

# Florida Historical Quarterly

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Volume 39  
Number 3 *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol 39,  
Issue 3

Article 4

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1960

## Civil War Operations in and Around Pensacola Part II

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### Recommended Citation

Society, Florida Historical (1960) "Civil War Operations in and Around Pensacola Part II," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 39: No. 3, Article 4.

Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol39/iss3/4>

CIVIL WAR OPERATIONS IN AND  
AROUND PENSACOLA PART II

by EDWIN C. BEARSS \*

I

THE BREAKDOWN OF THE MODUS VIVENDI

COLONEL CHASE resigned the command of the Confederate forces at Pensacola on March 1, 1861, to accept appointment as major general in command of the Florida State Militia.<sup>1</sup> Colonel John H. Forney, of Alabama, assumed temporary command of these forces until relieved on March 11 by Brigadier General Braxton Bragg.<sup>2</sup> Bragg, a West Point graduate and Mexican War hero, had been assigned to this command by President Davis on March 7.<sup>3</sup> The new commander, a stern disciplinarian, set to work with his customary vigor to bring order out of chaos. Requisitions were made upon the governors of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Georgia, and Florida for additional troops in excess of 5,000 men. Forney was appointed inspector-general, and under his supervision a rigorous training program was instituted. Captain Hypolite Oladowski, Bragg's chief of ordnance, matured

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\* The Florida Historical *Quarterly* (Volume XXXVI, Number 2, pp. 125-65) contained the first part of Mr. Bearss's study of military operations around Pensacola during the Civil War. The third part of this account will appear in the April, 1961, issue of the *Quarterly*.

1. *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion* (Washington: 1894-1927) Ser. I, Vol. IV, p. 215. (Cited hereafter as *O. R. N.*)
2. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies in the War of the Rebellion* (Washington: 1880-1901) Ser. I, Vol. I, p. 449. (Cited hereafter as *O. R.*) John H. Forney was born in North Carolina in 1829. He entered West Point from Alabama July 1, 1848, graduated July 1, 1852, and was commissioned 2d lieutenant assigned to the 7th U. S. Infantry. On March 3, 1855, Forney was transferred to the 10th U. S. Infantry, and promoted 1st lieutenant to rank from August 25, 1855. Forney resigned from the United States service on January 23, 1861, offering his services to Governor Moore of Alabama. He was commissioned colonel of artillery and ordered to Pensacola.
3. *Ibid.*, 448. Braxton Bragg was born in Warren County, North Carolina on March 22, 1817. He was graduated fifth in the class of 1837 at the United States Military Academy, and commissioned a 2d lieutenant in the 3d Artillery. He served in Florida during the Seminole War. In the subsequent war with Mexico Bragg served with distinction, and was brevetted captain for gallantry in the defense of Fort Brown, Texas, and major for valor at Monterey, and lieutenant-

plans for the effective utilization of the Confederate siege guns fronting Fort Pickens.<sup>4</sup>

Eight days after Lincoln's inauguration an order was dispatched to Captain Vogdes by General Winfield Scott ordering him to land his company, 're-enforce Fort Pickens, and hold the same till further orders.'<sup>5</sup> Even before the dispatch of Scott's order, Bragg had ordered work resumed on the batteries, and informed the Federal commander that such action seemed "fully justified as a means of defense, and especially so under the threats of the new administration."<sup>6</sup> Thus the conditions of the *modus vivendi* were broken.

Despite these threats and counter-threats, relations between the Confederate and Federal forces in the bay area remained amicable. On the morning of March 12 four runaway slaves appeared before Fort Pickens with the erroneous idea that they would be granted asylum. That very afternoon the fugitives were returned to Pensacola had turned over to the city marshal for return to their masters.<sup>7</sup> To add to the Federals' difficulty their supply of fresh beef was curtailed; the contractor alleged that he was without funds for the purchase of cattle.<sup>8</sup> However, the actual reason for this curtailment of the garrison's provisions was an order from Bragg dated March 18 :

The commanding general learns with surprise and regret that some of our citizens are engaged in the business of furnishing supplies of fuel, water, and provisions to the armed vessels of the United States. . . .

That no misunderstanding may exist on this subject, it is announced to all concerned that this traffic is strictly forbidden, and all such supplies which may be captured in transit to such vessels, or to Fort Pickens, will be confiscated. The more effectually to enforce this prohibition, no boat or vessel will be allowed to visit Fort Pickens, or any United States naval vessel, without special sanction.<sup>9</sup>

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colonel for his services at Buena Vista. Bragg resigned from the U. S. Army January 3, 1856, and became a planter at Thibodeaux, Louisiana. In February 1861 he was placed in command of the Louisiana state troops.

4. *Ibid.*, 449.

5. *Ibid.*, 360.

6. *Ibid.*, 362.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*, 362-63.

9. *Ibid.*, 451.

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The new Confederate commander at Pensacola seemed omnipresent. In conjunction with Colonel William J. Hardee, commander at Fort Morgan, the bastion guarding the eastern approaches to Mobile Bay, a reconnaissance was conducted preparatory to the opening of a new line of communication between Mobile and Pensacola. It was hoped that an easier route could be developed between these two key points by utilizing water and land transportation, via Bon Secours, Bear Creek, and Perdido Bay, eliminating the long, slow overland trek from Blakely.<sup>10</sup> By the end of March, 1,116 officers and men constituting Bragg's command, most of whom had never been away from home, had assimilated some of the rudiments of the soldier and formed an excellent cadre around which an expanding army could be organized. While the infantrymen learned the fundamentals of soldiery, Captain Oladowski supervised the emplacement of a number of siege guns in Fort McRee. In addition two heavy batteries, each consisting of four 8-inch columbiads, had been established, one near the lighthouse and the other in the neighborhood of the naval hospital.<sup>11</sup> Fort Barrancas, for the first time in its history, was armed and manned. Bragg and his staff had practically moved heaven and earth in their efforts to strengthen the defense of Pensacola Bay. The Confederate forts would now be very difficult for the Federals to reoccupy, and in the future could possibly constitute a serious menace to Fort Pickens. The Federal commander protested in vain against the continuation of these efforts, but Bragg, unlike his predecessor, Colonel Chase, would not halt his efforts to fortify the area. After each protest the Confederates seemed to redouble their efforts, and the Federals began to fear that the forts could only be repossessed at a fearful cost.<sup>12</sup>

10. *Ibid.*, 453-454. William J. Hardee was born in Camden County, Georgia, in October 1815. He was graduated from West Point on July 1, 1838, receiving a commission as 2d lieutenant in the 2d Dragoons, and was promoted 1st lieutenant in 1839. Hardee served in the Seminole Indian War. In 1844 he was promoted to captain, and in 1846 crossed the Rio Grande with General Taylor. Hardee was breveted major for gallantry at Medelin, and lieutenant-colonel for gallantry at St. Augustine, Mexico, on August 20, 1847. He was the author of *Hardee's Tactics* and appointed to be commandant of cadets at West Point on June 28, 1860, resigning from the U. S. Army on January 21, 1861, to enter the Confederate services as colonel of cavalry.

