
Service Afield and Afloat: A Reminiscence of the Civil War

*Edited by Guy R. Everson**

Hiram H. Martin thought of himself as just an ordinary fellow. Looking back on his life as he began penning the reminiscences he was to leave behind for his daughters, he concluded that he had not done anything that called "for any especial commendation."¹ Yet the story of his life—particularly that part of it spent in the service of his country—is well worth considering, if for no other reason than because it is a story that has been repeated many times over by the young men and women who have left their civilian pursuits in times of national emergency and answered the call to arms.

Born of "poor, but honest parentage," on June 9, 1843, about four miles from Port Huron, Michigan, Martin remembered his early years as "the happy days of innocent childhood when it took but little to satisfy the mind . . ." In 1851, however, his father died unexpectedly, and the innocent days of childhood came to an end. In later years Martin attributed his failure to accomplish some great thing to "my father dying when I was so young, [a circumstance which] prevented in part, my not having an opportunity to obtain But a meager education, except what I strove and worked for my self."

* Guy R. Everson is a certified public accountant in Honea Path, South Carolina, and a graduate student in history at Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina.

¹ On June 9, 1896, Hiram H. Martin sat down and began writing an account of his life. A man with a keen sense of history, he had been frustrated in his attempts to learn about his parents and grandparents by the paucity of information that was available to him, and he was determined that his descendants—if they were so inclined—would not have the same difficulty. ". . . if my descendants," he wrote, "take any thing like the interest in [tracing] their ancestors as I have done to trace mine, they will I know, highly appreciate what I shall detail here." He then proceeded to set forth—in 114 pages of handwritten reminiscences—the major events in his life as best he could recall them. The original of this handwritten memoir is now in the possession of Martin's great-granddaughter, Mrs. Phyllis Dalton of Greenwood, South Carolina, and is reproduced here with her kind permission.

In October of 1860 Martin's family moved to La Porte, Indiana, where they found "great excitement every where over the [presidential] election." Caring little about politics up to that time, Martin soon came to believe that "the principals of Unionism and patriotism was best represented by Abraham Lincoln, and the Republican party." Lincoln, of course, was elected, but it was the South's talk of seceding that made Hiram Martin "an ardent Union boy." Not old enough to enlist when the first call for 75,000 volunteers went out at the fall of Fort Sumter, Martin had to bide his time. At the end of July, 1861, however, "the shock to the loyal North over the disastrous battle of Bull Run increased the determination to bring the seceded States back into the Union. When the call for 300,000 more troops was made by President Lincoln," he recalled, "I could stand it no longer, although there was no one around there that I was acquainted with that was going at that time, I went up to La Porte Aug 4, 1861, and enlisted in Co. G. 29th Indiana Infantry, and was sworn in . . ."²

SERVICE AFIELD³

". . . [I] was sworn in," Martin recalled, "by Col. Jno. F. Miller, who was quite a young looking man and who afterwards rose to the rank of Maj. Genl. and in 1880 became a U.S. Senator from the state of California."⁴

² According to the Indiana Constitution of 1851 eighteen was the minimum legal age required for service in the militia. When President Abraham Lincoln issued the first call for volunteers in April, 1861, Martin was approximately two months short of his eighteenth birthday. By July, of course, he had passed this milestone. Charles Kettleborough, *Constitution Making in Indiana: A Source Book of Constitutional Documents with Historical Introduction and Critical Notes*; Vol. I, 1780-1851 (*Indiana Historical Collections*, Vol. I; Indianapolis, 1916), 358. Officially, Martin was mustered in with the rest of the 29th Indiana Volunteer Infantry Regiment on August 27, 1861. [William H. H. Terrell], *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana* (8 vols., Indianapolis, 1866-1869), IV, 670.

³ The following excerpts from Hiram M. Martin's reminiscences were transcribed from photocopies of the original handwritten memoir. Martin himself apparently edited his account at some point, scratching out certain words and phrases and adding others. Every attempt has been made to select Martin's preferred version of his reminiscence. Material written above the line or in margins has been inserted in what appears to be the proper place in the text. Abbreviations have been brought down to the line, and those written as 2", 4", 1", for example, have been transcribed as 2nd, 4th, 1st, etc. Martin sometimes used dashes, and occasionally what appear to be commas, to end sentences. All such closing marks have been transcribed as periods. Where there is no end punctuation at all, double spaces have been used to designate sentence breaks. In two instances Martin inserted unnecessary question marks in the text, perhaps to remind himself to check factual information that he had included. Those marks have been deleted. Although every attempt was made to determine Martin's intent regarding paragraphing and capitalization—particularly in the case of words beginning with *c*, *s*, and *a*—arbitrary decisions were frequently necessary. People and places have been identified either in footnotes or in brackets in the text. Missing letters have also been added in brackets when it was believed they were necessary for clarification.

⁴ John Franklin Miller (1831-1886) was a native of South Bend, Indiana. He practiced law for several years in Napa, California, during the 1850s but returned

"I remember getting my hair cut close to my head before coming home. I was given a furlough for one week at the end of which time I returned and entered into Camp life. Our Rendezvous was about two miles from LaPorte near the banks of Clear Lake, and our camp was named, Camp Jackson.

"We remained there about a month recruiting our regiment. The impressions of my first soldier life remains green in my memory. While it was far removed from the comforts of home, as we had long board tables and bunks made from boards and which were covered over. For our menu we had fresh meet, potatoes and vegetables Yet it was paradise to what we had, when we got out into the field. I had a taste of the hospital before I left that camp, as I caught a severe cold and was quite sick. The day before we were to leave for Indianapolis the citizens gave us a great dinner out in the grove, and I was so anxious to be there that I left the Hospital and went there against the Doctors advise. The next day we started for Indianapolis and I was so eager to go although feeling very bad, [that I] started with the rest, with my blanket around me Angie and Carrie my sisters were at the Depot to see me off. Henry [my brother] had gone to Mich, near St. Joe the fall before, and he had just enlisted in the 12th. Mich. Infy. Co. B. and came to see me just before I left.⁵ I being sick was given a seat in a good car while the rank and file had to ride in box cars. We went in Camp at Camp Morton near Indianapolis where we remained until sometime in Oct.⁶ While lying there my cold had de[ve]loped into quite a Cough

to South Bend in 1855. When the Civil War broke out, he was commissioned colonel of the 29th Indiana Volunteer Infantry, which, as a part of General Don Carlos Buell's Army of the Ohio, did good service on the second day at Shiloh. Miller subsequently participated in the Battle of Murfreesboro, the Tullahoma Campaign, and the decisive Battle of Nashville, where he was brevetted major general for his services in turning back the Confederate attack. Returning to California after the war, he was elected to the United States Senate in 1880. He died in 1886. Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Blue: Lives of the Union Commanders* (Baton Rouge, 1964), 324-25.

⁵ Hiram Martin was the fourth of six children born to Abram and Lavinia Wilson Martin. Their first child, Bryant, was born March 10, 1837, but died in infancy. Bryant was followed by Henry (December 1, 1838), Adaline (February 16, 1841), Hiram (June 9, 1843), Angeline (July 14, 1845), and Caroline (September 20, 1847). Abram, who had migrated to Port Huron, Michigan, from Buffalo, New York, in 1835, died unexpectedly in the fall of 1851, leaving Lavinia to raise five young children on her own. In 1853 she married James Ard, a Canadian who, in the words of Hiram, "disliked work, was a poor manager . . . who never lifted his hands to lighten the burdens that were thrown upon her shoulders." James and Lavinia Ard had at least one child, James, who was born about 1854. Martin makes a later reference in his reminiscences to "three boys, half brothers," so there may have been more. If so, they are never identified.

