G. McCracken*

*Historian: unseated*

*Eagle Scout Coordina-  
tor. : Unassigned*

*Signals Officer: Clair  
D. "Skip" Whitlam*

*JROTC contact: Michael Urell*

*Guide: Pending*

**Editor**  
**Steve Williams**  
[swilliams16@cfl.rr.com](mailto:swilliams16@cfl.rr.com)

# Wreaths Across America

Their mission, Remember, Honor, Teach, is carried out in part by coordinating wreath laying ceremonies on a specified Saturday in December at Arlington, as well as veterans cemeteries and other locations in all 50 states and beyond. They also organize a week of events including international veteran's tributes, ceremonies at State Houses and a week-long "Veteran's Parade" between Maine and Virginia where we stop along the way to spread a message about the importance of remembering our fallen heroes, honoring those who serve, and teaching our children about the sacrifices made by veterans and their families to preserve our freedoms.

## *What is Wreaths Across America?*

501(c)3 non-profit organization formed in 2007 as an extension of The Arlington Wreath Project, with over 700 participating locations in all 50 states, and 24 national veteran cemeteries on foreign soil.

What began in 1992 with a trailer load of wreaths, decorated by volunteers and laid at the graves of fallen soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery has now become a national organization with over 900 participating locations - all focused on the mission to Remember - Honor - and Teach.

Wreaths Across America™ wreath sponsorships are \$15 per wreath. Funds are collected by each participating group. \$5 of each \$15 will be returned to the registered fundraising group on a 30 day reimbursement cycle.

Our Camp is registered for the Mt Peace Cemetery.



# Eagle Scout Program

Since 1910 the Boy Scouts of America have contributed to the moral and physical character of our communities by offering opportunities where young men can experience fun and adventure while learning the skills necessary for good citizenship and leadership.

One of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War many goals and purposes is to reward young men who achieve the status of Eagle Scout with a special congratulatory letter and color Certificate of Commendation, suitable for framing. While we encourage any young man searching for that special community service project to look to us for inspiration on projects relating to the Civil War, we offer this certificate with no "strings attached" other than you must be an Eagle.

Your Eagle Court of Honor observes a very proud tradition that our organization is pleased to recognize in memory of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). Comprised of over 400,000 Union Veterans of the American Civil War of 1861-1865, the GAR was a living symbol of patriotism when the Boy Scouts of America was formed in 1910. Before the passing of their last member (on 2 August 1956) the GAR officially recognized the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) as their Legal Heir. As such, it is our honor to maintain the many traditions of the GAR. These include the promotion of good citizenship by teaching patriotism, civic duties, and the love & honor of our flag – concepts that are "near and dear" to the Boy Scouts of America.

When possible, every effort is made by Camp (local chapter) and Department (state) members to present the certificate to the Scout at his Court of Honor, usually wearing the uniform of our Order or a replica Civil War uniform. Note: A personal presentation is not possible when ordering through the National Coordinator.

### How to Order a Certificate

Download this certificate application (pdf).

[http://suvchw.org/eagle/eagle\\_application\\_fi.pdf](http://suvchw.org/eagle/eagle_application_fi.pdf)

This application must be completely printed on line. We recommend you keep a copy for your records. You may also keep an electronic copy by saving the completed form to your computer. You must use a different file name in order to preserve your entries. NO hand written forms, letters or cards will be accepted.

We prefer that the application be sent as an email attachment. Email the application to the Department Eagle Scout Coordinator and request that the application be sent to the appropriate coordinator within your department. A 45 day notice is required to have a presenter at the Court of Honor. Postal mail applications will not be accepted.

Note: These guidelines must be followed in order to receive a certificate. If these guidelines are not followed a certificate may not be sent.