11. *Ibid.*, 365.

12. *Ibid.*

The *Brooklyn*, which had been ordered to Key West on March 22 for provisions, returned to Pensacola Harbor on March 31 with the dispatches from General Scott for Captain Vogdes authorizing him to land his command at Fort Pickens.<sup>13</sup> The army officer immediately exhibited these instructions to the naval commander. Captain Adams noticed the date of the orders (March 12), believed that they were given without a clear comprehension of the state of affairs at Pensacola, and decided to ignore them. The naval officer felt the implementation of the order would be viewed by the Confederate authorities as a hostile act, and would undoubtedly precipitate a collision against the wishes of the Lincoln administration. Adams observed further that "both sides are faithfully observing the agreement entered into by the U. S. Government with Mr. Mallory and Colonel Chase."<sup>14</sup> The senior naval officer present had visited General Bragg the day before, and the Confederate commander had assured him that the Confederates, for their part, would not violate the conditions of the agreement. In terminating his interview with Vogdes, Adams observed, "I can not take on myself under such insufficient authority as General Scott's order the fearful responsibility of an act which seems to render civil war inevitable."<sup>15</sup>

The exposed condition of Fort Pickens was brought to President Lincoln's attention by his advisors, and at a cabinet meeting on March 29 it was decided to reinforce the fort.<sup>16</sup> To Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles was left the selection of the ships and the manner of conducting the affair. Prior to this cabinet meeting Captain Montgomery C. Meigs of the Engineer Corps had been maturing a plan whereby the Federal Government would reinforce Fort Pickens, which was weakly manned by Captain Slemmer and eighty-two men, again asserting its authority in the area.<sup>17</sup> Meigs' plan, initially proposed to Secretary of State Wil-

13. *O. R. N.*, Ser. I, Vol. IV, p. 125.

14. *Ibid.*, 110.

15. *Ibid.*

16. John G. Nicolay, *The Outbreak of Rebellion* (New York: 1881), 51.

17. David D. Porter, *Naval History of the Civil War* (New York: 1881), 100. Montgomery C. Meigs was born in Georgia and entered West Point from Pennsylvania on July 1, 1832. He graduated from the Military Academy on July 1, 1836, was promoted 1st lieutenant in the Engineer Corps on July 7, 1838, and captain on March 3, 1853. During the Civil War Meigs rendered excellent service as Quartermaster General of the United States Army. Harvey Brown was born

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liam H. Seward, envisioned the chartering of a large steamboat capable of carrying 600 troops and their equipage, and a warship to protect the landing. Welles, after conferring with Seward, adopted the Meigs' plan and designated Colonel Harvey Brown, commander of the 5th Artillery, to command the expedition, giving instructions for him in an order dated April 1, 1861:

You will proceed with the least possible delay to that place [Fort Pickens], and you will assume command of all the land forces of the United States within the limits of the State of Florida. You will proceed to New York, where steam transportation for four companies will be engaged. . . . The engineer company of Sappers and Miners; Brevet Major Hunt's Company M, Second Artillery; Captain Jahns' Company C, Third Infantry; Captain Clitz's Company E, Third Infantry, will embark with you. . . .

The object and destination of this expedition will be communicated to no one to whom it is not already known. The naval officers in the Gulf will be instructed to co-operate with you, and to afford every facility in their power for the accomplishment of the object of the expedition, which is the security of Fort Pickens against all attacks, foreign and domestic. Should a shot be fired at you, you will defend yourself and your expedition at whatever hazard. . . .

You will make Fort Jefferson your main depot and base of operations. You will be careful not to reduce too much the means of the fortresses in the Florida Reef, as they are deemed of greater importance than even Fort Pickens.

On the same date that Colonel Brown had received his orders, Lieutenant David D. Porter was issued confidential instructions by President Lincoln "to take command of the steamer *Powhatan*,

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in New Jersey and entered West Point on October 11, 1814. Brown graduated from the Military Academy in July 1818, and was commissioned a 2d lieutenant in the light artillery. At the time of the Seminole Indian War, Brown, a captain in the 4th Artillery, was breveted for gallantry several times. Brown participated in the Mexican War where he was breveted lieutenant-colonel for gallantry at Contreras on August 20, 1847, and colonel for gallantry at Garita de Belen on September 13, 1847.

18. *O. R.*, Ser. I, Vol. I, pp. 365-366.

19. *O. R. N.*, Ser. I, Vol. IV, p. 108. David Dixon Porter was born on June 8, 1813, in Chester, Pennsylvania, the second son of Captain David Porter, naval hero of the War of 1812. Porter served under his father in his ill-fated Mexican adventure, and in February 1829 was appointed a midshipman in the United States Navy, Porter served in the Mexican War as 1st lieutenant on the side-wheel steamer *Spitfire*. While Jefferson Davis was Secretary of War, Porter, then in com-

or any other United States steamer ready for sea." <sup>19</sup> Porter was ordered "to New York, and with the least possible delay assume command. . . . Proceed to Pensacola Harbor, and at any cost or risk prevent any expedition from the mainland reaching Fort Pickens or Santa Rosa." <sup>20</sup>

That night Lieutenant Porter left for New York, and 10 A.M. the next day presented to Captain Andrew J. Foote (who was acting commandant of the Brooklyn Navy Yard) the order to fit out the *Powhatan*. Porter's instructions constituted a most unusual method of doing business and greatly surprised Foote. It required three hours to convince Foote that he must obey the President's order, and that he was not to telegraph the Secretary of the Navy for instructions to relieve him from his embarrassing position. <sup>21</sup> Foote at last consented to call Captain Samuel Mercer into the conference, and show him the letter. Mercer, after examining the document, considered it mandatory for Foote to obey the President's orders to the letter. He was rather pleased with getting rid of an old worn-out ship, and offered to remain with the *Powhatan* as her captain, fit her out, and take her down the harbor as far as Staten Island, in order better to conceal the important movement. Captain Meigs also urged Foote to obey the President's order, and he finally decided to do so. The outfitting of the *Powhatan* was then ordered to proceed. <sup>22</sup>

The *Powhatan*'s engines were apart, and they were preparing to remove her guns in preparation for placing her in drydock at 2 P.M. on April 2. Foote's order directed a double force of men

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mand of the U. S. storeship *Supply*, brought the camels to America in what was a novel War Department experiment. The *Powhatan*, a side-wheel steamer of 2,415 tons had been built at the Norfolk Navy Yard in 1853 at a cost of \$785,000. The ship had a maximum speed of 11 knots an hour while it cruised at an average of 8 knots. In April 1861 it carried the following guns: four heavy 12-pounders, one light 12-pounder, one XI-inch Dahlgren smoothbore, and ten IX-inch Dahlgren smoothbores.

