

CONFLICTED FRIENDSHIPS:
JOHN BULL, UNCLE SAM AND KING COTTON
IN THE WAR FOR SOUTHERN INDEPENDENCE

Domination of American Waters and the Fortunes of War, 1861 to 1865

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Includes bibliographic citations

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NOTES

Sources cited within the text are enclosed inside pairs of inequality brackets, <>.

The format for references to Army and Navy Official Records is as follows:

References for “*The War of the Rebellion; A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*” are herein cited as “ar” and followed by the short notation of Serial Number, underscore, and page number as in this example: <arXXX_XXX>. The serial numbers are strictly sequential, 1 through 130, as appearing on the spines of the original bound volumes. See Appendix 6 for translation from older Series/Volume/part numbers to Serial Numbers.

References found in “*Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*,” (Series 1) in short notation, are cited herein cited as “nor” followed by Volume Number, underscore, page number, as in: <norXX_XXX>. References to “Official Records [...Navies...], Series 2” are herein cited as “nori” followed by Volume number, underscore, page number, as in this example: <noriXX_XXX>

Other sources are cited in the text by author or short title and page number, as in: <Surname or title, pXXX>, e. g., <McPherson, *Battle Cry*, pXXX>. See Bibliography for full titles.

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PART ONE

NAVAL WARFARE AND SIGNIFICANCE OFF THE BATTLEFIELD

Even as thousands of new publications appear each year there are many untold stories about The War for Southern Independence, or The American Civil War as it is more widely known. Oddly enough, few published works have ever revealed the true significance of two subjects in that war: naval warfare and international affairs, especially the affairs of Great Britain, or Britannia, the undisputed Ruler of the Waves. As vast and far-reaching, literally and figuratively as these influences were, they are virtually ignored. Is it because they were just not bloody enough to get attention? Perhaps; after all, only around 2,000 American sailors were killed in action in that war, <Ringle, p126>, <Fox, p537> a war in which literally hundreds of thousands of soldiers were annihilated on land.

One singular statistic, the death toll of around 700,000 service members and civilians, stands alone as the primary symbol of the worst tragedy in American history. As we try to understand its significance we are inextricably drawn to the practice of subdividing the numbers of slain into groupings of battles and campaigns which yielded the greatest numbers of casualties. By the same measure we are further prone to judging individual leaders. To state it more plainly, we rank “greatness” of Civil War battles by the number of fallen soldiers in four orders of magnitude—which is to say that 10,000 men must fall to get on the honor role of public imagination. Significance is reduced to its simplest terms as if horrible body counts on dusty battlefields were all that mattered.

No doubt in part due to lower body counts the maritime affairs of the 1860s have been badly

overlooked. The mere thousand-folds of slain in the earlier American wars and 19th Century Europe paled in comparison to the sheer volume of blood spewed on land at Shiloh, Fredericksburg, Antietam, and Gettysburg; and to what avail? The popular remembrance of those bloodbaths and many others is primarily just that—the copious quantities of blood which poured forth; not whether a battle was decisive in the outcome of the war. In that regard, naval operations are virtually ignored.

Naval operations in total were decisive and yet all the naval battles put together could not possibly have produced the casualties of even a small fraction of one of the well-known army battles. Time and time again naval operations proved vital in establishing Northern supremacy and not always by doing battle. Thus, it is to be shown in this essay that battles per se are not the sole measure of significance of great wars and are not even the point of this analysis. If we are to get at the heart of what really mattered in determining the outcome of the war, we must get past military* casualty reports and look to the sea and beyond at foreign policy issues.

One great problem to overcome in relating the importance of naval history is the general apathy toward the role of navies as a fighting force. The world vision of navies in the day was seaward, not inland as comrades-in-arms with the military. Inter-service rivalries may have factored into the indifference as well. Scores of early writers, typically well-schooled in military warfare and seeking to claim the high road in history, have literally eulogized heroes on horseback and ignored all else. Obsequious followers simply turned a deaf ear and a blind eye to the importance of the navies and trans-Atlantic influences in America's presumably internal, that is, inland war.

*In the day, more so than today, the use of the word "military" most often pertained to land warfare, whereas, "naval" applied to warfare on water, presumably at sea. Traditionally until the 1860's naval authority stopped at the high-tide mark. <Symonds, p106>

The truth of this was evident by complaints starting early with the Union and Confederate Secretaries of the Navy and continuing right on down to present-day scholars.

In a post-script after the war Secretary Mallory was quoted as saying "...our little navy accomplished more than could have been looked or hoped for ...and yet not 10 men in 10,000 of the country know or appreciate these facts." <Still, *Iron Afloat*, p227, citing primary source> The policies of Secretary Welles and the Navy Department in 1863 rather demonstrate on a grander scale the concern that the Navy was getting scant credit for achievements. The greatest example is the mission given to Admiral DuPont to seize Charleston in 1863 without help from the Army. Welles's motives were almost purely to aggrandize the Navy as the excitement caused by Farragut's invasion of New Orleans was waning. Of course, he was also trying to justify his very expensive armored gunship, or ironclad, program. <Symonds, p202>

The understanding among readers is further undermined by a general absence of knowledge among authors of the power and influence of the navies of the 19th Century. Writers of the American Civil War at sea most often have written to a public well-steeped in romanticized versions of naval history, especially those in the days of sail leading up to the war. The Civil War introduced a new era of steam-and-sail with massive new weapons and exciting tales of ironclad ships in battle. This fed unbounded romanticism because writers simply did not understand all the technological impacts, much less the changes in world diplomacy emanating from the 1856 Treaty of Paris.* <Ronzitti, p64>, <See also Wheaton Appendix 5>

* The 1856 Treaty of Paris, as opposed to other international treaties made in Paris, France, is also widely known as the Declaration of Paris. The Treaty marked an official end of the Crimean War, a war in which Britain, France and Turkey allied together in opposing Russia over control of the Crimean Coast of the Black Sea, now a part of Ukraine. The Treaty established neutral rights, outlawed privateering and codified customary rules for blockading.

Concepts imbedded in the public imagination are far removed from the realities of war. As a result, many of our naval histories are fragmented stories written in relatively small parcels of loosely related events and overlain upon centuries of romanticism. A great many of our naval “histories” are simplified plagiarisms of prior works, utterly lacking in technical clarity and solid conclusions, although certainly not lacking in airs of authority. Upon reaching their limits of knowledge or the end of a short work many writers have simply filled in wide gaps of information with their own imaginations as influenced by the romanticism of earlier eras or just repeated a previously published work. Many unfounded views have been repeated for public consumption so often that they are now accepted truths. In the words of the late Bern Anderson, “Volumes of romantic balderdash have been written...,” and yet the balderdash is rarely challenged. In fact, critical and comparative analyses of the Northern and Southern navies are so rare that *gross* misrepresentations, inaccuracies and unfounded myths still exist. Rarer still are balanced views without the bias of old loyalties or sympathies.

Perhaps the gravest error by historians, including America’s most eminent, James McPherson,^{*} is one of omission of some primary and extremely important facts. Little regarded is that inside of a week Lincoln responded to two belligerent acts that were ordered by the head of the Confederate Government: the firing upon the Federal Government on April 12, 1861, and the call for privateers to attack Northern shipping on April 17th. <Musicant, p50> The Northern view held that the South shot first and was preparing to attack Washington, D.C. and other Northern cities. <Harris, p26-27> To avoid these facts is to ignore the first critical steps taken by Lincoln to preserve the

*James McPherson is the undisputed grand master of the history of the American Civil War. He must be given the greatest respect for his lifetime of scholarship and devotion to objective truth. His most recent *War on the Waters* is the most concise book yet written on the role of naval warfare in the war. However, the fact that even McPherson is capable of making errors of fallacy and omission in naval studies serves to demonstrate the need for a new generation of critical thinkers.

Union. On the other hand, historians rarely miss the Southern claim that Lincoln tricked them into firing first and that the 75,000 ninety-day volunteers called for by Lincoln on April 15th amounted to an invasion force. This further tends to play to popular sympathies for the underdog while diminishing the acts taken by the Confederacy that virtually assured the outbreak of war. It can scarcely be upheld the old adage that “the winners write the histories” to the disfavor of the losing side.

Fortunately, in this age of the information super highway, many works and documents that previously only drew dust in untouched archives are now readily available and we can find the missing pieces without resorting to our imagination. As a happy result many surprises are in store for readers of this treatise despite the fact that the information herein has theoretically always been available in the historic record. What has not been published to date is a single concise work that draws upon the primary factors off the battlefield which influenced the war’s outcome.

The first surprise is something rather obvious for those who follow events and timelines carefully. It is that the domination of American waters, coastal and inland, was an enormous factor in the war which aided immeasurably to Northern success. International and diplomatic strategies loomed even larger in the war and naval forces were the conduits for carrying them out. Yet it would be wrong to assume that the domination of the waters was entirely a naval enterprise or even that Union naval strength was the deciding factor.

It is not the purpose of this essay to discredit the fact that the war’s outcome was decided on the battlefield, nor to detract in any way from the Herculean efforts of the Armies and certainly not

to suggest any alternative or counter-factual histories. It is simply to give further insight to critical influences *off* the battlefield which led to the finality of combat.

PART TWO

THE MYTH OF INEVITABLE NORTHERN VICTORY; CRITICAL BRITISH INFLUENCE AND THE FORTUNES OF WAR

Historians have generally constructed the view that the pillars of Northern strength—wealth, industry, army, navy, and sheer numbers—made the victory of the North inevitable, especially as it stood against the agrarian and sparsely populated South. Historian and author Shelby Foote reflected that notion when he said, “The North won the war with one hand tied behind its back,” suggesting perhaps that the outcome was inevitable.

Inevitable?! This is the first myth to be disassembled. Popular as that assumption may be, it is considerably wanting for justification. The trouble with Northern supremacy theory is that it is too much a uniquely American winner’s point of view. It harbors the assertion that the whole matter was solved internally by internal American heroes from captains on the field to the captains of industry. Such an assertion can only be defended if the South had existed in a vacuum, totally isolated. But the South was not in a vacuum. For one thing, many European nations had a stake in the outcome too and if just one of the great powers, Great Britain (the United Kingdom) in particular, had decided to intervene a far different history would have been written.

As we know, the British did not intervene, at least not overtly, but a great impact was made by British policies—even the policy of non-intervention—and the balance could have been tipped by relatively easy decisions, especially early in the war. On the broadest of bases the then unknown potential for foreign intervention alone disavows the premise of inevitability. Of

course, the case does not rest on that factor alone. There were many other outside influences.

Some of the greatest policy influences happened almost instantly through decisions made by the heads of the governments of United Kingdom, the United States of America, and the government formed by the seceded states, so-named the Confederate States of America. The long shadow of John Bull* is especially noteworthy because the very foundation of Southern war policy was the expectation of his support. To some extent Mr. Bull fulfilled Southern expectations which no doubt encouraged war-making against the North and did in fact prolong the war. These factors will be taken up in greater detail throughout this analysis.

If we lay bare each factor alleged to have contributed to an inevitable end, we will encounter many surprises to the contrary. Quite often we find scenarios with very frail connections to success, in particular, those built upon false premises or mistaken assumptions. These might just as easily have ended disastrously to the historical winner. Battle analysts and historians are fond of such discoveries and write of them frequently. As we thus learn, critical binary decisions (yes or no) were made at critical moments—times at which relatively minor changes in plans, tactics or just plain random luck, good or bad, could have produced virtually any speculative outcome.

As a matter of recorded history, outcomes of battles and wars are rarely if ever guaranteed in

* The primary symbols of these three governments as used in this analysis are the caricatures of John Bull, Uncle Sam and King Cotton. “John Bull” is the personification of England, or every Englishman’s Englishman. He was typically represented as a stout, red-faced gentleman farmer in a medium-crowned top hat, waistcoat, tailed frock coat, and cuff-topped boots. He was, and still is, the British equivalent of the American “Uncle Sam.” Uncle Sam was not a king, a president, or even a father, but an avuncular character symbolizing unity of the family of American states as a nation, also its flag and its people. Tall and sinewy like a woodsman or farmer, he presented a favorable self-image to the American people. It is of little relevance whether the collective states were singular or plural as an identity. The country formed by the former English colonies in North America was known far and wide as simply “America” whose people strongly identified themselves as Americans. To Americans of the era America was a country, North America was a continent and no one was confused by the difference. “King Cotton” was a somewhat temporary identity for the cotton-growing states of America, representing not a persona, but the economic power of cotton in the 19th Century. The term was known around the world and was used extensively by Southern leaders themselves.

advance, hence such terms as “the “fortunes of war” or “the fortune of arms.”

In looking to internal influence first, we may notice the most striking difference between North and South in 1860—the numbers of people. The population imbalance is often portrayed as being too great for the South to overcome. It certainly was a great factor because the North outnumbered the South by over three-to-one among the populations of expected combatants, that is, the white populations in the two sectors: twenty-one million in the North vs about six and one-half million in the South. It is perhaps natural to assume that larger populations meant larger armies and virtual assurance of victory. The imbalance was partially offset by the nearly four-million enslaved persons in the South, who provided domestic labor which freed up a proportionally larger number of Southern white men to be soldiers. By the end of the war the North did indeed have a lopsided number of soldiers and sailors, bolstered to a significant degree by European immigrants and Northern soldiers of African descent and former slaves of the South, but it did not start out that way. It only became lopsided after several critical early decisions were made—decisions that in many ways were influenced by British policies.