# Civil War Time line

## December in the Civil War



1860 - Dec 1st - Florida's Legislature convenes; Dec 3rd - Second session of the Thirty-sixth Congress convenes; Dec 4th - President Buchanan report on the State of the Union; Dec 14th - Georgia Legislature called on South Carolina, Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi to consider a Southern Confederacy; Dec 17th - South Carolina Secession Convention convenes; Dec 20th - South Carolina declares Union Dissolved; Dec 26th - Federal garrison transfers from Ft Moultrie to Ft. Sumter; Dec 30th SC troops seize Federal Arsenal at Charleston.



1861 - Dec 1st - President Lincoln pointed asks Gen'l McClellan 'how long would it require to actually get in motion?' And Prince Albert drafted diplomatic correspondence critical of the American seizure of the Trent with Confederate commissioners Slidell & Mason; Dec 4th - the Senate unanimously expelled Sen. John C Breckinridge of KY; Dec 7th & 8th - minor skirmishes in MO, KY, & western VA; Dec 10th - Confederate Congress accepted KY into the Confederacy; Dec 11th to 31st skirmishes in MO, VA, w VA, KY, SC, and Indian Terr. Naval actions in SC, NC, GA; Dec 18th to 23rd - British Minister to the United States began talks with Sec State Seward concerning the Trent affair threatening the possibility of war with Britain; Dec 26th - President Lincoln and his cabinet agreed to release Confederate commissioners Slidell & Mason thus blunting Britain's demands and Confederate hopes of war with Britain; Dec 26th - Martial law declared in St. Louis.



1862 - Skirmishes throughout December in MS, VA, w VA, TN, Indian Terr., Ark, LA, NC, MD, Naval Action in NC, KY. on rivers n MS, & NC.

Dec 1st - Pres. Lincoln gave his State of the Union message with 3 proposed amendments to the Constitution; Dec 7th - Battle of Prairie Grove, Ark; Dec 10th - The House passed a bill creating the state of West Virginia, the Senate had passed such a measure in July; Dec 11th - Federals Occupy Fredericksburg VA with Battle taking place on Dec 13th with disastrous results; Dec 17th - Grant issued his General Order No 11 which was subsequently rescinded by Lincoln ordering all Jews expelled from the (western) department within 24 hours; Dec 23rd - Confederate President Davis issues a proclamation that Union Gen'l Butler. Dec 29th - Battle of Chickasaw Bayou, MS; Dec 30th - Pres. Lincoln produced final draft of the Emancipation Proclamation to his Cabinet; And ironclad Monitor foundered off NC; Dec 31st - Battle of Murfreesboro/Stone's River TN; Act Admitting West Virginia approved.



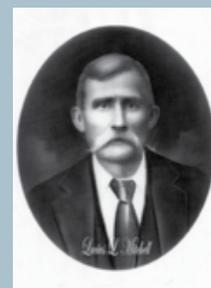
1863 - December shows the nation looking back over the bloody campaigns of the summer and anticipating the upcoming 1864 election. Throughout the month there was a growing despair in the Confederacy's political hierarchy over the progress of the war. Dec 2nd - Confederate General Braxton Bragg relieved of command and the Army of the Potomac withdraws to north of the Rapidan in VA. Dec 3rd & 4th - General Longstreet removes to Greenville



### Meeting Schedule

Our meeting schedule is six consecutive months between November through April meeting on the first Saturday of every month except in January, then we will meet on the second Saturday. At 1:00 PM.

Community Center - 702 Indiana Ave in St. Cloud.



SC for winter quarters thus ceding eastern TN to the Federals. Dec 4th to - Skirmishes on land in Nebraska Terr, W VA, TN, MS, SC, VA, NC, KY, Ark, Indian Terr., AL, CA, FL & GA. Dec 8th - President Lincoln Proclaims Amnesty and Reconstruction in his message to Congress. Confederate Captain (Naval) seized a merchant steamer ship Chesapeake off Cape Cod and the steamer was recaptured off Nova Scotia (Dec 17th). Dec 14th - Mary Todd Lincoln's half-sister, Mrs. Ben Hardin, was granted amnesty after taking the oath of allegiance. Dec 19th - Federal Naval forces continued destruction at St Andrews Bay in Florida. Dec 25th - Federal Naval forces operated in SC, fighting at Ft Brooke FL; Dec 26th - **CSS Alabama** took two prizes near Malacca.



