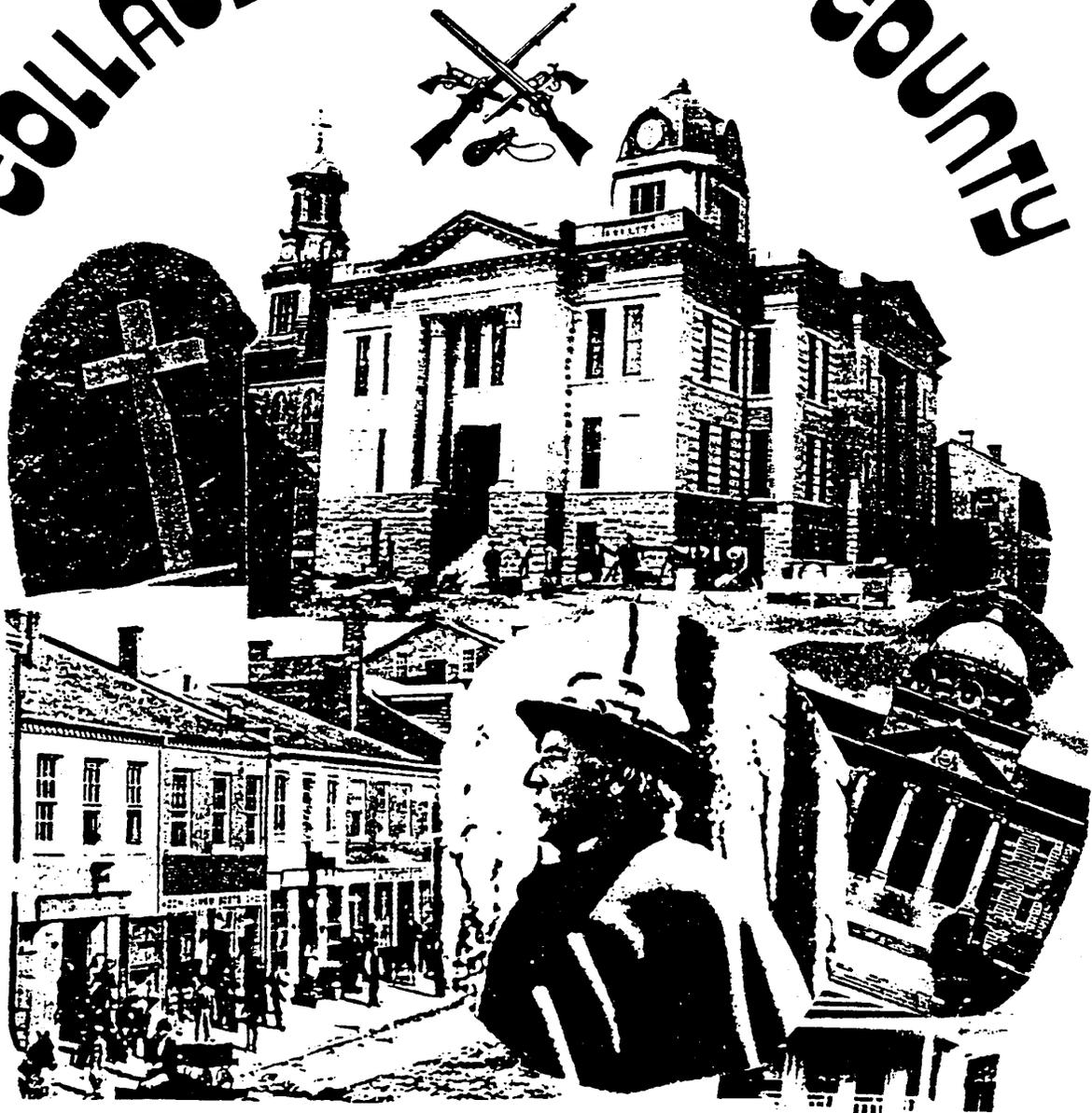


# COLLAGE OF CAPE COUNTY



CAPE GIRARDEAU EXPORTS 1874

Item	Amount	Price	Value
flour	120,000 bbls	\$ 6.00	\$720,000
lime	38,000 bbls	1.15	43,000
bacon	300,000 lbs	.07	21,000
lard	50,000 lbs	.07	3,500
hogs, dressed	150,000 lbs	.05	7,500





P. O. Box 571

Jackson, MO 63755

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The Cape Girardeau County Genealogical Society was organized in May 1970, a non-profit organization, its primary purpose is education in the field of genealogy. Membership is open to individuals upon payment of the annual dues of \$10, or a couple for \$15, per year, beginning in May. Life membership is available for a one-time payment of \$250. Web site: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~mccgcs/index.htm>

The CGCGS Library is located in the Research Room at the Cape Girardeau County Archive Center, 112 East Washington, Jackson, MO and is open during regular Archive Center hours. Our meetings are held at The Cape Girardeau County Archive Center, 112 East Washington in Jackson, MO, bi-monthly in January, March, May, July, September, and November on the fourth Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., unless announced otherwise.

CGCGS publishes this quarterly, *THE COLLAGE OF CAPE COUNTY*, in March, June, September, and December, sent free to members. All members are encouraged to submit articles for publication. Submissions on disk (MS Word, rich text, or text files) or by email (text or rich text format) are encouraged, but not essential. Mail to **Bill Eddleman, 1831 Ricardo Drive Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 (email: eddlemanw@sbcglobal.net)**.