20. Robert S. West, *The Second Admiral* (New York: 1937), 81.

21. David D. Porter, *Incidents and Anecdotes of the Civil War* (New York: 1885), 17-20. Andrew H. Foote was born at New Haven, Connecticut, on September 12, 1806. He entered the U. S. Navy in 1822, and was commissioned Lieutenant in 1830. In 1849 he was made commander of the *Perry*, engaged for two years in suppressing the slave trade on the African Coast station, under Commodore Armstrong, and later helped capture the Barrier Forts near Canton. From October 1858 to the outbreak of the Civil War, he was in charge of the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

22. Porter, *Naval History of the Civil War*, 102.

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should be worked day and night until she was ready for sea. The officers who had been granted shore leave were recalled, and on April 4 the crew was put on board. On April 6, four days after the *Powhatan* was taken in hand, steam was up, everything in place, the pilot on board, and the lines ready to cast off. Lieutenant Porter boarded the ship in citizen's attire, and was unobserved among the crowd of people who were bidding their friends goodbye. He went into the cabin and locked himself in the captain's stateroom. The ship pulled away from the dock at 1 P.M., proceeding as far as Staten Island before Captain Mercer left her.<sup>23</sup> While the ship was lying off Tompkinville, Staten Island, waiting for the return of the boat which had carried Captain Mercer ashore, a swift steamer came alongside and Lieutenant Frances A. Roe of the Navy handed Porter the following message: "Give the *Powhatan* up to Captain Mercer." This communication was signed by the Secretary of State.<sup>24</sup> The Secretary of the Navy had apparently convinced the President that the *Powhatan* should be diverted from the expedition for the relief of Fort Pickens to the one being formed for the succor of Fort Sumter.<sup>25</sup>

Lieutenant Porter read the dispatch, and decided that there was only one thing for him to do - disobey it. The artillery for Brown's expedition was on board the *Powhatan*, and the steamer *Atlantic*, with the troops on board, he supposed had sailed at 12 noon and was at least ten miles at sea. If he stopped to restore the ship, the expedition might fail. In addition his orders were from the President and he determined to obey them. Porter had Roe telegraph to Washington: "I received my orders from the President and shall proceed and execute them."<sup>26</sup>

23. *Ibid.*, 103.

24. *O. R. N. Ser. I, Vol. IV, p. 112.*

25. The execution of the President's plan to reinforce Forts Sumter and Pickens had become involved in a series of muddles. Orders issued through Secretary Welles of the Navy Department assigned the *Powhatan* to the Sumter expedition; but Seward put through an order, which the President signed without reading, transferring the *Powhatan* to the fleet designated for Pickens. When Lincoln overruled Seward, directing him to restore the ship to the Sumter expedition, Seward bungled the matter by sending the new order in his own name; and the commander of the *Powhatan* refused to obey it in opposition to the previous order in the President's name. J. G. Randall, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: 1953), 238-239.

26. *O. R. N., Ser. I, Vol. IV, p. 112.*



Late on the evening of April 6, to supplement the orders to Colonel Brown, Welles sent for Lieutenant John L. Worden, of subsequent *Monitor* fame. Welles verbally instructed Worden to proceed with all possible speed to Pensacola with dispatches for Captain Adams; the substance of these orders was that Fort Pickens should be immediately reinforced.<sup>27</sup> Worden departed the next morning and reached Pensacola about midnight on April 10. Such a gale was blowing the next day that Worden was unable to deliver the substance of his dispatches to Adams until the afternoon of April 12.<sup>28</sup> Upon receipt of Welles' instructions, Adams inaugurated preparations to reinforce Pickens, first notifying Vogdes of the changed situation. Late that evening the troops under Vogdes and the marines of the naval squadron, under Lieutenant John C. Cash, were disembarked at Fort Pickens. The landing was unopposed. Once ashore the army commander deemed it probable that Bragg would land his men upon Santa Rosa Island in an endeavor to outflank Fort Pickens. To deter the Confederates from such a maneuver the *Wyandotte* and *Brooklyn* were anchored in position to sweep this exposed area with their broadsides.<sup>29</sup> Bragg reasonably inferred that Worden had brought the dispatches effecting the reinforcement of Fort Pickens, and ordered his arrest. Worden was apprehended by the Confederate authorities and incarcerated for several months.<sup>30</sup>

The day after the landing of the reinforcements at Fort Pickens it was reported to Captain Vogdes that a small boat had landed at the wharf under a flag of truce, and that the bearer, Captain Robert C. Wood, solicited an interview with the commander of the base. Upon Vogdes' arrival at the dock, Wood informed him that he had a verbal message from General Bragg. Wood stated "I was directed by General Bragg to inquire why the armistice in respect to re-enforcing Fort Pickens has been violated by throwing re-enforcements into it." Vogdes replied "I have never been a party to any armistice; I have been sent by the General Government to take command of the post, and have entered under the orders of the General Government." Wood then addressed himself to Lieutenant Slemmer stating "I was directed to inquire of the former commanding officer why the armistice has been vio-

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27. *Ibid.*, 111.

28. *Ibid.*, 137.

29. *Ibid.*, 115-117.

30. *Ibid.*, 118.

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lated." Slemmer replied "I have always obeyed the orders of my superiors." The interview then terminated.<sup>31</sup>

Now let us return to the expedition being outfitted in New York City by Colonel Brown. The Colonel, accompanied by Captain Meigs, arrived in New York City from Washington on the morning the *Atlantic* sailed for Fort Jefferson where she arrived at making preparations for the expedition. During the afternoon of April 6 the troops were embarked on the steamship *Atlantic*.<sup>32</sup> The ship weighed anchor at 3:30 A.M. the next morning and put to sea. After an extremely rough voyage the *Atlantic* put into Key West on the afternoon of April 13.<sup>33</sup> At daybreak the next morning the *Atlantic* sailed for Fort Jefferson where she arrived at 1 P.M. Brown inspected the fort and found its defenses in excellent condition. The *Atlantic* departed "the Gibraltar of the Gulf" on April 14 and arrived off Santa Rosa Island on the evening of April 16.<sup>34</sup> The voyage from the Tortugas was quite rough as a "heavy norther" had been encountered. Upon arrival at Fort Pickens, Brown immediately sought and obtained an interview with Captain Adams, who promised him every assistance in his power. Brown decided to land part of his force without delay. By 2 A.M. the Sappers and Miners and part of Captain Clitz's command had gone ashore.<sup>35</sup>

