

# MILITARY SEA SERVICES MUSEUM, INC.



## SEA SERVICES SCUTTLEBUTT

December 2017

### A message from the President



**John Cecil**

Greetings,

The year 2017 was another good year for the Museum. Thanks to our Member's dues, a substantial contribution from our most generous member and contributions from a couple of local patriotic organizations, we will end the year financially sound and feeling confident that we will be able to make any emergency repairs and continue to make improvements to the Museum. As reported in previous Scuttlebutts, most of our major projects have been completed. Our upgraded security system with motion activated cameras inside the Museum and outside the shed should be completed this month. The construction of a concrete structure for the mid-1600s British Admiralty Cannon should be completed early next year.

I hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and a New Year that is happy, healthy and prosperous.

On this Christmas day let's all say a prayer for our troops that can't be home with families and loved ones. They are doing a great job of preventing the spread of terrorism and protecting our freedoms. Please say a prayer for their safe return home.

John



Military Sea Services entry in Sebring's 2017 Veteran's Day Parade

The construction on Fred Carino's boat was done by Fred and his brother Chris. The replica of the bow ornament was done by Mary Anne Lamorte and her granddaughter Dominique Juliano.

**Military Sea Services Museum**  
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**Hours of Operation**  
**Open: Thursday through Saturday**  
**Noon to 4:00 p.m.**  
Web site: <http://milseasvcmuseum.org/>

## **Welcome Aboard New Members**

On 1 Dec 2017, Kenneth and Kathleen Wells became annual members of the Museum. Kenneth is a U.S. Navy Veteran and a retired IT Specialist. Kathleen is a retired Police Officer. Kenneth and Kathleen live in Sebring, FL.

On 1 Dec 2017, Charles and Betty Martin became life members of the Museum. Charles is a retired U.S. Army Warrant Officer and is retired/disabled. Betty is a Certified Nurse's Assistant. Charles and Betty live in Avon Park, FL.

On 1 Dec 2017 Richard and Sandra Tufts became annual members of the Museum. Richard is a retired U.S. Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer and a retired Electrician. Sandra is a retired Doll Maker. Richard and Sandra live in Lake Placid, FL.

On 5 Dec 2017, Robert and Joann Posthumus became annual members of the Museum. Robert is a retired U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander and a retired Configuration Manager for the Navy SSN 688 Program. Joann is a U.S. Navy Veteran who served as a Navy Nurse. Robert and Joann live in Sebring, FL.

On 8 Dec 2017, Vernon and Nancy Ringle became annual members of the Museum. Vernon is a U.S. Navy Veteran and retired from Retail Sales Management. Nancy is a retired Engineering Clerk. Vernon and Nancy live in Sebring, FL during the winter months and in Michigan in the summer.

A very hearty welcome aboard to our newest members! A sincere thank you to all our members for their continued support. Without member support, the Museum would not be able to pay its bills and would have to close the doors.

## **Memoriam**

We are saddened by the passing on 18 November 2017 of Rodney E. Richardson, age 89. Rodney was a long time member of the Museum. He retired from the U.S. Navy as a Chief Petty Officer after serving during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Rodney, while serving in USS Bainbridge (DLGN-25), participated in Operation Sea Orbit---in 1964 USS Bainbridge, USS Enterprise (CVAN-65) and USS Long Beach (CGN-9) made the first nuclear-powered trip around the world.

We are also saddened by the passing on 21 November 2017 of Nancy Gill. Nancy and her husband John were long time members of the Museum. John (MCPO, USCG (Ret)) continues as an active member. Nancy worked in many professions during her life. She was also an excellent seamstress, enjoyed travelling, and volunteered for many charitable projects. Nancy enjoyed singing with the Glad Hatters and in various Church Choirs.

Fair winds and following seas Rodney and Nancy. Rest in Peace! Our thoughts and prayers are with the Richardson and Gill families.