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**STATEMENT.**

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MILLERSVILLE, MO., *Sept 9<sup>th</sup> 1871*

*M. A. B. ...*

In Account with **J. J. Miller & Co.,**

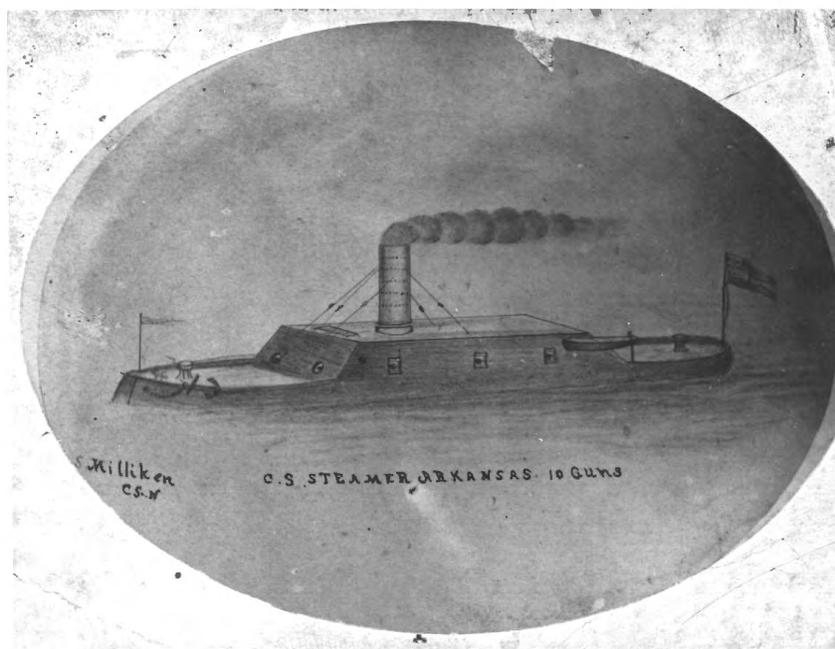
DEALERS IN

**1871 Dry Goods, Groceries, Notions, &c., &c.**

## Sam Harris Remembers the *CSS Arkansas*

By Ray Nichols

The CSS ARKANSAS, an ironclad ram, 165 feet in length, was constructed during the fall of 1861 and the spring of 1862 at Memphis, Tennessee by John T. Shirley, a Memphis steamboat owner and captain, and Prime Emmerson from the Carondelet Shipyard in St. Louis. Throughout construction, material and manpower were huge problems. Finally, with enough timber for the frames and planking two boats, the CSS ARKANSAS and the CSS TENNESSEE, were taking shape on the stocks. However, enough iron could not be obtained to armor both boats so Shirley decided to concentrate work on the ARKANSAS.



Following the surrender of Island No. 10, the decision was made to burn the CSS TENNESSEE on the stocks and on the evening of 25 April 1862, the steamboat CAPITOL, towed the unfinished ARKANSAS down the Mississippi River to the mouth of the Yazoo River, and then up that river to Yazoo City and then was moved further upstream to Greenwood, Mississippi.

Isaac Newton Brown, a US Navy veteran, became commander of the Confederate ironclad ram CSS ARKANSAS at Greenwood. On 26 May 1862, he moved the ARKANSAS to complete her construction back to Yazoo City, Mississippi. On 26 June 1862 the ram was finally ready to take a trial run down the Yazoo River. After returning the ram to the navy yard at Yazoo City to make adjustments on the machinery, Brown sent his mechanics ashore and on 12 July sailed the ram down to below Satartia Bar. Completed, the ARKANSAS had ten guns of various calibers.

Counting Brown and Stevens, there were 25 commissioned officers and several petty officers assigned to the ironclad. Of these, 12 had served in the "old service." Two of the pilots on the ARKANSAS, John G. Hodges and James Brady, were Missourians.

The crew consisted of about 200 seamen, landsmen, firemen, soldiers, and boys, including infantrymen and artillerymen from Missouri, Louisiana and Kentucky units. A volunteer detachment of Missourians

was composed of Samuel S. Harris' Company Missouri Light Artillery and Robert McDonald's Company Missouri Light Artillery. Most of these men were from Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, and St. Louis, and enrolled at New Madrid, Missouri, during January 1862 or in Northeast Arkansas during April 1862. They had served under Missouri State Guard General M. Jeff Thompson and on Commodore Joseph Ed Montgomery's "River Defense Fleet" at the Plum Run Bend naval battle. Among the ARKANSAS volunteer gunners were: Farmers, merchants, carpenters, printers, a silversmith, lawyer, engineer, pilot, policeman, physician, butcher, miller, gunsmith, musician, and one gentleman by profession.

On 14 July, the ARKANSAS resumed her run down the Yazoo. The Yazoo River empties into an old channel of the Mississippi, 12 miles above the city of Vicksburg; and this old channel runs into the main river 3 miles below the mouth of the Yazoo. In order to reach the landing at Vicksburg it was necessary for Brown to pass his vessel by no less than 40 of the most formidable sloops, gunboats, rams, transports and a mortar fleet then in the service of the United States.

Since the ram was approaching a point in the river where Union gunboats had been frequently reported, Brown had the men beat to quarters. The sailors and gunners raced to their battle stations. Guns were loaded and cast loose, their tackles in the hands of seamen ready to train; primers were inserted in the vents. Locks were thrown back and the lanyards held firmly by the gun captains.

Decks were sprinkled with sand, to keep from slipping, and tourniquets and bandages were issued to the division officers by Surgeon H.W.M. Washington. Tubs of water were placed between the guns, while down in the sick bay the surgeons prepared for the anticipated grim harvest. Ammunition details were posted in the passageways leading to the magazines ready to pass powder, shell and shot. All was quiet except for the dull sound of the screws.

On the morning of 15 July 1862, the ARKANSAS arrived at the mouth of the Old River, and seeing three Federal gunboats lying off a point below, Brown rang for a full head of steam. The ARKANSAS steered toward the leading boat, the timber-clad TYLER, and opened fire with her bow guns at 7 AM. The wooden gunboat TYLER and the ironclad ram QUEEN OF THE WEST, turned and steamed down for the main fleet below, firing their stern guns as they retreated, passing the lumbering CARONDELET. The CARONDELET, fired her bow guns until the ARKANSAS approached her at close quarters, when she also turned and retreated.