Despite the greater population in the North its armies were virtually non-existent in 1860 except as needed in the limited warfare against Native Americans and other internal security needs. The number of regular troops in the US Army in early 1861 is usually stated as somewhere around 12 to 15 thousand men when the war began—small in raw numbers, but large in comparison to the assumed zero number of troops in the South. But if that disparity in troop strength did indeed exist, was it a material concern for the South when the first shots were fired at Fort Sumter? Absolutely not and for two possible reasons: for one, the difference in actual troop strength was not as great a disparity as widely believed, and for another, perhaps because of an unfounded

faith in European intervention for the South.

When Fort Sumter was fired upon on April 12, 1861, the number of armed men available for instant Confederate service actually exceeded Union strength. Under a resolution passed by the Confederate Congress <ar1_258>, on March 1, 1861, the Confederate War Department assumed command of all the forces around Charleston, SC and Pensacola, FL. On March 6, South Carolina alone reported that nearly 9,000 rank-and-file men had been organized since mid-December and were ready for turnover to the Confederate central command. <ar1_265, Gist to Bonham> Florida and Alabama together had similar numbers of men in arms for the defense of the Pensacola Navy Yard while awaiting orders from Confederate President Jefferson Davis.

According to McPherson, “By the time Lincoln called for 75,000 ninety-day volunteers after the fall of Fort Sumter, the South’s do-it-yourself mobilization had already enrolled 60,000 men.”<McPherson, *Battle Cry*, p318> Although not all completely under a central command, at least they were ready to take orders from Davis upon short notice. So, if we go by numbers of troops actually in or committed to Confederate service on April 12, 1861, it would indicate the South was *better* prepared than the North.

For whatever reasons, potentially larger Union armies were certainly not an intimidating factor to secessionists and only rarely did oversized Union armies swing the fortune of arms after the fighting began. As we know now, only after the fact, smaller Southern armies defeated or stalemated Northern armies time after time for nearly four years until deprived of the most vital resources. Moreover, the concept of a Northern strategy of winning a war of attrition did not exist for at least two years after the war began. Thus, superiority in Northern numbers, if not

neutralized, was at least mitigated in the most critical timeframe for the South to gain independence, the first few months.

Armament was an altogether different matter. It was in notable shortage in the South, but not for long and it was not for no effort on the part of the Secessionists prior to the war. The key Southern loyalist in the Buchanan Cabinet, John B. Floyd, the US Secretary of War from 1856-1860, busied himself in the late months of his term by shipping arms to Southern arsenals and forts, some 50 of which were subsequently seized by Southern states in the period of secession beginning in December 1860. In that same period, Floyd was refusing to send arms and men to *Northern* arsenals <ar122_13-14> while spreading US troops far and wide away from the South and while also seeking to reduce US Federal spending. <ar122_16-121>

At the end of December, 1860, when Floyd was finally challenged for too blatantly sending arms into Southern hands, <ar122_15-16> he resigned his post early <ar122_21>,<ar1_349> and aligned himself with Virginia. His successor, Union loyalist Joseph Holt, flatly refused to send any more arms to Southern forts and abruptly stopped the practice. The turnover of the Federal War Department from Floyd to Holt was lamented by one of the leading Southern secessionists still holding a seat in the US Senate at the time, Louis Wigfall, D-TX. He promptly sent a telegram to the Governor of South Carolina on January 2nd saying this: "Holt succeeds Floyd. It means war. Cut off supplies from Anderson and take Sumter as soon as possible." <ar1_252>

Thwarted from taking more arms from US Government stockpiles, President Davis, in one of his earliest executive acts on February 21, 1861, sent a naval expert, Rafael Semmes, to New York and Boston to purchase arms and munitions of war. <ar127_106-107>, <Spencer, p102> He was given carte

blanche to make purchases of war materiel and warships as he saw fit. Semmes looked into purchasing warships at New York and Boston but found no suitable vessels. However, he did send back to Montgomery a large shipment of percussion caps for muskets, a critical need at the time given the sense that war was on the horizon.

Southern preparation for war was unmistakable in virtually every act passed by the Confederate government in the first two months of its existence starting in February 1861. <nori2_40-50> The Confederate Department of War and Department of the Navy were quickly established; authorization was made to raise an army of 100,000 men and the president was given war powers similar to Lincoln's as the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. Military installations were immediately authorized for placement on Southern coasts and rivers and an appropriation for \$2,065,110 was passed on March 16 to cover the first year of estimated expenses. Estimates included the purchase of 10 steam gunboats and the assumed takeover of the Pensacola Navy Yard. <nori2_49-50>

In contrast, the Buchanan administration was remarkably pacifist (some would say treasonous) under the circumstances. Right up to the Buchanan Administration's final day, on March 4, 1861, alarm over the hostilities of the secession movement was officially ignored. No new armies were raised by the United States, nor were any existing US forces strengthened. Likewise, there were no prewar displays of aggression by the US Army or Navy.

In a manner somewhat similar to Secretary Floyd's the US Secretary of the Navy, Isaac Toucey, while never officially accused of disloyal acts, did in fact have a policy of dispersing American naval forces far away from home waters. <Appendix 1> On top of that he placed the most capable

warships in a condition known as “in ordinary,” a navy term meaning laid up in the yards in reserve in an ordinary condition, sans crew, much akin to today’s term, “mothballed.” Thus, in the beginning Northern sea-power was relatively weak with only a small handful of ships capable of littoral warfare, such as might be demanded of a blockade. There happened to be a modest buildup of US Navy warships in the mid-1850’s, but mostly as a modernization effort to keep up with the world in the transition from sail to steam power; not as an actual preparation for war and certainly not for war against the Southern States. The manifestly non-aggressive mission of the US Navy was scientific exploration and showing the American flag around the world. The main objective being to protect American interests at a time of relative freedom of the seas.

<Anderson, p7-10> The most capable American cruisers were the mid-sized frigates and sloops-of-war. These were not only out-numbered and out-gunned by English and French ships-of-the-line (large warships designed for traditional naval warfare in an actual line of battle), but most were too widely scattered to have been called back to home waters in any timely manner.

In January 1861 the US Navy had 90 ships on the registry with almost 1,500 officers and 7,600 seamen. However, less than a dozen serviceable warships with 187 guns were close enough to home shores to provide any serious protection for Northern shipping, much less throw up a blockade on 3,549 miles of coastline. <nor1_xv-xvi> In physical reality the North was not vastly ahead of the South in terms of an immediately effective coastal navy. The largest and most modern US Navy warships were the five 3- to 4,000-ton, 44-gun (average), steam-and-sail, screw-propelled frigates of the Merrimack class; not one of which was in commission when the war broke out. The next smaller class was a group of sailing steamers known as sloops-of-war. These were both screw and side-wheel driven, made for independent deep-water cruising with drafts greater than 18 feet—too small to fight at broadside against the great European line-of-

battle-ships and too large to hover in close to a typically shallow Southern seaport for any reason.

By world standards the US Navy might have been a *pushover* in 1861. Britain and France together had more than 600 steam-and-sail armed vessels, the largest with up to 130 guns on the broadsides. <Canney, *Lincoln's Navy*, p16> Examples of the largest are the British *HMS Duke of Wellington* and the French *Valmy*. The reader should not infer by this that England and France were close allies. Despite having teamed together against Russia in the Crimean War they distrusted each other so much that they were racing to build ironclads for possible use against each other.

It is debatable whether even the Monroe Doctrine was enforceable when the war broke out. This uniquely bold 1823 American policy, ironically a British idea, <Herman, p439> to stop European colonialism on the Western Hemisphere had never been seriously challenged prior to the war. However, after the war began, it did not take very long for France to see the inherent weakness of the US Navy. The French Emperor, Louis Napoleon III, Bonaparte's nephew, brazenly defied the Monroe Doctrine in January 1862 by invading Mexico while the United States was too preoccupied with the war in the South to do anything about it. Lincoln was in no position to take ships away from the blockade or to send troops overland to Mexico via Texas.

From the beginning and throughout much of the war Southern resourcefulness on land and sea did much to counterweight Northern naval superiority. Southern privateers, commerce raiders, ironclad rams, and torpedoes severely challenged Northern sea power rather continually. Behind virtually every effort was British help, which is not to say British *government* help. Nor is it

correct to say that British entrepreneurs were one-sided by any stretch of the imagination. British manufacturers were just as happy to sell war materiel to Northern purchasers as to Southern.

Simply put, in 1861 the North was in no condition to fight a serious war anywhere and especially not a war at sea against one or more European nations who may have chosen to intervene. In other words, Northern supremacy could have been neutralized virtually overnight by outside intervention, which was a definite possibility. <Musicant, p52-53> Textiles mills, the backbone of European industry, were under threat of being cut off from supplies of the much preferred cleaned (ginned) and baled American cotton. Alternatives to American cotton were as yet not well established and the ensuing economic crisis, real or perceived, may well have demanded quick and forceful intervention.

The Emperor of France actually wanted to aid the South to support France's more fragile industries, relative to England's that is, but he did not think his position was strong enough to go in without the British taking the lead. That was a distinct possibility also because in Britain, by the sheer size of her industries, there was a far greater demand for Southern cotton and much public sympathy among the labor sectors for the Southern cause. In fact, British textile factories alone exceeded the output of all the industrialized nations combined. British industry was far ahead in other sectors also such as steel, munitions and shipbuilding. Popular British support for giving aid to the South reached across several social classes and even had a degree of clout in Parliament. Fear of economic ruin and misguided policies in the early days and months of hostilities may well have pulled Great Britain into war and in fact came close to doing so more than once. However, all throughout the war a wise restraint prevailed on Whitehall Street, the seat of British government in London, and war was avoided. Of course, it was purely in the best

economic interest of the British Empire to keep out, not sympathy for the North. We only know this after the fact because at the time no one could predict how the fortunes of war in America would play out in the world.

Also said to be too strongly in favor of the North is wealth and industry, which are typically taken together as one in the overall equation. Historically, of course, the industrialization of nations is an enormous strength. Indeed, throughout history the more industrialized a nation was the wealthier and the more likely it was to prevail in conflicts with non-industrialized nations. But ironically in 1860, Southern wealth actually exceeded Northern industrial wealth, <1860 US Preliminary Report on the Eighth Census and 1860 US Treasury Report, Agriculture> which gave the South the purchasing power to offset the industrial disparity and to expand greatly the capability to conduct war.

Even the superiority of Northern industry must be challenged. Prior to 1860 Northern industry and technology were minor compared to the great powers of Britain and France. There are numerous works that show the data which, in the interest of brevity, will not be repeated here. However, one striking example is telling: the ironworks in Britain had already advanced to major *steel* production, that is to say, low-cost carbon alloying of iron for factory, locomotive and marine equipment. In contrast, American foundries were barely out of the stages of the simple smelting of iron ore—strong evidence that the industrial revolution lagged in America. Hence, Northern supremacy of industry existed only in comparison to *Southern* capabilities. Here too, the disparities were not impossible to overcome by outside intervention.

Some professors of American history will point out as a possible case for British non-intervention the presumably friendly relations already existing between the United States and

Great Britain. Present-day Americans may even be inclined to imagine that all prior hostilities from previous wars were soothed over and genuine warmth existed between the mother country and her former colonies. That belief is in error. In actuality, the only “friendliness” in British-American relations in 1860 was the fact that the two countries were not at war at the moment.

Quite often British anti-slavery sentiment comes into the discussion as a point in favor of friendlier relations with the North on moral grounds, but that too falls short of a complete answer especially in the beginning when policies were first being formed. There certainly was reluctance at Whitehall to side up with the North because of Lincoln’s publicly stated reason for taking up arms against the South—that is, to “merely” save the Union of American States; not to abolish slavery. For that matter, the British were indeed reluctant to help create a new nation with slavery as its cornerstone. Despite that the British placed slavery on a firm footing in the colonies in the 17th and 18th Centuries, they also *abolished* slavery throughout the Empire without bloodshed in the 19th Century. British opposition to slavery was always in the background but it *never* came to the forefront of policy making. In truth, the desire to simply stay out of America’s war dominated British policy from the outset, not issues of slavery, and it was a policy far from being firmly established in April of 1861 because it too was subject to the fortunes of war across the pond. <nori3_248>

In all, we simply cannot find a case for inevitability of a Northern victory before the war started. Almost certainly swift intervention from overseas could have swung the balance in favor of the South when Europeans had the power and public will to do so. Intervention certainly was expected by the South so why was there any reluctance by the British government to intervene in early 1861 when the economics of cotton appeared to have the upper hand? Or to question the

case in another way: in view of the many other overt activities taken by British subjects in support of the South during the war, why would the British government give even slight pause to the question of intervention? Why not just go ahead and do it when foregone conclusions and obvious excuses may have ruled the day?

President Lincoln certainly had no basis for believing that British policy, whether for or against intervention, was settled when the war broke out. The direction ultimately to be taken by the British government was a complete unknown at the time, and in fact, a third American war with Great Britain was never out of the question. To recap: there were no guarantees of Britannia taking sides.

Be that as it may, if we are to insist that all the great commonly accepted factors—military and industrial power, naval strength, inexhaustible manpower, *and* perhaps even the high ground on slavery—so strongly favored the North as to make the outcome inevitable, we are faced with another glaring question. *With a deck so solidly stacked against the Southern Confederacy, why would its leaders feel bold enough to enter a war to achieve independence?* Certainly, there was an expectation of winning independence or it would not have been sought in the first place nor pursued so ardently after the war began.