1864 - With winter came no letdown in action: Sherman was deep in Georgia, Confederate General Hood and the Army Tennessee was in front of Nashville facing Union General Thomas. Congress was dealing with the constitutional abolition of slavery and the reconstruction with a rival Radical Republican faction demanding southern states needed to re-apply for statehood. Throughout the month land skirmishes in VA, Ark., MO, GA, LA, KS, TN, KY, AL, NC, AZ, FL, & MS.

Dec 1 - detachments of Sherman's Troops heading to Confederate prison camps in Millen and Andersonville GA; Dec 3rd - Federal Naval forces operated against slat works in Rocky Pt., Tampa Bay FL; Dec 6th - Salmon Chase named Chief Justice, President Lincoln sends his State of the Union message to Congress; [Aside - public debt was \$1,740,690,489.49]; Dec 10th - Sherman's troops arrive before Savannah, and move towards Ft McCallister; Dec 13th - Ft McCallister falls allowing Sherman to make contact with his supply ships; Dec 15th to 16th - Battle of Nashville; Dec 18th - Federal fleet sailed towards Wilmington & Ft. Fisher, NC; Dec 20th - Savannah evacuated; Dec 24th & 25th - Ft. Fisher attacked by bombardments and land troops in a failed attempt to capture the fort caused by disputes between Gen'l Butler and Navy Commander Porter.



1865 - Dec 2nd to 11th - Alabama, North Carolina, Georgia and Oregon legislatures approved the 13th Amendment. Mississippi rejected it. The 13th Amendment went into effect December 18th after 27 states approved.

Source: *The Civil War Day by Day, An Almanac 1861-1865*, E B Long, 1971, Doubleday.



# The Battle of Gettysburg

By Frank Aretas Haskell

## A Book I Enjoyed and You Might Too, Or Not



There are so many ways in which this book, that was originally a letter, can captivate you. First of all it is a first-person narrative of a very important event in American history, the Battle of Gettysburg. Plus it was written shortly after the battle and by a person with a very readable no-nonsense style of writing. And lastly it still can stir controversy over battlefield tactics and unit bravery that is argued to this day.

Frank Aretas Haskell was born in Vermont in 1828. In 1854 he graduated from Dartmouth College with distinguished honors. He entered a law firm in Madison, Wisconsin and by the beginning of the Civil War was beginning to be a successful lawyer. Knowing that he dies in battle in 1864 the "what ifs" enter your mind. The tragedy of an early death, the effect on others. All of us have thought about this in our own lives.

But we get ahead of ourselves. This is an account of much of the Union Army leaving Falmouth, Virginia and following Lee's army into Pennsylvania and finally meeting at Gettysburg for a bloody showdown. Haskell, a lieutenant and aide to 2nd Corp, 2nd division Commander Gibbon gives the reader a very clear picture of what happened before they arrive late on July 1st. So you are up to date and know his writing gives you an eyewitness account of the second and third days at Gettysburg. He was in the thick of it and deserves a great deal of the credit for the victory.

It is interesting that the letter did not receive a lot of notice until it was reprinted in large numbers in 1908. That reprinting was exactly as Haskell had written it. Previously changes had been made to the letter that defended Sickles' tactics during the battle. Another note of interest is that the Philadelphia Brigade did not like the recount of some of their actions at the Angle. The book is a well written delight to read. Forget about the above "or not".

Commander Michael Emmet Urell

L. L. Mitchell, Camp 4 St. Cloud, Fl.

[Ed. notes] Haskell's *Battle of Gettysburg in Popular Culture*.

On February 9, 1864, Haskell was appointed colonel of the 36th Wisconsin. On June 3, he assumed command of the 1st

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# Upcoming Events

## National

Lincoln Tomb Observance April 14 & 15, 2017. President Abraham Lincoln Hotel & Conference Center, Springfield IL 217-544-8800.

