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Officer's Call

Rose O'Neal Greenhow— Confederate Spy, A Narrative

by Conway B. Moncure, CPA, DCS, MOSB Comptroller General

Maria Rosetta O'Neale was born in Montgomery County Maryland, in 1813(14) to a Catholic planter and slave owner. She moved to Washington, D.C. around 1830 and lived with her aunt after her father was killed by his valet. There, she met and married Robert Greenhow Jr, a prominent doctor, lawyer from Virginia, who worked for the U.S. State Department. They had four daughters. They moved to Mexico City and San Francisco because of his work, where he died in 1854. She moved back to Washington, D.C. and became an advocate for secession and slavery. There she became friends with Senator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina; as well as, many congressman, senators, and high ranking military officials. Because of her socialite positions, she was recruited as a southern spy by U.S Army Captain Thomas Jordan, himself being part in a southern spy network, for the Confederate Secret Service, and he furnished her with ciphers to encode messages.

On July 9th and 16th of 1861, Greenhow passes coded messages to Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard containing information of Union Military movements and plans of Union General Irvin McDowell's move on Bull Run. President Jefferson Davis credited Greenhow's information with the southern victory at Manassas on July 22, 1861. (She became known as "Rebel Rose" for her works for the South).

It was during this time that the Union had hired



Allen Pinkerton and the Pinkerton Detective Agency to perform duties, nowadays assigned to the secret service. Pinkerton had spies too, and suspected Greenhow to be passing these messages. He searched her quarters and found her diary linking her to bribes of public officials and obtaining secrets, and arrested her for spying. She was confined in the Old Capital Prison with her daughter Rose. The filthy conditions there drew the ire of the Washington elite. Rose continued to pass information regarding Union fortifications while in prison. On May 31, 1862 she was released without trial (with her daughter), on condition she stay in Confederate boundaries, and was moved to and released at Fortress

Monroe at Hampton, Virginia. This is the same prison that CSA President Jefferson Davis would be sent to in 1865. She and her daughter traveled to Richmond where she is welcomed by the press and Jefferson Davis as a heroine, and given a \$2,500 reward by Davis for her services to the government. She continued regular communications with southern officials and the secret service, and was appointed by President Davis as an envoy to Europe on behalf of the Confederate Government. Her mission is to obtain information to aid the Confederate Governments alliances and business associations in

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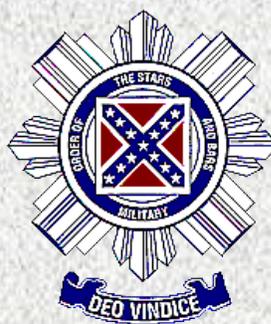
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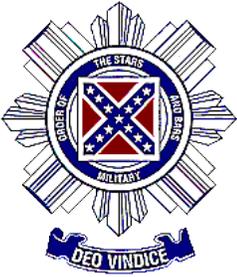
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officials. We are dedicated to the preservation and education of the memory of our ancestors and the traditional values of our Southern Heritage. Address all general business or advertising correspondence to MOS&B IHQ, P O Box 18901, Raleigh, NC 27619-8901.



Commander General's Message



Last month I wrote about the privilege I had of attending three Confederate Memorial Day ceremonies here in Charleston. Our ability to celebrate our Confederate heritage in Charleston and all of South Carolina is the result of our Heritage Act enacted by our state legislature. This act is the result of the forward thinking of Senator Glenn McConnell, a Charleston attorney, who became leader of the South Carolina Senate and later Lt. Governor. He is currently President of the College of Charleston. The current tragedy in New Orleans could have been avoided if Louisiana had such an act.

We have had a number of editorials in our local newspaper, The Post and Courier, concerning Confederate history and monuments. Noted journalists William Murchison of Texas, Commander R. L. Schreadley, US Navy Retired and retired editor of the Post and Courier and Brian Hicks of the Post and Courier all agreed that Confederate history needs to be put in context and not eradicated.

Since the removal of the monuments in New Orleans we have had two excellent editorials in the Post and Courier by native Charlestonians concerning the monument removal.

The first was written by Judge Thomas Pinckney Lowndes, Jr., an attorney and Past Commander of the Fort Sumter Camp of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. I quote Judge Lowndes, "We have no right today to judge a different generation with some inflated sense of moral superiority which cannot be found in today's culture. Removal of all things Confederate does not foster common ground but divides. We see it in New Orleans and Charlottesville too. Ignorance is the poster child of extremism and extremism breeds radicalism. Enlightenment must eclipse ignorance. Respect for the sentiments of the various views as to the causes of that cataclysmic event of 1860-1865 are necessary for peace and desired tranquility in the country in which we all live. North or South, we are still Americans all."

The second was written by Robert Rosen, an attorney, historian and author. Rosen's books include "Confederate Charleston" and "Jewish Confederates". I quote Mr. Rosen, "The New Orleans way did not solve any problems. Instead, it created a great deal of ill-will. The New Orleans decision created a highly emotionally charged controversy which fanned the flames of racial polarization, anger, and resentment. The ill-will will fester for years to come. Destroying monuments and memorials which remind us, educate us, and inform us even if we disagree with some of the sentiments they express is not the way to harmony and tolerance."

There are two other quotes which I think are pertinent to this situation. First from former Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, "When you start wiping out your history, sanitizing your history, to make you feel better, it's a bad thing. I'm a firm believer of keeping your history before you." Secondly, from the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "I believe that one day the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood".