## Quotable Quotes

We will always remember. We will always be proud. We will always be prepared, so we may always be free  
---Ronald Reagan

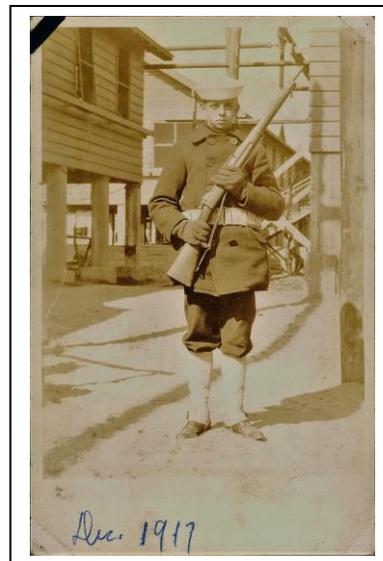
We must be ready to dare all for our country. For history does not long entrust the care of freedom to the weak or the timid.-  
--Dwight D. Eisenhower

In the truest sense, freedom cannot be bestowed; it must be achieved.---Franklin D. Roosevelt

Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves.---Abraham Lincoln

Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must, like men, undergo the fatigue of supporting it. ---Thomas Paine

Seaman Recruit Mathew James Walter White Jr., Age 18, father of  
Gordon White, Navy Vet, Museum Member, and Volunteer.  
Photo taken 100 years ago probably at Norfolk, VA.



## Why the Military Sea Services Museum is Non-Political

A special note about politics and our 501.c.3 status. As our goals for the museum are to honor our military, specifically the sea services, and to educate and inform the public regarding the same, we are established as a state of Florida non-profit corporation, and are recognized by the IRS as a 501.c.3 non-profit. This status allows individuals to donate funds to the museum and claim it on their income taxes. This status precludes and proscribes our participation in political activities as an entity or as individuals representing the museum for that purpose. This does not mean that a member of the museum is prohibited from participating in campaigns, donating money to the same, etc. They just cannot do it in the name of the museum.

Beyond that, to achieve our goals, we cannot and do not play favorites. Additionally, not everyone in the room is a Democrat, Republican, or Independent. There is at least one of each of these. Our cohesion and camaraderie are too important to let the passions of our politics affect our group. We leave politics at the door for good reason. We all have feelings, sometimes very strong ones, on what is going on in our country. We all love our country, and demonstrated that by our service in uniform or our support to the museum, and in many other ways. Just because someone is a “fill in the blank” doesn’t mean that he or she loves America any more or any less. Our country was founded on the very freedoms that allow these differences of opinion. No other country in the history of the world ever enjoyed the freedoms we hold so dear. But we strive for unity, and choose to not let the divisions so dominant in the public sphere affect our unity as members of the Military Sea Services Museum—where history comes alive.

Thank You COL Mike Borders, USA (Ret) for this excellent reminder.

## **My Most Memorable Experience**

Jack Moore, Pearl Harbor Survivor, Museum Member

On the morning of Dec 7, 1941, the USS Sacramento was tied up to a dock in Pearl Harbor. I was two decks below reading the Sunday newspaper. Occasionally, I would peer through the porthole to watch harbor activity and to admire the battleships of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. They were lined up in two rows abreast and, this morning, were preparing for church services. Even though I was little more than a recruit, I was so very proud to be a part of the U.S. Navy, the greatest Navy in the world according to the military experts of the time and to 19-year-old Jack H. Moore, Seaman 2/c.

As I returned to my bunk to finish reading the Sunday paper, I heard the unmistakable sound of General Quarters. Automatically, I reached for my helmet and ran up two flights of steps to the main deck. Believing this to be just another routine drill, I felt no apprehension, only irritation for being disturbed on this peaceful Sunday morning. However, when I reached the main deck and looked astern, I saw torpedo planes with large red insignias on their wings and fuselages. They were flying just above water and were in the process of releasing their torpedoes.

As I watched the torpedoes speed toward Battleship Row and explode against the hulls of those great ships, it was unbelievable but true, we were being attacked by the Japs and this was not a drill, this was war!

I immediately ran to my battle station, a .50 cal. machine gun located on the flying bridge. My assignment was to pump water into the water cooled machine gun, but since I was the first man to arrive at my battle station, I pulled off the gun cover with one hand and with the other tried to flip open the lid of the ammunition storage box. To my amazement the storage boxes were locked!