31. *O. R.*, Ser. I, Vol. I, p. 378. Robert C. Wood was born in Louisiana and entered West Point on July 11, 1850. Wood did not graduate from the academy, resigning from the institution on August 15, 1853. He was subsequently commissioned 2d lieutenant 2d Cavalry on March 3, 1855, and resigned from the service on January 1, 1858.
32. *Ibid.*, 372-373. The troops embarked included Barry's battery (Company A, 2d Artillery), Hunt's Company M, 2d Artillery, Duane's company of Sappers and Miners, and Companies C and E (Jahns' and Clitz's), 3d Infantry, and twenty Engineer carpenters under Captain Gray.
33. *Ibid.*, 394. While at Key West in order to augment his heavy ordnance Colonel Brown drew from Fort Taylor a battery of 12-pounder howitzers and 6-pounder guns, three 10-inch siege mortars for which shells had been embarked at New York, and a supply of ammunition for the field pieces. *Ibid.*, 395.
34. *Ibid.*, 395. At Fort Jefferson four mountain howitzers with prairie carriages, light and suitable either for the sands of Santa Rosa Island or for service upon the covered ways of Fort Pickens, with supplies of fixed ammunition, spherical case and cannister, were taken aboard. To assist in landing artillery a scow was taken in tow, but it broke loose from its fastenings before the *Atlantic* left the harbor.
35. *Ibid.*, 378-379. The only casualties during the landing were three horses which drowned. Four had died previously and had been thrown overboard in the boisterous passage, making in all seven lost in passage out of the seventy-three originally embarked.

On her voyage south the *Powhatan* was buffeted by several gales which reduced her speed. Once at sea Porter ordered his seamen over the side to paint out the gunport shutters so the *Powhatan* might resemble a mail steamer. Camouflaged by this disguise Porter counted strongly on being able to run past the forts and batteries at the entrance to Pensacola Harbor before the Confederates were alerted to the ship's identity. Once inside and beyond Fort Barrancas he had nothing to fear from the Confederates and would be able to prevent any attempt on their part to land a force on Santa Rosa Island. On April 17, twenty-four hours after the arrival of the *Atlantic*, the *Powhatan* arrived off Santa Rosa Island.<sup>36</sup> The *Powhatan* stood in towards the bar, crossed it, and headed for Fort McRee with her crew at their guns. A large barge with Captain Meigs on board now spoke the *Powhatan*. The ship stopped and Meigs came aboard, handing Porter a message from Colonel Brown protesting against Porter's entering the harbor on the grounds that Fort Pickens was unprepared for an attack from the Confederate batteries, and if the *Powhatan* entered the harbor it would draw their fire upon the fort. After discussing Brown's protest with Captain Meigs and carefully considering the matter, Porter reluctantly turned the *Powhatan's* head toward the steamer *Atlantic* and anchored within twenty fathoms of the beach.<sup>37</sup>

Brown's command now undertook to land the balance of the troops and horses carried aboard the *Atlantic*. The work associated with landing so many tons of supplies and equipment was most laborious and tedious. Wherever the heavy surf would permit, the disembarkation was carried on by the small boats carried on *Powhatan*, *Brooklyn*, *Wyandotte*, *Sabine* and *St. Louis*. The paddle-box boats carried aboard the *Powhatan* were especially useful for this work. One of them had a Dahlgren boat-howitzer aboard and was kept ready to protect the beach party from any marauding boats of the foe. None of the Southerners, however, interrupted the landing.<sup>38</sup> A detachment of one hundred marines and sailors heretofore constituting part of the garrison was allowed to return to the ships.

The next morning Brown inspected the condition of Fort

36. West, *Second Admiral*, 88.

37. Porter, *Naval History of the Civil War*, 103.

38. *O. R.*, Ser. I, Vol. I, p. 397.

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Pickens and found the defenses to be in a miserable state. Brown was confronted by a most distressing task. The mounted guns were few in number - two 10-inch columbiads, four 8-inch siege howitzers, seventeen 32-pounders, seven 18-pounders, and eleven 12-pounders. All these guns were smooth-bores and Colonel Brown urged the immediate requisition from the Navy of a number of heavy rifled guns. Orders were issued employing the entire garrison in mounting additional guns, building roads, and preparing quarters.<sup>39</sup> Brown then dispatched the following message to General Bragg:

I have the honor to inform you that I have arrived at this post, and that I shall, unless assailed, act only on the defensive, and make only such disposition of my forces as is necessary to protect them from any enemy, foreign or domestic. I have also to inform you that no movement of the troops of my command or of United States vessels in this vicinity will have any other than a defensive object, unless we shall unhappily be compelled to act offensively, repelling aggression against the flag, persons, or property of our country.<sup>40</sup>

In answer to Brown's message, Bragg proclaimed martial law in the area, and prohibited all intercourse between the mainland and the Federals.<sup>41</sup>

By April 20 the Federal's positions at Fort Pickens had noticeably improved. As reinforcements for the 690 men already ashore the steamship *Illinois* had arrived from New York that evening with two companies of infantry (Brooks' and Allen's) aboard. The *St. Louis* was sent to Key West to embark the additional companies of infantry destined for Fort Pickens. Augmented by these accretions Colonel Brown's force would soon total 1,012 officers and men with provisions to last for approximately six months.<sup>42</sup> With this force available the Federal officers believed it would be impossible for Bragg to land a force upon Santa Rosa Island as he would be confronted by the fire of the heavy batteries of the *Powhatan*, *Brooklyn*, and *Wyandotte*, which

39. *Ibid.*, 379.

40. *Ibid.*, 380.

41. *Ibid.*, 464.

42. *O. R. N.*, Ser. I, Vol. IV, p. 140. Counting the crews aboard ship, the force subject to Brown's orders totalled 3,087 officers and men.

would expose his force to swift destruction. However, to provide for the security of the vital eastern portion of Santa Rosa Island, a larger force would be necessary. Until these reinforcements should arrive, Brown proposed to throw up field works in advance of Fort Pickens' eastern approaches.<sup>43</sup>

Prior to his departure with dispatches for the government on April 23, Captain Meigs advised Colonel Brown to place the greater part of his command in an entrenched camp outside Fort Pickens. A favorable site for bivouac was found about four miles from the western end of Santa Rosa Island. The camp had a number of advantages; it was beyond the range of the 13-inch sea-coast mortars at the navy yard; it was overlooked by the guns of the Federal fleet; a good road could be built between the entrenched camp and the fort, protected by sand ridges forming natural epaulements from all horizontal fire for nine-tenths of the distance; a boat channel could be easily cut through the island just above the camp; and the men and horses would be healthy, and safe from the annoyance of hostile fire.<sup>44</sup> Two days after the arrival of the *Powhatan*, a flotilla, composed of steam tugs, schooners, and large launches filled with Confederate soldiers, was seen approaching from the direction of Pensacola. The Confederate vessels seemed to be heading for the two ships, *Powhatan* and *Atlantic*, on the Gulf side of Santa Rosa Island. There were about twenty-five of these small boats. The flotilla approached to within a mile and a half of the beach on Santa Rosa Island. They then halted and appeared to be making preparations for a landing. The 11-inch Dahlgren on board the *Powhatan* was cast loose, and a shell fired. The shell burst directly over the middle of the flotilla. The consequence was a rapid retreat of the expedition toward Pensacola. Undoubtedly the Confederates had taken the *Powhatan* and *Atlantic* for two supply ships which they hoped to capture. The Dahlgren was reloaded and pointed in the direction of the Navy Yard where a group of idle soldiers were watching the operations. It was fired, and a shrapnel shell exploded in the midst of the yard, at once clearing it of all occupants.<sup>45</sup>

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43. *Ibid.*, 140.