## Department

Annual Department Encampment February 18th, 2017

### Department Officers 2015-2016

**Commander:** Charles S Reeves, PCC - E-mail [reevesoldfarm@msn.com](mailto:reevesoldfarm@msn.com)

**Senior Vice Commander:** James G Ward, PDC - E-mail [nacheson1@att.net](mailto:nacheson1@att.net)

**Junior Vice Commander:** David Palmer, PCC - E-mail [Dayplm6@aol.com](mailto:Dayplm6@aol.com)

**Secretary:** Clair D Whitlam, PDC - E-mail [clairwhitlam@gmail.com](mailto:clairwhitlam@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:** Clair D Whitlam, PDC - E-mail [clairwhitlam@gmail.com](mailto:clairwhitlam@gmail.com)

**Councilor #1:** Harvey K. Linscott, PDC

**Councilor # 2:** John M. Vaughn, PDC

**Councilor # 3:** James G. Ward, PDC



The SVR roots date back to 1881 with the "Cadet Corps" of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) – the largest Union Veterans organization which formed in 1866 after the Civil War. The members of the GAR encouraged the formation of their sons as the SUVCW in 1881. These units eventually became known as the Sons of Veterans Reserve, when the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War moved toward a more patriotic and educational organization in design.

Many of the Sons of Union Veterans Camps (local organizations) formed reserve military units which volunteered their services during the Spanish – American War, World War I, and with the National Guard. Just prior to World War I, over 5,000 men wore the blue uniform of the SVR. As late as the 1930's, several states regarded their local SVR units as a military training component. Since World War II, the SVR has evolved into a ceremonial and commemorative organization. In 1962, the National Military Department was created by the SUVCW and consolidated the SVR units under national regulations and command. Since 1962, there have been five SUVCW Brothers that have held the SVR rank of Brigadier General and have had the honor to serve as the Commanding Officer of the SVR.

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform the members of Lucius L Mitchell Camp of activities and events related to the mission of the SUVCW and its interests.

If you wish to place a civil war article or SUVCW item please submit to the Editor at [swilliams16@cfl.rr.com](mailto:swilliams16@cfl.rr.com)

*The Editor reserves the right to censor and/or edit all material submitted for publication to the Camp Communicator newsletter without notice to the submitter.*



## Sutler Links

Link to list of vendors for any items to fill out your uniform and re-enactor accessories.

<http://www.fighting69th.org/sutler.html>

<http://www.ccsutlery.com/>

<http://www.crescentcity-sutler.com/index.html>

## Camp Website

Be sure and visit our NEW Camp Website at <http://www.c4dofsuvcw.org/officers.html>. There is a page with a complete Calendar of Events that is updated regularly. Check back often for news of changes in time or place!

# CSS Alabama

CSS *Alabama* was a screw sloop-of-war built in 1862 for the Confederate States Navy at Birkenhead on the River Mersey opposite Liverpool, England by John Laird Sons and Company.[3] Alabama served as a successful commerce raider, attacking Union merchant and naval ships over the course of her two-year career, during which she never docked at a Southern port. She was sunk in June 1864 by USS *Kearsarge* at the Battle of Cherbourg outside the port of Cherbourg, France.

Alabama was built in secrecy in 1862 by British shipbuilders John Laird Sons and Company, in north west England at their shipyards at Birkenhead, Wirral, opposite Liverpool. The construction was arranged by the Confederate agent Commander James Bulloch, who led the procurement of sorely needed ships for the fledgling Confederate States Navy. The contract was arranged through the Fraser Trenholm Company, a cotton broker in Liverpool with ties to the Confederacy. Under prevailing British neutrality law, it was possible to build a ship designed as an armed vessel, provided that it wasn't actually armed until after it sailed into international waters. In light of this loophole, Alabama was built with reinforced decks for cannon emplacements, ammunition magazines below water-level, etc., but the builder stopped short of fitting her out with armaments or any "warlike equipment".