I believe the actions of Mayor Landrieu and the city council of New Orleans have set the "table of brotherhood" on fire and they have caused a major setback in race relations in our nation. Instead, they should have followed the Christian example of forgiveness by the relatives of the nine Christians murdered, while studying the bible here in Charleston at Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. In a public statement they forgave mentally ill racist Dylan Roof for his heinous crime of premeditated murder. I believe their actions have moved race relations forward in Charleston and all of South Carolina.

So where do we go from New Orleans? First, we must strive to foster enlightenment that will overcome ignorance. Secondly, we must embrace peace, tranquility, harmony and tolerance. Lastly, we must take political action to ensure that every state has a Heritage Act. Contact your legislators and let them know how you feel about this important matter.

May the one true God of Israel continue to give us strength and courage to remember our Confederate ancestors and their Judeo-Christian heritage and to defend their honor against all of their foes!!

Deo Vindice!!

Harold F. Davis, III

Commander General

From the Chaplain General

Dr. John H. Killian, Sr.

In recent days, our nation was called to remember the bravery of those Allied troops who stormed the beaches at Normandy for the assault on Hitler's forces. This brave advance of our troops was crucial in ridding Western civilization of the scourge of Nazism. Truly, these brave men saved the world--and this statement is no exaggeration.

Some eighty years before, a band of Southern soldiers displayed that same bravery as Confederate troops charged up the ridge in Gettysburg, PA. As the great Southern icon William Faulkner says, of Gettysburg *"For every Southern boy fourteen years old, not once but whenever he wants it, there is the instant when it's still not yet two o'clock on that July afternoon in 1863, the brigades are in position behind the rail fence, the guns are laid and ready in the woods and the furled flags are already loosened to break out and Pickett himself with his long oiled ringlets and his hat in one hand probably and his sword in the other looking up the hill waiting for Longstreet to give the word and it's all in the balance, it hasn't happened yet, it hasn't even begun yet, it not only hasn't begun yet but there is still time for it not to begin against that position and those circumstances which made more men than Garnett and Kemper and Armistead and Wilcox look grave yet it's going to begin, we all know that, we have come too far with too*

much at stake and that moment doesn't need even a fourteen-year-old boy to think This time. Maybe this time with all this much to lose than all this much to gain: Pennsylvania, Maryland, the world, the golden dome of Washington itself to crown with desperate and unbelievable victory the desperate gamble, the cast made two years ago."

But unlike their grandsons on D-day, our Southern boys were not successful at breaking the Union line on the ridge and maintaining our status as a country. We grieve at their loss, but must bow to the will of our all-sovereign God.

John the Baptist was to challenge Herod's wickedness, but the consequences were still grim for John as Herod ordered the beheading of the Baptizer. Paul's teaching was correct, but Paul still faced imprisonment and death by a wicked ruler.

Colossians instructs us that Satan is the god of this world. One day, our Lord will make all right, will place all authority under His feet and will right all wrongs. But I pray that all devoted Confederates do not apologize that our Cause was not victorious. Right does not always win on this Earth. But right will stand when we face Eternity.

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Article from Page 1 -

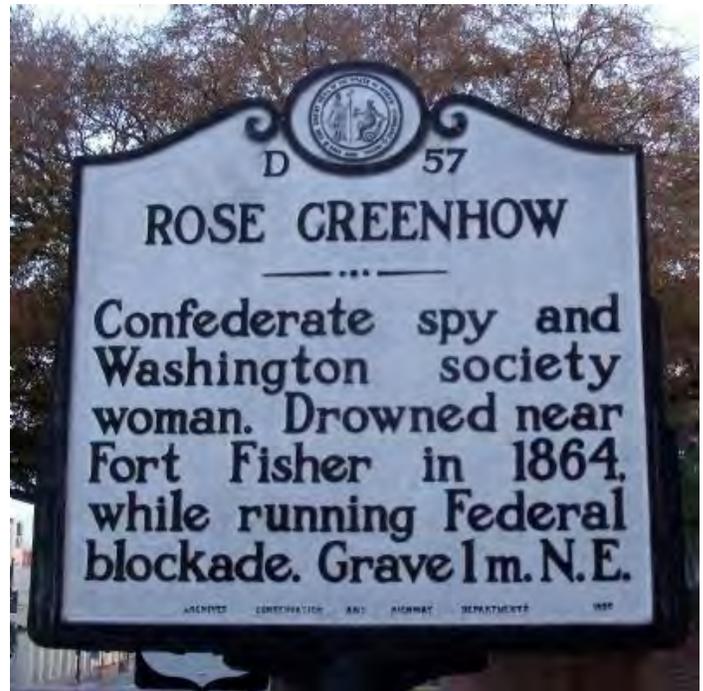
France and Britain. She had audiences with the court of Napoleon III and Queen Victoria, the details of which were recorded in her diaries from August 1863 to August 10, 1864. After leaving London, she published her memoir titled "My Imprisonment and the First Year of Abolition Rule at Washington". The book was an immediate success in Europe and earned her over \$2,500 in gold.

On August 19, 1864, Rose Greenhow left Europe to return to the Confederacy carrying dispatches and \$2,000 in gold coins, but left her daughter to study in Paris. She then traveled on a British blockade runner named Condor. The ship was headed for one of the few southern ports still open, that being Wilmington North Carolina. While off the coast of Wilmington, a storm approached; as well as, the Union gunboat, USS Niphon. While trying to evade the USS Niphon, the Condor ran aground at the mouth of the Cape Fear River at Wilmington.