Looking down, I saw a hammer near the storage boxes which someone had forgotten to put away. With the hammer I smashed the locks open and with all my strength lifted the fully loaded ammunition container onto the gun mount and began firing at the attacking aircraft. They were flying on a flight path that passed over our port bow and near a huge hammerhead crane located on the dock near the ship. Because of the crane's location and its proximity to the ship, strafing aircraft fire ricocheted harmlessly off the crane.

Although the entire fleet concentrated their anti-aircraft fire on the attacking aircraft, it was too late, all of the proud and invincible battleships had been sunk or damaged in the first few minutes of the attack!

During the first attack our gun malfunctioned and while the gunner's mate was repairing the gun, I had time to observe and absorb the humiliating and horrible sights of the harbor. Hundreds of sailors were clinging to the overturned hull of the USS Oklahoma while others were trying to swim through or under the burning oil to reach rescue boats or the docks. It was a sight that I will never forget. Too, the coolness under fire that our gunner's mate displayed while repairing our gun had a lasting impression. I decided then I must acquire those same skills for I never wanted to feel that useless or helpless ever again.

My morale got a tremendous boost in the next few minutes as we watched a smoking Jap plane crash near the Navy hospital. However, my confidence soon vanished for as I looked across the harbor I saw a bomb drop down the stack of the USS Arizona. Almost immediately the ship exploded and began to sink while Marines high up in the crow's nest continued to fire at the attacking aircraft! An unbelievable hit, but not any more unbelievable than this treacherous and surprise attack.

About this time, the USS Nevada although damaged, made a courageous attempt to escape the harbor. She pulled away from her mooring and under full speed proceeded down the channel with all of her AA guns firing. What a sight to behold! This was the power and fighting capability of a battleship being demonstrated to what was left of Battleship Row and other ships of the fleet.

## **My Most Memorable Experience – cont'd**

Of course the Japanese observed this last remaining battleship trying to leave the harbor and they immediately began their attack. One pilot flew by us so close that I could have hit him with a rock. He opened his cockpit canopy and with a characteristic grin thumbed his nose at us. Enraged, we tried with every gun to shoot him down but unfortunately we were unsuccessful. He managed to drop an armor piercing bomb on the bow of the Nevada, the ship shuddered and shook but continued down the channel. However, she was seriously damaged and to prevent her from sinking in the channel, the captain wisely beached her on the nearest sand bar.

The Japanese began their final attack with high altitude bombing. The Navy crane and our 50 cal guns which had provided us with a measure of protection in the preceding attacks, were of no value in this attack. With no means of retaliation or protection it was the most gut wrenching time of the attack. As I watched the bombs being dropped directly overhead it appeared that each bomb would be a direct hit! Fortunately, we were not hit and most of the bombs fell harmlessly into the harbor.

Finally, the attack was over but rumors were circulating that the Japs were going to land an invasion force. Quickly, a retaliatory force was formed and we were issued rifles and ammunition. We were ready to leave for the beaches when the rumors were proven to be false.

That night the planes from the USS Enterprise flew in to land on Ford Island and we were so trigger happy that we shot down some of our own aircraft.

Several days later, we were given a few days of R&R at the nearby beaches. For me it was very difficult to think of anything except the humiliating defeat we had suffered and the loss of so many of our sailors. Most depressing too was the realization that we were mentally unprepared for this attack. How could the Japanese fleet come so close to the Hawaiian Islands without being detected!