During the 30 minute running fight, the CARONDELET became unmanageable. The ARKANSAS came alongside her and poured a broadside into her with her port guns. Moments later, there was a shudder as the CARONDELET ran afoul of a small stump and grounded. All told, the CARONDELET had received 13 direct hits resulting in a loss of 30 men, 4 killed, 18 wounded, and 8 missing.

While the ARKANSAS was still in sight, the Confederates were seen to pitch a body overboard. Lt. George W. Gift, in command of the port side 8-inch Columbiad, on which a Missourian Private Stephen Minton was apparently a gunner, related the following story of young Minton's death:

"The first blood was drawn from my division. An Irishman, with more curiosity than prudence, stuck his head out the broadside port, and was killed by a heavy rifle bolt which had missed the ship. Stevens was with me at the time; and, fearing that the sight of the mangled corpse and blood might demoralize the guns' crew, sprang forward to throw the body out of the port, and called upon the man nearest him to assist. "Oh! I can't do it, sir, it's my brother," the gunner replied. It was Minton's brother Smith Minton.

The body was thrown overboard. This incident of the brother was related to Gift by Lt. Stevens afterwards as Gift was too busy manning his gun. The Minton brothers were from Stoddard County, Missouri.

The timber-clad TYLER's decks looked like a slaughter pen; dead and wounded lay in every direction. During the battle, she had been hulled 11 times. Shortly after the fight had commenced, a shell from the ARKANSAS had exploded on the TYLER's deck. It killed Captain John W. Lynn and six of his 4<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin sharpshooters, "piling them up in one sickening heap. Four of them were headless, and for many feet on both sides of the deck, the woodwork was splattered with gore." On checking the rolls, it was found that eight men had been killed and 16 wounded aboard the boat. Damages to the gunboat were so extensive that she would have to be repaired before returning to active service.

Within an hour of the time when the first boom was heard, the QUEEN OF THE WEST emerged from the Yazoo and rounded Kings Point. As the QUEEN passed down the row of anchored vessels, a lieutenant frantically shouted through his trumpet that "the great rebel ironclad steam battery was coming down the river." Several minutes elapsed before the TYLER came into view. She was running at forced draft, her stern gun banging away at a yet unseen ARKANSAS. Close behind came the unidentified ironclad, showing no colors.

By this time, "General Quarters" was being sounded on the other vessels of Farragut's Squadron. The SCIOTA, which was anchored fourth in line, found herself in an embarrassing situation. She was without steam, and her engines were under repair.

The ARKANSAS had surprised the combined fleets. Retreating down the Yazoo before the victorious Confederate ram, the TYLER and the ram QUEEN OF THE WEST, rejoined the combined Union fleets in the Mississippi River above Vicksburg. By 8:45 AM they were all engaged with the ARKANSAS standing down past the fleet. Continuing down the river the ARKANSAS soon came in sight of the whole fleet, 33 vessels in all, not including the Union mortar fleet above Vicksburg.

In passing them the ARKANSAS underwent fire at close range, which was answered, bringing every gun into action that would bear upon the enemy. The Federal ram LANCASTER, running out to strike the ARKANSAS, received a shot in her steam drum from one of the bow guns, which caused a deadly cloud of steam, scalding a number of the crew. Many of her crew leaped overboard and perished in full sight of the fleet.

Aboard the RICHMOND, the crew was appalled at the terrible spectacle to which they had been eyewitness. Scalded men leaped overboard, some of them never coming to the surface. Ten or twelve men were in the water, some swimming and some clutching desperately to the rudder. A boat was quickly lowered from the LANCASTER to pick up survivors. The ram, dead in the water, drifted past the RICHMOND.

Unfortunately for the LANCASTER, the current carried her down parallel to the ARKANSAS. A large number of projectiles from the other Union vessels, as they fired at the ARKANSAS, struck the LANCASTER. The ram could have drifted within range of the Vicksburg batteries if it hadn't been for the QUEEN OF THE WEST. Overtaking the stricken ram, the QUEEN took her in tow and brought her back to the anchorage.

The RICHMOND fired a broadside as the ARKANSAS drew abreast. The ARKANSAS continued without having apparently suffered any crippling damage. On the RICHMOND, officers shook their heads in disbelief. According to the books, no vessel afloat was supposed to withstand such a blow. After passing the RICHMOND, the ARKANSAS steamed on.

As the ARKANSAS approached the HARTFORD, the Union vessel gave her a port broadside, apparently with no effect. Next in line, the GENERAL BRAGG, an ex-Confederate ram, captured after the battle of Memphis, was helpless as she lay moored between the RICHMOND and the HARTFORD. If either ship made a run at the ARKANSAS, the BRAGG would be in the line of fire.

Aboard the SCIOTA, a big 11-inch pivot gun tracked the ARKANSAS as she approached. When fired the big 166-pound projectile struck the casemate, glanced into the air and exploded. The SCIOTA's crew began firing with their small arms, aiming for the gun ports. There were cheers as the sailors saw a Rebel gunner, sponge in hand, tumble out of a port, evidently cut down by a minie ball. Last in line, a shell exploded above the deck of the WINONA, wounding two sailors.

The mortar fleet was moored on the opposite side of the river from Farragut's ships and Davis' gunboats. The captain observed, the ARKANSAS "passed down slowly, keeping up a constant firing as she went, and receiving our shots without any apparent damage to her."