Rose Greenhow knew well her capture may mean death for treason if captured by the Union navy, and she risked the rough waters in a rowboat to escape capture. The rowboats capsized and all aboard drowned. The next morning, a Confederate sentry discovered her body which had floated in with the surf at Fort Fisher. He found a metal buckle of a leather pouch containing gold sovereigns and some checks, which he buried in the sand. Her dispatch case carrying the secret dispatches for the War Department was nowhere to be found. The soldier reported the body, and out of guilt, returned the bag and gold coins to his commanding officer.

Her body was carried up the river by boat to Wilmington where an honor guard had assembled, she was given a catholic funeral, wrapped in a confederate flag, and transported to Oakdale Cemetery where she was buried. Her tombstone, supplied by the Ladies Memorial Association simply read, "Mrs. Rose O'N. Greenhow, A bearer of Dispatches to the Confederate Government". References for this article were from Wikimedia Commons, Wikipedia, Civil War @ Smithsonian, and (Wild Rose, the true story of a confederate Spy by Ann Blackman).

There is a free tour of her grave site at the Oakdale Cemetery on Thursday, July 6th at 10:00AM, as part of the convention schedule.



Rose O'Neal Greenhow

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**Military Order of the Stars and Bars
80th Annual General Convention
Wilmington, North Carolina - July 6-8, 2017**

Convention Schedule

Thursday, July 6th

10:00 - 11:30 AM: Free tour of Wilmington's historic Oakdale Cemetery including Confederate graves (transportation on your own with map to cemetery provided)

12:00 - 5:00 PM: Registration

1:00 - 3:00 PM: GEC Meeting - Coastline Conference Center

6:00 - 8:00 PM: Commander General's Reception - Coastline Conference Center

Friday, July 7th

7:00 AM - 12:00 PM: Registration

7:30 AM: Forest Cavalry Corps Breakfast - Coastline Conference Center - Pay at the door

9:00 AM: Opening Ceremonies - Coastline Conference Center

9:30 AM: MOSB Business Session I - Coastline Conference Center

10:00 AM: Women's Trolley Tour of Historic Wilmington

12:00 PM: Awards Luncheon - Coastline Conference Center

2:00 PM: Bus Tour to Fort Fisher

Supper on your own tonight

Saturday, July 8th

7:30 - 12:00 PM: Registration

7:30 AM: MOSB Prayer Breakfast - Coastline Conference Center

9:30 AM: MOSB Business Session II - Coastline Conference Center

10:00 AM: Women's Backwater Boat Tour

Final GEC Meeting: To follow Business Session II

6:00 PM: Commander General's Banquet - Cape Fear Club, in downtown Wilmington. *This facility is not ADA accessible.*

For questions regarding the 2017 MOSB Wilmington National Convention
Contact Byron Brady at: byronbrady@aol.com or at: 919-622-0606

Description of Convention Events

****The deadline for all preregistrations is June 28, 2017****

Thursday, July 6th



10:00 - 11:30 AM - Free tour of Oakdale Cemetery: Linda Lashley of Wilmington will be giving a free tour of Confederate Oakdale Cemetery. The tour will include a Confederate VA grave marker dedication for Brig. Gen. W.H.C. Whiting. Transportation to the cemetery will be on your own with maps provided. Suggested attire - comfortable casual.



6:00 - 8:00 PM - Commander General's Reception: The Commander General's Reception will be held at the Coastline Inn Conference Center and will feature a visit from *Confederate Spy Rose O'Neal Greenhow* portrayed by Kelly Atkins Hinson of Jackson Springs, North Carolina. Suggested attire - casual.

Kelly Atkins Hinson

Friday, July 7th

7:30 AM - Forest Cavalry Corps Breakfast: Sponsored by the Forrest Cavalry Corps, the breakfast will be held at the Coastline Conference Center. Past MOSB CIC Beau Cantrell will be the featured speaker. Price will be announced later. Suggested attire - coat & tie.

9:00 AM - Opening Ceremonies: Coastline Conference Center. Suggested attire - coat & tie.

9:30 - 11:30 AM - MOSB Business Session I: Coastline Conference Center - Presided over by MOSB CG Harold Franklin Davis, III. Suggested attire - coat & tie.



10:00 AM - Women's Trolley Tour of Historic Wilmington: While the men are in their Business Session I, the women will depart from the hotel on a one-hour trolley tour of the Wilmington historic district. This event is limited to the first 40 people to register. Suggested attire - comfortable casual.

Noon - 1:30 PM - MOSB Awards Luncheon: Coastline Conference Center - Presided over by MOSB CG Harold Franklin Davis, III. Suggested attire - coat & tie.



Bernhard
Thuersam

2:00 PM - Bus Tour to Fort Fisher: A 45-min bus trip to the Fort Fisher State Historic Site and tour of the fort by Bernhard Thuersam, Chairman of the North Carolina War Between the States Sesquicentennial Commission. Mr. Thuersam will describe the Carolinas history beginning in December 1864 and events leading up to the Battle of Fort Fisher. Following a tour of North Carolina's most popular state historic site, Mr. Thuersam will describe the events of the Fall of Fisher and the evacuation of Wilmington on the return bus trip back to the hotel. This event is limited to the first 50 people to register. Suggested attire - comfortable casual.

Saturday, July 8th



Rev. John Killian

7:30 AM - MOSB Prayer Breakfast: The MOSB Prayer Breakfast will be held at the Coastline Conference Center and presided over by Rev. John Killian, MOSB Chaplain General.