⁶ Camp Morton, located on the old state fairgrounds, had become the rendezvous point for Indiana troops being mustered into federal service. The camp "was well located, on high ground, with good drainage, a light and porous soil, an abundance of excellent water, well shaded, with very comfortable buildings for quarters." These same virtues made it an ideal location for a prisoner-of-war camp also, and it was so utilized in the spring of 1862 when several thousand of the Confederate soldiers captured at Fort Donelson were quartered there. Terrell, *Report of the Adjutant General*, I, 456.

and I was offered my discharge, but I would not accept it, as I said that I was going down to the front, as that was what I enlisted for. It was while there that 1st Lt. Frank Stebbins informed me that I was appointed a Corporal.⁷ Our Capt. was named Fosdick and was a Dentist by profession.⁸ Frank Stebbins 1st Lt and G W Maloone 2d Lt. had both been in the three months service. We also had three or four more who were Non Commissioned Officers that had been in the three months service.⁹

"The city of Indianapolis being the Center for the western troops especially the middle states, there was nothing but preparations for war going on constantly, and it was more like a great military camp, as Regiment after Regiment were constantly passing through to the front. Finally our orders came, then it began to seem a little more serious as up to this time it had been like a holiday, with the exception of our drilling and a little Regimental Guard duty our labors were light. Our destination was Louisville first. From Indianapolis we went to New Albany thence by boat to Louisville. As we passed through Louisville in our new uniforms and bright guns with old glory waving at our front the animosity of the secession women was seen by their slurring remarks, about our being Lincolns hirelings. It so angered Lt Stebbins that the answer he gave one of them sent her flying into the house. The men, though rebels they were dare not say anything to us. We took the cars for Bardstown Ky, or Camp Nevin rather on the L[ouisville] & N[ashville] RR where we encamped for two or three

⁷ First Lieutenant Frank Stebbins of La Porte, Indiana, was mustered in on August 27, 1861. He was commissioned first lieutenant of Company G, 29th Indiana Volunteer Infantry, on September 10, 1861, and upon the resignation of John S. Fosdick on May 16, 1862, he was made captain of his company. He was killed in action at the Battle of Stone's River (Murfreesboro) on December 31, 1862. *Ibid.*, II, 285. According to the adjutant general's report, Martin was mustered into service as a corporal on August 27, 1861, when the 29th Indiana was officially organized. *Ibid.*, IV, 670.

⁸ Captain John S. Fosdick of La Porte, Indiana, was mustered in on August 27, 1861, and commissioned captain of Company G, 29th Indiana Volunteer Infantry, on September 10, 1861. He resigned for unspecified reasons on May 16, 1862, and was succeeded by Frank Stebbins. *Ibid.*, II, 285.

⁹ Second Lieutenant George W. Maloon was mustered in on August 27, 1861. He, too, was a local boy from La Porte, Indiana. Commissioned second lieutenant of Company G, 29th Indiana Volunteer Infantry, on September 10, 1861, he was promoted to first lieutenant on May 16, 1862, when Frank Stebbins moved up to captain, and himself became captain of the company when Stebbins was killed six months later at Stone's River. Maloon continued to lead his company until honorably discharged from service on November 16, 1864. *Ibid.*, II, 285-86. From the approximately twelve thousand Hoosiers who tendered their services after Lincoln's call for troops following Fort Sumter, Indiana initially organized six regiments of three-month volunteers who were mustered into the service of the United States. A few months later additional regiments were organized and accepted for service—some for a period of twelve months, others for three years. When the first six regiments' brief term of enlistment expired, the troops were asked to reenlist for three years, and most of them did so. *Ibid.*, I, 4-17; Emma Lou Thornbrough, *Indiana in the Civil War Era, 1850-1880* (Indianapolis, 1965), 125-26.



HIRAM H. MARTIN, MAY, 1919,
THREE MONTHS BEFORE HIS DEATH

Courtesy Phyllis Dalton.

weeks,¹⁰ and I well remember as we were on open cars, and at night, how cautiously the train moved at one or two places and what great anxiety existed among the boys as we expected a night attack, as the trains along there had been fired into the day before.

"We got through without a skirmish. The nights had begun to get quite cool and there was a good frost that night. The most serious thing we did up to that time, and it is something that I have forgotten to mention was our drilling. It was drill drill nearly all the time. It was laughable to see how awkward some of the new recruits were. It seemed almost impossible for some of them to learn to drill or become used to the manual of arms. While I knew nothing about it before, it did not come very hard for me, and I would not take a back seat for any one in our company, in drilling. It was my first introduction to southern soil. The first I had seen of slave labor. I soon noticed the difference between the farms and buildings of the north and those of the south. The out buildings, fences, and general appearance of their plantations were slovenly, and looked uncared for. Labor that was controlled by the lash was not like the free labor of the north, it had its blighting effect upon every thing it touched. Although of course there were many pretty places there.

"The main portion of Genl Buels army, to which we belonged, lay at Mumfordsville on Green River Confronting the Rebel Genl. [Simon Bolivar] Buckners Army at Bowling Green. I was sick at Bardstown, or Camp Nevin but started with the Regt for Mumfordsville, where we arrived about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and remember that there were several Native unionists there who gave cheer after cheer as we marched by. We marched to our camping ground, but while waiting for the baggage wagons with our tents the long roll beat to arms, and as the boys grabbed their guns and fell in, they began to realize that we were near the scene of conflict, and a trembling was noticeable in some. But it must be remembered that many of them were like my self only boys of 18 years of age, and many of them knew nothing of the use of arms. The cause of the alarm was an attack on the picket line, consisting of a German Regt. posted on the southern side of the River. Our camp was on the north side. The enemy consisted of about 5,000 infantry, Cavalry, & artillery. Our Regt with many others was ordered across the River, and with the aid of several Batteries of heavy Artillery, which were planted on the north bank, the 'rebs' were put to flight, leaving twice as many dead on the field as were

¹⁰ The 29th Indiana arrived at Camp Nevin on October 9, 1861, and remained there until sometime in December when it left to join General Don Carlos Buell's army at Mumfordsville. Frederick H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion* (3 vols., New York, 1959), III, 1130.

killed of our troops. This was our first taste of real war, and I guess most of our boys remembered it as long as they lived.¹¹

"The army was concentrating there [Munfordville], for a forward movement upon Bowling Green.

"A Genl. Wood Commanded our Brigade. He was small, and one of the most profane men I ever knew.¹² Genl. Alex D. McCook comanded the Division.¹³ The Brigade was composed of our Regt. (the 29th Ind.,) the 30th Ind.; the 77th Penna & the 34th Ohio¹⁴ Our disagreeable duty there, was picket duty. I remember one night when we were stationed on the banks of Green River, a storm came up. We were in the woods, and it was so dark that it was impossible to see your hand before you, and it was only by the flashes of the lighting that we could see any thing. I, as Corporal had charge of that Post, and was the only one who had a watch. It got a little lighter towards morning and about 1 oclock I loaned my watch, to a soldier, by the name of Hank Dunn and posted him.¹⁵ Then I laid down, and told him to wake me in two hours as he had just been asleep for some time. I fell asleep and when I was awakened by Dunn I thought the time was awful short, but he lit a

¹¹ The fighting that Martin describes here took place on December 17, 1861, and was officially designated the "Action at Rowlett's Station (Woodsonville), Green River, Ky." The "German Regt" on picket duty south of the Green River was Colonel August Willich's 32nd Indiana Volunteers (German). They were attacked by a force of about 1,400 men—infantry, cavalry, and artillery—under Confederate Brigadier General Thomas C. Hindman, who had moved toward Woodsonville for the purpose of breaking up the railroad over which General Buell's army would have to advance if it decided to move south. After a brief but fierce encounter the Confederates withdrew, having suffered 14 casualties—4 killed and 10 wounded. Losses among the 400 or so men of the 32nd Indiana actually engaged in the fighting were 11 killed, 22 wounded, and 5 missing. While several regiments of Union soldiers had crossed the river to reinforce Willich's pickets, none of them reached the scene of the fighting until after the enemy had been put to flight. As a "first taste of real war," this was an exciting event for the men on both sides; all too soon, however, "actions" such as this one at Rowlett's Station would barely rate a mention in their letters home. U. S., War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (128 vols., Washington, D. C., 1880–1901), ser. 1, vol. VII, pp. 14–21. This work is hereafter cited as *Official Records*.