Actually, the ARKANSAS had suffered heavy damage in passing the combined fleets. A shell from the RICHMOND penetrated the broken armor on the ARKANSAS' port side and exploded, wounding a lieutenant in the right shoulder and killing all of his gun crew, except the quartermaster. Several men had been killed and maimed by the explosion, and the vessel set afire. The lieutenant found himself standing in a "dense, suffocating smoke," with cap gone and his hair and beard singed. The Executive Officer, calmly and coolly, raced to the engine room hatch, grabbed a hose, dragged it to the opening and extinguished the blaze.

An 11-inch solid shot entered the ship's side above Acting Master Mate John A. Wilson's gun, smashing in the bulkhead, killing two men and the powder boy, wounding three others and knocked him senseless, cutting his head and removing part of his nose. He was taken below, his wounds were dressed and he returned to his gun. The same shot continued on across the deck, passing through the lower part of the smokestack, killing eight men and wounding three others, as they were running out their gun. It finally struck the opposite bulkhead, broke in half and fell on the deck. Only the quartermaster in one gun's entire division was able to answer muster when the ARKANSAS reached Vicksburg. The heat on the gun deck from rapid firing and the concussions from shot and shell on all sides was unbearable. Men and officers fought their guns, clad only in pantaloons and undershirts.

Out of the smoke, a large ironclad, the BENTON, came into view. Brown called for his pilot to ram the BENTON. The excitement and smoke were too much for the Confederates and they missed the BENTON. As they passed the big ironclad, Brown gave her a broadside, but the Rebels aimed high and the only damage done was to cut away a stanchion and tear the back of her Captain's sack coat. The enemy's lower mortar fleet, thinking the ARKANSAS was about to attack them, burned one of their vessels, which was below the city, while the others hastily got underway and proceeded down the river.

The smokestack of the ARKANSAS was so perforated it was almost impossible to keep up sufficient steam to give the ship enough propulsion power to steer her, but the ram finally cleared the enemy's line of vessels and ran in alongside the wharf, under the guns of the batteries at Vicksburg. On

mustering Brown listed the ARKANSAS' losses as 14 dead and 21 wounded, including 7 officers. Brown did not list himself as wounded. Humanity demanded that the casualties be landed.

Along with Stephen Minton, Private Andrew J. Blankenship of Greene County, Arkansas, another Missouri artilleryman was killed in the run. Two additional members of the Missouri batteries were mortally wounded and died before reaching Vicksburg: Private Felix Thomure, of Ste. Genevieve lost a leg and later died. Private John Snider, origin unknown, lost an arm and later died. All the killed were from Robert McDonald's Company B, Missouri Light Artillery. In addition three Missouri artillerymen were wounded on 15 July 1862.

When the ARKANSAS rounded the bend, large numbers of soldiers and civilians rushed to the bluffs and saluted her with enthusiastic cheers. Pandemonium seemed to break loose. Brown had several of his men rig up a temporary pole from which a flag was hoisted. As soon as the ARKANSAS tied up at the landing, General Van Dorn and several other ranking officers came aboard.

The scene around the gun deck upon the ram's arrival at Vicksburg was ghastly. Blood and brains splattered everything, while arms, legs and several headless bodies were strewn about. General Van Dorn's assistant remarked, "I slipped on blood and flesh as I walked, as if on lemon peels." The citizens and soldiers of the town crowded eagerly aboard, but a passing look at the gun deck was sufficient to cause them to retreat hastily from the ship.

The Federal loss was severe, being over 120 men killed and wounded, besides the damages sustained by their vessels.

The crew of the ARKANSAS passed the day by burying the dead, sending the wounded ashore, cleaning up the ship and making all possible repairs. The detailed soldiers from the Missouri and Louisiana units disembarked and returned to their respective commands.

Having left Yazoo City with a "short supply of fuel," Lt. Brown, as soon as the casualties had been taken ashore, moved the ARKANSAS down to the coal depot. Here, the remainder of the crew organized into details and put to work loading coal and repairing damages. After having coaled his vessel, Brown moved her back up river out of range of the mortars.

The achievement of passing through the fire of such a fleet, at close quarters, will remain as one of the most creditable exploits in the history of the Confederate Navy. In General Orders No. 51, from the Confederate War Department in Richmond, the following compliment was issued to the officers and crew of the ARKANSAS: "Lt. Brown and the officers and crew of the Confederate Steamer ARKANSAS, by their heroic attack upon the Federal fleet before Vicksburg, equaled the highest recorded examples of courage and skill. They prove that the navy, when it regains its proper element, will be one of the chief bulwarks of national defense, and that it is entitled to a high place in the confidence and affection of the country."

Congress also passed the following joint resolution of thanks to Lt. Brown and all under his command:

"Resolved, by the Congress of the Confederate States of America, that the thanks of Congress are hereby cordially tendered to Lt. Isaac N. Brown, and all under his command, for the signal exhibition of skill and gallantry on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of July last, on the Mississippi River, near

Vicksburg, in the brilliant and successful engagement of the sloop of war ARKANSAS with the enemy's fleet.

Approved 2 October 1862."

The ARKANSAS lay under the bluff in the darkness, and being painted a dark brown color could not be seen at a distance. The ARKANSAS' engineers had gotten up steam, but were unable to generate much, owing to the riddled condition of the smokestack. With so many men disabled and her armor badly shattered, she was really not ready for another engagement. A few volunteers from the 1st Missouri Infantry went aboard in the afternoon to assist in working the guns.

In a few days after the last action the ARKANSAS was ready to assume the offensive. Steaming up the river, she had the satisfaction of putting to flight the mortar boats under tow of the Eads ironclads, all escaping by their superior speed.

On 21 July Flag Officers Farragut, Davis and W.D. Porter held a council of war on board the USS BENTON, at which time Commander Porter volunteered the service of the converted ironclad USS ESSEX to make an effort to destroy the ARKANSAS.