9:30 AM - Noon - MOSB Business Session II: Coastline Conference Center - Presided over by MOSB CG Harold Franklin Davis, III. Suggested attire - coat & tie.



not actual boat

10:00 AM - Women's Backwater Boat Tour: While the men are in their Business Session II, the women will depart from the hotel for a two-hour tour of the historic Wilmington waterfront and the backwaters of the Cape Fear River. This event is limited to the first 40 people to register. Suggested attire - comfortable casual. *Unsold seats on the Backwater Tour may be offered to the public.*



Dr. Chris E.
Fonvielle Jr.

6:00 PM - Commander General's Banquet - Cape Fear Club: Held in the oldest continuous Gentleman's Club in the South, the Commander General's Banquet will feature Dr. Chris E. Fonvielle Jr., local author and historian speaking on *Last Rays of Departing Hope*. The Cape Fear Club was founded by Confederate Veterans in Wilmington in 1866. Paid parking is available adjacent to the Cape Fear Club in a city-owned parking deck. The event includes a social hour with a cash bar beginning at 6:00 PM and supper beginning at 7:00 PM. This event is limited to the first 80 people to register. Suggested attire - Formal, coat and tie or Confederate uniform for the men and formal or period attire for the women. *Please note that this event is on the second level of the Cape Fear Club and is not ADA accessible.*

2017 MOSB Wilmington Convention Commemorative Program Advertising Rates

Full Page - \$100.00

Half Page - \$50.00

Quarter Page - \$25.00

Ancestor Memorial - \$5.00

Advertising deadline submittal date - June 1, 2017

Southall Freeman History Literary Award



Mr. Timothy B. Smith of Adamsville, TN, has been awarded the 2017 MOS&B Douglas Southall Freeman History Literary Award

AGAINST ALL ODDS: THE CONFEDERATE ATTEMPTS TO CAPTURE FORT PICKENS, PENSACOLA , FLORIDA IN 1864

By The Rev. Dr. Robert Girard Carroon, Commander
CSS Tallahassee Chapter &
Past Chaplain General MOS&B

In the spring of 1864 two brothers developed a plan to attack and seize Fort Pickens which guarded the harbor and navy yard at Pensacola, Florida. The two brothers, Lt. James McCutchen Baker (Age 27) and Page M. Baker (Age 25) Acting Master both serving in the Confederate States Navy, were natives of Pensacola and at the time of devising their plan were stationed at Mobile Bay. It was the knowledge of their home town and the Union held fort which led to their suggestion that it was possible for the Confederate navy to seize the post.

Lt. James M. Baker was the executive officer of the C.S.S. *Huntsville*, a small ironclad of the “C.S.S. *Virginia/Merrimac* design” which, with her sister ship the C.S.S. *Tuscaloosa*, formed part of the Confederate naval forces guarding Mobile Bay.

Following discussions with Admiral Franklin Buchanan the following directive was issued to Lt. Baker on April 20, 1864. ‘Sir: You will proceed with all possible dispatch to equip a boat for an important reconnaissance, taking with you provisions for ten days. The boat and crew you will select from vessels of the squadron, the commanders of which will afford you every facility for carrying out this order, which you will show them as authority for doing so. As much secrecy as possible will be observed in making arrangements for your departure. When ready, you will report to me for your final instructions. Very respectfully, your obedient servant, Frank. Buchanan Admiral etc.’

The next day Lt. Baker received his instructions from Admiral Buchanan “Sir: it is important that a correct reconnaissance should be made from Mobile to Pensacola by water with the view to ascertain whether it will be practicable to capture Fort Pickens with a sufficient force by a boat expedition. You will therefore proceed to Pensacola in one of the *Morgan’s* cutters taking with you Acting Master’s Mate Page M. Baker C.S .Navy and a crew of ten men

Book Reviews on MOS&B Website

If you have read a history book recently that covers the period of before, during, and after the War Between the States and would be willing to write up a review, the MOS&B would gladly appreciate you submitting it so we can include it with the various book reviews that we will start posting on our website. Please forward your review to the email listed on the website.

with ten days ' provisions. Confidence is placed in your judgement and discretion to make this reconnaissance, and be careful of your men. After performing this duty you will return to your station and report to me the result"

Lt. Baker proceeded as ordered and on April 29 made the following report to Admiral Buchanan. "On board the Sloop *Creole* off Philips Inlet, 30 miles to Eastward of East Pass, April 29, 1864. "Sir: On Monday evening the 25th instant, the weather being fine, left the beach some 10 miles to the eastward of Fort Morgan, having carried the boat across from Oyster Bay (Bayou) to the Little Lagoon and from thence to the Gulf. Much to my surprise the wind, instead of hauling off the land, chopped round to the southward and blew freshly, making quite a heavy sea. On making mouth of Perdido which I had intended to enter found the sea breaking across the whole bar, rendering it impossible for me to do so. The wind having increased the sea running high, the current setting to the eastward several knots per hour, I was compelled to keep on my course. When some 8 miles to the eastward of Pensacola, intending if possible, to make a harbor at East Pass, fell in with a sloop smack lying at anchor. Our position being very precarious, as the sea was continually breaking over us and the doubt of our being able to make safe harbor, determined me to board and take her. We did so, and the next day, 26th, while lying off and on the land, waiting for a favorable wind, was chased by a Yankee screw propeller to the eastward. We are now lying off Philips Inlet, in hopes of soon being able by a favorable change of weather to make our way to the westward, our appearance as a fishing smack being deceptive and much in our favor. I omitted to mention that our appearance deceived the Yankee cruiser and caused him to give up the chase. Our capture proved to be the sloop *Creole* of New Orleans, Captain Lancashire, and four men, one day out of Pensacola. The captain has given us the following information: The *Hartford*, *Richmond*, *Genesee*, *Octorora* and *Potomac* were lying at the navy yard. The *Pensacola* went north some weeks since. Faragut was in New Orleans. It was currently reported at the yard that Banks had met with a disastrous defeat on Red River losing two batteries and 5,000 prisoners and also that he had been recalled. There were no ironclads in port.