Today it is widely agreed that in 1861 both sides believed that war would probably not come and if war should come it would be short. The rationale behind those beliefs is rarely challenged beyond the usual platitudes—those being roughly that each side assessed the other as being either unwilling or unable to conduct a war. Of course, both sides did have the will to fight and the North had the means to prevail, *but only if the South was forced to stand alone*. On that

matter, secessionists in the South firmly believed the Confederate States would *not* stand alone. By all expectations European forces would move swiftly to settle the conflict with either arms or the threat of arms. Why else would the secessionist leaders be so willing to face nearly insane odds to fight for disbanding the old Constitution? If all of the obvious differences were ignored in the beginning would we not have a case for accusing Southern secessionists of being irrational? Of course, not all Southern leaders were the irrational fire-eating madmen that many writers have portrayed them to be. Certainly, the educated leaders in the South, including the bombastic fire-eaters, were well aware of the disparities, and yet, those differences were disregarded from the very outset of the Secession Movement. We must press harder to learn the reasons why.

The answer lies in the conviction of Secession leaders that European nations would not hesitate take to war to satisfy their own demands for cotton. <Davis, p372-373><Foreman, p650,651> “Cotton is King!” proclaimed the more outspoken Southern leaders well before the war started. <McPherson, *Drawn With Sword*, p48> The so-crowned “King Cotton,” would compel Europeans to do the fighting for them if there should be any fighting at all. <Owesly, 19-55> In fact, the first emissaries of the newly formed Confederate government, William Yancey, Pierre Rost, and Dudley Mann, were sent to London and Paris in February and March 1861 with orders to stress exactly that point (in lieu of the usual diplomatic sweet talk). <Foreman, p68,79,85,88> It is upon the premise of potential European alliances that international relations for both sides were unavoidable and extremely important outside elements—perhaps even the decisive ones—in the war to come.

PART THREE

NACENT NAVAL STRATEGIES AND BRITISH INFLUENCE; ARMY-NAVY PARTNERSHIPS; BLOCKADE AND COUNTER BLOCKADE POLICIES

We have already touched on some surprises such as the role of the United States Navy as perhaps *crucial* to the outcome. The really *big* surprise of British influence, which we have only begun to analyze, was far greater than most readers today have ever realized. We have to remember that American naval warfare was played out virtually all over the world and because of that foreign policy was tied in. This brings up further questions: what did the naval strategies mean internationally, and in particular, what did they mean for Southern sovereignty and the War?

For another surprise, we have to view naval strategies in partnership with the military wherever possible. That is because, at least for the North, many of the military battles and campaigns hinged upon naval support. By the same token, Northern naval successes anywhere *near* land, including the blockade, depended just as largely upon the *army* for support. Actually, with over 10 thousand miles of navigable waters surrounding and penetrating into the South control of the waters was essential to both sides, which points to perhaps the South's greatest weakness: there was virtually *no* control of the waters and that would naturally invite a blockade and waterborne invasions.

Bearing that in mind, one may be justified in thinking that the only inevitability in a war between the North and South was a naval blockade. Long before Abraham Lincoln's 1860 election

actually triggered secession most Americans held an instinctive belief that if the South tried to break away it would start a civil war. The presupposed first act of the *North* in such a war would be to try to isolate the South with a naval blockade. That was a belief shared by both sides, so the naval strategies in the beginning were hardly more than simple extensions of prevailing public opinion: “Blockade” and “Counter-Blockade” without much regard to actual plans.

In acting according to their respective world visions, the strategies were quickly adapted to foreign policy. Whereas the Confederate States wanted sovereignty and ties to Europe, the United States wanted to prevent Southern sovereignty and keep the Europeans out. <Anderson, p27> Thus in April 1861 the South was faced with two immediate priorities *even more immediate than raising an army*: one, gain recognition of its sovereignty and two, find ways to *oppose* the imagined blockade. The first thought that came to mind was actually another pre-war imagined belief—that the European textile nations would not stand still for a blockade that would interrupt their major source of cotton.

The reasoning behind that belief was also very simple: the livelihoods of millions of Europeans were at stake. Faith in the economic power of cotton was widespread among virtually everyone from elected officials, merchants, newspaper editors, planters, and yeomen (land-owning farmers), right down to the man on the street. Many Americans, North and South, believed the words of Senator James Hammond, D-SC, who said on the Senate floor, “[...]would any sane nation make war on cotton? Without firing a gun, without drawing a sword, should they make war on us we could bring the whole world to our feet.” <Speech, Sen.

James H. Hammond, D-SC, March 4, 1858>, <McPherson, *Sword*, p48>

Southerners of all walks of life, from Jefferson Davis on down, held on to that belief as an assumed fact. <Owsley, p18-19> Without a doubt swift and forceful intervention by either England or France, as secessionists hoped for, could have prevented the blockade and possibly even the war—or at least the war as we have come to know it.

Despite those deeply held premonitions of naval isolation in the prewar years *and* in spite of the tremendous dependence upon foreign imports for finished goods, many influential Southerners firmly believed the South had enough wealth to purchase *anything* from any supplier in the world and those suppliers and their nations would protect their own trade—even if it meant going to war for it. That in a nutshell was “King Cotton Diplomacy” <Symonds, p281>, <Musicant, p22> and it really did not go over very well. Southern policy makers naively overlooked the fact that *great* powers do not base their foreign policy upon extortion.

Compounding the difficulties Confederate President Davis held very little regard for maritime matters. <Merli, p254> He preferred to depend largely upon a *hired* navy, or privateers, in the tradition of the American Revolution and the War of 1812. Historically, privateering was the quickest and easiest way to gain sea power on par with mightier nations.

Of course, the North had a navy, but no plans aforethought to conduct a war at sea. It is noteworthy that while the Europeans were already in an arms race which included armored warships, the only pre-war American armored gunship project, dating from 1842, was abandoned due to high cost. Likewise, the artifacts of an earlier era, the largest class of American men-o-war, the 120-gun wooden sailing ships-of-the-line, were decommissioned and rotting in place. The existence of great warships such as frigates and larger was not a factor anyway because

ships with drafts deeper than 18 feet were useless for patrolling the shallow near-coast Southern waters.

The decision to blockade the South fell out of the circumstances almost immediately following the bombardment of Fort Sumter and it was made completely without enough warships to back it up. So quickly did the crisis develop that in actual fact neither side could claim to be ready.

PART FOUR

INTERNATIONAL STAKES

Jefferson Davis took the first overt action in the great game of “Blockade and Counter-Blockade” on April 17, 1861, calling for privateers around the world to attack Northern shipping. This could hardly be called a defensive action, but the intent was to force the weak and limited US Navy to go to the open sea to protect maritime commerce. Thereby, Davis hoped to head off the assumed blockade before it could even get started. He further reasoned that by jumping into the international arena with a position of strength he would bring about recognition *de facto* of the Confederate States. His views were inspired by American history in the 18th Century, wherein France, after the Battle of Saratoga in 1777, officially recognized the United States of America and placed a fleet off-coast to defeat the British Blockade. Later in the 19th Century, American privateers wreaked havoc on British shipping in the War of 1812.

Davis’s Privateering Act had instant world-wide impact because a call for privateers was an internationally recognized act of war. More than that, privateering was also generally seen as warfare against the innocent trade of *all* nations. For that matter, so too was blockading, but blockades commanded greater international respect. By long-established custom, they were still recognized as legitimate weapons of war, but only against an enemy nation and only if they were enforced with an actual presence of warships. to be legal. As established by the 1856 Treaty of Paris, a blockade had to exist in physical reality. In other words, a government could not simply pass legislation to claim control over ports where it had no control. According to international law, blockades had to satisfy two basic conditions: (one) armed ships had to actually be standing outside of declared ports...and (two) they had to be *effective* in stopping wartime trade. The

word “effective” was the key legal term as it applied ostensibly to preventing passage, however, at the moment it was very poorly defined. Obviously, if the blockade was totally *ineffective*, as many have claimed, it would be as if there was no physical blockade at all. The doors would be wide open, Southern bonds with Europe could be established, and foreign recognition with armed intervention, if necessary, would surely follow (or so it was believed).

The privateering act was premature for the spring of 1861. As yet there was no mention of a blockade and certainly no task force yet existed which could have effected one. Ironically, the Confederate call for privateers not only *guaranteed* the Union blockade, it brought it on sooner. President Lincoln, in responding quickly to this unambiguous act of belligerence, surmised that it would be easier to *confine* Southern privateers than to chase them all over the world. In the same stroke he could protect Washington, DC.

It is doubtful that Lincoln could have responded in any other manner than he did because to have done otherwise would have shown a complete lack of will by the US Federal Government to exist. Given the political power of the millions of American people who believed passionately that the United States was the best country that ever existed, it was unthinkable to let the South destroy it—and there was scarce time to sort out the legalities.

PART FIVE

STICKY LEGAL ISSUES

How would confinement be accomplished? Simply closing Southern ports by legislation was an option by US law, even recommended by certain members of the cabinet, but by definition that was a paper blockade and a substantially weaker position. Only a *real* blockade—one with real ships and real guns—would be respected by international maritime law, namely, the 1856 Treaty of Paris. One big problem with The Treaty, as written, was that it applied to *nations* at war. That, in and of itself, was a contradiction if the CSA's existence were to be denied. In other words, if the Southern shores still belonged to the United States, it amounted to blockading one's *self*—a legal absurdity—which is exactly what Davis wanted to expose.

There was the conundrum. Lincoln needed desperately for this to be strictly an internal matter—a rebellion, so to speak, or an insurrection—so he could deal with it forcefully and stay within the framework of the US Constitution. The Constitution did allow suppression of rebellions *if approved by Congress*, < US Constitution, Article 1, Section 8:15> which happened in the following July by a special session. The sticking point was whether Lincoln could legally proclaim a blockade, itself an act of war, *before* the Congress declared it a war and whether his actions would acknowledge, or recognize, the Confederacy as a real nation. Lincoln held to three principles: (one) that his government had a legal right to suppress insurrections, (two) that blockading was the proper means to that end, and (three) that it did not amount to a *de facto* recognition of a new country.

Lincoln was a lawyer, but he knew little of international law which at the time was a great exercise in legalistic nonsense anyway and not just in his own naïve state of mind. What he did

know was that a formal blockade had certain practical advantages that were hard to ignore. Once declared, and *if honored*, there would be official notifications worldwide and commercial shippers would be given fair warning that challenging the blockade would be at their own risk.

Presumably, the risk-averse merchants would simply stay away and many did, especially the ones that had only *sailing* ships. In fact, the merchant sailing ships cleared out within two weeks of the first official notice of the blockade, which helped to give the immediate appearance that the blockade really was being respected. <Wise, p25>

Perhaps above all other immediate considerations, however, was the simple assertion of power. A blockade drew a “line in the sand,” so to speak, or rather, in the sea foam, which if crossed by a foreign navy meant instant war with the blockading country. Thereby, the blockader was obligated to back his position with the force of arms. If there was any respect at all (or fear, as the case may be) a blockade should be comparatively easy to enforce. The key to success in this case would be in convincing the supreme Ruler of the Seas, Great Britain, to honor the blockade. All other foreign powers were secondary or far less in comparison and would have to bend to the will of the British Lion. Yet British approval was not a sure thing because British merchantmen seeking trade with the South would be subject to search and seizure which might have provoked British retaliation. At least, however, neutral nations were not automatically at war over the adventurous ways of their private citizens.

A few historians, including McPherson, have concluded that Lincoln’s Secretary of State, William Henry Seward, gained knowledge of British policy prior to April 19, 1861 through Lord Richard Lyons, the British ambassador to the United States. According to this assertion, Lincoln was given (unofficial) advance approval of the blockade. <McPherson, *Waters*, p20-21> Unfortunately, in

presenting this view McPherson propagates an error previously published in other works:

<Musicant, p51-52> that Lincoln had safe assurance from Lord Lyons that his blockade would be respected. But there was no assurance. Lyons was only speaking privately to Seward at a social gathering reminding him that in regard to blockades, mere words on paper would not be respected by other nations. Lyons was not a policy maker and at best he could only review the Treaty of Paris and the rules of blockading, which were considered very hastily by Lincoln if at all. British policy was *ad hoc*, <Merli p257> meaning that old rules would be reinterpreted and new ones made up as the war went along. At the time that Lincoln declared the blockade, Lyons could not possibly have known what British policy would be any more than did Lincoln because the policy makers in London did not know yet themselves.

It truly was a gamble because, as we see, British policy was not yet certain and in fact it never was certain during the war because of strained relations and perceived hostilities. <Merli, p257> From the British viewpoint, there was great mistrust of *American* policy because the United States was not a signer of the Treaty in order to preserve its own right to privateering. That was already a sore spot for Her Britannic Majesty's government and now that the United States wanted the *benefits* of a blockade, Mr. Lincoln could expect cooperation only if he respected all the rules and did not resort to privateering himself.

The troubling question was simply this: what *were* all the rules? Not even the British legal advisors were sure because the relatively recent 1856 treaty had yet to withstand legal challenges and the test of time. Rules were subject to change according to new conditions and new technologies thus conflicts were bound to arise. As might be expected, Great Britain also just happened to be the great rule *maker* of the seas. <Merli p257> All fundamental conflicts in

international law were hers alone to rule upon, that is, short of another international convention. In other words, Britannia could interpret the legalistic fine points as she pleased as long as the issues stayed out of court and they always did. No other nation challenged the legality of the Blockade. <Symonds, p48-49>

The Confederacy presented difficult challenges to British interpretation as well. The Confederate government was also not a signer of the Treaty of Paris and for that reason was also held to suspicion by British policy makers. The great uncertainty was whether unprincipled Southern civilian raiders (privateers) might also attack *British* merchants. <Courtemanche, p15-16> The willingness of the South to immediately jump into the business of privateering was a very curious act indeed for an upstart nation whose expectation was to ally with the very nation who had outlawed it. As facts will bear out in further reading herein, it was a miscalculated gamble by Jefferson Davis. While it aided tremendously to enhance the Southern posture of independence, it failed to produce the goal of full recognition of a new nation-state.