Initially known as "hull number 290" to hide her identity, the ship was launched as *Enrica* on 15 May 1862 and secretly slipped out of Birkenhead on 29 July 1862. Union Captain Tunis A. M. Craven, commander of USS *Tuscarora*, was in Southampton and was tasked with intercepting the new ship, but was unsuccessful. Agent Bulloch arranged for a civilian crew and captain to sail *Enrica* to Terceira Island in the Azores. With Bulloch at his side, the new ship's captain, Raphael Semmes, left Liverpool on 13 August 1862 aboard the steamer *Bahama* to take command of the new cruiser. Semmes arrived at Terceira Island on 20 August 1862 and began overseeing the refitting of the new vessel with various provisions, including armaments, and 350 tons of coal, brought there by *Agrippina*, his new ship's supply vessel. After three days of back-breaking work by the three ship's crews, *Enrica* was equipped as a naval cruiser, designated a commerce raider, for the Confederate States of America. Following her commissioning as CSS *Alabama*, Bulloch then returned to Liverpool to continue his secret work for the Confederate Navy.

Alabama's British-made ordnance was composed of six muzzle-loading, broadside, 32-pounder naval smoothbores (three firing to port and three firing to starboard) and two larger and more powerful pivot cannons. The pivot cannons were placed fore and aft of the main mast and positioned roughly amidships along the deck's center line. From those positions, they could be rotated to fire across the port or starboard sides of the cruiser. The fore pivot cannon was a heavy, long-range 100-pounder, 7-inch bore (178 mm) Blakely rifled muzzle-loader; the aft pivot cannon a large, 8-inch (203 mm) smoothbore.

The new Confederate cruiser was powered by both sail and by two John Laird Sons and Company 300 horsepower (220 kW) horizontal steam engines, driving a single, Griffiths-type, twin-bladed brass screw. With the screw retracted using the stern's brass lifting gear mechanism, Alabama could make up to ten knots under sail alone and 13.25 knots (24.54 km/h) when her sail and steam power were used together.

The ship was purposely commissioned about a mile off Terceira Island in international waters on 24 August 1862. All the men from *Agrippina* and *Bahama* had been transferred to the quarter deck of *Enrica*, where her 24 officers, some of them Southerners, stood in full dress uniform. Captain Raphael Semmes mounted a gun-carriage and read his commission from President Jefferson Davis, authorizing him to take command of the new cruiser. Upon completion of the reading, musicians that assembled from among the three ships' crews began to play the tune "Dixie" just as the quartermaster finished hauling down *Enrica*'s British colors. A signal cannon boomed and the stops to the halliards at the peaks of the mizzen gaff and mainmast were broken and the ship's new battle ensign and commissioning pennant floated free on the breeze. With that the cruiser became Confederate States Steamer Alabama. The ship's motto: *Aide-toi et Dieu t'aidera* (French for "God helps those who help themselves") was engraved in the bronze of the great double ship's wheel.

Captain Semmes then made a speech about the Southern cause to the assembled seamen (few of whom were American), asking them to sign on for a voyage of unknown length and destiny. Semmes had only his 24 officers and no crew to man his new command. When this did not succeed, Semmes changed his tack. He offered signing money and double wages, paid in gold, and additional prize money to be paid by the Confederate congress for all destroyed Union ships. When the men began to shout "Hear! Hear!" Semmes knew he had closed the deal: 83 seamen, many of them British, signed on for service in the Confederate Navy. Confederate agent Bulloch and the remaining seamen then returned to their respective ships for their return voyage to England. Semmes still needed another 20 or so men for a full crew complement, but enough had signed on to at least handle the new commerce raider. The rest would be recruited from among captured crews of raided ships or from friendly ports-of-call. Of the original 83 crewmen that signed on that day, many completed the full voyage.