On Saturday, the 23rd, two screw propellers arrived at the yard with Negro troops on board. I propose to-day sending Mr. Baker 25 miles inland to our pickets with Mr. Broxson, a citizen of Alabama, whom we accidentally met at this point with his wagon hauling salt, and who has kindly offered to haul a seine of 90 fathoms and a new manila hawser 4 ½ inches, 150 fathoms, to a place of safety. Mr. Baker will also endeavor to obtain a force sufficient to take charge of prisoners, viz, Captain Benj. Lancashire, F. Miller, John McDougal, Ed. Stafford, and Bernard Bauman. Stafford claims to be a discharged Confederate soldier, captured by Yankees on blockade steamer *Alice Vivien* en route for Havana. Our provisions are running short, but should the wind, which has been constantly blowing from the westward, change in our favor, I will endeavor to make my way back to Mobile Bay, either by running the blockade or hauling our cutter into Little Lagoon, etc., in which case I will destroy vessel. Should the wind hold as it is, I will be compelled to burn vessel at this point, and make our way overland to Mobile. I trust my course will meet with your approbation, as I have done what, under the circumstances, seemed best and what necessity forced upon me. Should an opportunity present itself on my return I will finish the reconnaissance which unfavorable weather has permitted me to make only in part. It is probable I shall see you before this reach Mobile. In the event of our capture however, this will give you intelligence of our whereabouts and what we have done up to this time. Very respectfully, your obedient servant, James McC Baker Lieutenant C. S. Navy."

Lieutenant Baker did return successfully with his crew to Mobile and with his arrival that seemed to put an end to his project to capture Fort Pickens: however that was not to be. Approximately four months after his return the unrelenting Lieutenant was at it again! Determined to seize his home town and the Union occupied fort he wrote on August 4, 1864, from his post on the C.S.S. *Huntsville* to Brigadier General Edward Higgins who commanded the military forces at Mobile proposing an immediate attack on Fort Pickens.

"Sir: In April last a proposition was submitted by Mr. P.M. Baker to General (Dabney) Maury for the capture

Article Submittal Request

If you have an article that you would like to be considered for publication, please send your submittal to Jeff Sizemore (Editor General) at swampeditor@yahoo.com. Chapter and Society News is also welcome. Please email to the address. The preferred submittal is one in which the articles are in MS Word format and that all pictures are in jpeg format as this makes it easier to format to the proper scale within this publication.

Note that references and footnotes are requested to support where the original information is acquired as it is up to the article writer to provide such material. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thanks.

of Fort Pickens. The general approved it and consulted with Admiral Buchanan, who concluded to send me in a small boat, with a crew of eight men, together with Mr. Baker, on a reconnaissance.

Owing to unfavorable weather I succeeded only partially, but sufficiently to demonstrate the practicability of a boat expedition to Fort Pickens, by starting at a point about 20 miles east of Fort Morgan. It was proposed to send a force of 100 to 150 men in small boats, they to affect a landing near the fort and make an entrance through the sally ports or by scaling.

By the arrival of Mr. Newman, who escaped from Fort Pickens on Friday last, I have obtained information concerning sentinels and garrison which leaves no doubt in my mind of the success of an attack on the fort if attempted at the present time.

There are in the fort for garrison duty three companies of the Seventh Vermont numbering in all 100 men, in command of Major Allen. There are but two sentinels, one on the parapet on the east face of the fort and one at the gate opposite Barrancas. In view of these facts I earnestly desire to obtain permission to attempt the capture of the fort, and should you approve the project would request your influence with the admiral in order to have me detached for that purpose. I would require but three or four boats carrying about 15 men each, with their arms and five days' provisions. In seven hours after leaving the lagoon we can reach the fort, so that, starting at 5 p.m. we would arrive about midnight.

The enemy has now withdrawn all their large vessels for an attack on Mobile, and their attention is wholly diverted from Pensacola. In the event of the capture of the fort, with the immense amount of ammunition, stores, etc. there and at the yard, the force of the blow here would be broken, as the enemy obtains all their supplies from that point. Having already reconnoitered the route, I feel confident in asserting its entire feasibility, and think it would greatly relieve Mobile.

Mr. Newman is an engineer whom I have long known, is intelligent and trustworthy. He is well known by naval men and very anxious to accompany me on this expedition. Hoping the above will meet with your approval I remain very respectfully, your obedient servant. Jas. McC Baker, Lieutenant C.S. Navy. "

Lieutenant Baker's proposition was approved by Brigadier General Higgins and Major General Maury. The Lieutenant thought he had now received all the permission required however he had not counted on a bean counting bureaucrat who commanded the naval forces at Mobile. Lieutenant Baker's good friend and ally in the Naval Commandant's Office Lt. William T. Key warned him that any opposition from the Flag Officer could sink the expedition before it ever got underway. Baker wrote the Commodore asking that he now approve the expedition. Lieutenant Key wrote James, "Tis no further use, I am sorry to say, to push this matter with Commodore (Ebenezer) Farrand as he is now decided that we cannot

go. If you think it would be right to telegraph the honorable Secretary of the Navy, do so, but be certain before you do so that you receive not a reprimand for presuming to address him without sending your communication through your commanding officer, and thereby the whole plan fall through. I do not know it would be so; you know best. I am truly sorry to blight your hopes, but the truth must be told. The expedition will not be allowed to embark by the commodore. I am as sorry as you are, and if you should go by consent of a higher authority I also will endeavor to go with you. Believe me, your friend W.T. Key Secretary of Admiral Buchanan and Commodore Farrand."