¹² Brigadier General Thomas John Wood (1823–1906) commanded a brigade consisting of the 34th Illinois, the 29th and 30th Indiana, and the 77th Pennsylvania. Wood is perhaps best remembered as the general who, by a strict adherence to his orders, knowingly left a gap in the Union line at Chickamauga, allowing General James Longstreet's Confederates to pour through and turn the Union right flank. *Ibid.*, 460; Peter Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound: The Battle of Chickamauga* (Urbana, 1992), 363.

¹³ Brigadier General Alexander McDowell McCook (1831–1903) commanded one of the two large five-brigade divisions in Buell's army. The other large division was commanded by Brigadier General George Henry Thomas, the "Rock of Chickamauga." *Official Records*, ser. 1, vol. VII, p. 467.

¹⁴ Martin is mistaken here. His regiment was brigaded with the 34th Illinois, not the 34th Ohio.

¹⁵ Private Henry Dunn of La Porte, Indiana, was mustered in on August 27, 1861, and discharged for disability on May 20, 1862. The records do not indicate the nature of his disability. Terrell, *Report of the Adjutant General*, IV, 671.

match and showed me by the watch that the two hours were up. I said nothing, but went on duty & towards morning I found that there was something the matter with the watch. When I saw the other pickets I found that my watch was over an hour fast. This Dunn who was an arrant Coward, and a great wag, had turned my watch around in order to shorten his duty. Thereafter he went by the name of *Timer*

"I remember another time while on picket we found an old Jack ass and we had lots of fun riding up and down the road on him. Several Genls, came along at that time and found the four or five non Commissioned Officers at our Post, and none of us were on guard, but had our belts off, and guns laying some distance from us. They gave us a lecture on the duties of soldiers, while on picket, but blamed our officers more than they did us. Sweet potatoes suffered at that picket post as there was a patch of them very near us.

"Every one dreaded picket on the other side of the river, for when we left camp in the morning it was only a guess as to whether we would return alive or not; besides the weather was beginning to get cold, and rainy. It was a mixture of wind snow & frost, and the soft side of a rail was our only bed, if we wanted to sleep, and keep out of the mud.

"This picket duty and drilling constantly were our tasks for some weeks. During most all of this time I had quite a severe cough; so much so, that when drilling, I would get to coughing so when we were double quicking, that I would fall from exhaustion out of the ranks. I had to make a good many calls upon the Dr. I was troubled with Diarrhoea considerably, and had an attack of Intermittent fever. But the climax came about Jan. 1st [1862] when one day I was on duty as Corporal of the Guard. The duty of the Corporal was to place the guard on picket around the camp, and see that they attended to their duties and if any thing should happen, or one of the guards wanted to be relieved, or any one wanted to get in or out, the guard would sing out, '*Corporal of the guard, beat no. so & so,*' and this call would be passed from one guard to the other until the Corporal put in an appearance.

"Along in the afternoon of this day, I got so sick that I could not attend to duty, and was relieved, and went to my tent, which was a large Sibley tent, where the non Commissioned officers slept¹⁶ I commenced vomiting in the night, and by morning I was unconscious, and was carried on a stretcher to the Regimental Hospital which was a large square tent. For three days I knew noth-

¹⁶ The Sibley tent, named for its inventor, Major (later Confederate Brigadier General) Henry Hopkins, was conical in shape and easily erected on a tripod holding a single pole. It could comfortably house twelve soldiers along with their equipment. Mark Mayo Boatner III, *The Civil War Dictionary* (New York, 1988), 760.

ing, and remembered nothing. The first day that I remembered any thing was, when they got me up to fix my bunk, and the care and nursing being none too gentle, I thought I should surely die before they got me in bed again. It seemed that my head would split open, and I coughed continually, and raised considerable phlegm

"I remained there I think a week or so, and was so sick that they transferred me to the general Hospital at Mumfordsville My disease was diagnosed as Pneumonia. This Hospital was formerly used as a Tobacco warehouse, and there were perhaps 100 cots on the floor I was on. Dead Comrades were being constantly removed and others patients talking [taking] their places. I continued to be very ill and weak for some time When the Army was moved forward to the front, all of the sick at Mumfordsville were sent back to Louisville Ky, and I with the rest. I went and was put in Genl. Hospital No 4 where I remained until about May 1st. I still remained very ill; had a terrible Cough, my right chest was sunk in and I had the appearance of a man with the Consumption. The care received there was fair, but it was not very cheering to wake up in the morning and find your nearest bunk mate had died during the night and had been carried out but such was the case many times.

"The dead were being carried out and the dying brought in.¹⁷ I have now in my Secretary a testament given by a lady who was distributing gifts from the North. We had in our ward two Sisters of Chairity who were very faithful but I never got so tired in my life of toast and tea as I did there. When the Doctors saw that I was getting no better they gave me a furlough to go home, but I come near dying getting there. I Remember that I was cared for in Indianapolis at a Hotel and from there I went to LaPorte Indiana. My old friend Ed Westcott got a carriage and took me down to Mrs. Merrills. God bless her old heart. She was a mother to me then & a noble woman. I know she is reaping her rich reward in heaven."¹⁸

In poor health from the very beginning of his enlistment, Martin was declared unfit for further duty with the army as a result of

¹⁷ Martin is not exaggerating here. The official records show that, during the period from November, 1861, to March, 1862—a period in which no major engagements were fought—the 29th Indiana Volunteers had thirty-four men die of sickness and disease. Most of them died either at Camp Nevin or at General Hospital No. 4 in Louisville. Martin was fortunate to have survived that first winter. Many of his comrades did not. Terrell, *Report of the Adjutant General*, VIII, 487-91.

¹⁸ Martin had become acquainted with the Westcott and Merrill families shortly after his family moved to La Porte in the fall of 1860. Mrs. Merrill, a widow with three children, owned a farm that she rented out to a young man named Charles Westcott. Martin hired out to work for Charles Westcott for ten dollars a month. At the Merrills' he met Charles's brother, Ed, a schoolteacher who worked on the farm between teaching jobs. Martin's mother had died in 1861 just before Martin went off to war; thus, when he returned to La Porte in 1862 in need of looking after, it was his "old friend" Ed Westcott who picked him up and carried him to Mrs. Merrill who nursed him back to health.

his severe bout of pneumonia. On June 24, 1862, he received a medical discharge. Returning to La Porte, he began the long, slow road to recovery. His days of fighting for the Union seemed to be over almost before they got started. As his health gradually improved, he worked at various jobs in northern Illinois and, with a friend, took a farm in the La Porte area "to work on shares." By the following spring, however, he had had enough of farming—"have never done any since," he told his daughters—and when a friend of his suggested that they go to Chicago and enlist in the Navy, he jumped at the opportunity.

SERVICE AFLOAT

"... in April [1863] went to Chicago, and in company with a friend, Robt. Wheeler, enlisted as first class fireman at a salary of \$30.00 per month, in the Mississippi Squadron¹⁹ I knew nothing about the business, but my friend did and he persuaded [me] to do so. We went to Cairo Ills and was put aboard the Receiving ship Clara Dolson,²⁰ and from there we were put aboard the Gun Boat Hastings just fitted up. It was what was called a mosquito boat, only protected against bullets.²¹ The Chief Engineer was Mr Watson an old River Engineer, and a very fine man. He died in the summer while near Vicksburg. I was with him the night before he died.

"The boat was hardly in condition for service and the crew consisted mostly of green men unaccustomed to service of that kind. We were ordered up the Tenn. River, and started immediately for Paducah Ky. where we left the Ohio River, and steamed up the Tenn. On the second night out while opposite Green Bottom Bar, Tenn. and about 1 o'clock, I had just gone off duty and turned in

¹⁹ Organized originally as the Western Flotilla, the Mississippi River force of wooden and iron-clad gunboats was assigned the important task of assisting the Union Army in opening up the Mississippi River and its navigable tributaries to northern military and civilian commerce—and of denying the same to the South. To avoid problems of command between naval and army officers, the Western Flotilla was officially assigned to the control of the Navy Department on October 1, 1862, and was thereafter known as the Mississippi Squadron. Francis Trevelyan Miller, ed., *The Photographic History of the Civil War* (1911–1912; 10 vols. in 5, New York, 1957), VI, 214.