Lincoln had to act quickly and he could only guess as to how other nations would react. So, perhaps influenced by the advice of Secretary of State William Seward, or perhaps instinctively, Lincoln concluded that a blockade would be more effective and he made his decision—a blockade it would be. He made his first proclamation of a blockade on April 19, only two days after Davis's call for privateers. <Appendix 2> In it, he specifically cited Davis's threatening Letters of Marque and further warned that privateers would be treated as pirates. <nor5_620> If that were not enough, Secretary Seward was busy saber-rattling towards the British and thereby projecting a very feisty foreign policy which the British took seriously. <Foreman, p69-70,191, 329-330>, <Anderson, p179>

Only seven states were initially targeted—South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas. A few days later when Virginia seceded and the Norfolk navy yard fell into Southern hands Lincoln extended the blockade to the states of Virginia and North Carolina even though North Carolina had not yet seceded. In his second proclamation on April 27, 1861, he reaffirmed his first proclamation with regard to privateers and with further reference to the takeover of the Norfolk Navy Yard, added two more things as justification: “seizure of US Government property” and “imprisonment of US military personnel”. <nor4_340, nor5_621>, < Appendix 3> It was Lincoln’s most significant policy statement from that point on until the Emancipation Proclamation. It amounted to the closest thing to a declaration of war, as if to another nation, as was possible without coming right out and saying it. Southern leaders were elated of course because of the implied recognition, but the question of how the British would rule upon it at that point was still not answered.

The opening of the war forced the European powers into a delicate position. If they wished to stay out of a fight that was rapidly spilling into the Atlantic and possibly beyond, they *had* to proclaim neutrality. It was a touchy matter because it implied an equal status between the warring factions which would be offensive to the established and more powerful and feared power, the United States. It is also hard to claim neutrality in a war unless there are two belligerent parties to be neutral from. There was a war unfolding, thus there were belligerents and of course the Confederacy was one of them—and being called a belligerent by another nation at the time was not an insult. In fact, it was a new legal status breathtakingly close to being accepted as a new nation—but not quite—belligerence and independence are legally two different things. The fact that there was fighting had established belligerency on both sides, but independence and recognition of Southern sovereignty could only be established either by the

“fortune of arms,” which means the outcome of the fighting, or by peaceful negotiations.

<nori3_248>, <Merli, p40, 259>, <Courtemanche, p18>

The issue rose to the US Supreme court over lawsuits challenging the blockade. <US Supreme Court Decision, *Prize Cases*, 67 US 635, March 10 1863 > Lawyers for the plaintiffs, owners of a ship captured by the blockade, argued that the capture was illegal because the blockade did not exist legally because a war was not yet declared—a rather paradoxical position given that Confederates claimed that a *de facto* war was declared *exactly because* the blockade was declared before Congress acted, therefore captures made by privateers were legal. In the trial US attorneys conceded that Congress ratified Lincoln’s decision after the fact, but that was not the point. They argued that the blockade was legal because a state of war already existed between the two belligerents at the time of the blockade’s declaration, thus the proclamation fell under the president’s war powers as Commander-in-Chief. The Court, on March 10, 1863, ruled that when Lincoln declared the blockade, the States of the South were in insurrection *and* at war against the United States. No doubt with an eye to recent 1862 British interpretations of international law, the Court acknowledged that the Southern Confederacy was indeed a belligerent, but ruled that a belligerent did not have to be a *nation* and furthermore, that the name of the war was irrelevant. In the sustaining argument, conceding the fact that there was no declaration of war by the United States, Court Justice Robert Grier wrote the majority (5 to 4) opinion as follows:

... “it is not necessary to constitute war that both parties should be acknowledged as independent nations” ... “The President was bound to meet it [the war] in the shape it presented itself, without waiting for Congress to baptize it with a name.” <Prize Cases>, <Silver, p115>

In essence, the Court upheld the President's executive power to act in accordance with the presidential oath of office, "to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States" and to act expediently as the Commander-in-Chief in time of war—a war existing *de facto* since April 12th, 1861.

It is indeed strange that long after the Supreme Court made its decision, legal theories and loopholes are still being debated as if perhaps they would hold up better in the court of world opinion. In further irony, neither president ever signed an official declaration of war (nor of ending it) and regardless of legal theories to the contrary the rights of North and South were settled out of court, to wit, by *war*. Prewar legalities were a moot point. The Supreme Court's decision came well after the fact of the war's existence—acknowledged by the US and internationally as beginning with the exchange of fire at Fort Sumter on April 12th. The Court only ruled that war existed when Lincoln proclaimed the blockade, not that the blockade started it. By Southern reckoning, which was never backed by any court, Lincoln's April 15th call for 75,000 ninety-day volunteers started the belligerence—another moot point. The ruling was based upon post-1861 interpretations of international law, primarily British. When Lincoln proclaimed the blockade, he had no insight to future court rulings, but he knew he had to choose his words carefully and did so.

Nevertheless, Lincoln stated in no uncertain terms in his proclamation that blockading was an anti-privateering policy, not a plan for war against the South. If privateers had not already been solicited by Davis, Lincoln could not have issued a blockade using words against privateers (in all probability the blockade would have been declared anyway if war continued). Other matters were mentioned in Lincoln's April 19th declaration such as the responsibility to collect duties from all of the states equally, a way of

saying that the seceded states were still states of the United States, but only the privateers constituted an immediate threat to US national security. This is not to say that a war and a blockade as a war policy could have been averted, nor that Lincoln was right or wrong in responding with force. He responded and the relevant facts which followed are herein analyzed.

By proclaiming a blockade Lincoln did his share in nudging the war into international waters and directly into the face of poorly defined legalities. Given the uncertainty of the times it truly was dangerously close to recognizing the Confederacy's nationhood—exactly what he wanted to avoid. Nevertheless, the Lincoln and Davis postures for war were firmly taken and would soon be accepted world-wide. Lincoln would have his blockade and Davis would have his privateers.

Regardless of how privateers are perceived today or even later in the war, they were not a trivial matter. They posed new threats to the US because the privateers of a belligerent power who had not signed The Treaty were *not* regarded as outlaws as Lincoln would have it. Furthermore, as a belligerent power, they had other recognized rights such as soliciting loans, purchasing armament and the use of neutral ports as harbors of refuge and repair. The most immediate concern for the war, however, was the still-existing right of privateers to clear their prizes in neutral ports which were literally world-wide and therefore a credible menace to the United States—and *that* was taken very seriously.

But the times were changing. The British Crown and Parliament had a big problem with privateering. They hated it about as much as they hated slavery. To British subjects, both were illegal *and* to a great many, equally immoral. Great Britain had spent the past 50 years trying to rid the world of privateering, which

they considered barbaric, and in fact the Treaty of Paris was recognized as a great triumph of British diplomacy against criminality at sea.

Actually though, the war had caught the Ruler of the Waves off-guard with a mooring line still tied to an earlier era. The barely five-year-old Treaty of Paris was already obsolete because of rapid advancements in steam and fire power, yet it was the *only* document pertaining to policies of blockading and privateering—and it was loaded with untested loopholes and loose definitions of effectiveness. The treaty would have to be modified to deal with new realities while cautiously protecting *British* interests. <Merli, p257> If interpretations were too literal they could not only pull Great Britain into the present war, but restrict the British hand in future wars, ironically, most likely against France with the United States as a potential ally. <Owsley, p213> In that regard, British policy makers were faced with challenges similar to Lincoln's—having to make up policy as they went along. Also complicating interests was the fact that the Crown was obligated to protect her subjects in the Americas from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to Bermuda and the Bahamas and the Virgin Islands in the Caribbean.

So, what did Her Majesty's government do? The great rule-maker of the seas simply swept aside all of these contradictory legal issues in one fell swoop. With practically no hesitation, on May 13, 1861, Queen Victoria proclaimed neutrality and accepted the blockade without recognizing Davis's government except as a belligerent nation *de facto*. It was the same as the policy toward the United States except for continuing to recognize Lincoln's government as the *de jure*, or legal, government of the American States. <Courtemanche, p18> With his sticky legal issues essentially behind him, Lincoln could prosecute the war as one of insurrection with less of a threat from outside intervention.

Going one step further, in another big surprise—truly no one saw it coming—within three weeks of declaring neutrality, on June 1 <Courtemanche, p86> the Queen prohibited the clearing of prizes by privateers across the whole British empire. Other imperial nations quickly followed suit. That of course meant that privateers of any nation, anywhere on earth, could only clear their prizes (captured property) in *Southern* seaports, which were under a blockade. <McPherson, p316> Thereby, privateering was pretty much left up to Southerners alone which threw the momentary balance of power far in the favor of the North. <Robinson, p26-27>, <Anderson, p44>

President Lincoln probably didn't know it at the time, but the ban on prize clearing was a veritable triumph for his own foreign policy. The British stance alone suddenly eased the pressure to spread the US Navy out beyond impossible limits and let him concentrate on the coastal blockade. Other signers of The Treaty of Paris—France, Spain and Russia—had little choice as neutrals but to quickly refute prize clearing as well.

Many Southerners were angered by the Crown's bold and allegedly non-neutral act which seemed to grant favor to the North. Indeed, according to that it may seem to us now that US and British relations were quite rosy back then, but in fact they were not. And in fact, British neutrality was strained to the edge of outright war on a number of occasions, most notably the *Trent Affair* in November 1861. In that episode, a Union Navy captain rather literally “Yanked” the Lion's tail. He forcibly removed two Confederate envoys, James Mason and John Slidell, from a British mail steamer, the *HMS Trent*. John Bull got mad about it and when pressed, Lincoln famously said, “One war at a time” and ordered the two men released—but that was a later issue. Incredibly, when the Queen first declared neutrality it was taken by Lincoln as being

openly hostile to the United States because it gave secession a nod toward legitimacy.

The Queen's prohibition of trade with privateers should be seen as strictly in the British interest, not as any special favor to Lincoln or having warmer regards toward the United States. Given Britain's long struggle against privateering any other action would have exhibited the extreme height of hypocrisy and set freedom of the seas back 50 years.

PART SIX

A SEA CHANGE; RAISING NAVIES

On May 2, 1861, nearly two weeks after Lincoln's decision to blockade the South, the ranking General of the Army, Winfield Scott, validated the policy of isolation of privateers and further proposed to integrate the concept into a broader military strategy. Scott called for, in addition to Lincoln's already proclaimed blockade, joint Army/Navy operations on the coast and inland on the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. <ar107_339> This may rightfully be called a "sea change" in the history of naval warfare. Prior to this the vision for world navies was almost entirely seaward. Inland was considered army territory and the two services rarely communicated. Scott's vision soon acquired the derisive name of the Anaconda, or "Great Snake Plan" ...and it was not taken very seriously by his successors—neither George B. McClellan nor Henry Halleck—but at least the Navy, being already committed to the blockade, took the plan and ran with it. <Simson p24, 52-54>

The US Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, immediately set out to remedy the shortage of vessels. Several "in ordinary" (in reserve, or "mothballed") vessels were quickly put back into commission, ships were called in from overseas, and nearly anything that could float and carry a gun was chartered for naval service. He also ordered conversion and new construction in massive proportion that would soon add several steam-and-sail warships and steam-powered gunboats *including* a large river fleet of wooden and ironclad gunboats. By December Union naval strength swelled to 264 vessels with 2500 guns, and 22,000 seamen.

Likewise, the Confederate Navy sprang up almost overnight. After Virginia seceded around 280 US Navy officers resigned and offered their service to the South. Also, rather instantly, around a

dozen US revenue cutters and service vessels that had been seized by the seceding states were pledged to Confederate service. Meanwhile the Confederate Secretary of the Navy, Stephen R. Mallory, quickly urged his congress to authorize billets for 322 navy officers and a marine corps and thereby the Confederate Navy was born. The vessels captured and purchased, plus the first nine privateers (through July), placed Confederate naval forces on rough parity with the Union's for a brief period of time that first summer (considering the US Navy's strength in home waters started at less than a dozen and it took many weeks before a sizable force was accrued). Through further acquisition of private vessels, by year's end the Confederate government had 21 steam powered vessels afloat and 12 privateers with a mix of steam and sail. Even if the raw numbers in terms of size soon paled in comparison to the rapidly growing Union navy, it was enough to stave off US invasion forces and test the strength of the blockade.

The most seaworthy Confederate acquisitions, such as the *CSS Sumter* and the *CSS McRae*, were ordered to attack Northern merchantmen at sea. This was in addition to the privateers that had quickly answered Davis's April 17th call. In response the US Navy kept a few warships at sea to chase them down, but the Union stayed mainly focused on building the blockade. All the while, Confederates expected England and/or France to intercede. But if that was a plan it was a disaster in the making for a number of reasons. In the first place, if either England or France had made any such promise it was not in writing. The British government held firm against war. Meanwhile, the French emperor openly favored an alliance with the Confederates but *only* if England would take the lead—and England would not; ... and why not? ... good sense mostly. The most compelling reason was that taking sides held a high risk of starting a war England did not want—not only a war with the United States which would threaten wheat imports, but a world-wide war that could threaten the whole British Empire.

The world just happened to be a *very* unstable place at the time as minor powers were growing industrially and with a greater sense of nationalism were waging wars of national unity, realigning borders, upgrading war-making technologies in steel, steam and firepower and escalating old disputes with their neighbors. Thus, other nations of mixed loyalties and some with old axes to grind may have been pulled in; not only France, but also Russia, Europe's third largest naval power with issues lingering from the Crimean War against both England and France. Other possible belligerents were Spain, Denmark and Prussia (Prussia was essentially what would become unified Germany) with seaports serving the North Sea and the Baltic. Still others, to wit, Italy and Austria, were building naval power and would soon test ironclads in battle in the Adriatic. Even Japan and Brazil were becoming sea powers to be taken seriously.