44. *O. R.*, Ser. I, Vol. I, pp. 386-387.

45. Porter, *Incidents and Anecdotes of the Civil War*, 24-25.

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Ten days after his arrival at Pensacola, Porter received the following order from Captain Adams:

The *Powhatan* will be a permanent guard ship for the present and hoist the guard flag. You will have all vessels bound in or out of Pensacola boarded by a lieutenant, who will report to me immediately if he learns anything of importance. . . .

If any vessels bound in are found to have munitions of war on board, they are not to be allowed to enter the harbor. No force is to be used in stopping those bound out. The *Wyandotte* will afford assistance in towing your boat and intercepting vessels when necessary.<sup>46</sup>

This order was issued and enforced at Pensacola prior to the receipt of any knowledge of the President's proclamations of blockade (dated April 19 and 27). Intelligence of the President's order did not reach Pensacola until the evening of May 12.<sup>47</sup>

Now to see what action the vigilant Confederate commander would take to counter these violations by the Federals of the truce agreement. On April 6 General Samuel Cooper, upon receipt of intelligence concerning the outfitting of Colonel Brown's expedition, warned Bragg, "the Government at Washington have determined to re-enforce Fort Pickens, and troops are now leaving for that purpose."<sup>48</sup> Bragg had already observed in a dispatch to Confederate Secretary of War Leroy P. Walker that the Federals had placed an officer of the Engineers in Fort Pickens in violation of the agreement "not to re-enforce." In addition, from information reaching his staff, he had reason to believe the garrison within Fort Pickens was rapidly becoming demoralized. Bragg believed the United States Government and some of its agents were acting in bad faith, and the Confederates were entirely

46. *O. R. N.*, Ser. I, Vol. IV, p. 131.

47. *Ibid.*

48. *O. R. Ser. I*, Vol. I, p. 456. Samuel Cooper was born at Hackensack, New Jersey, on June 12, 1798. Cooper graduated from West Point in 1815 receiving his commission as brevet 2d lieutenant of artillery. For the period 1828-1836 he was aide-de-camp to General Macomb. During the Seminole Indian War he served at army headquarters as assistant adjutant-general. In the Mexican War he served as chief-of-staff to General William J. Worth, and was brevetted colonel of staff for meritorious conduct relating to the prosecution of the war. In 1852 he became adjutant-general of the United States Army and resigned that position on March 7, 1861, to enter the Confederate service.

absolved from all obligations under the agreement of January 29. However, he hesitated to attack unless specifically ordered to do so by his government. Bragg correctly believed an attack would constitute a political problem.<sup>49</sup>

However, the Confederate Government was not ready to authorize a *coup de main* directed against Fort Pickens. In due course cognizance was taken of the critical situation and Secretary Walker called upon the chief executives of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Florida, and Mississippi for additional troops.<sup>50</sup> These troops were rapidly forwarded to Pensacola and by April 12 Bragg's forces had been increased to about 5,000 men.<sup>51</sup> During the night of April 12-13 Vodges' command had been thrown into Fort Pickens; however, its movement could not be observed from the mainland as the Federals were landed on the far side of Santa Rosa Island. When informed of this development, Bragg protested in vain and notified the Confederate authorities of the changed situation. On the morning of April 17 Bragg's scouts reported the arrival of the *Atlantic* with Colonel Brown's relief expedition.<sup>52</sup> After the debarkation of Brown's men affairs grew more tense along the opposing lines of works frowning at each other across the bay. April passed thus into history with the *modus vivendi* violated to the Federals' advantage; but, unlike Sumter, hostilities had been averted.

## II

### WATCHFUL WAITING

With the breakdown of the *modus vivendi* an armed truce prevailed within Pensacola Harbor. Both the Federal and Confederate forces labored day and night to strengthen their relative positions. On the night of May 5 the Confederate engineers placed a number of obstructions in the channel between Forts Pickens

49. *Ibid.*, 457. Leroy P. Walker was born near Huntsville, Alabama, in what was then Mississippi Territory, on February 7, 1817. He was admitted to the bar in 1837 and soon became judge of the 4th judicial circuit in Alabama, holding this position until 1853 when he resigned. Walker then entered the state legislature, and in 1860 was a delegate to the Charleston and Baltimore Democratic Conventions.

50. *Ibid.*, 457-459.

51. Dickison, *Military History of Florida*. (Atlanta: 1899), 24.

52. *O. R.*, Ser. I, Vol. I, p. 463.

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and McRee. These obstacles, it was hoped, would retard any serious attempt by the Federal fleet to force an entry into the harbor. <sup>53</sup> To help solve their difficult logistical problem the Confederates rushed to completion, by the second week in May, the Florida and Alabama Railroad. <sup>54</sup> Over this vital supply artery Bragg soon received a number of powerful siege guns and mortars. The Confederate commander ordered these heavy weapons emplaced in five positions which his engineers had recently completed. At this time (May 1861) Bragg viewed the shortage of cartridges and cartridge-boxes (forty dead men) as his most serious problems. In March, requisitions had been made upon the Baton Rouge Arsenal for these needed items, but no response was received. Bragg now dispatched one of his staff officers to Louisiana to expedite the matter. <sup>55</sup>

The Confederates' exertions on the mainland were matched by the Federals on Santa Rosa Island. They were continuously employed in unloading ships, storing provisions, and erecting additional fortifications for their protection. In their labors the Federals were hindered by a shortage of sandbags. <sup>56</sup> Other problems now arose to plague the Federals. In the hurry and confusion of the departure of the expedition, commanded by Colonel Brown, from New York, articles of prime importance which were stored in warehouses ready to be loaded were left behind, while other items of little importance were taken aboard. Among the former were the 8- and 10-inch shells for the garrison's numerous heavy ordnance. A special request to have these shells loaded on the *Illinois*, which had sailed subsequent to the departure of the *Atlantic*, was also neglected. The garrison of Fort Pickens, by borrowing from the Navy, was able to obtain enough shells to last for one day's continuous firing. <sup>57</sup>

53. *O. R.*, Ser. I, Vol. I, p. 467. Dickison, *Military History of Florida*, 26.