## **Thanks for the Memories**

For everyone in our locale (Sebring, Florida) Hurricane Irma gave us a lot of work to do both before and after the storm. Having worked hard repairing, replacing, hauling tons of debris to the street, etc. Pat and I decided to do a "drop and go" cruise to the southern Caribbean islands of Aruba, Curacao and Bonaire. We left November 18 and as is the custom aboard the *Princess* line, the ship hosted a US veterans get together on the first full day at sea. About forty of us gathered in the comfortable Skywalker Bar with a panorama overlooking the pool decks and everything forward on a deeply blue and perfectly calm day on the Atlantic. The line provided the "bubbly" and we settled in with introducing ourselves around. As it happened I was seated with several US Army Vietnam vets and a rather senior US Navy captain. As we shared stories of ships and stations in which we had served, Captain Peter Brown related he had been the commanding officer of USS Brumby, destroyer escort number 1044. Flipping back through my mental Rolodex I recognized this as one of the ship's cruise books on display in our museum's Flag Room. I even recalled it had been donated by Chief Petty Officer George Smith, USN-Retired. I asked the captain, "Did you perhaps serve with a Machinist Mate Chief named George Smith?" Captain Brown thought but a second or two and then smiled widely and replied, "Yes. I do indeed remember Chief George Smith. He was one of my crew in the Brumby. He was a good man." Our little gathering broke up and I made a mental note to double check the cruise book upon return to Sebring. Later, paging through the slightly tattered journal of the Brumby there indeed was a picture of the self same Captain Peter Brown. When I related this story to George's widow, Millie, she instantly recalled that when Captain Brown was departing the Brumby after completing his tour as commanding officer, he asked her husband to accompany him down the gangway as it was George's transfer day as well. George and son Steven's dress blue Chief's uniforms are displayed side-by-side in the museum. Millie continues as a very active and cherished member of our Military Sea Services Museum family. Merry Christmas, Happy New Year's and Anchors Aweigh!

Thank You CDR Fred Carino, USN (Ret) for this unusual story -it is indeed a small world.

# Tales of an Asia Sailor



*U. S. Navy II*  
by davisg022

Friday, October 13, 2017, marked the Two Hundred Forty-Second birthday of the United States Navy. I have compiled a history of the Navy from its inception through the present. The entire document comprises over eleven thousand words and twenty pages. This is the second of four installments.

((1st installment is in Oct 2017 Scuttlebutt)))

## War of 1812 (1812–1815)

Much of the war was expected to be fought at sea; and within an hour of the announcement of war, the diminutive American navy set forth to do battle with an opponent outnumbering it 50-to-1. After two months, USS Constitution sank HMS Guerriere; the crew was most dismayed to see their cannonballs bouncing off the Constitution's unusually strong live oak hull, giving her the enduring nickname of "Old Ironsides." On 29 December 1812 Constitution defeated HMS Java off the coast of Brazil and Java was burned after the Americans determined she could not be salvaged. On 25 October 1812, USS United States captured HMS Macedonian, after the battle, Macedonian was commissioned into American service. In 1813, USS Essex commenced a very fruitful raiding venture into the South Pacific, preying upon the British merchant and whaling industry. The Essex was already known for her capture of HMS Alert and a British transport the previous year and gained further success capturing 15 British merchantmen/whalers. The British finally took action, dispatching HMS Cherub and HMS Phoebe to stop the Essex. After violating Chile's neutrality, the British captured the Essex in the Battle of Valparaiso.

The capture of the three British frigates led the British to deploy more vessels on the American seaboard to tighten the blockade. On 1 June 1813, off Boston Harbor, the frigate USS Chesapeake, commanded by Captain James Lawrence, was captured by the British frigate HMS Shannon under Captain Sir Philip Broke. Lawrence was mortally wounded and famously cried out, "Don't give up the ship!".<sup>[42]</sup> Despite their earlier successes, by 1814 many of the Navy's best ships were blockaded in port and unable to prevent British incursions on land via the sea.

During the summer of 1814, the British fought the Chesapeake Campaign which was climaxed by amphibious assaults against Washington and Baltimore. The capital fell to the British almost without a fight, and several ships were burned at the Washington Navy Yard, including the 44-gun frigate USS Columbia. At Baltimore, the bombardment of Fort McHenry inspired Francis Scott Key to write "The Star-Spangled Banner," and the hulks blocking the channel prevented the fleet from entering the harbor; the army re-embarked on the ships, ending the battle. The American naval victories at the Battle of Lake Champlain and Battle of Lake Erie halted the final British offensive in the north and helped to deny the British exclusive rights to the Great Lakes in the Treaty of Ghent. Shortly before the treaty was signed, USS President was captured by four British frigates three days after the treaty was signed, the Constitution captures HMS Levant and Cayne. The final naval action of the war occurred almost five months after the treaty on 30 June 1815 when the sloop USS Peacock captured the East India Company brig Nautilus, the last enemy ship captured by the U.S. Navy until World War II.