The USS ESSEX, on the morning of 22 July, followed by the QUEEN OF THE WEST, got underway and passed the BENTON. The ESSEX came in sight of the ARKANSAS, which was moored against the bank under the big guns of a battery. Gunners on the ARKANSAS fired at the ESSEX but she kept coming straight for her, as Brown would later write, "like a mad bull, nothing daunted or overawed." The ESSEX was square across the bow while the ARKANSAS was sharp as a wedge. Brown planned to counter Dirty Bill Porter's scheme by throwing the engine, controlling the starboard screw, into gear. This presented the sharp bow of the ram to the ESSEX.

Porter immediately called for "hard a-port!" and the ESSEX's bow veered toward the Mississippi shore and swung broadside to the current. Speed was lost. She opened her port shutters and let go with four 11-inch shots which crashed against the ARKANSAS' armor and glanced.

Instead of crashing into the ARKANSAS, the ESSEX merely nudged her and went high on the river bank with the bow of the ship, where she lay 10 minutes, under three batteries of heavy guns. The Confederates on the bluffs drew up a detachment of sharpshooters and several batteries of field pieces, ranging from 6-pounders to 24-pounders. The ESSEX then backed off. A second run was made at the ARKANSAS. Just as the vessels came together the ESSEX's bow guns opened up on the ram's port side. The ARKANSAS replied with her port broadside. One of the projectiles from the ESSEX entered a few inches forward of the "unlucky" forward broadside port, "breaking off the ends of the railroad bars and driving them in among the crew." Eight men were killed and six wounded inside the ARKANSAS. Reversing her paddle wheel, the ESSEX backed out into mid-channel and started upstream.

From the ARKANSAS' perspective, there was never a more opportune moment for her destruction. Many of her officers and all but 28 of her crew were ashore in hospitals, and she lay helpless at anchor with a disabled engine. When the ESSEX headed for the ARKANSAS, Lt. Brown received the attack at anchor and with his officers and skeleton crew managed to man all the guns which could be brought to bear on the ESSEX. When the muzzles of the guns were nearly touching each other, the broadside of the ARKANSAS was exchanged for the bow guns of the ESSEX. Forty-five minutes after the first gun was discharged by Davis' Gunboat Flotilla, the action was over.

After repairs were made, the ARKANSAS could be seen, almost daily, steaming up and down the river in front of the batteries, as if in contempt of all efforts made to destroy her. While his vessel was being repaired under the bluffs at Vicksburg, Lieutenant, now Commander Isaac N. Brown, obtained a leave of absence, went to Grenada, Mississippi, and became bedridden with fever. While he was disabled, he learned from his executive officer, Lieutenant Stevens left in command of the ARKANSAS that General Earl Van Dorn had ordered the ram to get underway and cooperate with General Breckinridge in the attack on Baton Rouge.

Commander Brown sent positive orders to Lt. Stevens not to move his vessel until he could join it, as he felt the ARKANSAS was not ready for action. Lieutenant Stevens referred the matter for his decision to Captain William F. Lynch, the senior officer of the Confederate Navy in the West. Ignorant of the true condition of the ARKANSAS, Captain Lynch ordered Lieutenant Stevens to disobey the instructions of Commander Brown and to comply with the request of Van Dorn. In this way the ARKANSAS was placed under command of Lieutenant Stevens with orders to run 300 miles against time. A long run with engines that had already been broken down off Vicksburg imposed a great responsibility on the new commander of the vessel. The ARKANSAS commanded by Lieutenant Stevens left Vicksburg on 3 August at 2 AM.

The ARKANSAS proceeded down the river until within 22 miles off Baton Rouge, when near midnight, her starboard engine broke down. She was moored to the bank and repairs begun, which were finished about 8 AM the next morning. The ARKANSAS started again and steamed to within sight of the Federal fleet, consisting of the ironclad ESSEX, the gunboats SUMTER, CAYUGA, KINEO and KATSHDIN, and some river transports. All hands were beat to quarters and the guns cleared for action.

Almost immediately afterwards the engine broke down and the ship drifted ashore, where she was moored and repairs again started. By night the ship was afloat and the engine repaired. Lieutenant Stevens moved the ram a short distance up river to load some coal lying on the river bank. Upon reaching the coal dump the starboard engine broke down for a third time. Another night was spent in making repairs and taking coal aboard.

General Breckinridge waited on the ARKANSAS until the morning of 4 August when he finally attacked the Federal garrison at Baton Rouge. On the morning of 5 August the 3rd Assistant Engineer reported to Stevens that the engine was repaired, but unreliable. A consultation was held between Stevens and his officers and at 9 AM 6 August the ARKANSAS started from the bank to attack the Federal fleet, headed by the USS ESSEX, which was slowly advancing up the river.

The ARKANSAS had not steamed any distance when the port engine disabled. The ram was then headed for the shore, and in a few minutes her starboard engine gave way and she drifted toward the enemy in a helpless condition. At that point the ESSEX opened fire on her. The ARKANSAS finally grounded near the river bank, stern downstream. The ESSEX continued to shell the ARKANSAS at long range, but with no effect, her shells falling short and out of range. The ARKANSAS' engines were now beyond repair. In her present condition the ship was immovable and her guns could not be brought to bear upon the Federal fleet. Under the circumstances there was no alternative left for Lieutenant Stevens but to destroy the ARKANSAS to prevent her capture.

Most of the officers and crew were sent ashore with small arms and ammunition. One of the ARKANSAS' lookouts reported a Federal force landing below them, so the ship's company marched off into the interior. Two of the crew from New Orleans, who had worked in the mess room, deserted.

They later reported aboard the USS ESSEX.

