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Chapter 1 : The Ruthless Exploits of Admiral John Winslow : Naval Hero of the Civil War by € | eBay

*The Ruthless Exploits of Admiral John Winslow: Naval Hero of the Civil War (True Adventure Stories from the Civil War) [Paul Ditzel] on www.nxgvision.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. Really the story of the exploits of two American characters: John Ancrum Winslow and CSS Navy Admiral Raphael Simmes.*

Alabama By William F. When the Union sloop of war Kearsarge and the Confederate commerce raider Alabama clashed off the coast of Cherbourg, France, it was a last glimpse of chivalry in what had otherwise become a deadly serious and unromantic war. On June 19, , was waged the last naval duel of American naval history: Admiral David Glasgow Farragut himself, the hero of Mobile Bay, declared, "I had sooner have fought that fight than any ever fought upon the ocean! Highlighting the transition through which naval technology was then passing, both the Kearsarge and the Alabama were equipped with sails and steam-driven propellers. As Bruce Catton wrote, "The Civil War came while one revolution in naval affairs was underway, and it hastened the commencement of another Kearsarge and the C. Alabama hearkened back to a more romantic, more gallant era. Many people remember the clash of the ironclads Monitor and Virginia, but that battle was essentially a draw. There was a clear winner in the clash of the Kearsarge and the Alabama. When it started, the Civil War caught the navies of both sides completely unprepared. Years of prewar neglect had taken their toll on the U. When war broke out and President Lincoln ordered a blockade of the 3, miles of Confederate coastline, U. Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles found that he had at his disposal just 8, officers and sailors, and 89 ships, only 42 of which were in commission. Of these, 28 were on station in foreign waters, 26 were available but not in commission, and 21 were rated unserviceable. Welles immediately made arrangements for the purchase of other vessels to be altered and put into service - including harbor ferryboats, tugboats and passenger liners - and he ordered the construction of 52 others, just for starters. Among these would be the Mohican-class steam sloop U. By December , the U. Navy had ships mounting 2, guns and carrying 22, crew. By the end of the war, the Navy would boast ships and 52, men - among the largest in the world. A third of the Navy officer corps of Southern birth headed south to serve the Confederacy: Navy high command so feared sabotage or invasion in the simmering border state of Maryland, that the U. Naval Academy at Annapolis was moved for the first and only time in its history: Along with the cadets, the faculty and the books went the U. Constitution, "Old Ironsides" of War of fame, which continued to serve as a training ship. Confederate Navy Secretary Stephen Mallory had just 35 ships, mostly small, by December ; only 21 were steamships, and the majority had fewer than five cannon. Some were "cottonclads," relying on the dubious protection of bales of cotton rather than iron plating. The Confederacy was not too much better off in terms of an industrial base with which to build more. The Confederacy had only two naval yards, three rolling mills, and just a single foundry for the casting of heavy cannon. The Confederacy initially had to rely for its naval ordnance upon arms captured at Gosport Navy Yard in Norfolk, Virginia. They also captured the half-burned hulk of the Union steam frigate Merrimac, which would be refit and rebuilt as the fearsome Confederate ironclad C. Virginia, and go on to its fateful battle with the U. Mallory did good work with few resources, and he would be the only member of the Confederate cabinet to hold the same post throughout the entire war. On April 17, , President Jefferson Davis issued an offer of letters of marque and reprisal under the great seal of the Confederacy to attack U. It was an open invitation for privateers to do what the infant Confederate Navy could not then do for itself: Cotton was key to Southern prosperity. Cotton cost about eight cents a pound in the port of Wilmington, N. The money from that trade could buy a lot of war materiel; hemmed in by the Union, the Confederacy badly needed foreign commerce. Blockade runners, sleek, swift, quiet ships, soon appeared to slip through the Union blockade and bring much needed supplies to the Confederacy. For those who bankrolled blockade runners, profits started at percent at the beginning of the war. With 1, blockade runners captured by April , however, the flood of supplies brought across the high seas to Confederate shores slowed to a trickle. The Confederate Congress passed a law requiring one-third of all