54. *O. R.*, Ser. I, Vol. I, p. 407. At the time the Confederates opened fire on Fort Sumter this railroad, running northeastward to Montgomery, had not been completed.

55. *Ibid.*, 465. Bragg's powerful batteries were located at the following places: Number I at the Navy Yard; Number II in the rear of the Warrington Church; Number III near Barrancas Barracks; Number IV near the old lighthouse; and Number V south of the new lighthouse.

56. *Ibid.*, 407.

57. *Ibid.*, 401.



As the hot summer months approached, there was a noticeable increase in the number of Federal soldiers reporting for sick call. This could be attributed to several factors, among which was the arduous labor in the torrid sun. In addition scurvy had broken out in Company G, 1st Artillery (the company originally posted at Pensacola Harbor), and Brown, on the certification of John Campbell, the senior assistant surgeon, that a temperate climate was necessary for the troops to recoup their health, had ordered them to Fort Hamilton, New York. Up until May 13 the Federals had lost two men by death and two by desertion to the enemy.<sup>58</sup>

The ammunition shortage was rectified on May 18 by the arrival of the schooner *J. N. Genin* with a supply of 8- and 10-inch shells, and a large quantity of solid shot for the 42-pounder smoothbores. The work of unloading the vessel anchored in the open roadstead proceeded very slowly and was not completed until May 27. By this time the Federals had completed and armed two new batteries christened "Lincoln" and "Cameron." The former, located five hundred yards northeast of the fort, was armed with two 10-inch siege mortars and one 8-inch sea-coast howitzer, and the latter between Fort Pickens and Batteries Lincoln was armed with two 10-inch columbiads.<sup>59</sup>

The primary problem continuing to plague the Federal officers was that Fort Pickens, being designed to cover the channel, had one extremely vulnerable point - its rear, provided the Confederates could establish a beachhead on Santa Rosa Island. Brown directed his Chief Engineer, Major Zealous B. Tower, to draw up a report on this critical situation. Tower responded:

It is my opinion that Fort Pickens cannot be successfully defended against the enemy's forces now arrayed against us unless a sufficient number of the steamships aid your command to prevent any landing upon Santa Rosa Island. If the enemy once establish themselves on this island in the absence of a powerful steam fleet, they can in a few days build batteries to prevent ships from approaching this end of the island, and rapidly advance and reduce this work by a short siege. The heavy fire upon the flank and rear of our land fronts will prevent us from making a strong resistance if it

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58. *Ibid.*, 407-411.

59. *Ibid.*, 416-417.

## CIVIL WAR OPERATIONS IN AND AROUND PENSACOLA 247

does not dismount nearly all our guns. Two curtains of our land fronts have no guns upon them, and the flank guns are seen in reverse. The Navy must hold the island until reinforcements arrive, or our nation must suffer another disgrace in the loss of Fort Pickens. Circumstances have much changed during the past three weeks, the power of the enemy being nearly doubled in men and heavy guns.<sup>60</sup>

The tensions built up during the past several weeks were to culminate in a rather amusing incident. At 3 A.M. on May 22 a greatly excited sentinel reported to Colonel Brown that the drydock was moving out into the bay from the Warrington Navy Yard. For some time previous it had been rumored that the dock had been fitted out as a water battery with heavy guns. The alarm sounded. Troops were ordered to their positions. Guns were trained on the approaching monster. Slowly the drydock moved toward Battery Lincoln, approaching to within less than a mile. Here she stopped, her broadside to the battery. Day-break revealed the drydock still anchored in this position. A thought then struck Brown. Here was an excellent opportunity to free himself from a false position, that of being obliged to act only on the defensive.<sup>61</sup> He therefore dispatched the following message to General Bragg:

In my letter to you of the 17th ultimo I announced my intention of acting only on the defensive, unless assailed. Since then your so-called government has commenced an unholy, unjust, and parricidal war on our common country, and you personally have been almost constantly hostilely engaged in erecting batteries against this fort, and last night in anchoring a floating battery within range of and menacing my command. You will therefore be pleased to notice that I shall act on the offensive whenever the interests and honor of my country, in my opinion, require it.<sup>62</sup>

Not receiving an answer, and having requested the concurrence of other officers of his command, Brown sent a second dispatch to Bragg which read:

60. *Ibid.*, 415-417. Zealous B. Tower was born in Massachusetts, and graduated from West Point in 1841 at head of his class. Upon graduation he was commissioned 2d lieutenant in the Engineers. He served in the Mexican War, and was brevetted three times for gallantry and meritorious conduct. Tower was promoted to captain on July 1, 1855.

61. *Ibid.*, 417.

62. *Ibid.*, 419.

It being impossible for me to know the character of the vessel now under my guns, or the object for which she is placed there, or of her removal from there, I can only consider her as designed to act in some manner against this fort or the shipping off this harbor. I have therefore to notify you that any attempt to remove or to occupy her will be considered an act of hostility, which I shall resist with what means I possess, unless I shall receive a satisfactory explanation.<sup>63</sup>

Brown's messenger returned from the mainland with Bragg's reply which read:

Your communication of this date announced your intention to "act on the offensive whenever the honor and interests of your country, in your judgment require it." To any action you may take I shall respond with alacrity. Having voluntarily pledged yourself "to act on the defensive, unless assailed" I am no little surprised at your complaint that I, who acted under no such pledge, have been "constantly hostilely engaged in erecting batteries against your fort," when you have been all the while, under my daily observation, doing precisely the same thing against my position. The merits of the controversy between our respective governments I choose not to discuss with you. Impartial history will decide that question for us; but I must insist on the propriety and necessity of your observing those courtesies of style and language which I have a right to expect from one holding your high position, in any future communications addressed to these headquarters.

. . . I am surprised at the excitement which has been caused by the accidental position of the dry-dock from the navy-yard, without troops or armament. I cannot see how it could be regarded in any hostile light, and I had intended removing it as soon as my means and the wind and tide would allow.<sup>64</sup>

The next morning the Federals discovered that the dock had been sunk within less than a mile of batteries Lincoln and Cameron. The incident was closed. Actually the Confederates had intended to take the drydock from Warrington to Pensacola where she would be safe in case of bombardment, but a strong northerly wind either broke her loose from the tugs or they were unable to control her movements. She then began to drift directly to-

63. *Ibid.*, 420.

64. *Ibid.*

## CIVIL WAR OPERATIONS IN AND AROUND PENSACOLA 249

ward the Federal batteries. To prevent the dock running aground on Santa Rosa Island the Confederates anchored her. Bragg, not knowing whether the Federals would accept his explanation as satisfactory, decided not to hazard the loss of any tugs which might be employed in towing the dock to a haven of safety. He therefore ordered the dock scuttled.<sup>65</sup>

In the initial week of May the Federal government determined to enforce the blockade enunciated by President Lincoln in his proclamations of April 19 and 27 by sending additional naval forces to the Gulf. To implement this decision, on May 4 Captain Williams W. McKean, while aboard the steam frigate *Niagara* which was tied up at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, received the following instructions from the Secretary of Navy:

You will therefore on the receipt of this [order] proceed to the Gulf and take measures for instituting and carrying into effect a rigid blockade of the Mississippi, and such other ports, especially Mobile, as the forces under your command will admit, and in connection therewith use all diligence to capture the vessels with arms and munitions on board.