Six officers were ordered to remain onboard, to assist in destroying the vessel. The machinery of the engine room was broken up with axes and the wardroom bedding fired in several places. The cotton in the inside bulkheads between the guns was cut open and fired. They opened the magazines, scattered cartridges and loaded shells about on the gun deck between the guns. The wardroom was now ablaze, so the remaining officers abandoned ship, assisting Lieutenant Stevens ashore, as he had his hands badly burned by the premature explosion of a hand grenade while he was occupied destroying the engines. They went ashore with their side arms and no other clothing than what they had on.

A local Southern woman, Sarah Morgan, described the crew as they made their way into the interior: "On they came, dirty, half dressed, some with only their guns, a few with bundles and knapsacks on their backs, grimy and tired, but still laughing. We called to the first, and asked if the boat were really afire; they shouted yes, and went on, talking still... we found ourselves in the center of 200 men, just we five girls, talking with the officers who stood around us as though we were old friends. You could only guess they were officers, for a dirtier, more forlorn set I never saw. There was one handsome Kentuckian whose name I soon found to be Talbot (Midshipman Daniel B. Talbot), who looked charmingly picturesque in his coarse cottoned pants, white shirt, straw hat, black hair, beard and eyes, with rosy cheeks. Then another jolly faced young man pleased me too. He, the doctor and the Captain (Lt. Stevens), were the only ones who possessed a coat in the whole crowd, the few who saved theirs, carrying them over their arms. They all talked over their loss cheerfully, as far as the loss of money, watches, clothes, were concerned; but they were disheartened about their boat."

The officers and the crew would return to Naval Headquarters at Jackson, Mississippi, remain there a short time then report to Port Hudson, Louisiana, to man a battery, before being dispersed throughout the Confederacy for duty. Stevens later wrote, "With tears in my eyes, it was beautiful to see her, when abandoned by commander and crew, and dedicated to sacrifice, fighting the battle alone." While convalescing, Commander Isaac N. Brown wrote approvingly of his Lieutenant's conduct.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the Missourians, following their short tour on the ARKANSAS, were ordered into the Infantry service of the Missouri Brigade. Harris' and McDonald's old artillery companies were consolidated to form Company D of the 6<sup>th</sup> Missouri Infantry. Jeff Thompson's three infantry companies and the other artillery company remained in Isaac N. Hedgepeth's Battalion until consolidated with Erwin's Battalion Missouri Infantry. This consolidation completed the formation of the 6<sup>th</sup> Missouri Infantry, commanded by Colonel Eugene Erwin. The 6<sup>th</sup> Missouri Infantry continued to fight gallantly at Iuka and Corinth, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Siege of Vicksburg, the Georgia Campaign of 1864, and Franklin, Tennessee, before being surrendered at Mobile, Alabama, and paroled at Meridian, Mississippi in April of 1865.<sup>2</sup>

Besides the four killed aboard the ARKANSAS, 17 would die or be killed in action before the war was over. One would eventually join the Union army. Several would be enrolled in the 6<sup>th</sup> Missouri Infantry only to be transferred to one of the artillery batteries in the Missouri Brigade.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Extract from a talk, "23 Days...The Saga of the C.S.S. ARKANSAS," given by the author on 29 August 1993 as part of the Jefferson Barracks Civil War Series of Lectures, St. Louis, Missouri.

<sup>2</sup> National Archives. Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Missouri. M-322, Rolls 133-138, Sixth Missouri Infantry.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Several members aboard the ARKANSAS decided not to join the Infantry and returned to Missouri to join various cavalry and artillery units being formed in Southeast Missouri and Northeast Arkansas during the fall of 1862. Captains Harris and McDonald were among those returning. Captain Harris, being a physician, became the Assistant Surgeon in William L. Jeffers' 8<sup>th</sup> Missouri Cavalry. As Assistant Surgeon he was left behind to care for the wounded in the Battles of Hartville, Missouri and Cape Girardeau, Missouri and was captured at both places, paroled and returned to his command. In February 1864 he formed his own Artillery Company, the 4<sup>th</sup> Missouri Light Artillery and participated in General Sterling Price's 1864 Missouri Raid. At the Battle of Mound City, Kansas on 24 October 1864 the majority of the battery was captured along with their artillery pieces. Harris with the remainder of his battery escaped and returned with the Confederate forces to Louisiana. His unit surrendered at Grand Ecore, Louisiana in 1865. They had no guns and were manning a heavy battery at Grand Ecore.<sup>4</sup>

William T. Thompson, while living at Hancock, Maryland following the Civil War, solicited remembrances from former Missouri State Guard members. The officers addressed had served under General M. Jeff Thompson's 1<sup>st</sup> Division, during 1861-1862. It is not known what he was going to do with the material received as it was not used for Jeff Thompson's reminiscences.<sup>5</sup>

William Taliaferro Thompson was a nephew of General Jeff Thompson and served under him in Southeast Missouri as a Lieutenant-Colonel and Aide-de-Camp beginning in January 1862. After the disbursement of General Thompson's 1862 troops following the capture of Memphis, Tennessee on 6 June 1862, the younger Thompson returned to Southeast Missouri. He eventually joined William L. Jeffers' Regiment Confederate Missouri Cavalry on 22 September 1862 as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant of Company D, raised in Cape Girardeau County and commanded by Captain Robert A. Hope of the county. When Captain Hope died on 12 March 1863 at Camp Porter, Arkansas, Thompson was elected Captain of the company on 10 June 1863 at the regiment's camp near Wittsburg, Arkansas. Thompson served in that capacity the remainder of the war, surrendering at Shreveport, Louisiana on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June 1865, giving his residence as St. Joseph, Missouri.<sup>6</sup>

Copies of the letters to Will Thompson are in the Tulane University Collections, from which Harris' letter was obtained.<sup>7</sup>

Cape Girardeau, MO  
December 18, 1868  
Dear Will,

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid; M-322, Roll 50, Eighth Cavalry, D-Hi; M-322, Roll 84, Fourth (Harris') Field Battery, Light Artillery; Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies During the War of Rebellion. (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 1, Volume 48, Part 2, p. 963.