Under Captain Semmes, Alabama spent her first two months in the Eastern Atlantic, ranging southwest of the Azores and then redoubling east, capturing and burning northern merchant ships. After a difficult Atlantic crossing, she then continued her path of destruction and devastation in the greater New England region. She then sailed south, arriving in the West Indies where she raised more havoc before finally cruising west into the Gulf of Mexico. There, in January 1863, Alabama had her first military engagement. She came upon and quickly sank the Union side-wheeler USS *Hatteras* just off the Texas coast, near Galveston, capturing that warship's crew. She then continued further south, eventually crossing the Equator, where she took the most prizes of her raiding career while cruising off the coast of Brazil. After a second, easterly Atlantic crossing, Alabama sailed down the southwestern African coast where she continued her war against northern commerce. After stopping in

## Book Report from Page 5

*Brigade, 2nd Division, II Corps when its commander Col. Henry Boyd McKeen was killed during the Battle of Cold Harbor. Shortly after taking command he was shot through the temple and killed while leading a charge. A distraught Gibbon cried out: "My God! I have lost my best friend, and one of the best soldiers in the Army of the Potomac has fallen!" Gibbon wrote to his wife that he had planned to promote "poor Haskell" to field command after the battle.*

*Haskell's account is reprinted in volume 43, "American Historical Documents", of The Harvard Classics.*

*In The Killer Angels, the novel by Michael Shaara, part 4 ("Friday, July 3, 1863"), chapter 3 ("Chamberlain"), Col. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain goes to see Gen. Sykes, his corps commander, where there is a lunch for the senior commanders, and is finally taken some chicken by Lt. Haskell himself. That lunch is from Haskell's account.*

*In "The Civil War", the documentary by Ken Burns, the subtitle of Episode 5, "The Universe of Battle", comes from Haskell's account, where, shortly after the lunch, he and Gen. Gibbon are sitting, watching the great cannonade of the third day. During "Gettysburg: The Third Day", Garrison Keillor reads a relevant excerpt.*

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Saldanha Bay on 29 July 1863 in order to verify that no enemy ships were in Table Bay, she finally made a much-needed refitting and reprovisioning visit to Cape Town, South Africa. The Alabama is the subject of an Afrikaans folk song, "Daar kom die Alibama" still popular in South Africa today. She then sailed for the East Indies, where she spent six months destroying seven more ships before finally redoubling the Cape of Good Hope en route to France. Union warships hunted frequently for the elusive and by now famous Confederate raider, but the few times Alabama was spotted, she quickly outwitted her pursuers and vanished over the horizon.

All together, she burned 65 Union vessels of various types, most of them merchant ships. During all of Alabama's raiding ventures, captured ships' crews and passengers were never harmed, only detained until they could be placed aboard a neutral ship or placed ashore in a friendly or neutral port.

All together, Alabama conducted a total of seven expeditionary raids, spanning the globe, before heading to France for refit and repairs:

- The CSS Alabama's Eastern Atlantic Expeditionary Raid (August–September, 1862) commenced immediately after she was commissioned. She immediately set sail for the shipping lanes southwest and then east of the Azores, where she captured and burned ten prizes, mostly whalers.
- The CSS Alabama's New England Expeditionary Raid (October–November, 1862) began after Captain Semmes and his crew departed for the northeastern seaboard of North America, along Newfoundland and New England, where she ranged as far south as Bermuda and the coast of Virginia, burning ten prizes while capturing and releasing three others.
- The CSS Alabama's Gulf of Mexico Expeditionary Raid (December, 1862 – January, 1863) was centered around a needed rendezvous with her supply vessel, CSS Agripina. After that, she rendered aid to Texas during Major General Banks' invasion near Galveston, Texas. There, she quickly sank the Union side-wheeler USS Hatteras.
- The CSS Alabama's South Atlantic Expeditionary Raid (February–July, 1863) was her most successful raiding venture, taking 29 prizes while raiding off the coast of Brazil. Here she recommissioned the bark Conrad as the CSS Tuscaloosa.
- The CSS Alabama's South African Expeditionary Raid (August–September, 1863) occurred primarily while ranging off the coast of South Africa, as she worked together with the CSS Tuscaloosa.
- The CSS Alabama's Indian Ocean Expeditionary Raid (September–November, 1863) was composed of a nearly 4,500 mile journey across the Indian Ocean.[15] Successfully evading the Union gunboat Wyoming she took three prizes near the Sunda Strait and the Java Sea.[16]
- The CSS Alabama's South Pacific Expeditionary Raid (December, 1863) was her final raiding venture. She took a few prizes in the Strait of Malacca before finally turning back toward France for a much needed refit and long overdue repairs.