Herewith you will receive a copy of the President's proclamation ordering a blockade. This on your arrival out you will proceed to carry into effect, giving public notice thereof in the best manner you can allowing no vessels to obtain ingress into the port or river blockade. Neutrals will be allowed fifteen days to leave, with or without cargo. . . .<sup>66</sup>

The *Niagara's* voyage to Pensacola was quite eventful. She weighed anchor and steamed out of New York Harbor at 2 P.M. on May 5. Five days later the steamer was off Charleston where she cruised for three days, warning off a number of vessels. From there the *Niagara* proceeded to Havana; and thence to Pensacola. She arrived off Santa Rosa Island on the morning of May 25. Upon arrival McKean, who was now the senior naval officer present, issued orders to the commanders of the *Brooklyn* and the *Powhatan* to proceed to the mouth of the Mississippi. He planned to cruise with his ship off Mobile Bay,<sup>67</sup> but was obliged

65. *Ibid.*, 417.

66. *O. R. N.*, Ser. I, Vol. IV, pp. 155-156. The *Niagara*, a steam frigate of 4,582 tons, was commissioned on May 14, 1860. The vessel had a maximum speed of 14 knots, and cruised at an average of 7.47 knots an hour. At this time the *Niagara* was armed with twelve XI-inch Dahlgren smoothbore guns.

67. *Ibid.*, 181-207.

to change his mind as a result of a dispatch from Colonel Brown reading in part:

I respectfully present to you that de taking away of these ships will jeopardize the safety of this fort. The force of the enemy on the other side of the harbor is represented to be from 8,000 to 10,000. My force for duty is a little less than 700, excusive of marines and sailors, so that if the ships are taken away I cannot prevent a landing of the enemy on Santa Rosa Island, their making a permanent lodgment here, and subsequent approaches on this fort.<sup>68</sup>

On receipt of this message McKean had an interview with Brown. Brown reiterated the theme expressed in his dispatch to the naval officer. McKean differed with the army officer and was of the opinion that the *Sabine*, with a small steamer to tow her if necessary, was sufficient to prevent a Confederate lodgment on Santa Rosa Island. Brown finally succeeded in convincing McKean of the importance the government attached to Fort Pickens. McKean now agreed that it was improper to send the *Niagara* to Mobile Bay. He therefore ordered Commander Charles H. Poor to station the *Powhatan* off Mobile Bay, and then proceed in the *Brooklyn* to the Mississippi Passes. On the return of the *St. Louis*, which had been ordered to Key West in the last week of April, he would send her and the *Huntsville*, which had left the Brooklyn Navy Yard on May 11, 1861, and arrived off Santa Rosa Island on May 26, to Mobile Bay, where they would relieve the *Powhatan*. Upon relief the *Powhatan* would proceed to the station initially assigned her.<sup>69</sup> On May 20, prior to McKean's arrival, the *Wyandotte* had been sent by Captain Adams to Key West to pick up the mail. As soon as she should return McKean planned to dispatch her or the *Mohawk* to blockade the mouth of the Apalachicola River. The *Mohawk* had arrived from Key West on April 30 and had been assigned to blockade the eastern exit from Pensacola Harbor at the far end of Santa Rosa Island.<sup>70</sup>

McKean, as the senior naval officer present, was notified by Captain Adams that the supply of coal used by the steam ships

68. *O. R.*, Ser. I, Vol. I, p. 418.

69. *O. R. N.*, Ser. I, Vol. IV, pp. 181-211. The *Huntsville*, a steamer of 840 tons, was chartered by the Federal government in May, 1861. At this period the vessel was armed with one 64-pounder and two 32-pounders.

70. *Ibid.*, 182.

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was in exceedingly short supply. To rectify this situation McKean ordered the *Water Witch* to Key West with instructions for Lieutenant Commander Thomas T. Craven, commanding the Naval forces there, to charter a vessel and forward a supply of fuel to Pensacola.<sup>71</sup>

Prior to the conflict, the Atlantic and Gulf waters of the United States, with those of the Caribbean, were the cruising grounds of one division of vessels known as the Home Squadron. At the beginning of hostilities this squadron was under the command of Flag Officer Garrett J. Pendergrast. The command had proved too extensive to be administered by any one man when it became the scene of active operations. It was now divided into three commands. The West India Squadron, having as its charge United States interests in Mexico and Central America as well as in the Antilles, remained under the care of Pendergrast. Flag Officer Silas H. Stringham assumed command of the Atlantic Squadron with jurisdiction as far south as Cape Florida. Flag Officer William Mervine on May 6, 1861, was assigned to command the Gulf Blockading Squadron, which patrolled the waters of the gulf from Cape Florida to the Rio Grande. Mervine, flying his flag from the *Mississippi*, reached his station on June 8, and assumed command.<sup>72</sup>

The critical condition of the Federal defenses at Fort Pickens was called to Secretary of War Simon Cameron's attention. In a letter dated May 29, 1861, Cameron directed Colonel James W. Ripley, Chief of Ordnance, to expedite the shipment of additional pieces of heavy ordnance to Fort Pickens from Governor's Island.<sup>73</sup> On the same date Cameron forwarded a request to the Secretary of the Navy asking for the use of thirty IX-inch Dahl-

71. *Ibid.* In event of Craven's not having authority to do this a supplemental letter was dispatched to Shufeldt, the United States consul-general at Havana, to purchase a cargo there, and forward it without delay.

72. Alfred T. Mahan, *The Gulf and Inland Waters* (New York: 1883), 4-5. The *Mississippi*, a side-wheel steamer displacing 1,732 tons, had been built in 1841. In May 1861 its armament consisted of one IX-inch Dahlgren smoothbore gun, and ten VIII-inch Dahlgren smoothbore guns.