<nor2_170, 268,364> Britain would have been forced to defend Canada and the Caribbean and other enormously far flung places around the globe while inviting the return of the despised practice of privateering—and *no* amount of cotton was worth going through that again.

Seeing trouble brewing with King Cotton in 1860, England had already begun filling her warehouses with Southern cotton and also cotton from India and Egypt. England began the year of 1861 with a cotton *surplus* and the shortage was delayed, sparing time to consider reasonable alternatives to war. Later on, when the “cotton famine” in England was actually being felt, the British were making too much money in other sectors to go to war over so-called “white gold.”

<Courtemanche, p173>

PART SEVEN

THE MYTH OF KING COTTON: COTTON FOR RANSOM, THE EMBARGO AND THE EXPECTED BRITISH RESPONSE

To make matters worse for the Confederacy, when the blockade was announced a more or less spontaneous cotton embargo broke out across the South in the expectation of prompting European action. The embargo was not an official Confederate Government policy, but it had at least tacit approval of President Davis. Remarkably “well-coordinated” for a flight of mass fantasy, it went into effect almost immediately. The *Charleston Mercury* summed it up with brutal honesty: “The cards are in our hands and we intend to play them out to the bankruptcy of every cotton factory in Great Britain and France or the acknowledgement of our independence.”

<Owsley, p24>, <Foreman, p85>

The embargo was a resounding success only in that for all practical purposes, it temporarily stopped the outflow of cotton. In the early months of the war into the fall of 1861, virtually *no* cotton was shipped. But, as an instrument to influence foreign policy in favor of the Confederacy, it not only failed it backfired, creating instead the undesirable impression in Europe that the blockade actually *was* effective, and rather immediately at that. Lincoln himself could not have dreamed of a better deception, for truly at this point, the Federal blockade existed almost entirely on paper.

At the same time Confederate envoys in England and France tried in vain to convince those governments that the blockade existed in name only—which was *very* close to the truth—but they were silenced by the simple question, “Where’s the cotton?” <Anderson, p30>, <Owsley, p210, 213>

Thus, “King Cotton Diplomacy” fell on its face and intervention at this critical early stage was thwarted. Outwardly, Southern emissaries simply could not openly admit that Europe was being held hostage to cotton. Furthermore, on the other side of the pond, just the same as here, was the ever-popular belief that European naval intervention would soon be coming, therefore, risk-taking against the blockade without getting cotton in return just did not make any sense. <Wise, p28>

As if the extra-legal cotton embargo were not enough, every other conceivable legislative effort was employed to keep cotton off the market. For one, the CS Congress passed bills to restrict international cotton trade and to prohibit the selling of cotton to the North. In theory that would have indirectly stopped shipments to England and France and put more pressure on them to clear the blockade and trade in Southern ports. Also, many planters succumbed to the prevailing faith in the coercive power of cotton and voluntarily hoarded the 1861 crop. In 1862 cash crops were shifted to the more practical production of food which served the armies better, but further helped to extend the “cotton famine” in Europe while doing nothing to suppress the outflow of gold. Efforts to stop cotton exports were more completely “successful” than any embargo in history, but only in that virtually no cotton was shipped. <Owsley, p26-40> Of course that was just one of the major blunders of the infant Confederacy. <Anderson, p30>

In part because of the embargo and in part because no serious concern was given to the possibility of a prolonged war, the Confederate War Department under Leroy Pope Walker <Harris, p105-119> was virtually paralyzed in the business of arms importation. The War Department’s main purchasing agent in England, Caleb Huse, was stymied by Walker’s indifference and resistance to big spending for arms. Huse offered the face-saving excuse that the Yankees got there first and bought up all the arms. Huse may have been half-way correct at the time in light of the

spending limitations imposed upon him by Walker. <Harris, p84>, <ar127_344>

It took a Confederate *Navy* purchasing agent to go to England to prove that money talks. In the month of May, a Confederate Navy Department officer, Commander James Dunwoody Bulloch, went to England with strong financial backing from a loyal Southern agency in London, Fraser, Trenholm & Company. He began purchasing huge stores of munitions and getting them ready to be shipped. But, whether due to the embargo, or as some have said, loyalty to the Queen's proclamation of neutrality, shippers were hard to find. <Foreman, p147> Wasting no time, Bulloch turned to building warships in England—so much for English patriotism when enough money was involved. Meanwhile, the myth of European intervention (read: belief in a short war) misdirected attention away from arms importation for several critical months. Cotton merely piled up on plantations and on warehouses and docks. Inaction prevailed and much opportunity was lost forever.

By tacit approval, British activities and policies from the very beginning had enormous influence upon virtually every American warship that went to sea. For the South, British influence touched all the counter-blockade measures: privateers, commerce raiders, and blockade runners. British policies also affected Northern blockaders and chasers of privateers, raiders, and blockade runners because they prevented the US Navy from blockading foreign ports that gave supplies and refuge to Southern shipping. For the most part, the ships at sea serving on both sides were wooden hulled with various combinations of steam and sail power. The more famous armored warships (ironclads) played no significant part in the warfare on the high seas. Regardless of all expectations to foment a revolution at sea, they were more generally used by both sides for river, harbor, and inshore operations; that is, for invasions and bombardments by the North and interior

water defenses by the South. Some ironclads, such as the *USS [New] Ironsides*, have been misrepresented as blockaders, but that unique ship was used only as a floating battery against shore installations at Charleston and Wilmington. Any ironclads further mentioned in this essay are purely incidental to broader issues.

PART EIGHT

PIRATE TRAILS: LINCOLN'S STANDOFF WITH DAVIS AND JOHN BULL

Any discussion of the war within the American states starts with Confederate privateers. They must be taken up first because not only were they the first national threat in the war, they were a redefining force for matters of great international import and for a time they were the dominate category of Confederate “warships.” They leaped into national attention almost immediately and resulted in *the* most important policy changes in the war, not the least of which was the foundation of the previously mentioned war policies of both sides. Among the first Southern privateers <Still, *Confederate Navy*, p48>, <Robinson, p32> were the *Savannah* and the *Jefferson Davis*, fast sailing schooners which made a few easy captures of other sailing ships before being captured themselves. Captains and crews were arraigned in Federal Courts on charges of piracy and treason. The *Savannah's* men went to trial in New York City and the crew of the *Jefferson Davis* in Philadelphia.

The death penalty for *both offenses* was accepted worldwide, but according to the Treaty of Paris captured privateersmen would have been given prisoner-of-war status. Not being bound by the treaty, Lincoln was not about to give the slightest concession to the South's nationhood by this or any other manner. In his view, the official view of the United States government, it was *not* a war with another nation, but a great rebellion of states of the *same* nation. So, his initial position amounted to just saying, “Hang ’em.” To him, privateers without a country were *pirates*, or common criminals, preying upon unarmed commercial vessels.

The New York jury could not come to a decision which placed the *Savannah's* men in limbo for

a while. As they waited for another trial, in November, 1861 convictions were handed down in Philadelphia. Davis responded immediately with a threat to hang captured Unionists. As men's lives hung in the balance Lincoln gave in and from then on captured privateer sailors were treated as prisoners-of-war.

This popular story has long been told in promoting a sense of equality in a standoff between heads of state and a case for recognition *de facto* of the Confederacy. Unfortunately, the legend of Lincoln backing down to Davis, his alleged equal, hangs upon faulty logic—the fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*—the theory that if A happens and B follows, then A caused B. In this case, Davis threatened and Lincoln relented, therefore it is assumed that Davis caused it—a position taken up by promoters of Southern legitimacy more than 150 years ago and has been accepted uncritically ever since. Unfortunately, there is not a shred of evidence connecting the two facts. It appears that even the most venerated Civil War authorities are not immune from taking logical shortcuts. <McPherson, *Waters*, p22>

The story behind the story is that it was a face-to-face conflict with *British* foreign policy as well. Despite the 1856 prohibition against privateering, the privateers of a recognized belligerent were regarded more highly than rogue buccaneers, or pirates, and Great Britain supported their rights. A moral consciousness arising in the Victorian era introduced many humanitarian reforms including abolishment of both slavery and privateering. A third major reform goal was ending capital punishment, or at least reducing the number crimes which carried the death sentence. In accordance with that principle, which was built into the Treaty of Paris, Great Britain would not abide by the death penalty for privateers. <Merli, p43, 46>, <Courtemanche, p18> Making matters worse, four of the captured privateersmen were British subjects now facing execution at the virtual peak of

tensions over the *Trent Affair*. British pride was so severely challenged that preparations for war against the United States were made almost instantly. The British quickly raised the fleet off the American coast from an observational force of around 30 warships to 42 with orders to stand ready for war with the United States at any moment. Meanwhile, the British landed around 10,000 troops in Canada.

Actually, from the beginning of the hostilities Great Britain already had her guard up and had never let it down. Ever since the arms race with France began in 1859 the British Royal Navy was in a continual and rapid mode of upgrade. During that period total British naval strength increased from around 200 steam and sail ocean-cruising warships in 1860 <Canney, p16> to 339 at the height of the *Trent* Crisis in late 1861. <Courtemanche, p59> From her position of superior strength Britain handed Lincoln an ultimatum: capitulate or be at war with the Crown. It was a stare-down equivalent to the Cuban Missile Crisis nearly 100 years later and Lincoln blinked. <Symonds, p94> The *Trent* Affair was resolved by some rather delicate face-saving diplomacy in late December, 1861. On January 14, 1862, Lincoln released Mason and Slidell to let them continue their journey unmolested to England.

In the entire time Lincoln ignored the threats made by Davis in June and in November to hang captured Union officers in retaliation for the conviction of privateers as pirates. Soon after the resolution of the *Trent* affair in mid-January, 1862, on February 3 the privateers were quietly transferred to a prisoner-of-war camp. <Scharf, p78>, <Robinson, p150> A three-way coincidence? Perhaps so, but Lincoln had strong incentives to change his policy without acknowledging Davis's authority as an equal. Actually, Lincoln's adopted position toward Davis since the beginning of his presidency was total indifference and this was not an occasion to change. As a matter of fact,

there were many humane and practical reasons to stay the executions of Southern privateers and to halt all further sham “pirate trials” and Davis’s threats had little if any influence upon any of them. Humanitarianism was indeed a factor as neither side would benefit by a wanton destruction of prisoners’ lives.

There were, in fact, other big issues. For one thing, by the time of their release the legal status of the Confederacy as a belligerent was firmly established world-wide by physical reality and the issue of recognition by a careless misuse of words no longer existed. There was also the distinct possibility that any further trials might include more British subjects whose convictions might antagonize British policy makers all over again. The risk of negating the diplomatic gains so recently made was too great. In truth, the tensions arising from *Trent* crisis needed no further complications by the execution of British privateersmen. Satisfied there would be no more kidnappings at sea, a la Mason and Slidell, and spared of having to respond at all to the execution of British subjects, the British Government quickly got over both affairs.

Perhaps to placate the Crown even further, Lincoln soon modified his policy toward captured British subjects. They would only be detained for a short time for questioning and then released. <Wise, p108> While that policy was perhaps best for long-term relations between the United States and Britain, it had an undesirable effect upon the US war effort—creating a low-risk environment for British private citizens to conduct illegal wartime enterprises such as arms trading and blockade running. It was a blessing for the Confederate States in that blockade running replaced privateering as a more efficient importing business at far less risk—both personal and financial.

Confederate privateering flourished for over a year and essentially vanished in 1862 due to a greatly raised risk of capture by a growing blockade and minimal reward. The credit for the demise of privateering goes only in part to the blockade and British censure. We must also look at significant army/navy landings on the coast which drove them out of their havens and blocked their sally ports. The key places occupied included Hatteras Inlet, NC (stopping sea trade to northern Virginia); Port Royal, SC (covering both Charleston and Savannah for the rest of the war); Ship Island off Biloxi, MS (covering two approaches to New Orleans); and the Head of the Passes in the Mississippi below New Orleans—all hotbeds of Confederate privateering, the primary objective of US coastal policy in 1861. These led to even deeper occupations in 1862 such as at Roanoke Island and much of the Carolina Sounds and then New Orleans itself.

By late 1861, cotton was starting to move again commercially even though the coastal blockade was tightening and privateering gave way to blockade running. Nevertheless, predations at sea picked up with commerce raiding by Confederate Navy cruisers.

PART NINE

BRITISH-BUILT CONFEDERATE COMMERCE RAIDERS

There is always confusion between privateers and ocean-cruising Confederate commerce raiders. The main difference is that the raiders were *not* privately owned. They were commissioned navy ships with professional navy officers and it did not matter to them that neutral ports would not be their clear prizes. They didn't take prizes. They lived off what they captured and destroyed or released the rest on bond. It further meant that they did not have to return to home port frequently, or at all even. Although wooden, they were also the newest class of modern sailing steamers with steam condensers for making drinking water and lifting-screw propellers to minimize drag while under sail. These features allowed raiders to cruise world-wide at a faster pace and be a far greater threat than were the privateers. Of course, the *underlying* purpose was still the same, drawing Union warships away from the blockade.

Due to a shortage of resources in the South, as well as potential confinement by the blockade, much of the new construction for Confederate raiders was consigned to foreign ship builders, primarily British. This, however, was not because of a sympathetic British government *per se*. It was for two other reasons. For one thing, British-built ships were the best that money could buy and for another, British laws against giving private aid to foreign belligerents were incredibly weak, especially in ship-building.