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shipping capacity be set aside for government cargoes, but the rule was not strictly enforced. There was far more money to be made in secretly importing European perfumes, silks, tea, liquor, and exotic foods. Navy crews preferred to capture rather than sink blockade runners, wherever possible, and for good reason: James Bulloch left , Confederate agent in London during the war who arranged for the construction of the Alabama, and his half-brother Irvine Bulloch right , who served as an officer on the Alabama. Confederate Navy Secretary Mallory realized that he could not rely on Confederate shipyards alone to build his fleet. He also sent James D. Bulloch, a business and shipping genius, to Great Britain to arrange for the construction of commerce raiders there. Soon, the ships that would become the C. Florida and her more famous compatriot, the Alabama, were under construction - both under the alert eye of U. Bulloch had to be very careful. As he wrote to James M. Although of strong Union sympathies, T. Historian James McPherson has written that this was a "contest of lawyers, spies and double agents that would furnish material for an espionage thriller," and so it was. The British were no strangers to shipbuilding for the Confederacy; the small, shallow-draft Clyde River steamers were already popular and effective blockade runners. A correspondent for the London Times noted in late , "Should the demand continue at this rate, there will soon be scarcely a swift steamer left on the Clyde. Many members of Parliament made no attempt to hide their Confederate sympathies, and Adams had his work cut out for him. As McPherson noted, "Although their exploits did not alter the outcome of the war, they diverted numerous Union navy ships from the blockade, drove insurance rates for American vessels to astronomical heights, forced these vessels to remain in port or convert to foreign registry [eight times as much tonnage as the Alabama and her sister ships actually destroyed], and helped topple the American merchant marine from its once-dominant position, which it never regained. Raphael Semmes had begun the war as secretary of the U. Lighthouse Board in Washington, but he soon made himself useful to the Confederacy by shopping for naval supplies in the north. Born in Maryland but a longtime resident of Alabama, Semmes was lean and wiry, with piercing blue eyes and a rakish moustache, looking every inch the pirate captain that the northern press later accused him of being. He kept the moustache so heavily waxed that his crew dubbed him "Old Beeswax. Somers, which capsized in a squall. He secured a Confederate combat command for himself first as master of the C. Sumter, a passenger ship converted to a raider, which sank or captured 18 ships in a seven-month voyage. Bulloch had wanted her command for himself, but he was providing a greater service to the Confederacy ashore, so Semmes got the Alabama and a better-known place in the history books. It was just as well for him, as the British government ordered him not to sail just hours before. Semmes took his ship to the Azores, west of Spain, and the ship was armed there with cannon and ammunition brought aboard another ship from Britain. Semmes formally commissioned his ship the C. Alabama on August 24, , and the hunt was on. Immediately, the Alabama wreaked havoc among the U. She sailed for Newfoundland and the New England coast, capturing, burning or sinking another 11 ships. By now, the Atlantic was aswarm with U. Navy ships hunting for her; none found her until the Alabama encountered the U. Hatteras in the Gulf of Mexico near Galveston, Texas. By a ruse in which Semmes pretended that his ship was the British warship H. Petrel, the Alabama got close enough to the Hatteras to loose a fatal broadside, and soon the smaller Union warship was sinking. It was to be the only victory of a Confederate raider over a Union warship in the entire war. Navy Secretary Welles, seething, confided to his diary, "The ravages of the England should be held accountable for these outrages. The vessel was built in England and has never been in the ports of any other nation. British authorities were warned of her true character repeatedly before she left. Semmes, perhaps sensing that the U. Navy was closing in on him, sailed down the coast of South America, around the Cape of Good Hope and westward across the Pacific, continuing to prey on American ships as he went. The Alabama sailed across the Indian Ocean and then to Singapore, but the news of her coming had raced ahead, and no U. By then, Semmes had developed a routine, checking the papers of each ship he stopped, burning or sinking any of U. He sometimes would hoist false colors or identify his ship as another in order to gain an advantage or win the confidence of another ship, a practice which also led to his denunciation as a pirate by the Northern press. After a visit to India and South Africa, Semmes and the Alabama continued their swath of destruction

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up through the center of the Atlantic. Semmes put in at Cherbourg, France, on June 11, , for repairs and coal. The Kearsarge appeared three days later, steaming briefly into harbor to look over the Alabama before leaving again to blockade the harbor mouth, beyond the breakwater. Winslow, was careful not to cause a diplomatic incident by engaging the Alabama then and there. Semmes immediately challenged the Kearsarge to a duel, writing to Winslow, "My intention is to fight the Kearsarge as soon as I can make the necessary arrangements. I hope these will not deter me more than until tomorrow evening, or after the morrow morning at the furthest. I beg she will not depart before I am ready to go out. In one of those great ironies for which the Civil War is so remarkable, Semmes and Winslow had shared a cabin as young naval lieutenants during the Mexican War, 17 years earlier and 5, miles to the west. Each had lost early commands in unavoidable storms. Now, the two officers had their own rendezvous with destiny. John Ancrum Winslow was a native North Carolinian who had remained loyal to the Union when the war came. He married his not-so-distant cousin, a Boston socialite, causing a minor scandal.

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