²⁰ The *Clara Dolson* was a 268-foot side-wheel steamer that had been confiscated on the White River in Arkansas in June, 1862. Its armament consisted of one 32-pounder. After participating in the expedition to recapture Henderson, Kentucky, in July, 1862, the *Clara Dolson* served as a receiving ship at Cairo, Illinois, until a court ordered it returned to her owners in May, 1864. *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships* (8 vols., Washington, D. C., 1959–1981), II, 122.

²¹ The *Hastings* was a small wooden gunboat that had originally operated as a river transport out of Cincinnati, Ohio. Only 173 feet long and 34 feet at the beam, it was armed with eight guns—two 30-pounders, two 32-pounders, and four 24-pounders. The *Hastings* was fitted out at Cairo, Illinois, and was ready for service in April, 1863. Its first commanding officer was Acting Master W. N. Griswold, and her first assignment was patrolling the Tennessee River. *Ibid.*, III, 269.

my hammock which was swinging over a 24-pound Dahlgren gun, when boom boom came shots from the shore.²² The long roll beat to quarters and there was some falling and tumbling out of hammocks. I had no more than gotten mine down, when that gun was needed. Business Commenced in earnest. A Battery of Rebel Genl [Nathan Bedford] For[r]est on shore, was peppering it into us hot and heavy. Our boat commenced turning around so that the guns, first on one side and then the other could be used. Several shots had been put through our boat.

"I was making my way forward where there were two 32 pound parrot rifle guns.²³ The one on the port side was being used at the time and just as I got near the forward end of the bulk head, a shell filled with iron balls came through on the port side, struck the gun on the starboard side, and exploded. Pieces of shell took an arm apiece off three of the young men who shipped when I did at Chicago. Before I had passed the bulk head one of the balls that had about spent itself glanced off the Casement and struck me, on the shoulder without breaking the skin. Two steps further at the time of the explosion, and I would not be here writing this account of our engagement, as I would have been torn to pieces. The only way we could see to tell where the rebs were, was by the flash of their guns, as it [was] very dark. but we were a good target for them as they Could see the lights from our furnaces and on the boat.

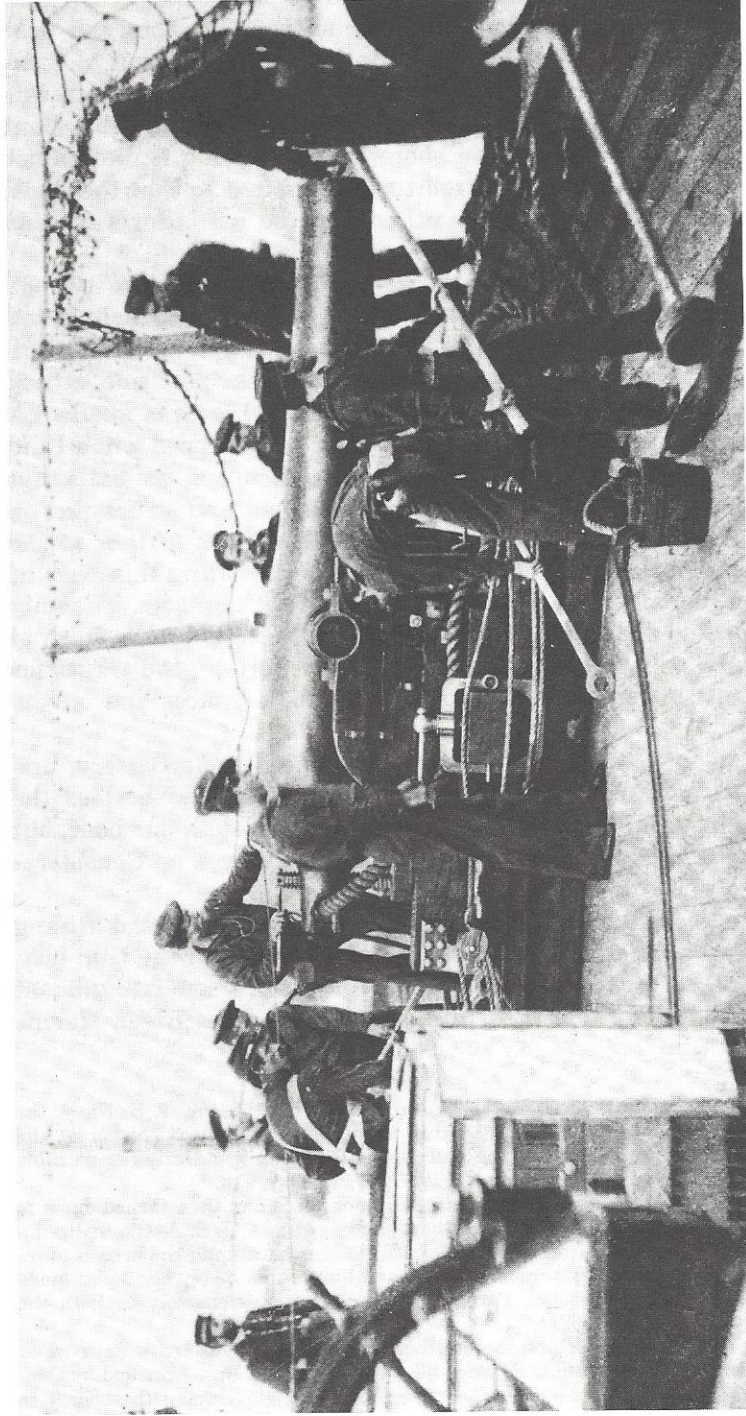
"In about 3/4 of an hour we had silenced their Battery, and then we continued on up the river. Our casualties besides the three young men were several Cannon shot through our boat, but all above water line. The berth deck was splintered up Considerable.²⁴

"The second morning after this incident, we heard firing ahead, and we crowded on all steam, when we found the Gun boat Tyler, one of the wooden boats that did such good *execution* at Pittsburg Landing, engaged in defending the Miss River Marine

²² Invented by John A. Dahlgren, an ordnance officer in the U. S. Navy, the Dahlgren gun was used primarily by that branch of the service. Thicker at the breech and tapering rapidly near the muzzle, the Dahlgren was easily recognizable by its bottle-shaped profile. Boatner, *Civil War Dictionary*, 218.

²³ Unlike Dahlgren, whose gun was cast in one piece and then turned down to the desired shape, R. B. Parrott, an ordnance officer in the U. S. Army, utilized a separate, heavy, wrought-iron band that was heat shrunk around the breech to reinforce it against the heavy pressures generated there. This heavy band also made the Parrott easily recognizable. Parrott guns were used extensively by both the army and the navy. *Ibid.*, 621.

²⁴ The crew's baptism of fire, as described in detail here by Martin, occurred on April 24, 1863, as the *Hastings* steamed near Green Bottom Bar. Attacked by Confederate guerrillas, the gunboat turned to and gave battle, forcing the enemy to withdraw. The *Hastings* was shot through the hull seven times in the action and, as Martin correctly recalled, suffered three casualties. *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, III, 269.



GUN CREW OF DAHLGREN GUN AT DRILL, 1864

Courtesy National Archives, Washington, D. C.