## Continental Expansion (1815–1861)

After the war, the Navy's accomplishments paid off in the form of better funding, and it embarked on the construction of many new ships. However, the expense of the larger ships was prohibitive, and many of them stayed in shipyards half-completed, in readiness for another war, until the age of Sail had almost completely passed. The main force of the Navy continued to be large sailing frigates with some smaller sloops during the three decades of peace. By the 1840s, the Navy began to adopt steam power and shell guns, but they lagged behind the French and British in adopting the new technologies

Enlisted sailors during this time included many foreign-born men, and native-born Americans were usually social outcasts who had few other employment options, or they were trying to escape punishment for crimes. In 1835, almost 3,000 men sailed with merchant ships out of Boston harbor, but only 90 men were recruited by the Navy. It was unlawful for black men to serve in the Navy, but the shortage of men was so acute this law was frequently ignored.

Discipline followed the customs of the Royal Navy, but the punishment was much milder than typical in European navies. Sodomy was rarely prosecuted. The Army abolished flogging as a punishment in 1812, but the Navy kept it until 1850.

## Tales of an Asia Sailor- Cont'd

During the War of 1812, the Barbary States took advantage of the weakness of the United States Navy to again capture American merchant ships and sailors. After the Treaty of Ghent had been signed, the United States looked at ending the piracy in the Mediterranean which had plagued American merchants for two decades. On 3 March 1815, the U.S. Congress authorized the deployment of naval power against Algiers, beginning the Second Barbary War. Two powerful squadrons under the command of Commodores Stephen Decatur, Jr. and William Bainbridge, including the 74-gun ships of the line Washington, Independence, and Franklin were dispatched to the Mediterranean. Shortly after departing Gibraltar en route to Algiers, Decatur's squadron encountered the Algerian flagship Meshuda, and, in the Action of 17 June 1825, captured it. Not long afterward, the American squadron likewise captured the Algerian brig Estedo in the Battle of Cape Pelos. By June, the squadrons had reached Algiers and peace was negotiated with the Dey, including a return of captured vessels and men, a guarantee of no further tributes and a right to trade in the region.

Piracy in the Caribbean Sea was also a major problem, and between 1815 and 1822 an estimated 3,000 ships were captured by pirates. In 1819, Congress authorized President James Madison to deal with this threat, and since many of the pirates were privateers of the newly independent states of Latin America, he decided to embark on a strategy of diplomacy backed up by the guns of the Navy. An agreement with Venezuela was reached in 1819, but ships were still regularly captured until a military campaign by the West India Squadron, under the command of David Porter, used a combination of large frigates escorting merchant ships backed by much small craft searching small coves and islands, and capturing pirate vessels. During this campaign, USS Seagull became the first steam-powered ship to see combat action. Although isolated instances of piracy continued into the 1830s, by 1826 the frequent attacks had ended and the region was declared free for commerce.

Another international problem was the slave trade, and the African squadron was formed in 1820 to deal with this threat. Politically, the suppression of the slave trade was unpopular, and the squadron was withdrawn in 1823 ostensibly to deal with piracy in the Caribbean and did not return to the African coast until the passage of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty with Britain in 1842. After the treaty was passed, the United States used fewer ships than the treaty required, ordered the ships based far from the coast of Africa and used ships that were too large to operate close to shore. Between 1845 and 1850, the United States Navy captured only ten slave vessels, while the British captured 423 vessels carrying 27,000 captives. Congress formally authorized the establishment of the United States Military Academy in 1802, but it took almost 50 years to approve a similar school for naval officers. During the long period of peace between 1815 and 1846, midshipmen had few opportunities for promotion, and their warrants were often obtained via patronage. The poor quality of officer training in the U.S. Navy became visible after the Somers Affair, an alleged mutiny aboard the training ship USS Somers in 1842, and the subsequent execution of Midshipman Philip Spencer. George Bancroft, appointed Secretary of the Navy in 1845, decided to work outside of congressional approval and create a new academy for officers. He formed a council led by Commodore Perry to create a new system for training officers and turned the old Fort Severn at Annapolis into a new institution in 1845 which would be designated as the United States Naval Academy by Congress in 1851.

