

OFFICIAL RECORDS  
OF THE  
UNION AND CONFEDERATE NAVIES  
IN THE  
WAR OF THE REBELLION.

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PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF  
The Hon. H. A. HERBERT, Secretary of the Navy,  
BY  
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SUPERINTENDENT NAVAL WAR RECORDS,  
AND  
MR. ROBERT H. WOODS.

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SERIES I—VOLUME I.  
THE OPERATIONS OF THE CRUISERS,  
FROM JANUARY 19, 1861, TO DECEMBER 31, 1862.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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The work of preparing for publication the official records of the Union and Confederate navies in the civil war was authorized by an act of Congress approved July 7, 1884. This act permitted the employment of a small clerical force by the Navy Department to copy and classify such documents as were available in the Department files, or could be obtained from other reliable sources. Prior to this Congressional action there had been a desultory attempt on the part of the Department to collect and arrange these records, but comparatively little was accomplished until the assistance of Congress was obtained, when, under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy, the Office of Naval War Records was organized, and Professor James R. Soley, U. S. Navy, at that time the librarian of the Navy Department, was placed in charge as the first Superintendent.

Under the efficient management of Mr. Soley the work of collecting and classifying the material was vigorously begun. Much difficulty, however, was found in collecting the records, for while the official reports of commanders of fleets and of vessels acting singly were on file in the Navy Department, it was found that the correspondence between flag-officers and their subordinates was frequently missing. Without this squadron correspondence the historical value of the work would necessarily be incomplete, and the Department, therefore, spared no pains to secure the letter books and papers of the chief actors on both sides. These papers have, for the most part, been obtained, and they have been copiously used in the compilation of the work. The reports of the Union commanders are full and fairly complete. It is to be regretted, however, that the Confederate records are not equally complete, due to the great difficulty found in collecting them, and also to the fact that a large part of the archives of the Confederate Navy Department was burned at the close of the war. Frequent careful searches throughout various parts of the country, conducted by a spe-

cial agent of the Department, have brought to light many duplicates of these papers, found among the personal files of participants. It is hoped that this first volume of the series will revive the interest of the participants in the events referred to, and lead them to bring to the notice of the Department the whereabouts of any papers bearing upon naval operations in the civil war of which they may have knowledge.

By act of Congress approved July 11, 1888, the clerical force of the office was placed upon such a footing as to enable the Superintendent to make a substantial advance in the copying and classification of the material then in hand.

The following extract from the report of the Secretary of the Navy for that year is of interest as showing the estimation in which the Department regarded the proposed publication:

The importance and value of these records have been frequently alluded to in my reports, but I now call attention to the subject, as Congress, by its action last year, has shown its intention that the work should be seriously prosecuted. There is no doubt whatever that the Army War Records, for the compilation of which a liberal provision has been made, form to-day one of the most valuable and most sought-after of all the Government publications. The naval records are of equal importance and demand equal attention. Without them the record is incomplete. The civil war is not only the first war in which naval operations on a great scale have been conducted since the introduction of steam, but it is the only war in which those modern appliances have been used which have revolutionized the art of naval warfare. The only operations of any magnitude with rams, with torpedoes, with ironclads, with rifled ordnance, and, it might be added, with steam vessels, that can be studied by the professional man, are those of the war of 1861-'65. The maintenance of a steam blockade and the employment of commerce-destroying steam cruisers, two of the most important operations of modern war, occurred only in this conflict. To place this record in a permanent and accessible form, where it can be referred to by the naval service, by the executive and legislative departments of the Government in their efforts to insure the highest efficiency in the Navy, and by the public generally, is the object of this publication, which clearly ought to appear side by side with that of the War Department.

By acts of Congress approved February 26, 1889, and July 11, 1890, the force of the office was still further increased. In July, 1890, Lieutenant-Commander F. M. Wise, U. S. Navy, relieved Mr. Soley as Superintendent, the latter having resigned his position to accept the appointment of Assistant Secretary of the Navy. During Mr. Wise's charge of the office the work of collection and classification was ably continued upon the lines laid down by his predecessor. Additional papers, both Union and Confederate, were obtained, many of which are of special value.