73. *O. R.*, Ser. I, Vol. I, p. 422. James Wolfe Ripley was born in Connecticut and graduated from West Point as a 2d lieutenant in the Artillery Corps on June 1, 1814. Ripley served in the Mexican War during which he was brevetted lieutenant-colonel for meritorious conduct in the performance of his duty. On April 23, 1861, he was made Chief of Ordnance.

gren guns.<sup>74</sup> On the next day Colonel Meigs, who had returned to Washington from Florida, was directed by the Secretary of War "to take charge of the organization and dispatch of an expedition to sail from New York and Portsmouth under sealed orders."<sup>75</sup> The energetic future Quartermaster General of the United States Army turned to this assignment with a will. A request was made of the governor of New York to designate a regiment of volunteers who had enlisted to serve for at least two years. The regiment was to be dispatched immediately to augment its garrison. Colonel William Wilson's 6th Regiment New York Volunteers was selected by Governor Edwin D. Morgan and ordered to embark immediately. Meigs, who seemed omnipresent, soon had reinforcements of men and material flowing to the gulf coast of Florida.<sup>76</sup>

By the end of the second week of June, Colonel Brown was able to report the arrival of the *Star of the South*, the *South Carolina*, and the *Massachusetts* with smoothbores, siege guns, howitzers, ammunition, hay, oats, and twenty mules and carts. With these additional weapons the colonel was able to arm Battery Scott, a new emplacement on the southwestern tip of Santa Rosa Island opposite Fort McRee. However, the Federal commander was disappointed when the repeatedly called for rifled cannon failed to arrive.<sup>77</sup>

The weather had now turned extremely hot and humid. The number of men reporting for sick call increased rapidly. By the fourth week of June at least ninety men reported daily to the surgeon. A majority of cases could be attributed to the hard work in the sun, sleeping in damp casemates, and drinking impure water. Nearly six weeks had passed since any rain had fallen. One of the cisterns leaked and the other had to be used with great economy. Brown ordered a temporary hospital built about

74. *Ibid.*, 423. Montgomery Meigs had returned to Washington from Fort Pickens in the initial week of May and had been promoted to the command of the newly organized 11th Infantry on May 14, 1861.

75. *Ibid.*

76. *Ibid.*, 427.

77. *Ibid.*, 429-30. At the time Colonel Brown had emplaced his heavy siege pieces as follows: 10-inch columbiads, one mounted in each of the five bastions of the fort, one in the salient of the counterscarp opposite E Bastion, and two in Battery Cameron; 10-inch seacoast mortar, two mounted in Battery Lincoln.

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a mile from the fort.<sup>78</sup> Brown, in view of these sanitation problems, advised the government in Washington not to land a large body of troops on Santa Rosa Island until after the September gales had dispelled the "miasma" arising from the nearby swamps. He considered the Confederate batteries erected by Bragg to be so numerous and advantageously situated as to preclude the entrance of any large Federal ships into the harbor. After noting this fact Brown prepared an essay on ground strategy. Since he conceived the entrance of large vessels to be out of the question the army officer recommended the use of gunboats of a shallow draught. He believed the gunboats could enter the harbor by one of two avenues; through the main entrance in front of Fort Pickens following the shoreline and taking advantage of a dark and cloudy night, or through the channel at the eastern end of Santa Rosa Island. Once inside the harbor the Federal gunboats would be able to operate at an advantage since the Confederates did not have any gunboats and once in command of the harbor the Federals could cut off the water-borne supplies of the Confederates. In conjunction with these forces operating in the harbor, additional Federal forces would be landed near the mouth of the Perdido River. These forces would sever Bragg's communication with Mobile, and his position would be completely invested.<sup>79</sup>

By the end of June the munitions that the Secretary of War had ordered Colonel Meigs to forward to Fort Pickens had arrived. In one shipment were the long-awaited rifled 42-pounders. Several days later the steamer *Illinois* arrived. Aboard this vessel were twenty-eight Dahlgren IX-inch guns sent by the Navy Department at the urgent request of the Secretary of War. Brown was overjoyed by the receipt of the rifled guns, but he was quickly disillusioned by the Dahlgrens. He found these guns unfit for service ashore and, of greater concern, their shells were fused in such a manner that only one-third of those sent could be used.<sup>80</sup> In anticipation of the arrival of the 6th New York, Brown was ordered to send Barry's and Hunt's company, 1st Artillery, to New York. This irked the Federal commander and he protested to Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas:

78. *Ibid.*, 431-433.

79. *Ibid.*, 431-432.

80. *Ibid.*, 433.



When, in the face of repeated applications and urgent entreaties for more regular officers, and of strong representations, repeatedly urged, of the necessity of more regular companies, and of my declaration that at this time volunteers would very much embarrass me, and the expression of a hope that none would be sent, nine of my officers, one-third my whole number, and two artillery companies are taken from me, and a regiment of undrilled New York City Volunteers, entirely undisciplined, are sent me, I can only attribute it to a want of confidence in my judgment, or of disbelief in, and disregard to, my urgent and repeated representations of the wants and necessities of this fort.<sup>81</sup>

Nevertheless, in conformity to these orders, Hunt's battery was embarked on the *Illinois*, and Barry's unit prepared to board the *Vanderbilt*, which had brought the garrison four additional rifled guns and three seacoast mortars.

On July 10 the New York Volunteers arrived, and Brown again took up his pen and composed another epistle to the War Department complaining of his exposed position and the inability of the garrison of Fort Pickens to stand a protracted siege. The colonel pointed out "while raw recruits and volunteers may be useful in the field and as infantry, but they are useless at Fort Pickens as an artillery soldier cannot be improvised in a day." He again reiterated his view that "the number of trained officers and men available is entirely insufficient to man the guns of the fort and the batteries, should they be bombarded." In Brown's opinion "twenty more officers and four more companies are required."<sup>82</sup>

Brown then broached the question "what course should I pursue-act still strictly on the defensive, or open my batteries against the enemy?" He pointed out that his instructions had been to act strictly on the defensive and it would be to the Federal government's advantage to continue this policy. The reason he gave was "the relative strength of the enemy is very greatly superior . . . 8,000 men to watch 1,800; . . . if he attacks me and fails, his defeat will be disgraceful and fatal to his cause; . . . we gain more and lose less by delay than he does." The advantages to be gained by becoming the aggressor Brown listed as follows: "the moral influence which a successful bombardment of

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81. *Ibid.*, 434.

82. *Ibid.*, 435-437.

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[forts Barancas and McRee], the destruction of the navy-yard and of the public and private buildings at Warrington, would . . . have in our country; . . . the immense amount of ammunition which he must expend; . . . the destruction and demoralization of his troops, being raw bodies, and the prestige obtained by an inferior force acting offensively. . . .”<sup>83</sup>

The new hospital situated on the beach, about one and a half miles from the fort, was completed by the end of the third week of July. With the arrival of a shipment of 8-inch columbiads from Fort Jefferson in the Tortugas, Brown now had all the heavy guns he could use. A new battery, a quarter of a mile east of the fort and near the Gulf, containing two heavy sea-coast mortars (12-and 13-inch) was nearly completed. Brown’s plans called for his engineers to lay out one more battery containing three 10-inch mortars in the center of the island and about one and a quarter miles east of the fort. With the completion of these works Brown wrote “this fort will be in complete readiness, and I presume no fort in the United States was ever better prepared for offensive or defensive operations (if manned, which it is not half.)”<sup>84</sup>

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83. *Ibid.*, 436.

84. *Ibid.*, 438, 440.