Naval forces participated in the effort to forcibly move the Seminole Indians from Florida to a reservation west of the Mississippi. After a massacre of army soldiers near Tampa on 28 December 1835, Marines and sailors were added to the forces which fought the Second Seminole War from 1836 until 1842. A "mosquito fleet" was formed in the Everglades out of various small craft to transport a mixture of army and navy personnel to pursue the Seminoles into the swamps. About 1,500 soldiers were killed during the conflict; some Seminoles agreed to move, but a small group of Seminoles remained in control of the Everglades and the area around Lake Okeechobee.

The Navy played a role in two major operations of the Mexican–American War (1845–1848); during the Battle of Veracruz, it transported the invasion force that captured Veracruz by landing 12,000 troops and their equipment in one day, leading eventually to the capture of Mexico City, and the end of the war. The Pacific Squadron's ships facilitated the capture of California

In 1853 Commodore Matthew Perry led the Perry Expedition, a squadron of four ships which sailed to Japan to establish normal relations with Japan. Perry's two technologically advanced steam-powered ships and calm, firm diplomacy convinced Japan to end three centuries of isolation and sign Treaty of Kanagawa with the U.S. in 1854. Nominally a treaty of friendship, the agreement soon paved the way for the opening of Japan and normal trade relations with the United States and Europe.

## American Civil War (1861–1865)



Between the beginning of the war and the end of 1861, 373 commissioned officers, warrant officers, and midshipmen resigned or were dismissed from the United States Navy and went on to serve the Confederacy. On 20 April 1861, the Union burned its ships that were at the Norfolk Navy Yard to prevent their capture by the Confederates, but not all of the ships were completely destroyed. The screw frigate USS Merrimack was so hastily scuttled that her hull and steam engine were intact, which gave the South's Stephen Mallory the idea of raising her and then armoring the upper sides with iron plate. The resulting ship was named CSS Virginia. Meanwhile, John Ericsson had similar ideas and received funding to build USS Monitor.

Winfield Scott, the commanding general of the U.S. Army at the beginning of the war, devised the Anaconda Plan to win the war with as little bloodshed as possible. His idea was that a Union blockade of the main ports would weaken the Confederate economy; then the capture of the Mississippi River would split the South. Lincoln adopted the plan in terms of a blockade to squeeze to death the Confederate economy but overruled Scott's warnings that his new army was not ready for an offensive operation because public opinion demanded an immediate attack.

On 8 March 1862, the Confederate Navy initiated the first combat between ironclads when the Virginia successfully attacked the blockade. The next day, the Monitor engaged the Virginia in the Battle of Hampton Roads. Their battle ended in a draw, and the Confederacy later lost the Virginia when the ship was scuttled to prevent capture. The Monitor was the prototype for the monitor warship and many more were built by the Union Navy. While the Confederacy built more ironclad ships during the war, they lacked the ability to build or purchase ships that could effectively counter the monitors.

Along with ironclad ships, the new technologies of naval mines, which were known as torpedoes after the torpedo eel, and submarine warfare were introduced during the war by the Confederacy. During the Battle of Mobile Bay, mines were used to protect the harbor and sank the Union monitor USS Tecumseh. After Tecumseh sank, Admiral David G. Farragut famously said, "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!" The forerunner of the modern submarine, CSS David, attacked USS New Ironsides using a spar torpedo. The Union ship was barely damaged and the resulting geyser of water put out the fires in the submarine's boiler, rendering the submarine immobile. Another submarine, CSS H.L. Hunley, was designed to dive and surface but ultimately did not work well and sank on five occasions during trials. In action against USS Housatonic the submarine successfully sank its target but was lost by the same explosion.