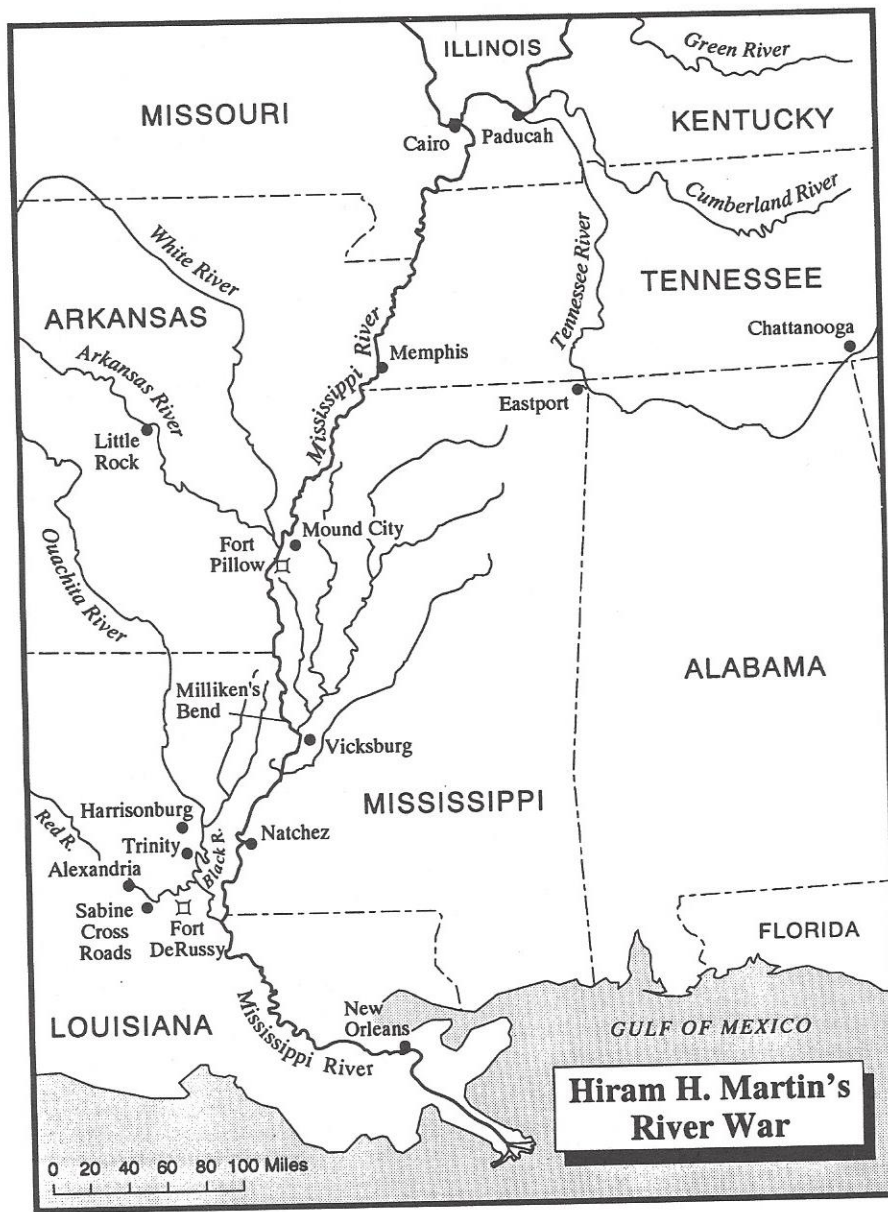
Brigade, which consisted of five steamers, that carried Cavalry and light howitzers for the purposes of fighting Gurrillas.

"It proved to be the same rebel Battery that engaged us, and if it had not been for the Tyler, and our boat, it would have gone hard with the Brigade.²⁵ Several of the rebels were Killed in this engagement, and the Cavalry was put ashore and pursued the rebels quite a distance We learned from a prisoner captured there that we killed six, and wounded about eighteen of the rebels the night they engaged us alone.

"We patrolled the Tenn. River from Eastport to the mouth for a month or so then went down the Miss. River, after getting repaired at Cairo. Our beat [boat] patrolled along by Ft Pillow, to Memhis and below. Commodore Phelps, afterwards a Commissioner of the Dist. of Columbia was on our boat one day and charged one of the guns with grape and canister and leveled it at a flock of geese on the shore, and at one discharge, brought down nine geese.²⁶ Wild geese were in great abundance along in that vicinity The one we got for our, (the firemens) mess was a fine one and I thought at the time that it was the most toothsome morsal I had ever eaten. One reason, no doubt was, that we had been living for a long time on 'salt horse,' [salted beef] as it was called in the navy Our rations in the navy were better than in the army as a general thing. One thing it was better cooked and the meals

²⁵ Converted to a river gunboat in June, 1861, the 180-foot side-wheel steamer *Tyler* participated in most of the major river campaigns of the war, including Belmont, Forts Henry and Donelson, Shiloh (Pittsburg Landing), Vicksburg, and the invasion of Arkansas. In between, the boat performed routine patrol and escort duty on the Tennessee, Cumberland, and Mississippi rivers during which it was frequently called upon to engage the enemy with its one 32-pounder and its six 8-inch guns. Martin describes one of those engagements here. *Ibid.*, VII, 376-77. The Mississippi River Marine Brigade was really a misnomer. The brigade was actually composed of troops commanded by an army lieutenant colonel, Alfred D. Ellet. Ellet's "marines" were organized in the fall of 1862 after the navy, citing lack of manpower, turned down Admiral David Porter's request for an authentic marine brigade to work with the Mississippi Squadron in keeping the rivers clear of guerrillas. The Mississippi River Marine Brigade resembled a modern "task force" and included elements of infantry, artillery, and cavalry—all transported aboard a small fleet of packet boats. The brigade performed excellent service until 1864 when it was disbanded—some say because of Ellet's refusal to transfer the ships and men under his command to the navy and to recognize the authority of the admiral in command of the Mississippi Squadron. Robert Debs Heinl, Jr., *Soldiers of the Sea: The United States Marine Corps, 1775-1962* (Annapolis, 1962), 77-78.

²⁶ Lieutenant Commander Seth Ledyard Phelps entered the U. S. Navy as a midshipman in 1841 at the age of seventeen. A career naval officer, Phelps was given command of the gunboat *Conestoga* when war broke out between the North and the South. Soon after he was promoted to lieutenant commander. Recognized for his skillful management of the capture of Fort Henry, he was placed in command of a small fleet of gunboats and given responsibility for the Tennessee River line. In 1864 he commanded the *Eastport* in General Nathaniel P. Bank's Red River campaign. After the war Phelps was appointed one of the commissioners of the District of Columbia by President Ulysses S. Grant. He died in 1885. *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York, 1904), XII, 358-59.



Map by Graphic Arts Department, Audio-Visual Center,
 Indiana University, Bloomington.

were regular. About a month before the fall of Vicksburg, July 4th 1863, we were ordered there, where we remained until after the fall of that stronghold. We witnessed the seige of that doomed place, and night after night the shells from [Rear Admiral David Dixon] Porters Mortor fleet could be seen as they left the mortar and burst over the place. We participated in some of the exercises We were at Milikens Bend [Milliken's Bend, La.] near Admiral Porter's flag ship Black Hawk.²⁷

"In June we were sent up the White River to Balls Bluff from where the army started to attack Vicksburg in the rear. Did not get quite to Little Rock. We also went up the Arkansas river and one of our boys came near getting killed by a bush[wh]jacker. We were often ordered ashore to scout around through the Country. While it was not my business to do any of this, at every opportunity I got I would go ashore with the crew & carry a musket. I came near getting lost in the cane breake a few miles above Vicksburg. When the whistle of the boat blew for us to Return I was going in the opposite direction. It was quite a treat for one to get ashore and when I did so at Memphis, Natchese, or Vicksburg, I enjoyed it very much