Lieutenant James Baker was determined that the expedition devised by himself and his brother Page would not fail, especially at the hands of some bureaucrat and so he wrote Stephen R. Mallory the Secretary of the Navy, on August 18, 1864.

"Sir: I take the liberty of addressing you on a subject, the importance of which will, I trust, excuse the informality of my action. From information which I have received from time to time, but particularly since the arrival of William Newman, who made his escape a few days ago from Fort Pickens, I am convinced that the capture of the fort can be readily accomplished. Not dreaming that we have any designs upon it, and deluding themselves with the idea that its isolated position renders it safe from attack, they have become exceedingly careless, having only two sentinels on duty one at the east face of the fort and the other at the gate opposite Barrancas. The garrison consists of about 100 men and with the exception of the guard (15 men) all sleep with their arms stacked. I enclose herewith a proposition which I submitted to Generals Maury and Higgins which they highly approved, proffering me all the men and arms necessary. Commodore Farrand also approved of the project, and indeed ordered me to make the necessary preparations but afterwards concluded he could not well spare my services at this juncture. As a Floridian (This was a nice touch as Mallory himself was a native of Florida) I am particularly anxious to recapture Fort Pickens, and believe the way is now open to us. I propose taking about 60 men with four small boats, pulling down the eastern shore of the bay into Bon Secours and hauling the boats across a narrow strip of land into Little Lagoon. I would enter the Gulf at a point 20 miles east of Fort Morgan and be within seven hours pull of Fort Pickens, with nothing to interrupt our progress. Fort McRae is dismantled and abandoned, so we might pull close in under the land and then across the channel, making a landing between the wharf at the fort and the point. Once landed, we could affect an entrance through the sally ports, or by seizing the sentinel at the gate and calling for the corporal of the guard, who always comes alone and opens the gate. Mr. Newman says there are immense stores of provisions, medicines, ordinance, etc. both in the fort and at the yard. In the

event of our succeeding General Maury would send a co-operating force by land against the yard, which being assailed in front and rear must necessarily surrender. The reinforcement we would receive in the prisoners (numbering about fifty) would enable us to hold the fort without a doubt. Believing, sir, that the capture of this place would be of incalculable advantage to us at this time, giving us as it would an open port and distracting the attention of the enemy from more vital points together with the probability of recapturing the officers confined there. I most respectfully and earnestly request that you will detach me and brother for the purpose of undertaking this expedition. Having already reconnoitered the proposed route, and being perfectly familiar with the coast and localities in and around the fort, I feel confident in asserting the feasibility of the enterprise. Trusting that this will meet your approbation, I am very respectfully, your obedient servant, James McC Baker, Lieutenant C.S. Navy. Note: If you approve of the above, it would be well to take advantage of the next dark nights.

Evidently subscribing to the theory that it is better to ask forgiveness after taking action rather than permission to take it, James writes Commodore Farrand two days after writing Secretary Mallory. "...I would not again trouble you did I not feel assured that in my last interview you misunderstood the nature of the undertaking. If it is not asking too much, I would like to know whether the plan considered in this light does not meet with your approval. Hoping that in thus addressing you I have infringed on no law of naval etiquette, I am very respectfully, your obedient servant, Jas. McC Baker Lieutenant, C.S. Navy".

These communications met with dead silence. The Baker brothers and William Keys might be forgiven if they felt that all had come to naught when after over a month had passed Lt. Baker received a startling communication:

"Confidential: Confederate States of America.

Navy Department, Richmond, September 26, 1864. Sir: An earlier reply to your letter of the 18th ultimo, presenting your plan for capturing Fort Pickens has been precluded by its reference to the President and to General Bragg. Your plan is approved. Flag-Officer Farrand is instructed to take all necessary measures for fitting out the expedition and securing its success, and he will promptly confer with you. Enclosed is a copy of my letter to him and of General Bragg's letter to me. My injunctions as to secrecy must be rigidly observed. Your success must depend upon a surprise. I earnestly trust, as well for you, officers, and men, as for the country, and that there will be no failure. I am respectfully, your obedient servant. S.R. Mallory, Secretary of the Navy.

The letter from General Braxton Bragg also dated Sept. 26, 1864, and headed Headquarters Armies Confederate States to Secretary of the Navy Mallory which was enclosed is as follows: 'Sir: I have the honor to enclose to you the letter and papers of Lieutenant Baker, C.S. Navy, referred by you to the President. It will be seen he ap-

proves of the proposition and has sent it to me for the purpose of cooperation. In the present state of affairs in Mobile Bay the movement by boats into Bon Secours may be difficult or impracticable. In that event it might be made by transporting the boats overland and moving down the Perdido. But one important modification in the plan has seemed to me advisable. After landing, I would not rely solely on affecting an entrance at the sally ports. But a small party would suffice for the ruse, while the main force was thrown by scaling ladders immediately into the fort over the wall opposite Fort McRee. This point is easily approached, is near the landing place, and is the lowest part of the wall. It could be scaled by light ladders transported in the boats, which can be carried readily by two stout men. It will afford me pleasure to order the necessary assistance and cooperation from the land forces, and to direct a movement in diversion whenever the naval expedition shall be in readiness. I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant, Braxton Bragg, General."