Under the British “Foreign Enlistment Act,” an internal law to provide conformance with the Treaty of Paris, British subjects were forbidden to enlist in foreign military or naval services. The same law forbade the building of warships for a foreign belligerent—up to a point. The spirit

of the law was to maintain neutrality and not give a foreign belligerent an excuse to go to war against Britain in retaliation for nonneutral acts. Bulloch knew this law could be an obstacle when he first went to England, so instead of going directly to the shipbuilders he went to the lawyers. They assured him that a warship, especially a wooden one, could be “legally” built and even sold to a foreign power if it left the British Isles with a British crew and was totally unarmed. The law was more than a little bit quirky since private contractors could sell both arms and warships to foreign powers. They just could not sell *armed* warships. <Foreman, p146> As long as outward appearances could pass them off as innocent merchant ships, even ones with gun ports, the legalities were superficially satisfied.

By cleverly navigating the loopholes in open “secret” Bulloch raised a half-dozen wooden sea cruisers including the three most famous, the *Florida*, *Alabama* and *Shenandoah*. Emboldened by his early success, he further contracted for two steam-powered, screw-propelled, twin-turreted, ironclad rams for the Confederacy. As may be expected, they left little to the imagination that they were anything but deadly weapons of war and they were taken over by the British government before they could leave port.

The exploits of the raiders were legendary and, in their heyday, they were a tremendous morale boost to the South. But they were also a huge embarrassment to the British government because of the blatant violations of neutrality. In a post-war lawsuit against Great Britain, known as “the Alabama Claims,” the Crown had to admit to being wrong in the first place for letting the raiders be built in British waters and agreed to pay \$15.5 million dollars to the United States for their damages. Ironically, in that same court of law, the US tried to prove that the raiders *alone* extended the war for nearly two years and tacked on an additional two *billion* dollars for the

expense of the entire *war* past July 4, 1863. However, not a shred of evidence held up in court that the *Alabama* and all of her sisters put together added a single day to the war and the \$2,000,000,000 claim was thrown out.

Although the raiders did pull some Union cruisers off the blockade, the truth is, the raiders failed to weaken the blockade significantly. For the overall Southern cause, they did little as well. The war materiel they brought back to the Confederacy was next to nothing, and worse still, Secretary Welles was willing to sacrifice merchant ships at sea to preserve the blockade. Fully one-fourth of the American Merchant Marine, around 250 vessels, were destroyed by the raiders; but for the war it did not matter.

Despite relentless demands by Northern Commercial shippers to get protection from the Navy, Welles released capable warships from the blockade only as they could be replaced by lighter and faster vessels. Meanwhile Northern shippers learned to play it safe by simply switching registration to foreign flags, primarily British, and Northern commerce continued relatively unabated as the blockade grew tighter. <Scharf, p783>

PART TEN

BLOCKADE RUNNING AND BRITISH ENTERPRISE

If there was to be a blockade just as certainly there would be blockade runners. Of all the counter-blockade programs, blockade running was *the* most successful. Fully 60% of the South's arms were foreign imports, primarily British. Without blockade running the war may have ended in the summer of 1861 after the First Battle of Bull Run (First Manassas). <Harris, p85> Up until that point Confederate planning was still hung too strongly upon the belief in a short war, that is to say, faith in European intervention hence further preparation was not taken seriously enough.

<Merli, p189>, <Foreman, p147-148>, <Foreman, p84-85>

The July 1861 battle near the insignificant stream known as Bull Run just outside of Washington near Manassas Junction, VA deserves greater distinction. That battle kick-started Secretary Walker's enthusiasm for a war he had little prior reason to believe would play out. <Foreman, p147>, <Harris, p84-86> By summer it was becoming evident that the European powers were in no hurry to jump in. Thereby, Walker was embarrassed by the fact that Southern forces in Northern Virginia could not follow up on their victory due to lack of arms and ammunition. His letter to purchasing agent Huse in London sent July 22, 1861 reflected a new-found spirit of hope for the South to fight the war without direct intervention. With undisguised elation he urged Huse to spare no expense in obtaining enough arms for 500 regiments, roughly 500,000 men. <ar127_493, 494>

Meanwhile, the realization was slowly catching on around the world that King Cotton could not force the European powers to intervene. However, private interests could not be held back much longer in the face tremendous profit opportunities. In the fall of 1861 as the cotton embargo lost

support Bulloch sent his first steamer, the *Bermuda*, into Savannah laden with around a million dollars' worth of munitions. It loaded back up with 2000 bales of cotton and headed straight back to England where tremendous profits awaited. The success of the *Bermuda* proved three things to the world: one, that the blockade could be breached rather easily; two, that Southern cotton was available; and three, that the British Foreign Enlistment Act could be ignored with very low risk.

To emphasize the point Bulloch sent a second large steamer, the British-made *Fingal*, into Savannah with a roughly equal cargo of munitions. These two large shipments so close together, and a few others less notable, suddenly gave the South enough arms and ammunition to continue fighting vigorously as the Battle of Shiloh would attest in the following spring. The lifting of Southern morale was enormous. Southern hearts filled with pride and renewed confidence that their new government could adequately arm their men fighting for the cause of independence.

British merchants sat up and took notice of the exploding profit opportunity and began to organize their own blockade-running firms and building an entirely new class of ships exclusively for running purposes. It is estimated that some 300 to 400 fast and sleek private steamers of a typical runner "look" were built in British yards. Side-wheeled for speed and rarely armed, their mission was not to fight the blockade but to outrun it. Their slim, streamlined features came with strong disadvantages, however, such as limiting cargo capacity and sacrificing structural strength. Arming them would only add weight and take up valuable cargo space while requiring a larger crew to man the guns and inviting damage to their ship.

Fighting would have been very foolish anyway because there was little risk of personal harm to foreign citizens in simply surrendering. Foreign sailors would be released in a few days to a few

weeks pending court challenges for adjudication of US prize captures. <Wise, p109> Of course, American citizens on the runners could be held indefinitely as prisoners of war. Nor was there much danger of being fired upon as long as they stopped as ordered or did not fire back. Blockader captains and crews much preferred to capture the runners undamaged because of their value as prizes. It is noteworthy also that the US Navy was still following the tradition of rewarding officers and crews with a percentage of the money received from the sale of captured enemy goods—a practice strangely similar to the reward for privateers whom they considered pirates.

British merchants also built some 800 fast sailing schooners and sloops for inshore, or intracoastal, Southern service. Many of these were counted as runners by Southerners for obvious propaganda purposes, that is, to inflate the numbers of both runs and runners. However, the smaller sailboats were not used significantly for importing or exporting. Their primary mission was to distribute light goods to and from the main ports via the shallow backwaters of the Southern Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

The slim and fast steam runners, as noted, were structurally weak and therefore not suited for long ocean voyages. Fortunately for the South, most runners were not required to run all the way across the Atlantic. The islands off the shores of North America held deep-water ports within easy steaming distance of all the Southern seaports and they were in the hands of at least technically neutral foreign powers, primarily British. Actual ocean crossing was left up to the larger and more conventional steam and sailing freighters, whereas, dashing through the blockade was the job of smaller and faster vessels.

Blockade running was *the* most conspicuous British activity, but it should be remembered that it

was done by private haulers. Some organized running was done by the Confederate government, such as by Bulloch. These were generally successful in the early and late periods of the war, but in the of hands private amateurs in the mid-war years the results were not so good. <Wise, p56> By the summer of 1862 only three significant ports were left open—Wilmington, Charleston and Mobile—which forced a lot of off-loading of light loads onto remote beaches. In many cases that hardly mattered because a lot of them carried only small high-profit items such as perfumes, silks and cigars.

When Charleston was put under attack in July 1863 all major running operations on the East Coast shifted to Wilmington, NC, a city totally immune to offshore bombardment. The city was served by a deep harbor via the Cape Fear River and was very well connected by rail to the Army of Northern Virginia. By late summer of 1864 Mobile Bay was invaded by Admiral Farragut and then occupied by the army thereby closing Mobile Bay to blockade runners. After Sherman's march across Georgia, Lee's army was in virtual isolation except for Wilmington and the sea. Fresh foods from the bread baskets of Alabama and Georgia were shut off as were the coastal and rail lifelines from Florida. Thus, Lee's sustenance was reduced to mostly barreled salt-meat being delivered from the islands which was horribly inadequate. When Wilmington was finally subdued by the Union Army and Navy blockade running on the East Coast was essentially stopped. After that, Lee's surrender was not long in coming. <Wise, p213 and ref #50 on p355>.

<ar129_783>, <ar129_941, 955-958>

One of the greatest myths ever told about the war is that the blockade runners did extremely well. But did they really? Some did for sure, in particular those who got rich early and quit, but overall? Not really. Ninety percent of the runners' ships were either captured, destroyed or

missing-in-action, that is, 1,350 out of 1,500*, which can scarcely be called successful. What's more are the incessant *incomplete* "facts" such as their success rate being anywhere from greater than 90% down to no less than 50-50 at the end; ...or another, "the doubling time for venture capital was four months." Those were great numbers in the glory days and a high success rate at first was true, but 50-50 at the end was impossible. For one thing, that overly generalized statistic only applied to attempts by professional experts on rarely favorable days or nights, weather permitting, before Wilmington was occupied. Perhaps belaboring the obvious, for *occupied* ports the chance of success was *zero*. As for venture capital, by the end of the war most of the remaining venture capitalists were dead broke. <Wise, p221-226>

In regard to the endless high-spirited publications proclaiming the great success of blockade runners, one could be tempted to believe that a more or less steady stream of runners entered and exited Southern ports while happily thumbing their collective nose at the blockade. Some little-known facts indicate otherwise. For instance, two-thirds of the trans-Atlantic arms shipments piled up in the warehouses of Bermuda and Nassau. The reasons are various, although sometimes depicted as a preference for hauling luxury goods. That assessment is probably accurate to some degree, but incomplete. There was also the factor of runners having to wait for favorable opportunities: a moonless night or fog and a good pilot for navigating safely in relative blindness through treacherous waters. Evidently, it was *not* so easy to run the blockade.

Furthermore, the significance of "successful" runs is highly inflated due to the habit of counting of every light craft that ever entered or cleared a harbor without regard to its purpose, value, origin or destination. A small typical runner with dry goods is a far cry from the *Bermuda*

*Numbers of runners compiled from different sources vary greatly. A generally accepted claim is that less than 150 runners were known to have survived out of claims of up to 1500 runners claimed to have existed.

bringing in a large cargo of arms and returning to England with 2000 bales of cotton, yet both are often counted as equally “successful” runs. Accurate numbers are hard to come by, but the broad facts are indisputable—Southern imports and exports dropped to a mere trickle compared to their pre-war volumes <Guelzo, p312>, thanks to the blockade and its partner, the army.

Actually, in the long run privatized blockade running hurt the South more than it helped. All too often the incoming cargo was luxury goods that did nothing for the war effort. <Wise 210> The currency for payment was typically gold which nearly always ended up in private hands instead of paying down war debts. The overall result was disastrous inflation and shortages of nearly everything the South really needed. Nevertheless, blockade running was the true lifeline of the Confederacy. Enough holes existed in the blockade to let pass the majority of the South’s arms. <Wise, p6, 226> Instead of wasting resources on privateers, raiders and luxury goods, far greater gains would have been made with organized arms running from the very start. Without blockade running the war may well have ended right after the First Battle of Bull Run (First Manassas). As mentioned, it was only after that thrilling victory that Secretary Walker began ordering arms in earnest. <Harris, p85>, <ar127_493,494> Fortunately for the Confederacy, that same battle stalled the Union offensive thus giving the South more time to gather arms.

Under the circumstances of blockade running throughout the war, one may wonder just what the official British Government’s stand on blockade running really was. Despite appearances at times, official British policy was *strict neutrality*. Of course, that did not stop British individuals from breaking the law. Even Royal Navy Officers took leaves of absence and did freelance blockade running. It is also true that many British officials simply looked away from violations thereby showing tolerance. It may sound conflicted, but generally speaking, British policy was

easy on profit-making, the very foundation of the Empire.

PART ELEVEN

THE UNION BLOCKADE: ALWAYS ENOUGH FOR THE BRITISH

Another great, possibly the second-greatest, misconception promoted by Civil War writers is the empty claim that the Blockade was ineffective. In reality it was very effective as can be seen on substantial evidence, it just had a rough start. Inarguably, the United States Navy was charged with covering too much coastline with too few ships. A rational plan was desperately needed so in June 1861 the Navy Department formed a review board to study coastal maps and make recommendations. What they learned helped to simplify things greatly.

The most encouraging fact was that only those ports having *deep* water, say at least 12 to 17 feet of clearance, *and* good rail connections to the interior were worth considering. This narrowed the scope down to about a dozen ports—actually, only the ones that could handle deeply laden ships heavy with cargoes. The study exposed the severe restrictions upon importation of large cannons, steam engines, locomotives, and large reels of insulated copper wire for torpedoes and telegraphy. As early as July 1861 blockading ships held a presence off the ports of Norfolk, Wilmington, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, New Orleans, and Galveston—not very many at each, but it was enough to show the world that the blockade existed and they did stop *large* direct shipments. The initial squadron may have been small, but it really did command foreign respect from the outset.

The review board also recommended quick seizures of a few strategic points on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts for use as coaling stations and supply depots for the blockade. This was accomplished in relatively short order starting with some already mentioned places like Hatteras

Inlet, Port Royal and Ship Island. Other places of note were Fernandina, Jacksonville, and St. Augustine, FL. It also helped immensely that Fortress Monroe, Key West and Ft. Pickens were never lost in the first place. As the war progressed the blockade and the army's occupation of ports did a lot to stop privateering, but coincidentally across the Atlantic commercial interest picked up and turned to the less war-like blockade running.