Mr. Wise having received orders to sea duty, was relieved by Lieutenant-Commander Richard Rush, U. S. Navy, in June, 1893. Upon taking charge of the office, the present Superintendent found that ample material had been prepared to begin the work of compilation and publication. Having made a careful examination of the documents, a plan of compilation was drawn up which was submitted to the Secretary of the Navy for his approval, with the recommendation that Congress be asked to authorize and provide for the early publication of the work. The Department having approved this recommendation, Congress directed the commencement of the publication in accordance with the plan submitted, making an appropriation for this purpose (act approved July 31, 1894).

In preparing to publish the records it became apparent that for purposes of reference it would be more convenient to separate the subject of operations from administrative matter; and yet much of this latter material was found to be of exceptional value, especially that relating to the construction and outfit of the fleet. The extraordinary expansion of the Union Navy from a peace footing in 1861, when it was composed of small squadrons of ships widely separated in distant parts of the globe, to the enormous war fleet of 1865, numbering over 600 vessels of all descriptions, which maintained an effective blockade on a coast line of over 3,000 miles, presents in itself an interesting subject of professional and historical research. Equal interest is attached to the construction of the Confederate Navy, which, although small, gave exhibition of marvelous energy and ingenuity with the limited resources at its disposal. The papers relating to the creation of these two fleets are therefore of such special importance that it has been thought best to comprise them in a separate series (Series II). By this arrangement the subject of the general operations afloat (Series I), which is the main object of the work, is given a separate and principal place. It is the intention of the Department to introduce throughout the volumes of both series illustrations of each class or type of vessels referred to, in order to preserve the identity of these ships as they actually appeared during the war.

The plan of publication thus outlined includes only the use of such material as may be certified to be contemporaneous naval records of the war, and is divided into three series, in the following order of arrangement:

I. The first series embraces the reports, orders, and correspondence,

both Union and Confederate, relating to all naval operations on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts and inland waters of the United States during the war of the rebellion, together with the operations of vessels acting singly, either as cruisers or privateers, in different parts of the world. These reports are accompanied by such diagrams and maps as may be necessary.

In this series the papers are arranged according to squadrons and flotillas, chronologically, and, as far as possible, the Union reports of any events are immediately followed by the Confederate reports.

II. The second series embraces the reports, orders, and correspondence relating to—

1. The condition of the Union Navy in 1861, before the commencement of hostilities, and to its increase during the progress of the war, including the annual and special reports of the Secretary of the Navy and chiefs of the various bureaus.

2. The construction and outfit of the Confederate Navy, including privateers, setting forth also the annual and special reports of the Confederate Secretary of the Navy and chiefs of bureaus.

3. Statistical data of all vessels, Union and Confederate, as far as can be obtained.

4. Returns of naval and military property captured by the navies of both sides during the war.

5. Correspondence relating to naval prisoners.

This series is arranged chronologically in each of the above sections as far as practicable.

III. The third series embraces all reports, orders, and correspondence and returns of the Union and Confederate authorities not specially relating to the matter of the first and second series.

The Navy Department is now prepared to continue the publication of the records until completed, and will do so as rapidly as Congress may authorize the work.

The following is an extract from the law governing the distribution of the sets comprising the publication (act of Congress, approved July 31, 1894):

\* \* \* Of said number six thousand eight hundred and forty copies shall be for the use of the House of Representatives, two thousand one hundred and twelve copies for the use of the Senate, and one thousand and forty-eight copies for the use of the Navy Department and for distribution by the Secretary of the Navy among officers of the Navy and contributors to the work. The quotas herein authorized of said publication for the Senate and House of Representatives shall be

sent by the Secretary of the Navy to such libraries, organizations, and individuals as may be designated by the Senators, Representatives, and Delegates of the Fifty-third Congress, it being the purpose of this distribution herein provided for to place these records in public libraries and with permanent organizations having libraries so far as such libraries may exist in the several States and Territories. Each Senator shall designate not exceeding twenty-four and each Representative and Delegate not exceeding nineteen of such addresses, and the volumes shall be sent thereto from time to time as they are published, until the publication is completed, and all sets that may not be ordered to be distributed as provided herein shall be sold by the Secretary of the Navy for cost of publication with ten per centum added thereto, and the proceeds of such sale shall be covered into the Treasury. If two or more sets of said volumes are ordered to the same address, the Secretary of the Navy shall inform the Senators, Representatives, or Delegates who have designated the same, who thereupon may designate other libraries, organizations, or individuals. The Secretary of the Navy shall inform distributees at whose instance the volumes are sent.

RICHARD RUSH,  
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*Compilers.*

NAVY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., November 1, 1894.*