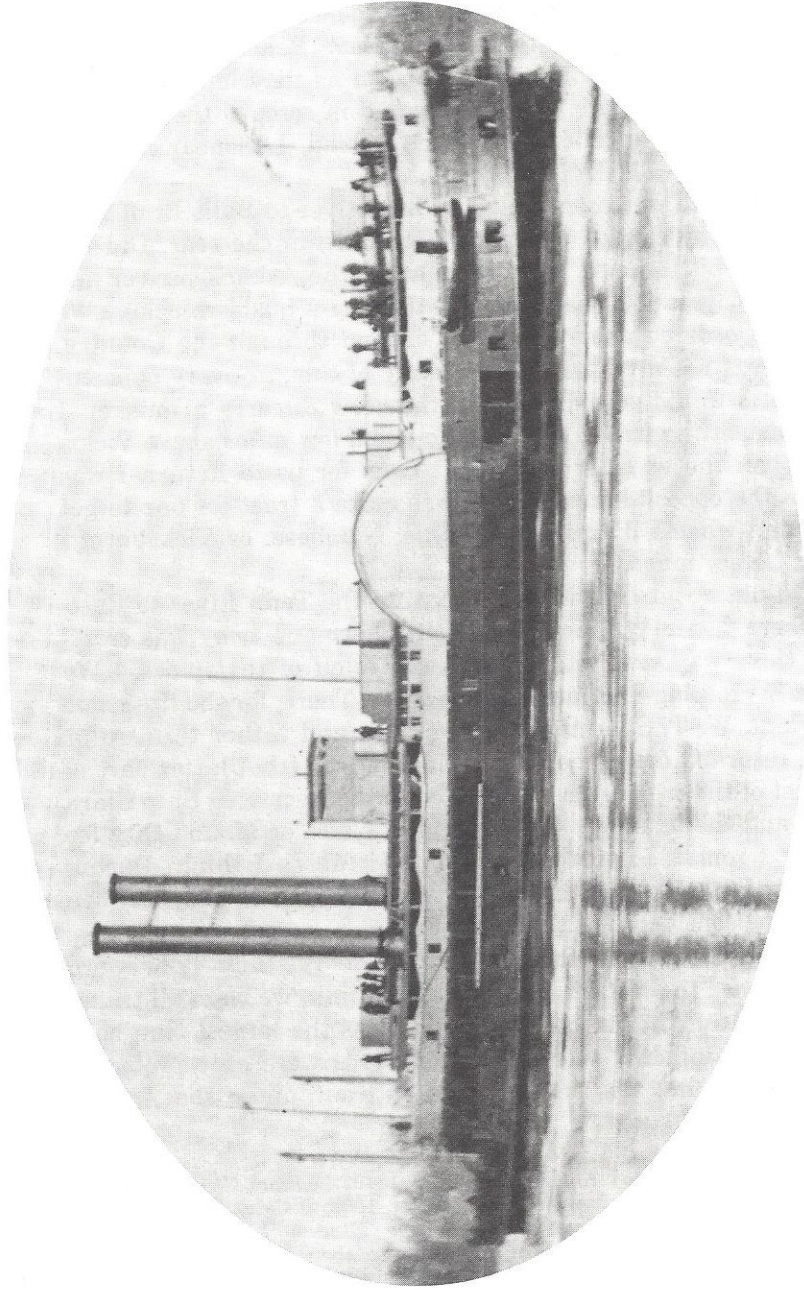
"I think, about Oct. we were sent up the Tenn River to Eastport, where Genl. [William Tecumseh] Shermans army was crossing on their way to Chatanooga to the releif of that place.²⁸ We assisted in crossing Shermans entire army. There, for the first time I saw Genl. W. T. Sherman, who was tall and rather thin. After this we returned down the river, and along in [the] latter part of Dec. most of the crew were transferred to the Receiving Ship Clara Dalson, and the Hastings was laid up at Cairo or Mound City for repairs.²⁹ I remained on the Dalson until March I think. During the winter I was treated for Bronchitas and Catarrh My left eye troubled me considerably at this time.

"During the winter the balance of the Hastings crew were brought aboard the Dalson, and in Feby I think, we were all transferred to the Gun Boat Ouachita, which was the largest Gun boat on the Mississippi. Her sides and bulk heads were only protected against bullets, but was 3/4 inch iron on front, and a shot from a

²⁷ Originally built in New Albany, Indiana, in 1848, the *Black Hawk* was a 260-foot side-wheel steamer commissioned in December, 1862, at Cairo, Illinois. Armed with four 32-pounder smoothbores, two 30-pounder rifles, one 12-pounder smoothbore, and one 12-pounder rifle, the boat served most of the war as flagship for Rear Admirals David Dixon Porter and Samuel Phillips Lee, successive commanders of the Mississippi Squadron. *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, I, 128.

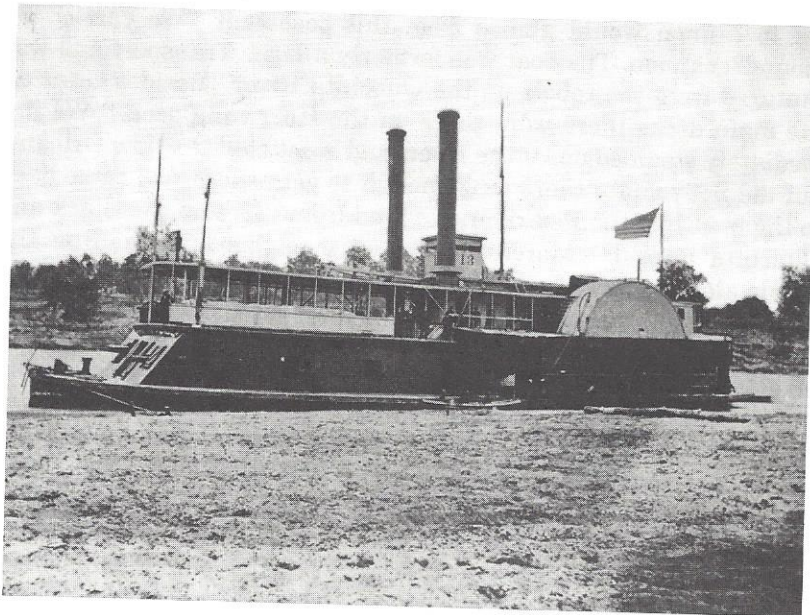
²⁸ Again Martin's memory served him well. "... [the *Hastings*] arrived at Eastport, Miss., 26 October 1863 to assist General Sherman's troops in crossing the river during operations culminating in the Battle of Chattanooga . . ." *Ibid.*, III, 269.

²⁹ "In need of repairs, *Hastings* returned to the Naval Station at Cairo 16 December [1863]." *Ibid.*

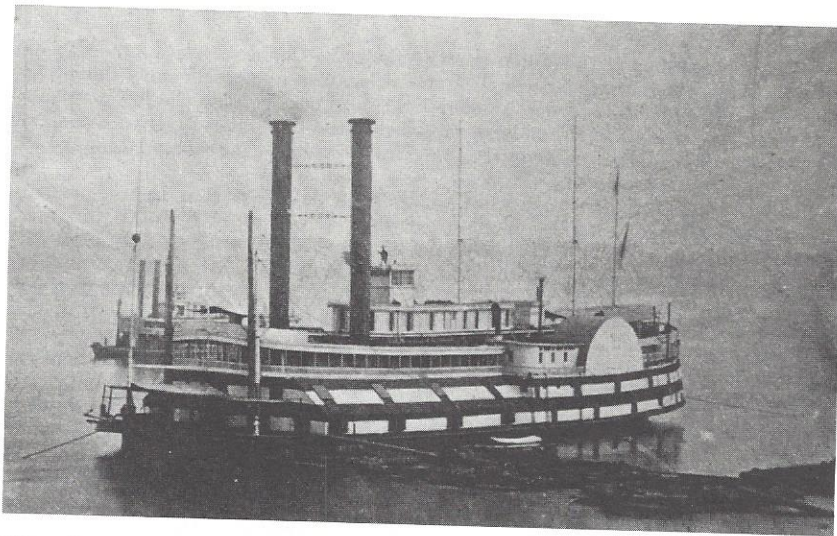


HIRAM H. MARTIN SERVED ABOARD THE *OUACHITA* FROM FEBRUARY
TO APRIL, 1864.

Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.