The flurry of correspondence reflecting the activity of the Confederate Navy at Mobile on receipt of these letters can well be imagined. Commodore Farrand immediately detaches Lieutenant Baker from his duties on the C.S.S. *Huntsville* which order is endorsed by Lieutenant Julian Meyers commanding the *Huntsville*. Lieutenant Baker writes to Commodore Farrand on October 11, "Having thoroughly reconnoitered the route I shall take, I am now ready to prepare the boats, and request, respectfully, they be turned over to me as soon as possible." The following day Baker writes again to Farrand "In accordance with your order, I beg leave to submit...I will require the following boats: Barge and launch at navy yard, first cutters of *Morgan* and *Huntsville*, launch and first cutter of *Nashville*, with their fixtures, and six wagons with good teams to transport same from Shell Banks to Ross point. Also 5 officers and 125 men; one-third sailors, the balance heavy artillerymen, if possible, armed with revolvers and some short effective gun, carrying with them seven days cooked rations. Two ladders, 40 feet long, in sections of 10 feet. Six axes, lines for lashing, and material for muffling oars will be needed. All to be ready in ten days from date your obedient servant, Jas. McC Baker"

Baker then replies on October 12 to Secretary Mallory, "Sir: Have reconnoitered and will adopt route suggested by General Bragg. Boats, with fixtures, ladders, etc. will be ready by 19th instant, the moon serving about that time. Commodore Farrand and General Maury having so small a force do not like to spare the men. Please send an order that will enable me to procure them as soon as possible. Yours etc. Jas McC Baker C.S. Navy. Endorsement Naval dispatch to S.R. Mallory in cipher.

Secretary Mallory evidently moved with dispatch as James received a letter from Brigadier General McCulloch on October 21, 1864, "Lieutenant: The fol-

lowing order from District Headquarters authorizing you to receive volunteers for a certain expedition therein contemplate meets with the approval of Col R. McCulloch, commanding and he directs me so to inform you. (Letter enclosed: Headquarters District of the Gulf, Mobile Ala. October 20, 1864. General: the major-general commanding directs that Lieutenant Baker, C.S. Navy, is authorized to receive 100 volunteers from the Fifteenth Confederate Cavalry Regiment in your command for a special and dangerous service. Let a proportion, if possible, come from each company. Very respectfully & c. Geo. G. Garner, Chief of Staff" I am, very respectfully W.H. Brand Assistant Adjutant-General to Lieutenant Baker C.S. Navy."

Baker then reported to Commodore Farrand on October 24, 1864, "Sir: In compliance with your order I take pleasure in making the following report: With five launches and 100 men I propose to leave Blakely, Ala., transporting boats in wagons to Ross Point on the Perdido River. From this point I will pull under cover of night to Pensacola Bay and affect a landing near Fort Pickens. I will then endeavor to enter the fort with scaling ladders or through the sally ports. Once in possession of the fort, I will signalize the land forces that are to cooperate with us. My course after this will be determined by circumstances; but should my position be untenable I will of course endeavor to destroy as much as possible and escape with my command. Being already I will leave this point in the steamer *Dick Keys* to-night. I am sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant, Jas McC Baker Lieutenant C.S. Navy."

Also on October 24 James received the following communication. "My Dear Sir: Having discharged my whole duty and perhaps more in laying before you my views of your proposed operations, I will now aid you as far as I can in its execution. Confer fully with General Liddell, who will cooperate with you as best he can. I regret that my forces are so much reduced as to prevent me from sending to General Liddell any troops from this point. I would not be justified in doing so. I earnestly hope complete success will attend you, and I desire to express my respect for the energy, confidence, tenacity and courage you have evinced. I believe if your future movements be conducted with secrecy you will capture the fort, and in that case yours shall be all the credit. Very truly and respectfully yours, Dabney H. Maury, Major General Commanding."

However, as outlined in his report of November 1 to Secretary Mallory, Lieutenant Baker's operation began to unravel. "Sir. I beg leave to respectfully report that on the evening of the 25th ultimo I left this place in the steamer *Dick Keys* with five launches, fixtures complete, two scaling ladders in sections wagons, teams, etc. We landed at Blakely at 9 p.m. where I found my men, 100 in number awaiting me. The better to conceal our movements, started at once under the cover of night. At this time I received an order from Brigadier General Liddell, commanding me to suspend the expedition temporarily, by order from Major

General Maury, who had heard of a heavy force of the enemy's being landed at the navy yard. Upon the receipt of this, I encamped in an obscure spot off the road, 3 miles from Blakely. On the 30th ultimo news was received by the general of the falsity of the rumor, and I immediately requested permission of General Maury to move forward. He again ordered a temporary suspension of the expedition as he was not fully prepared to cooperate, and feared the enemy had obtained information of the movement. I remonstrated against the delay, stating the impossibility of the enemy having obtained such information, since not even the men in my command were aware of my destination, but the men being under his control, I was compelled to acquiesce. He advised that the men be returned to their respective companies, so as to give the impression of the move being abandoned, and, on a given day, suddenly be ordered back, when the expedition might proceed, he thought, with more secrecy and certainty of success. This has been done, and I have left the boats on the wagons, concealed and under cover, with a guard in charge of Master's Mate P.M. Baker. Had I been allowed to proceed without delay, I feel confident we should have met with success. It is greatly to be regretted that the men could not be obtained from the navy, as, in that case, they would have been under my control, and this delay avoided. I would respectfully suggest that, if possible, sailors be procured for the enterprise. The generals commanding have recently received intelligence that besides the large quantities of stores, munitions of war, etc. always at the yard, the enemy have accumulated there immense supplies for Sherman's army. Enclosed you will find a letter to me from General Maury, which, unfortunately, did not reach me until other orders had been issued. As soon as the general is ready to cooperate I will proceed to carry out the plan without delay. Very respectfully your obedient servant, Jas. McC Baker, First Lieutenant C.S. Navy."