<sup>5</sup> M. Jeff Thompson, "Reminiscences of M. Jeff Thompson, 1826-1876," microfilm copy of original handwritten manuscript in the M. Jeff Thompson Papers, in Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina; transcribed and edited by Donal J. Stanton, Goodwin F. Berquist and Paul C. Bowers, The Civil War Reminiscences of General M. Jeff Thompson. (Dayton: Morningside House, Inc., 1988).

<sup>6</sup> National Archives. Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Missouri. M-322, Roll 190, State Guard Sn-Th; National Archives. Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Missouri. M-322, Roll 53, Eighth Cavalry, So-Y; Stanton, Donal J. et al. The Civil War Reminiscences of General M. Jeff Thompson. (Dayton: Morningside Books, 1988), pp. 133, 142, 148, 150, 165-67, 173, 175, 178-80, 184-85.

<sup>7</sup> Tulane University, New Orleans, LA. Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Manuscripts Department, "General M. Jeff Thompson Collection, " Box 1, Folder 5.

I received your very kind letter some time ago, and I have delayed answering it so long that I am ashamed to address you; s\_\_\_\_\_ as I deserve, but please attribute my silence to any cause rather than a cooling of that friendship warmed into life by the camp fires. I was truly \_\_\_\_\_ to learn that you was at work on "Jeff" and his campaigns, and when I received your letter I resolved to give you all the assistance I could; but I have done nothing – your kind heart will perhaps suggest the reason, my pleasures now – you call it pleasure – is in "sweet memories of the past." I have reached the turning point of life, must look back. I have no present, no future, I live a vegetable life. It is true that ambition – who is forever pricking us with his sharp pointed gads occasionally, assures me a little, but Will I have no mental energy. I don't want to think, I want to dream. I was in St. Louis some time since and met Henry Parr who told me he would give you all the items he

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could collect, which will probably embrace everything I could give you. Col. Jeffers promised to do the same. As regards the "Arkansas" I have forgotten nearly everything with the exception of the fight. I will give you the facts of that and you must supply such embellishments as you think it requires.

The Arkansas carried ten guns, three on each side, two in the bow, and two in the stern. Her heaviest gun was an 8-inch Columbiad. Her armor was one thickness of R[ail] R[oad] iron laid onto 12-inch timber. There was an inner bulwark of timber and compressed cotton between. Her crew consisted of about 175 men all told. Her officers with the exception of Lt. Galvin and myself and the pilots were all "Old Navy" men. The following [is] the list –

- Lieutenant Commanding Isaac N. Brown
- Lieutenants - Henry K. Stevens, John Grimball, A.D. Wharton, C.W. Read, A. Barbot and George W. Gift
- Surgeon – H.W. M. Washington
- Asst. Surgeon – Charles M. Morfit
- Act. Masters – Samuel Milliken and John L. Phillips
- Act. Midshipmen – D.M. Scales, R.H. Bacon and C.W. Tyler
- Masters Mate – John A. Wilson
- 1<sup>st</sup> Asst. Engineer – G.W. Citis [City]
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Asst. Engineer – E. Covert
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Asst. Engineer – E.H. Brown

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- 3<sup>rd</sup> Asst. Engineer – J.G. Dolane [Doland]
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Asst. Engineer – William H. Jackson
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Asst. Engineer –John Y. Duprey
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Asst. Engineer – John Gettis
- Act. Gunner – T.B. Travers
- Pilots – John B. Hodges, J.L. Brady, William Gilmore, J.R. Shacklett
- Capt. Harris and Lt. Galvin with 64 of Jeff Thompson's men – half of them from my company and half from McDonald's

About sunrise on the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 1862, when some five miles from the mouth of the Yazoo, we came in sight of three boats from the Federal Fleet. They consisted of a ram, a seagoing vessel of some sort and an ironclad gunboat; the men were called to "quarters" and our boat headed for the enemy. The ironclad Conestoga immediately opened on us, her second or third shot striking our pilot house which projected about 18 inches above the upper deck. The ball did not enter but drove in timbers shattering the steering wheel and wounding all the pilots, one of them mortally (Harris confused the CONESTOGA for the TYLER). This created a little confusion for a few moments, but soon our bow guns were answering those of the enemy and as soon as they felt the weight of our metal they reversed

their course and sought safety in their fleet below; we crowded on all \_\_\_\_ in pursuit, and our bow guns were worked rapidly: the ram and seagoing vessel having a good pair of heels soon

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Were out of range, but we reached a position a pistol shot astern of the Conestoga we using our bow guns she her stern guns, but our plating was too heavy for her shots to penetrate with the exception of one shell that lodged in the cotton and exploded through, killing one man and wounding two others; our shots on the contrary went crashing through her from stern to stem. This could not last long and soon the boasting Conestoga went ashore on the bar, the crew jumping off as she struck, but we had not time to stop for spoils, and as we swept by we gave her our broadside and then paid her our parting compliments with our stern guns. Then was a few minutes of rest now, and Captain Brown took the opportunity to congratulate the crew on their splendid victory and encouraged them for the coming fight. We only had time to bring in the rousing chains? When we rounded into the Mississippi and were in view of the Federal Fleet, which consisted of 27 war vessels. Some of the largest of them \_\_ such as the Hartford and the Richmond, with innumerable transports and other craft. The fleet had been put in lively commotion by the firing and was prepared to give us a warm reception, but this formidable \_\_\_\_ did not check our little craft for a moment and she moved on in the even tenor of her way. From some defect in our machinery steam could not be promoted fast enough and our speed had slackened until