Upon the completion of her seven expeditionary raids, Alabama had been at sea for 534 days out of 657, never visiting a single Confederate port. She boarded nearly 450 vessels, captured or burned 65 Union merchant ships, and took more than 2,000 prisoners without a single loss of life from either prisoners or her own crew.



CSS Alabama.



Captain Raphael Semmes, Alabama's commanding officer, standing aft of the mainsail by his ship's aft 8-inch smooth bore gun during her visit to Cape Town in August 1863. His executive officer, First Lieutenant John M. Kell, is in the background, standing by the ship's wheel.



The Battle of the Kearsarge and the Alabama by Édouard Manet



## Final Cruise

On 11 June 1864, Alabama arrived in port at Cherbourg, France. Captain Semmes soon requested permission to dry dock and overhaul his ship, much needed after so long a time at sea and so many naval actions. Pursuing the raider, the American sloop-of-war, USS Kearsarge, under the command of Captain John Ancrum Winslow, arrived three days later and took up station just outside the harbor. While at his previous port-of-call, Winslow had telegraphed Gibraltar to send the old sloop-of-war USS St. Louis with provisions and to provide blockading assistance. Kearsarge now had Alabama boxed in with no place left to run.

Having no desire to see his worn-out ship rot away at a French dock while quarantined by Union warships and given his instinctive aggressiveness and a long-held desire once again to engage his enemy, Captain Semmes chose to fight. After preparing his ship and drilling the crew for the coming battle during the next several days, Semmes issued, through diplomatic channels, a bold challenge (or hoped-for intimidation) to the Kearsarge's commander,[17] "my intention is to fight the Kearsarge as soon as I can make the necessary arrangements. I hope these will not detain me more than until to-morrow or the morrow morning at farthest. I beg she will not depart until I am ready to go out. I have the honor to be Your obedient servant, R. Semmes, Captain."

On 19 June, Alabama sailed out to meet the Union cruiser. Jurist Tom Bingham later wrote, "The ensuing battle was witnessed by Manet, who went out to paint it, and the owner of an English yacht who had offered his children a choice between watching the battle and going to church." [18]

As Kearsarge turned to meet her opponent, Alabama opened fire. Kearsarge waited patiently until the range had closed to less than 1,000 yards (900 m). According to survivors, the two ships steamed on opposite courses in seven spiraling circles, moving southwesterly with the 3-knot current, each commander trying to cross the bow of his opponent to deliver a heavy raking fire (to "cross the T"). The battle quickly turned against Alabama due to the superior gunnery displayed by Kearsarge and the deteriorated state of Alabama's contaminated powder and fuses. Her most telling shot, fired from the forward 7-inch (178 mm) Blakely pivot rifle, hit very near Kearsarge's vulnerable stern post, the impact binding the ship's rudder badly. That rifled shell, however, failed to explode. If it had done so, it would have seriously disabled Kearsarge's steering, possibly sinking the warship, and ending the contest. In addition, Alabama's too rapid rate-of-fire resulted in frequent poor gunnery, with many of her shots going too high, and as a result Kearsarge benefited little that day from the protection of her outboard chain armor. Semmes later said that the armor on Kearsarge was unknown to him at the time of his decision to issue the challenge to fight, and in the years that followed Semmes steadfastly claimed he would have never fought Kearsarge if he had known she was armor-clad.