Union blockade captains got better and better at capturing and converted some of the captured vessels into blockaders. Prized as many were for speed, the gun crews of the capturing ships tried to avoid inflicting much damage upon them so they would fetch a higher price at prize auctions. Despite continual improvements the blockade was never a totally water-tight operation, but it *did have effectiveness*. It is generally estimated that up to 1500 runners may have been used during the War while less than 150 are known to have survived. And while it is true that *no* port was 100% closed until it was also occupied by the army, to use that bit of information, as legions of writers have done, to call the whole program *ineffective* is utterly ridiculous. What they essentially argue is that if the blockade was not absolute and total *immediately* and by the navy acting all *alone*, it was not a blockade at all. That, of course, was the very point being stressed by Confederates agents in Europe—and we all know how that turned out.

The reality is that the blockade was *always* enough to satisfy the British that it legally existed and that's who really counted—and the British *did* watch it *very* intently while remaining open toward the prospect of forceful action against all comers in order to protect British interests. The French did likewise. From the beginning of the war through the height of tensions after the *Trent* Affair a few dozen British and French warships cruised off the American coast specifically to verify the legality of the blockade. On February 15, 1862, the British Foreign Minister, Lord

John Russell, officially declared to Parliament that the blockade truly *was* effective and called off official inspections. <Courtemanche, p18-24>, <nori3_356-358>, <Appendix 4>

Furthermore, the blockade could tighten quickly anywhere there was a strong sense of urgency. For instance, the large iron-hulled British merchant *Fingal* made exactly one crossing into Savannah and was never to leave. Blockaders swarmed in around the port and the army and navy working together forced the surrender of nearby Tybee Island and Fort Pulaski. Thereafter, Savannah was tightly sealed except for the shallow inner-coastal waterways and rail lifelines from Florida.

The blockade started out as a deterrent to privateers, as opposed to a far-reaching war policy. Over time and with aggressive growth it merged smoothly into a policy of complete domination of the American waters. The size of the blockade did not stop growing until the war was essentially over. By 1865 the number of Union naval vessels had swelled to 671 with over 50,000 sailors, arguably the largest navy on earth. <Courtemanche, p172> Regardless of its gain in numbers, however, the majority of vessels in the United States Navy were merely converted merchantmen and still second rate to the warships of England and France.

By the end of the war blockading, as it was then known, was indeed obsolete—at the end of its rope in all practical senses. Sail had given way to steam which leveled the playing field between blockaders and runners. The only way for the Union to stay ahead was to raise the blockading fleet to overwhelming numbers whereon by war's end it had reached the limits of sustainability in terms of coal, manpower and supplies. If arms importation had been handled aggressively with prompt exchanges of cotton at the most critical earliest time it is entirely possible that the

blockade could never have gotten ahead effectively.

PART TWELVE
DOMINATION OF THE WATERS, US VICTORIES
AND THE IMPACT UPON BRITISH POLICY

The importance of “joint” operations, meaning amphibious operations of the Army and Navy working together cannot be overstated. They isolated the South very much in the same context as the coastal blockade and cinched the hands-off policy of Great Britain. Together the Army and Navy opened invasion routes and sealed the fate of important places on the Atlantic seaboard, the Gulf and the inland rivers. Namely: Forts Hatteras & Clark, Port Royal, Ship Island, Roanoke Island, Carolina Sounds, New Bern, Norfolk, Savannah, Forts Henry & Donelson, Nashville, Pittsburg Landing (Shiloh), Island No. 10, New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Memphis, Arkansas Post & St. Charles (AR), Vicksburg, Port Hudson, and Helena, AR—all by mid-1863—and all the while fighting Confederate soldiers, sailors, gunboats and guerillas on virtually every river and shore. Moreover, holding on to these positions was just as daunting a task as capturing them in the first place.

The early 1862 Union victories at Roanoke Island and on the Cumberland, Tennessee and Mississippi Rivers cast an international gloom over the South’s chance of winning independence. A Confederate agent in Havana, Cuba, in a comment foretelling doom wrote, “Our recent reverses in Tennessee and the seacoast of North Carolina ... [have created] doubt in the minds of our foreign friends ...”. ^{<ar127_1019>} The nearly simultaneous capture of New Orleans in April and

the June fall of Memphis by water-borne forces were devastating to the Confederacy. Later in 1863 US Major General Nathaniel Banks, in cooperation with Rear Admiral Farragut's Western Gulf Squadron, occupied South Texas for about 100 miles inland from the mouth of the Rio Grande. There, in one stroke Matamoros, Mexico, was shut off as a blockade running port and France should have taken notice that the Monroe Doctrine was not forgotten.

The Western Gulf Squadron performed valuable service on the rivers too. After taking New Orleans several tall-masted sloops-of-war carrying army troops penetrated the Mississippi River over 400 miles to combine with Union army and navy forces coming down from the north. After New Orleans and the lower Mississippi River were firmly under Federal control in early 1862 British interest in blockade running in the shallow Western Gulf never amounted to much. For one thing, the only port remaining open was Galveston whose distance from British ports in the Western Atlantic consumed too much fuel for an average runner. For another, when interest to ship through the Gulf picked up after the Charleston siege, there was virtually no chance of getting supplies across the Mississippi to the Confederate armies in the East. <Wise, 214-217>

Meanwhile Vicksburg and Port Hudson, and possibly Bragg's army in Tennessee, continued to be supplied by way of the Red River which perhaps by then had more to do with support from the Trans-Mississippi states anyway, not Europe. After the Battles of Vicksburg and Port Hudson in July 1863 Union domination on the water was more or less complete, which did not escape the notice of British policy makers. Further considering the major military victories at Gettysburg, Vicksburg and Tullahoma, TN that summer and at Chattanooga and Knoxville in the fall, by the end of 1863 virtually all hope for European *armed* intervention vanished. <Merli P40, 259> A negotiated peace, or mediation, was briefly contemplated by France and Britain in 1862, but it

was taken off the table by Seward who let them know in no uncertain terms that even a soft attempt at intervention would be taken as an act of war. European powers needed little reminding of that position as the war ran into 1864 and the standing US Army and the Navy became, in total, too great a force to contest.

PART THIRTEEN

BRITISH POLICY AND CONFEDERATE RECOGNITION

It has often been said that the Emancipation Proclamation gets the credit for eliminating the threat from abroad, which is to say that turning the war into a war against slavery kept the Europeans out for good. In other words, it is claimed that after January 1863 it became suddenly politically impossible for any fence-straddling Europeans to jump in on the side of slavery. There is no doubt that the Battle of Antietam (Sharpsburg) and the Emancipation Proclamation which followed caused a tremendous and permanent shift in British sentiment away from the South, but they did not bring about sudden policy changes nor did they swing the fortunes of war to an inevitable outcome. The South was determined by that time to run the war out to its bitter end with the underlying hope of independence by stalemate if nothing else. If successful by any means, foreign recognition of Confederate sovereignty would surely result, and with it, an end to the hostilities and economic starvation by the blockade.

The issue of recognition in the British Cabinet and Parliament held on, if only weakly through late 1864, continuing as always throughout the war to rise and fall with Southern fortunes and misfortunes. Whether up with Southern successes, as on the Peninsula or at 2nd Bull Run, Fredericksburg or Chancellorsville; <Foreman, 458> or down with Antietam and the reverses in Pennsylvania, Mississippi, Louisiana and Tennessee—the greatest misfortune was possibly the reelection of Abraham Lincoln in November of 1864. Northern resolve at that point was unmistakable to the rest of the world, even if not to the Davis Administration, and unchangeable. *This is the only conceivable point at which any claim to inevitability of the outcome could be taken seriously.* Throughout the war and up until that point British policy makers were really just

waiting to see if Southern independence could be won by the South's *own* initiatives—whether by military victory or stalemate until the North just gave in.

It is not that British recognition was ever a very strong prospect whether due to issues of slavery, whether instability of the Confederate government, whether for risk of war against the United States or elsewhere in the world, or whether for a simple preference for peace. However, it must be remembered that the Crown had her politicians too and some had strong pro-Southern industrial and labor constituencies—Liverpool in ship building, Manchester in textiles, Birmingham in munitions, and Sheffield in steel. In reality, Southern hopes were toyed with by the Queen's own politicians until their final elections near the end of the war. <Foreman, 619, 664-676> British dalliance led to the deplorable continuance of war founded upon the South's false hopes for recognition. Desperate for recognition in his final acts of his presidency, Davis sent emissaries to England to promise to end slavery if only the Crown would acknowledge the South as a sovereign nation. Of course, that plea was being made even as Confederate agents rather foolhardily attempted to widen the war into British Canada to make the American public demand peace. Here is yet another curious act for a nascent government trying to woo a British alliance.

By early 1865 the newly proposed Southern position on slavery was a moot point. The reality is if the Confederate States had won their *own* independence at any time in the war, by the power of physical facts alone, that is, *by all de facto rights and precedents* there would have been recognition, slavery or not, and regardless of whether it was before or after the Emancipation Proclamation. <nori3_247, 248>, Lord Russell's policy statement of August 24, 1861, could not have stated it more clearly:

“Her Majesty’s government can not ... acknowledge the independence of the [Confederate] States ... until the fortune of arms or the more peaceful mode of negotiation shall have more clearly determined the respective positions of the two belligerents.” <nori3_248>, <Appendix 3, Russell’s letter to Yancey, Rost and Mann>

The war was ultimately decided on the battlefield by the fortune of arms, but in sum total, the Union’s domination of the rivers and shores was the key to battlefield success. The coastal blockade was just one of several elements of the domination strategy and it was permitted to start and grow for one reason: it was respected by foreign governments, primarily British (see Appendix 5). The overall Union strategy worked—it prevented Southern independence while keeping the rest of the world at arm’s length. In the end, the supreme goal of the United States was met, 100 per cent.

APPENDIX 1
UNITED STATES VESSELS OF WAR, MARCH 4, 1861

Navy O.R.—Series I—Volume 1 [S# 1], [page xv-xvi]
[Navy Official Records, short notation: nor1_xv-xvi]

List And Stations Of United States Vessels Of War In Commission March 4, 1861.

HOME SQUADRON.

Name	Tonnage.	Class.	Guns.	Crew.	Location.
Pawnee	1,289	Screw sloop	8	115	Washington, D. C.
Crusader	549	Screw steamer	8	70	New York.
Mohawk	464	do [ditto]	5	62	Do.
Supply	547	Sailing storeship	4	45	Do.
Sabine	1,726	Sailing frigate	50	393	Off Fort Pickens.
St. Louis	700	Sailing sloop	20	133	Do.
Brooklyn	2,070	Screw sloop	25	259	Do.
Wyandotte	464	Screw steamer	5	60	Do.
Cumberland	1,726	Sailing sloop	24	270	On the way from Vera Cruz to Hampton Roads.
Pocahontas.	694	Screw steamer	5	68	Do.
Powhatan	2,415	Side-wheel steamer	11	226	On the way from Vera Cruz to New York.
Macedonian	1,341	Sailing sloop	22	280	Vera Cruz.

EAST INDIES.

Hartford	,990	Screw sloop	16	264	Hongkong, China.
Dacotah	998	do	6	106	Shanghai, China.
Saginaw	453	Side-wheel steamer	3	42	Canton, China.
John Adams	700	Sailing sloop	20	146	
Vandalia		do	20	131	Cape Town, South Africa.
Niagara	4,580	Screw frigate	12	372	Do.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Richmond	1,959	Screw sloop	16	259	Messina, Italy.
Susquehanna	2 450	Side-wheel steamer	15	230	Naples, Italy.
Iroquois	1,016	Screw sloop	6	118	Malta, Italy.

BRAZIL.

Congress	1,867	Sailing frigate	50	436	Montevideo.
Seminole	801	Screw sloop	5	102	Buenos Ayres.
Pulaski	395	Side-wheel steamer	1	35	Montevideo.

AFRICAN COAST.

Name.	Tonnage	Class	Guns	Crew	Location
Constellation	1,452	Sailing sloop	22	227	Near mouth of Congo River.
Portsmouth	989	do	22	161	Do.
Saratoga	982	do	18	144	Do.
San Jacinto	1,446	Screw steamer	15	182	Do.
Mohican	994	do	6	125	Do.
Sumpter	464	do	5	60	Do.
Mystic	464	do	5	61	Do.
Relief	468	Sailing storeship	2	36	Lat. 2° N, Long. 110 W.

PACIFIC.

Lancaster	2,360	Screw sloop	22	327	Panama.
Wyoming	997	do	6	137	Mare Island, Cal.
Narragansett	804	do	5	100	Callao, Peru.
Saranac	1,446	Side-wheel steamer	9	187	Valparaiso, Chile.
St. Mary's	958	Sailing sloop	22	174	Panama.
Levant	792	do	20	143	Lost.
Cyane	792	do	20	154	Lat. 22° N., Long. 104° W.

APPENDIX 2
FIRST BLOCKADE PROCLAMATION

Instructions of the Secretary of the Navy to Flag-Officer Stringham, [nor5_620]
NAVY DEPARTMENT, *May 1, 1861.*

[transmitting] Copies of the proclamation of the President issued on the 19th of April. [...] A subsequent proclamation extends the blockade to the ports of Virginia and North Carolina. ...
GIDEON WELLES.

By the President of the United States of America—proclamations.