THE *FORT HINDMAN*, FLAGSHIP FOR COMMANDER OF THE OUACHITA RIVER EXPEDITION



THE *BLACK HAWK*, FLAGSHIP FOR COMMANDERS OF THE MISSISSIPPI SQUADRON FOR MOST OF THE CIVIL WAR

Courtesy Massachusetts Commandery, Military Order of the Loyal Legion, and U. S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

six lb cannon would glance from this casement We carried 32 [pound?] cannon. The boat was formerly a large Transport and was captured from the rebels up the Ouachita River Besides Guns on the main decks there were three on the Hurricane deck.³⁰ We immediately steamed down the river, and went clear to New Orleans, but did not remain there long enough to get ashore. We came back to the mouth of the Red river, . . . [and from there up the Black and Ouachita rivers].³¹ March 1st we were engaged in shelling the woods along banks of the Black river from which the rebels made an attack with musketry. M[ar]ch 2d we were engaged in shelling Gurrillas Concealed in woods along Ouachita river Also repulsed an attack of a battery at Harrisonburg La, which was fortified into a Fort. At this place we sent the rebels flying over the hill out of the reach of our guns. It was breakfast time and those who went ashore said that the 'Johnnies' left there tables all spread and breakfast partially eaten. They gave us quite a stiff fight One of our men was shot through the head and died immediately, and another through the side but recovered. The flag ship was disabled, and floated down the river and the Comodore came aboard our boat.³² We were hit several times. It was not my business to do it but I assisted in manning a gun, and received the compliments of the Captain Byron Wilson.³³ I wanted an opportunity to give them a parting shot as they were skedadling away.

³⁰ A new addition to the Union gunboat fleet, the *Ouachita* was a 227-foot side-wheeler with four 30-pounder army Parrott rifles, one 30-pounder navy Parrott rifle, eight 24-pounders, and one 12-pounder rifle. Formerly the Confederate side-wheel steamer *Louisville*, it had been captured in the Little Red River in Louisiana on July 13, 1863, and commissioned as the Union gunboat *Ouachita* on January 18, 1864, at Cairo, Illinois. *Ibid.*, V, 189.

³¹ This is one of the few times that Martin's memory failed him. In his narrative he recalled that the expedition up the Red River in support of General Nathaniel P. Banks took place during "the latter part of Feby" and a cotton-collecting expedition up the Black River during the first week of March. Official sources, however, make it clear that the foray up the Black River that took place during the first few days of March came while Porter's command was awaiting word to proceed up the Red River, which did not come until the second week in March. In a dispatch to the secretary of the navy dated March 2, 1864, Porter wrote: "I came down here [to the mouth of the Red River] anticipating a move on the part of the army up toward Shreveport, but as the river is lower than it has been known to be for years, I much fear that the combined movement can not come off . . . In the meantime the gunboats are up the Atchafalaya and Black rivers destroying bridges and stores . . ." See U. S., Navy Department, *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion* (30 vols., Washington, D. C., 1894-1922), ser. 1, vol. XXVI, p. 7. This transposition of events has been corrected in the text in order to present the account in proper chronological order.

³² The flagship Martin refers to here was the *Fort Hindman*, a 150-foot side-wheel steamer carrying six 8-inch guns, which served as the flagship of Lieutenant Commander Frank M. Ramsey, the commander of this expedition up the Ouachita River. At 10:30 a. m. on March 3, 1864, a shot from a Confederate battery at Harrisonburg struck the starboard engine of the *Fort Hindman*, disabling it and forcing Ramsey to remove his flag to the *Ouachita*. *Ibid.*, ser. 1, vol. XXVI, p. 783.

³³ Byron Wilson was lieutenant commander of the *Ouachita*, on which Martin

"We also on this day, shelled the town of Trinity La. On the 4th of this month we also repulsed an attack made from the woods along the banks of the Black River. We steamed farther up the river and beyond where there had been a railroad bridge burned that crossed the river. The road I think ran from Memphis in to La. We stopped at a large plantation where we heard they had a quantity of Cotton stored back in the woods about a half a mile, in great piles. We pressed into the service all of the darkies and old mules and carts we could get and had them haul the cotton to the banks of the river, and the crew loaded two or three empty coal barges that we had with us besides filling in between the decks.

"I had quite a time one evening there, after dark in trying to get a Turkey aboard that I had captured. It was strictly against orders to bring any thing aboard of a contraband nature. After a good deal of maneuvering and hiding behind Cotton bales I succeeded and our mess had a feast of turkey, and you may be sure that we all did justice to the occasion. We then returned down the river without meeting with any thing of importance except at one place where we saw the French flag floating over a house and a Frenchman put out to us in a boat, hailed the Capt. and tried to claim the Cotton we had. The Capt told him that would not go down with him, and that if he, the Frenchman, did not mind his own business he would put him under arrest as he was in the enemys Country trying to Conceal Cotton. Cotton in those days was worth big money. In 1865 I received over \$100.00 as prize money for the cotton we took up this river.³⁴

was a fireman. Wilson was later among those cited by Rear Admiral David D. Porter as "having zealously performed everything required of them with an ability deserving of the highest praise" in his report on the Red River campaign. *Ibid.*, ser. 1, vol. XXVI, p., 77.

³⁴ At least one authority believed that cotton rather than sound military strategy was what lay behind the Red River campaign. "It may as well be pointed out at once," wrote H. Allen Gosnell in his study, *Guns on the Western Waters: The Story of River Gunboats in the Civil War* (Baton Rouge, 1949), 246-47, "that there was a very unsavory odor attached to this Red River expedition. With all the existing evidence there can be little doubt that some prominent party or parties on the opposing sides were in cahoots with each other, the object being to sell Southern cotton through Northern civilian dealers. By such a procedure the Northern armed forces would be collecting Southern cotton for transport and sale, its owners would be reimbursed in due course, and the furtherance of the rebellion would thus be assisted. Ordinarily the Federal forces were not in a position to seize much cotton and carry it off for condemnation. When they did take any privately owned cotton or other valuable property the usual procedure was to give receipts for it payable after the close of hostilities. Confederate government property was of course seized outright or destroyed. Most of the suspicious-looking events [such as just happening to have 'two or three empty coal barges' along when a cache of cotton was discovered?] which came to pass in connection with the Red River affair certainly appear to be part of the cotton-collecting plan. Something, at any rate, brought about several moves which seem very peculiar from a military standpoint. Be it said to the credit of practically every rank and file on both sides, however, there was no pulling of punches when any fighting took place."

"We came back to the mouth of the Red river, where the fleet was assembling and getting ready to accompany Genl. [Nathaniel P.] Banks Army up the Red River . . . [On 12 March 1864] we started up the Red River leading a fleet of about twenty boats. Ft. De Russey La. had just been taken by the army. We were the first to reach Alexandria La. which was being evacuated by the rebels. Some of the rebel boats were steaming up the river above the falls where we could not go, but we sent a few solid shot after them. Two small rebell transports had been set on fire to prevent them from falling into our hands and they came floating down the river

"There were a few rebels at Alexandria who were inclined to give us trouble, and they fired into us, but we opened a broad side on them, when the Mayor came to the Levee with a flag of truce, and he was ordered aboard where he surrendered the town. Our boat with four others that drew more water than could get above the bar, were ordered down the river to the Miss. again . . .³⁵

"We steamed into the Mississippi, and lay near the mouth of the Red river waiting for the return of the Red River expedition. My time, one years enlistment being out and fifteen days over, as well as several who had enlisted when I did, we were discharged and paid off, and we took the Mail boat Genl. Lyon for Cairo.³⁶ Nothing of importance occurred on this trip, except, I rember the burial of some one from the boat on a little Island near the middle of the night, and it was a solemn & weird procession with lanterns and torches burning. It put me in mind of the account of the burial of Sir John Moore.³⁷

"From Cairo two sailors who shipped with me at Chicago but were boatswains mates on the iron Clad Chactaw traveled with me back to Chicago.³⁸

³⁵ The rest of Porter's gunboat fleet continued on up the Red River toward Shreveport in support of Banks's army, which was supposedly moving by land toward the same objective. By April 10, Porter had pushed up the river to within thirty miles of Shreveport only to find that Banks had not made it, having been stopped by Confederate forces at the Battle of Sabine Cross Roads two days before. There was nothing for Porter to do but to fight his way back down the river. Battling both Confederates and low water, he finally was able to extricate his fleet but not without great difficulty and not without the loss of both men and ships. The campaign had lasted over two months and had accomplished absolutely nothing militarily. Boatner, *The Civil War Dictionary*, 685-89.