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It was barely sufficient to give u steerage way. But we were soon among the fleet, the ironclads giving us the full weight of their metal and the rams were ready to charge down on us, when a lucky shot from one of our guns entered the steam works of some vessel in our front and caused her to explode. The river was filled with her crew and boats were sent to rescue them. This was doubtless the reason the rams did not run down on us. The firing was now tremendous and no break could be detected in the continuous roll of thunder. As our guns would recoil the port shutters would be closed until they could be recharged. The shutters were then opened for the guns to be run out and but little time was required to train the pieces. There was always something immediately in our front to fire at. In the hottest of our work we were struck immediately about the port hole of one of our side guns – our most vulnerable point- with an eleven inch solid shot, supposed to have come from the ironclad Essex. It came through bringing with it a fearful mass of iron and wooden splinters killing four men when it entered, sweeping across the ship and killing our men at the opposite gun. A charge of grape came in at one of the portholes killing one or two and wounding several. We passed in the shadow of the burning hulls of the Hartford and the Richmond receiving their broadsides and giving them ours. But we were still

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Moving on and now the last vessel of the Federal fleet is past and the white smoke that flashes up from the hills on our front tells us that we are at last safely under the Batteries of Vicksburg. The people covered the hills to greet us and as we moved ashore cheer after cheer went up for our safety.

When the fight was over the men were perfectly prostrated, the work at the guns had been so heavy. The air was so close and hot in the fire room that several times the firemen fainted, had to be hoisted up and a fresh relief sent down. The vessel caught fire during the action but “first firemen” were called and the flames extinguished without confusion and without any stoppage in the working of the guns.

Too much praise cannot be awarded Capt. Brown and Lieut. Stevens; the former took his station of the steps leading to the hatchway in the upper deck and with his head above the deck watched the maneuvers of the enemy and directed the course of our vessel. Lieut. Stevens fought the ship, and a more gallant man or more polished gentleman never breathed the breath of life. Twice when our flag

staff was carried away and our colors fell on deck, Lieut. Stevens passed out the port hole and amid a perfect rain of missiles of all kinds returned the flag to its place.

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This Will I believe is about all I know of the "Arkansas" fight. As to the number killed and wounded and some other details that I have forgotten, you can get them from the newspapers of that date. The Memphis Appeal had a full account of the fight.

If you can forgive me Will for my long delay I would be pleased to hear from you soon, and I will try and do better in the future. I know of no one whose hand I could so welcomly (sic) grasp as your own. Remember me to your lady and accept my dearest \_\_\_ for you happiness.

I am Will, Truly yours, S.S. Harris

In 1868 William T. Thompson married Sarah M. Bridges in Washington County, Maryland who unfortunately died a year later. In 1872 he married Ann Eliza White in Berryville, Clarke County, Virginia. The marriage lasted for about 12 years when Ann died in 1884. A year later in 1885 Thompson married a third time to Julia Elizabeth Adams in Virginia. Julia lived until 1898. Thompson was graduated from the University of Virginia and the Presbyterian Theological Seminary at Columbia, South Carolina. After being ordained a Presbyterian minister in 1872, he served the First Scots Presbyterian Church in Charleston, South Carolina from 1880 to 1890. After retiring in 1910 he moved to his summer home at Highlands, North Carolina where he lived until his death. William T. Thompson died 30 March 1920 at Highlands, Macon County, North Carolina and is buried in the Arlington National Cemetery, Confederate Section Site 201-A, in Arlington County, Virginia, the home of Confederate General Robert E. Lee.<sup>8</sup>

Dr. Samuel Stanhope Harris, at the end of the war, settled for a short time at Water Valley, Mississippi. He then returned to Cape Girardeau, where he remained and practiced his profession until his death. He wrote several articles for numerous medical journals. For eight years he was a member of the Board of Pension Examiners and in 1886 he was appointed postmaster of Cape Girardeau, serving almost three years in that capacity. Dr. Harris married twice. On 10 January 1867 he married Miss Amanda Brown, daughter of Lieutenant Governor Brown. She died a year later leaving one child, Mary Amanda Harris. In 1880 Dr. Harris married Miss Julia Russell of Jackson, Missouri. Two children were born to this union but died in infancy. In March of 1896 Camp No. 790 of the United Confederate Veterans was formed at Jackson, Missouri with Harris as commander. Many members of the camp were veterans of the 8<sup>th</sup> Missouri Cavalry and Harris' 4<sup>th</sup> Missouri Battery. Dr. Harris developed a heart condition and was taken to St. Louis for treatment on 24 November 1897. He died in the St. Luke's hospital there on 6 December 1897. His wife Julia also died of heart disease suddenly in St. Louis on 2 February 1902. They are buried in the New Lorimier Cemetery in Cape Girardeau. The Samuel S. Harris Memorial Association of the Confederated Southern Memorial Association was formed on 9 April 1902 with Mrs. Louis Houck as Corresponding Secretary and later president. Many of the members were charter members of the Cape Girardeau chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy organized on 15 June 1891.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) (July 2020); The Ministerial Directory of the Ministers of the Presbyterian Church. Oxford, OH, USA: The Ministerial Directory Company of Oxford, Ohio, 1898; Marsha L. Fuller, Certified Genealogist. *Marriage Records*. Washington County, Maryland, USA: Washington County Free Library; Virginia, Marriages, 1785-1940. Salt Lake City, Utah: FamilySearch, 2013.

<sup>9</sup> Conrad, Howard L., ed., *Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri*. (St. Louis; Southern History Company, 1901), Vol. III, p. 189-90; *Missouri Cash Book*, Jackson, MO, 26 March 1896, p. 2, col 2; *Cape Girardeau Democrat*. Cape Girardeau, MO. Saturday 27 November 1897, p. 5, col. 2 and Saturday 11 December 1897, p. 4, col. 2; Confederated Southern Memorial Association (U.S.) *History of the Confederated Memorial Associations of the South*. Graham Press, 1904 – p. 215-7.





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