Whereas an insurrection against the Government of the United States has broken out in the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, and the laws of the United States for the collection of the revenue can not be effectually executed therein, conformably to that provision of the Constitution which requires duties to be uniform throughout the United States; and

Whereas a combination of persons engaged in such insurrection has threatened to grant pretended letters of marque to authorize the bearers thereof to commit assaults on the lives, vessels, and property of good citizens of the country lawfully engaged in commerce on the high seas and in waters of the United States; and

Whereas an Executive proclamation has been already issued requiring the persons engaged in these disorderly proceedings to desist therefrom, calling out a militia force for the purpose of repressing the same, and convening Congress in extraordinary session to deliberate and determine thereon;

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, with a view to the same purposes before mentioned, and to the protection of the public peace and the lives and property of quiet and orderly citizens pursuing their lawful occupations until Congress shall have assembled and deliberated on the said unlawful proceedings, or until the same shall have ceased, have further deemed it advisable to set on foot a blockade of the ports within the States aforesaid, in pursuance of the laws of the United States and of the law of nations in such case provided. For this purpose a competent force will be posted so as to prevent entrance and exit of vessels from the ports aforesaid. If, therefore, with a view to violate such blockade a vessel shall approach or shall attempt to leave either of the said ports, she will be duly warned by the commander of one of the blockading vessels, who will endorse on her register the fact and date of such warning, and if the same vessel shall again attempt to enter or leave the blockaded port she will be captured and sent to the nearest convenient port for such proceedings against her and her cargo as prize as may be deemed advisable.

And I hereby proclaim and declare that if any person, under the pretended authority of the said States, or under any other pretense, shall molest a vessel of the United States, or the persons or cargo on board of her, such person shall be held amenable to the laws of the United States for the prevention and punishment of piracy.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington this 19th day of April, A. D. 1861, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-fifth.

[L. S.]

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

By the President:

WILLIAM H. SEWARD,
Secretary of State.

APPENDIX 3
SECOND BLOCKADE PROCLAMATION

Extending blockade to the ports in Virginia and North Carolina, April 27, 1861;
[Navy Official Records (nor4_340 and nor5_621)]

Whereas, for reasons assigned in my proclamation of the 19th instant, a blockade of the ports of the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas was ordered to be established; and, whereas, since that date public property of the United States has been seized, the collection of the revenue obstructed, and duly commissioned officers of the United States, while engaged in executing the orders of their superiors, have been arrested and held in custody as prisoners, or have been impeded in the discharge of their official duties without due legal process by persons claiming to act under authority of the States of Virginia and North Carolina, an efficient blockade of the ports of those States will therefore also be established.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington this 27th day of April, A. D. 1861, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-fifth.

[L. S.]

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

By the President:
WILLIAM H. SEWARD,
Secretary of State.

APPENDIX 4
BRITISH POLICY STATEMENT REGARDING SOUTHERN INDEPENDENCE

Navy O.R.-- Series II-- Volume 3
List of Papers pp. 202-255

[On Aug 14, 1861 a long letter (see nori3_238) was sent by Southern commissioners to the office of the British Foreign Minister, Earl Russell, in which was the admonition that cotton would only be shipped when Britain extends recognition and breaks the blockade. Here below is Russell's reply (nori3_247-248) with bold type added for emphasis.]

FOREIGN OFFICE, *August 24, 1861.*

The undersigned has had the honor to receive the letter of the 14th instant addressed to him by Messrs. Yancey, Rost, and Mann on behalf of the so-styled Confederate States of North America.

The British Government does not pretend in any way to pronounce a judgment upon the questions in debate between the United States and their adversaries in North America; the British Government can only regret that these differences have unfortunately been submitted to the arbitrament of arms. Her Majesty has considered this contest as constituting a civil war, and her Majesty has, by her royal proclamation, declared her intention to preserve a strict neutrality between the contending parties in that war.

Her Majesty will strictly perform the duties which belong to a neutral. **Her Majesty can not** undertake to determine by anticipation what may be the issue of the contest, nor can she **acknowledge the independence of the nine States** which are now combined against the President and Congress of the United States, **until the fortune of arms or the more peaceful mode of negotiation shall have more clearly determined the respective positions of the two belligerents.**

Her Majesty can, in the meantime, only express a hope that some adjustment satisfactory to both parties may be come to, without the calamities which must ensue in the event of an embittered and protracted conflict.

The undersigned has the honor to renew to Messrs. Yancey, Rost, and Mann the assurance of his high consideration.

APPENDIX 5

BRITISH INTERPRETATION OF BLOCKADE'S EFFECTIVENESS

[From] ELEMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW. BY HENRY WHEATON, LL.D.,
[shortened title] LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY. 1866.

[p674, Effective Blockades] The Declaration of Paris, of 1856, requires that a blockade, to be binding on neutrals, shall be " effective, — that is to say, maintained by a force sufficient really to prevent access to the coast of the enemy." This definition is unscientific, and, in its literal sense, requires an impossibility. Earl Russell, in a speech of 11th March, 1857, defines an effective blockade as " such that no vessel could with safety attempt to pass through." Earl Granville, in the debate of May 16, 1861, says, " Such a force as, I do not say to make it impossible, but at any rate to make it very difficult. for vessels to obtain ingress or egress ; " and Lord Brougham said, a blockade must be one which " precluded a reasonable chance of entrance." Earl Russell, in his instructions to Lord Lyons, of Feb. 15, 1862, respecting the American blockade, says, "Assuming . . . that a number of ships is stationed, and remains at, the entrance of a port, sufficient really to prevent access to it, or to create an evident danger of entering or leaving it, and that these ships do not voluntarily permit ingress or egress, the fact that various ships have successfully escaped through it, will not of itself prevent the blockade being an effective one by international law."

See also Earl Russell to Mr. Mason, Feb. 17, 1863, where his lordship explains the language of the Declaration of Paris as not intended to require that ingress and egress should be made impossible, but as aimed at paper blockades, or nominal and practically insufficient blockades, and requiring only that the blockade be practically and reasonably effective. The Confederate authorities protested against this interpretation, but it was adhered to by the British Government. (Parliamentary Papers, 1863.) M. Rouher, the French Minister of Commerce, communicated to the Chamber of Commerce in September, 1861, a note from the Department of Foreign Affairs [Affairs], relating to the American blockade, in which the definition is stated, " Forces sufficient to prevent the ports being approached without exposure to a certain danger." (Moai-teur Universel (sic), September, 1861.) Mr. Wheaton, in a note to Mr. Buchanan of July 1, 1846, during the Mexican war, uses the phrase, " Forces stationed so near the ports as to render it dangerous to approach or enter them." During the civil war, the United States Government recognized fully the obligation to make its blockade actual and effective; and, in its diplomatic correspondence and judicial decisions, the definitions of an effective blockade " were satisfactory to [p675] neutrals, and substantially to the effect that the force must be sufficient to make ingress or egress by unarmed vessels sensibly dangerous; and the actual effectiveness of the blockade, wherever a case arose of a vessel captured or warned off, was never disputed by the neutral powers." (Lord Lyons to Lord J. Russell, May 2, 1861. Same to same, May 4, 1861. Earl Russell's speech in the House of Lords, March 10, 1862. Sir R. Palmer's speech, March 7, 1862. Earl Russell to Lord Lyons, 15th February, 1862. Earl Russell to Mr. Mason, Feb. 10, 1863.)

Neutral Vessels of War. Neutral vessels of war have no privilege against blockade ; and the fact that they cannot be searched gives the blockading power the more right to require them to keep clear of the lines of blockade. (Mr. Wheaton to Mr. Buchanan, July 1, 1846. Ortolan, Dipl. de la Mer, tom. ii. p. 334. Hautefeuille, Droits des Nat. Neutr. tom. ii. p. 219.) During the Mexican blockade by France, special orders were given, prohibiting the entrance of neutral ships of war; but it was allowed by special orders in the civil war in the United States. (Lord Lyons to Admiral Milne, May 11, 1861.) And the United States permitted neutral vessels of war to carry through the blockades the official despatches [sic] not only of their own governments, but of other friendly governments. (Correspondence between Lord Lyons and Mr. Seward of Oct. 12 and 14, 1861 : Dipl. Corr. 168, 173.)

APPENDIX 6

INDEX OF NUMBERING SYSTEM FOR THE OFFICIAL RECORDS OF THE UNION AND CONFEDERATE ARMIES

RUNNING SERIAL # (BOOK#)	SERIES #s (I, II, III & IV)	VOLUME #	PART #	CAMPAIGNS and PRINCIPAL EVENTS (condensed titles)
1	I	I		Charleston
2	I	II		First Manassas
3	I	III		Wilson's Creek
4	I	IV.		Operations in South and West
5	I	V		West Virginia
6	I	VI		Fort Pulaski - New Orleans
7	I	VII		Ft. Henry - Ft. Donelson
8	I	VIII		Pea Ridge
9	I	IX		Roanoke
10	I	X	I	Shiloh
11	I		II	Shiloh
12	I	XI	I	Peninsular Campaign
13	I		II	Peninsular Campaign
14	I		III	Peninsular Campaign
15	I	XII	I	Second Manassas
16	I		II	Second Manassas
17	I		II-sup	Second Manassas
18	I		III	Second Manassas
19	I	XIII		Missouri-Arkansas Campaign
20	I	XIV		Secessionville
21	I	XV		Baton Rouge - Natchez
22	I	XVI	I	Morgan's First Kentucky Raid, Perryville Campaign
23	I		II	Morgan's First Kentucky Raid, Perryville Campaign
24	I	XVII	I	Corinth
25	I		II	Corinth
26	I	XVIII		Suffolk

27	I	XIX	I	Antietam
28	I		II	Antietam
29	I	XX	I	Murfreesboro
30	I		II	Murfreesboro
31	I	XXI		Fredericksburg
32	I	XXII	I	Little Rock
33	I		II	Little Rock
34	I	XXIII	I	Tullahoma Campaign
35	I		II	Tullahoma Campaign
36	I	XXIV.	I	Vicksburg
37	I		II	Vicksburg
38	I		III	Vicksburg
39	I	XXV	I	Chancellorsville
40	I		II	Chancellorsville
41	I	XXVI	I	Port Hudson
42	I		II	Port Hudson
43	I	XXVII	I	Gettysburg Campaign
44	I		II	Gettysburg Campaign
45	I		III	Gettysburg Campaign
46	I	XXVIII	I	Ft. Sumter - Ft. Wagner
47	I		II	Ft. Sumter - Ft. Wagner
48	I	XXIX	I	Bristoe, Mine Run
49			II	Bristoe, Mine Run
50	I	XXX	I	Chickamauga
51	I		II	Chickamauga
52	I		III	Chickamauga
53	I		IV	Chickamauga
54	I	XXXI	I	Knoxville, Lookout Mountain
55	I		II	Knoxville, Lookout Mountain
56	I		III	Knoxville, Lookout Mountain
57	I	XXXII	I	Forrest's Expedition
58	I		II	Forrest's Expedition
59	I		III	Forrest's Expedition

60	I	XXXIII		New Berne
61	I	XXXIV	I	Red River Campaign
62	I		II	Red River Campaign
63	I		III	Red River Campaign
64	I		IV	Red River Campaign
65	I	XXXV	I	Olustee
66	I		II	Olustee
67	I	XXXVI	I	Wilderness-Cold Harbor
68	I		II	Wilderness-Cold Harbor
69	I		III	Wilderness-Cold Harbor
70	I	XXXVII	I	Monocacy
71	I		II	Monocacy
72	I	XXXVIII	I	The Atlanta Campaign
73	I		II	The Atlanta Campaign
74	I		III	The Atlanta Campaign
75	I		IV	The Atlanta Campaign
76	I		V	The Atlanta Campaign
77	I	XXXIX	I	Allatoona
78	I		II	Allatoona
79	I		III	Allatoona
80	I	XL	I	Richmond, Petersburg
81	I		II	Richmond, Petersburg
82	I		III	Richmond, Petersburg
83	I	XLI	I	Price's Missouri Expedition
84	I		II	Price's Missouri Expedition
85	I		III	Price's Missouri Expedition
86	I		IV	Price's Missouri Expedition
87	I	XLII	I	Richmond-Fort Fisher
88	I		II	Richmond-Fort Fisher
89	I		III	Richmond-Fort Fisher
90	I	XLIII	I	Shenandoah Valley Campaign
91	I		II	Shenandoah Valley Campaign
92	I	XLIV		Savannah

93	I	XLV	I	Franklin - Nashville
94	I		II	Franklin - Nashville
95	I	XLVI	I	Appomattox Campaign
96	I		II	Appomattox Campaign
97	I		III	Appomattox Campaign
98	I	XLVII	I	Columbia
99	I		II	Columbia
100	I		III	Columbia
101	I	XLVIII	I	Powder River Expedition
102	I		II	Powder River Expedition
103	I	XLIX	I	Mobile Bay Campaign
104	I		II	Mobile Bay Campaign
105	I		I	Pacific
106	I	L	II	Pacific
107	I	LI	I	Supplements
108	I		II	Supplements
109	I	LII	I	Supplements
110	I		II	Supplements
111	I	LIII		Supplements
112				UNPUBLISHED
113				UNPUBLISHED
114	II	I		Prisoners of War
115	II	II		Prisoners of War
116	II	III		Prisoners of War
117	II	IV		Prisoners of War
118	II	V		Prisoners of War
119	II	VI		Prisoners of War
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121	II	VIII		Prisoners of War
122	III	I		Union Letters, Orders, Reports
123	III	II		Union Letters, Orders, Reports
124	III	III		Union Letters, Orders, Reports
125	III	IV		Union Letters, Orders, Reports

126	III	V	Union Letters, Orders, Reports
127	IV	I	Confederate Correspondence, Dec 20, 1860-Jun 30, 1862.
128	IV	II	Confederate Correspondence, Jul 1, 1862-Dec 31, 1863.
129	IV	III	Confederate Correspondence, Jan 1, 1864 to End.
130	General Index		Preface, Explanations, Synopsis of Contents (each book by running serial number), Special Index for military commands and organizations, Tables of volumes pertaining to military operations, by month, Dec. 1860 to end of war.

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