The Confederate States of America operated a number of commerce raiders and blockade runners, CSS Alabama being the most famous, and British investors built small, fast blockade runners that traded arms and luxuries brought in from Bermuda, Cuba, and The Bahamas in return for high-priced cotton and tobacco. When the Union Navy seized a blockade runner, the ship and cargo were sold and the proceeds given to the Navy sailors; the captured crewmen were mostly British and they were simply released.

The blockade of the South caused the Southern economy to collapse during the war. Shortages of food and supplies were caused by the blockade, the failure of Southern railroads, the loss of control of the main rivers, and foraging by Union and Confederate armies. The standard of living fell even as large-scale printing of paper money caused inflation and distrust of the currency. By 1864 the internal food distribution had broken down, leaving cities without enough food and causing food riots across the Confederacy. The Union victory at the Second Battle of Fort Fisher in January 1865 closed the last useful Southern port, virtually ending blockade running and hastening the end of the war.

## **Decline of the Navy (1865–1882)**

After the war, the Navy went into a period of decline. In 1864, the Navy had 51,500 men in uniform and almost 700 ships and about 60 monitor-type coastal ironclads which made the U.S. Navy the second-largest in the world after the Royal Navy. By 1880 the Navy only had 48 ships in commission, 6,000 men, and the ships and shore facilities were decrepit but Congress saw no need to spend money to improve them. The Navy was unprepared to fight a major maritime war before 1897.

In 1871, an expedition of five warships commanded by Rear Admiral John Rodgers was sent to Korea to obtain an apology for the murders of several shipwrecked American sailors and secure a treaty to protect shipwrecked foreigners in the future. After a small skirmish, Rodgers launched an amphibious assault of approximately 650 men on the forts protecting Seoul. Despite the capture of the forts, the Koreans refused to negotiate, and the expedition was forced to leave before the start of typhoon season. Nine sailors and six marines received Medals of Honor for their acts of heroism during the Korean campaign; the first for actions in a foreign conflict.

By the 1870s most of the ironclads from the Civil War were laid up in reserve, leaving the United States virtually without an ironclad fleet. When the Virginius Affair first broke out in 1873, a Spanish ironclad happened to be anchored in New York harbor, leading to the uncomfortable realization on the part of the U.S. Navy that it had no ship capable of defeating such a vessel. The Navy hastily issued contracts for the construction of five new ironclads, and accelerated its existing repair program for several more. USS Puritan and four Amphitrite-class monitors were subsequently built as a result of the Virginius war scare. All five vessels would later take part in the Spanish-American War of 1898.

By the time the Garfield Administration assumed office in 1881, the Navy's condition had deteriorated still further. A review conducted on behalf of the new Secretary of the Navy, William H. Hunt, found that of 140 vessels on the Navy's active list, only 52 were in an operational state, of which a mere 17 were iron-hulled ships, including 14 aging Civil War era ironclads. Hunt recognized the necessity of modernizing the Navy and set up an informal advisory board to make recommendations. Also to be expected, morale was considerably down; officers and sailors in foreign ports were all too aware that their old wooden ships would not survive long in the event of war. The limitations of the monitor type effectively prevented the United States from projecting power overseas, and until the 1890s the United States would have come off badly in a conflict with even Spain or the Latin American powers.

## **Rebuilding (1882–1898)**

In 1882, on the recommendation of an advisory panel, the Navy Secretary William H. Hunt requested funds from Congress to construct modern ships. The request was rejected initially, but in 1883 Congress authorized the construction of three protected cruisers, USS Chicago, USS Boston, and USS Atlanta, and the dispatch vessel USS Dolphin, together known as the ABCD ships. In 1885, two more protected cruisers, USS Charleston and USS Newark which was the last American cruiser to be fitted with a sail rig, were authorized. Congress also authorized the construction of the first battleships in the Navy, USS Texas and USS Maine. The ABCD ships proved to be excellent vessels, and the three cruisers were organized into the Squadron of Evolution, popularly known as the White Squadron because of the color of the hulls, which was used to train a generation of officers and men.