Kearsarge's hull armor had been installed in just three days, more than a year before, while she was in port at the Azores. It was made using 120 fathoms (720 ft; 220 m) of 1.7-inch (43 mm) single link iron chain and covered hull spaces 49 feet 6 inches (15.09 m) long by 6 feet 2 inches (1.88 m) deep. It was stopped up and down to eye-bolts



USS Kearsarge, a Mohican-class sloop-of-war

with marlines and secured by iron dogs. Her chain armor was concealed behind 1-inch deal-boards painted black to match the upper hull's color. This "chaincladding" was placed along Kearsarge's port and starboard midsection down to the waterline, for additional protection of her engine and boilers when the upper portion of her coal bunkers were empty (coal bunkers played an important part in the protection of early steam vessels, such as protected cruisers). A hit to her engine or boilers could

easily leave Kearsarge dead in the water and vulnerable, or even cause a boiler explosion or fire that could destroy the cruiser. Her armor belt was hit twice during the fight: First in the starboard gangway by one of Alabama's 32-pounder shells that cut the chain armor, denting the hull planking underneath, then again by a second 32-pounder shell that exploded and broke a link of the chain armor, tearing away a portion of the deal-board covering. If those rounds had come from Alabama's more powerful 100-pounder Blakely pivot rifle, they would have easily penetrated, but the likely result would not have been very serious, as both shots struck the hull a little more than five feet above the waterline. Even if both shots had penetrated Kearsarge's side, they would have completely missed her vital machinery. However, a 100-pound shell could have done a great deal of damage to her interior and nearby crewmen; hot fragments could have easily set fire to the cruiser, one of the greatest risks aboard a wooden vessel.

A little more than an hour after the first shot was fired, Alabama was reduced to a sinking wreck by Kearsarge's powerful 11-inch (280 mm) Dahlgrens, forcing Captain Semmes to strike his colors and to send one of his two surviving boats to Kearsarge to ask for assistance.

The ironclad frigate French battleship La Gloire was in the English Channel, near Cherbourg, during the battle between Alabama and Kearsarge

According to witnesses, Alabama fired 370 rounds at her adversary, averaging one round per minute per gun, a very fast rate of fire, while Kearsarge's gun crews fired less than half that number, taking more careful aim. During the confusion of battle, five more rounds were fired at Alabama after her colors were struck. (Her gun ports had been left open and the broadside cannon were still run out, appearing to come to bear on Kearsarge.) Then a hand-held white flag came fluttering from Alabama's stern spanker boom, finally halting the engagement. Prior to this, she had her steering gear compromised by shell hits, but the fatal shot came later when one of Kearsarge's 11-inch (280 mm) shells tore open a midsection of Alabama's starboard waterline. Water quickly rushed through the defeated cruiser, eventually drowning her boilers and forcing her down by the stern to the bottom. As Alabama sank, the injured Semmes threw his sword into the sea, depriving Kearsarge's commander Captain John Ancrum Winslow of the traditional surrender ceremony of having it handed over to him as victor (an act which was seen as dishonorable by many at the time). Kearsarge rescued the majority of the survivors, but 41 of Alabama's officers and crew, including Semmes, were rescued by John Lancaster's private British steam yacht Deerhound, while the Kearsarge stood off to recover her rescue boats as the Alabama sank.[19] Captain Winslow was forced to stand by helplessly and watch Deerhound spirit away to England his much sought-after adversary, Captain Semmes, and his surviving shipmates.

The sinking of the Alabama by the Kearsarge is honored by the United States Navy with a battle star on the Civil War campaign streamer.

# Veterans Day Ceremony & Celebration

Brevard Veterans Center - Merritt Island

Commander Urell with Brother Roger Heiple. Also in attendance Brother James Ward



Mt Peace, St Cloud  
Commander Urell with Brother Roger Heiple.