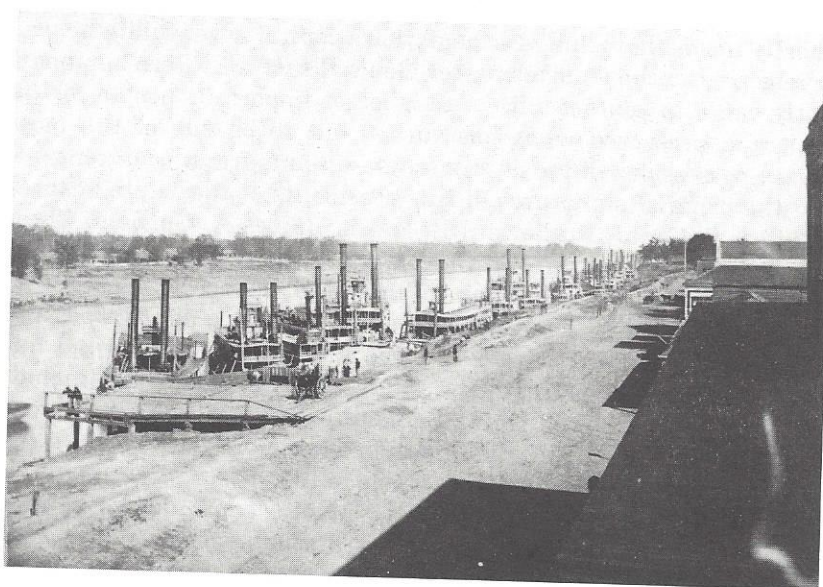
³⁶ Captured from the Confederates in April, 1862, at Island No. 10, the *General Lyon*, built at New Albany, Indiana, in 1860, was used extensively by the Mississippi Squadron as an ordnance, stores, and dispatch ship. *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, III, 50.

³⁷ Sir John Moore (1761-1809), British general, was killed at the Battle of Corunna (Spain) during the Peninsular Campaign against Napoleon. Struck by a cannonball on the left shoulder, he died in the moment of victory as British troops successfully beat back the French attack. He was buried in a soldier's grave early the next morning. David S. Chandler, *The Campaigns of Napoleon* (New York, 1966), 656-57.

³⁸ Built at New Albany, Indiana, in 1863, the *Choctaw* was a 1,004-ton ironclad ram that had served with the *Ouachita* in the Red River campaign. *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, II, 113.



ALEXANDRIA, LOUISIANA, ON THE RED RIVER



THE FEDERAL FLEET TRAPPED BY LOW WATER
AT ALEXANDRIA'S WHARF

Courtesy Massachusetts Commandery, Military Order of
the Loyal Legion, and U. S. Army Military History Institute,
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

"During my year in the Navy I saw a great deal of the Southern Country. My salary was \$30.00 per month and rations, and at the end of the year I had nearly \$300.00"

EPILOGUE

Returning to La Porte, Martin tried his hand at selling books for awhile, then went to work in a sawmill above Saginaw, Michigan. But for some reason he just could not stay away from the war. In March, 1865, he hired out to the military railroad and spent the last two months of the war running supplies between Nashville, Tennessee, and Stevenson, Alabama. He was in Nashville when Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House in Virginia.

Martin's adventures, however, did not end with the war. In May, 1865, he headed west for the gold fields of Montana, where he spent the next three years panning for gold, punching cattle, and working in a silver mine. In May, 1868, he took the overland stage to San Francisco where he caught a ship bound for Panama on his way to New York City by way of the Panama Railroad across the isthmus. Returning to Chicago in June, 1868, Martin married and settled down to the business of raising a family. In the spring of 1877 he was offered a job in Washington, D. C., with the Office of the Commissary General. He accepted and very shortly moved his family to the nation's capital. Eventually he was transferred to the Quartermaster General's Office where he apparently came in contact with a number of important people for he kept and preserved what has turned out to be one of the most prized possessions of his descendants—an autograph book containing the original signatures of five presidents of the United States (Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, Chester A. Arthur, and Grover Cleveland), a number of well-known generals (Philip H. Sheridan, Winfield S. Hancock, George W. Schofield, Oliver O. Howard, Nathaniel P. Banks, John Pope, and Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston among others), and numerous senators, congressmen, and heads of departments (including John Sherman of Ohio, Benjamin Hill of Georgia, Roscoe Conkling of New York, and James G. Blaine of Maine). It is a fitting testimony to Martin's keen sense of history.

To the end of his life Hiram H. Martin continued to believe that he had not done anything in his lifetime worthy of "especial commendation." Perhaps that is so. He certainly had had some interesting experiences, however, and he certainly must have looked back with especial pride on his years of service afield and afloat when, as "an ardent Union boy," he had participated in some of the most significant events in his country's history.

The Civil War Home Front: Diary of a Young Girl, 1862-1863

*Edited by Virginia Mayberry and Dawn E. Bakken**

Of the thousands of Civil War diaries and letters that are available to scholars, few are written by children or adolescents. The diary of one young Hoosier, Alice Hawks, provides a glimpse into the maturation of a nineteenth-century girl coming of age in a time of great strife. What is most striking about Alice's diary, however, is that that strife scarcely casts a shadow on its pages. Alice worries about school, clothes, housework, siblings, sleigh rides, and society meetings; the war intrudes only occasionally into the pages of her diary like an unexpected and unwelcome visitor. The story that emerges is of a life crowded with little events. Alice's diary paints a vivid portrait of small-town life in northern Indiana in the 1860s and the life of a middle-class girl.

Alice Hawks was born in Waterford, Indiana, in 1845 into a prosperous family. During the 1830s her paternal grandfather, Cephas Hawks, had established a large business complex in the small Elkhart County town. Cephas died in 1857, and four of his six sons, Cephus, Jr., Eleazer, Joel, and Dwight, took over the family businesses, which included a gristmill, sawmill, woolen mill, cooperage, distillery, and general store. By January of 1862, when Alice's diary begins, Joel, Alice's father, had moved his family approximately three miles north to Goshen, while continuing to work and travel extensively for the family businesses. Alice's emotional ties

* Virginia Mayberry, who now lives in Bloomington, Indiana, is a former resident of Middlebury, Elkhart County, Indiana. She is the author of "Draftee's Wife: A Memoir of World War II," *Indiana Magazine of History*, LXXIX (December, 1983), 305-29, and the editor of "West to Wilderness," *ibid.*, LXXXIII (March, 1987), 1-16. In 1986 she collaborated in the production of *Middlebury: The Town Beautiful, 1836-1986* (Goshen, Ind., 1986). Her husband, Joseph A. Mayberry, is a descendant of Joel Prescott Hawks and Sarah Jane Brown Hawks, the parents of the young girl whose diary appears below. Dawn E. Bakken is an editorial assistant with the *Indiana Magazine of History*. She is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Religious Studies, Indiana University, Bloomington.

tion of patriotism did continue, although in somewhat episodic fashion, but entertainment and leisure interests consumed much of the energy invested in commemorative periods. Civic leaders who certainly saw entertainment as a more effective and possibly more profitable way to promote their traditional objectives of citizen unity and city progress must assume some responsibility for citizens spending more time in leisure activities and less in formal civic rituals. It was these leaders who invented new traditions, such as the festival parade, around which commemorative days could be centered. Citizens themselves, however, demonstrated an obvious interest in leisure and entertainment as well. Traditional commemorations of the past were not entirely eliminated, but they were surely weakened in a city populated by leaders and citizens who feverishly pursued new forms of relaxation, amusement, and economic gain.