Alfred Thayer Mahan's book *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*, published in 1890, was very influential in justifying the naval program to the civilian government and to the general public. With the closing of the frontier, some Americans began to look outwards, to the Caribbean, to Hawaii and the Pacific, and with the doctrine of Manifest Destiny as philosophical justification, many saw the Navy as an essential part of realizing that doctrine beyond the limits of the American continent.

In 1890, Mahan's doctrine influenced Navy Secretary Benjamin F. Tracy to propose the United States start building no less than 200 ships of all types, but Congress rejected the proposal. Instead, the Navy Act of 1890 authorized building three battleships, USS Indiana, USS Massachusetts and USS Oregon, followed by USS Iowa. By around the start of the 20th century, two Kearsarge-class battleships and three Illinois-class battleships were completed or under construction, which brought the U.S. Navy from twelfth place in 1870 to fifth place among the world's navies. Battle tactics, especially long-range gunnery, became a central concern.

[davisg022](#) | October 11, 2017

Thank You CDR Eugene (Doc)Savage, USN (Ret) for this educational series

## Anniversaries

21 Dec 1861. Congress created Navy Medal of Honor for Sailors and Marines.

13 Dec 1936. U.S. National Guard established.

07 Dec 1941. "A date which will live in infamy." 0748 Hawaii time, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor killing 2,403 U.S. citizens.

08 Dec 1941. The Japanese begin the invasion of the Philippines by destroying U.S. aircraft at Clark Field.

08 Dec 1941. The U.S. and Allied countries, except the USSR, declared war on Japan.

11 Dec 1941. Germany and Italy declared war on the United States.

06 Jan 1942. Eleven U.S. Navy nurses captured when Manila fell to the Japanese. Sixty-seven U.S. Army nurses were captured when Corregidor fell to the Japanese in May 1942. The Navy nurses were liberated on 23 Feb 1945. The Army nurses were liberated on 3 Feb 1945.

25 Jan 1943. The Pentagon is dedicated, becoming the world's largest office building at the time.

27 Jan 1943. American bombers mount the first all-American air raid against Germany when they bomb Wilhelmshaven.

18 Dec 1965. U.S. Navy River Patrol Force, Operation Game Warden, began in Vietnam.

08 Dec 1967. U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General (JAG) Corps established.

23 Jan 1968. USS PUEBLO (AGER-2) captured by North Koreans in international waters in the Sea of Japan. One PUEBLO crew member was killed and seven others sustained shrapnel wounds. The 82 surviving crew members were imprisoned in North Korea.

23 Dec 1968. Eighty-two USS PUEBLO crew members released after 11 month imprisonment and torture by the North Koreans.

29 Jan 1980. USCG BLACKTHORN, following an overhaul, was leaving Tampa Bay for her homeport in Galveston, TX, when she collided with the tanker SS CAPRICOM near the Tampa Bay Sunshine Skyway bridge. Shortly after the collision, BLACKTHORN capsized and sank killing 23 crew members. Twenty-seven crew members survived. BLACKTHORN was raised for investigation, but was scuttled after completion of the investigation. USCG BLACKTHORN now serves as an artificial reef for recreational fishing and diving in the Gulf of Mexico.

20 Dec 1989. U.S. invaded Panama in Operation Just Cause.

17 Jan 1991. Persian Gulf War (Operation Desert Storm) began.

18 Jan 1991. USS NICHOLAS (FFG-47) working with Kuwaiti fast attack craft ISTIQLAL found that nine of the 11 oil platforms in Kuwait's Dorrah oil field about 40 miles off Kuwait's coast were occupied by Iraqi soldiers. Army AHIP Helicopters and Navy SH-60 Helicopters from NICHOLAS, firing guided missiles, neutralized two of the platforms. Shipboard firing from NICHOLAS and ISTIQLAL neutralized the other seven platforms. Teams from NICHOLAS boarded the platforms and destroyed the Iraqi fortifications. Five Iraqi soldiers were killed and 23 were taken prisoner. No U.S. or Kuwait casualties.

15 Dec 2011. Iraq War ended.