The next day, Lieutenant Baker began to return some of his supplies to the army quartermaster including 23 mules and 24 sets of harness "to be delivered to Major Klumph at Mobile". Also 6 teamsters identified as Negroes. Captain W. D. Waples, Assistant Quartermaster and D.A. Moniac Quartermaster's Sergeant, signed for the equipment." The same officers as well as First Lieutenant J.B. Cleveland of the C.S. Army signed receipts on November 7 for "six wagons, 5 with boat beds, 1 with wagon bed, all complete; 5 boats with rudder, gratings, painter, etc. complete; 60 oars and 14 poles; 3 boxes containing ladders; 1 piece Manila rope 1 bundle grummes, etc."

Lieutenant Baker then wrote again to Secretary Mallory on November 9 from Mobile. "Sir I beg leave respectfully, to report while acting under orders from the Department bearing the date Richmond, September 26, 1864, and while awaiting near Blakely

Ala, cooperation of Major General Maury I received the enclosed communication from Flag Officer Farrand ordering my return with boats, officers, etc. to this point. I obeyed the order and now respectfully enter my protest as I conceive myself still under orders from the Department. Furthermore, that upon reporting to Flag Officer Farrand I was ordered to relinquish the expedition and return to my ship for duty. Enclosed you will also please find communication from Major General Maury ordering a temporary suspension of the expedition. Very respectfully, your obedient servant, Jas. McC Baker, Lieutenant, C.S. Navy.”

On November 24, 1864 from the Confederate States of America Navy Department, Richmond Virginia this letter was sent to Lieutenant Baker. “Sir: Your letter of the 9th instant has been received. Major General Maury, having withdrawn his men from the enterprise to the command of which you were assigned, its prosecution became impracticable. It was Captain Farrand’s duty, therefore, to issue the order of which you complain and against which you protest, for the protection of either your men or the public interests was unnecessary and irregular. I regret that circumstances beyond the control of the Department or yourself should have thus terminated an enterprise which seemed to promise good results. I am, respectfully, your obedient servant, S.R. Mallory Secretary of the Navy.” Thus ended the expedition to capture Fort Pickens and the enterprise conceived and led by the Baker brothers.

Lieutenant James M. Baker returned to his duties with the C.S.S. *Huntsville*. She had escaped up the Spanish River following the Battle of Mobile Bay along with the C.S.S. *Tuscalusa*. On April 12, 1865 the ships were scuttled to prevent their capture by Union forces. In 1985 they were located and still remain in good condition as they had been covered over with large deposits of silt. Several attempts have been made to raise funds to raise the vessels but without success.

The Confederate attempt to take Fort Pickens illustrated the failure of a combined operation during the Civil War. Granted there were successes on the part of the Union armed forces, however such an elaborate attempt to seize Fort Pickens so close to the end of the war made success very unlikely. Probably the schemes of such a junior officer even when approved by such figures as President Davis, Secretary Mallory and General Braxton Bragg, were not regarded as having a great chance of success. The Confederacy by that time was grasping at straws and this was just one more example. Did it have any chance of success—possibly in April but not in November; for James and Page Baker, for Secretary Mallory, Major General Maury and all of the others involved it was indeed an enterprise “Against all Odds.”

What of Lieutenant Baker? On May 5 1865 he surrendered to Union troops and on May 10 both he and Page took the Oath of Allegiance to the United States of America. June 11 1867 at Christ Church, Monticello, Florida he married Elizabeth Washington Wirt. Elizabeth was the daughter of Dr. Henry Wirt and Harriet Brown Wirt

Girardeau. Dr. Wirt died in 1850 leaving his widow and two young daughters of which Elizabeth was the eldest. Harriet then married William Oglethorpe Girardeau by whom she had six children. One of these children, John Howard Girardeau is my great grandfather; consequently Lt. James McCutchen Baker is my great great uncle. The Bakers moved to New Orleans after living at the Casa Bianca Plantation in Monticello. James became a captain of various ships owned by the Morgan Steam Ship Line and the Atlantic Line of the Pacific Company. Page became the publisher of the New Orleans Times Democrat with another Pensacola brother, Henry Baker as editor. Elizabeth became a columnist for the New Orleans Times Democrat which merged with the Picayune in 1914 to become the Times Picayune. Elizabeth and James had nine children. James McCutchen Baker died in 1900 and Elizabeth Baker passed away in 1923.

The records of the family and the Baker expedition are found in the Wirt Family Papers (Collection No 01704 at the Southern Historical Collection of the Wilson Library at the University of North Carolina) where while doing research in the family genealogy I first learned of the life and service of James McCutchen Baker. This massive collection together with the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion Series I Volume 21 and Internet Websites on the C.S.S. *Huntsville* provided most of the sources for this article.



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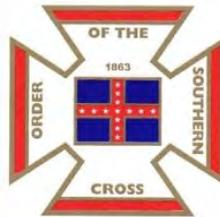
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