

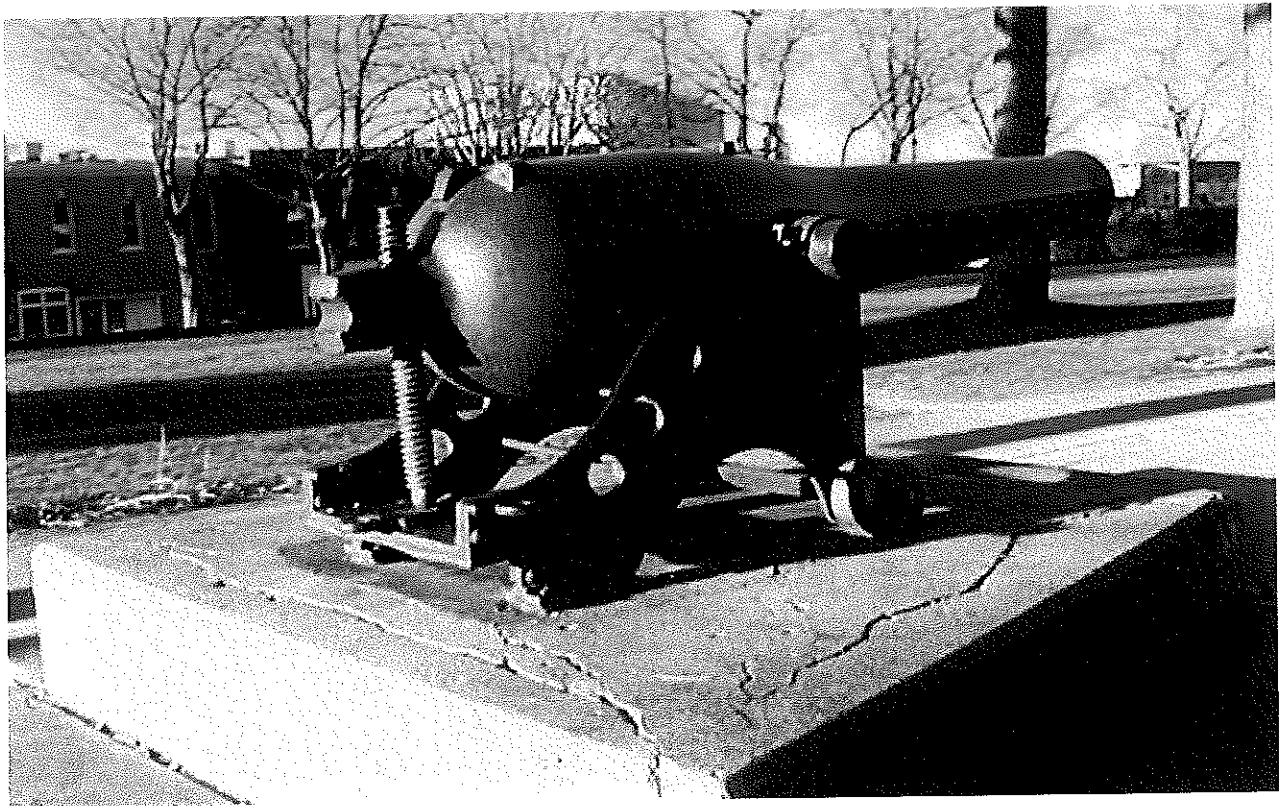
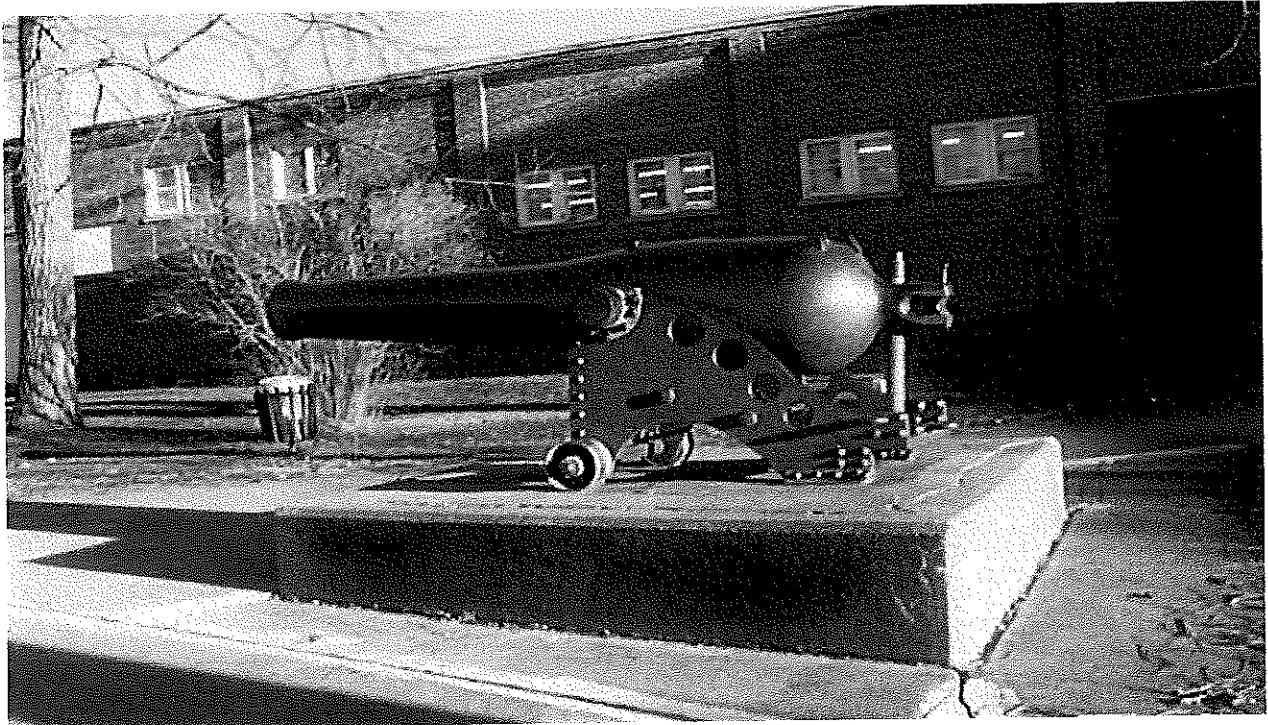
**CIVIL WAR CANNON**

**1X-INCH DAHIGREN, NO 249**

**Cast in 1859**

**PLACED IN PENNSYLVANIA PARK**

# Civil War Cannon Pennsylvania Park, Petoskey, Michigan



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### The Powerful Cannon From the Hartford Comes to Petoskey

Our gun in the park and the two in the Bay City park were brought here during the winter of 1904-1905 from Mare Island navy yard in California. Our gun was placed in the park May 29, 1905, and dedicated on July 4, 1905. Congressman George A. Loud and our local Postmaster at the time, James Buckley, are credited with obtaining these guns for Michigan. The metal tablet on the carriage of many of the Dahlgrens in Michigan explain about the gun and the Hartford. These plaques were cast at the Industrial Works in Bay City.

Farragut, Hartford and Dahlgren were entwined in the naval battles for New Orleans, Port Hudson, and Vicksburg as they were in the battle for Mobile. The union losses during the battle of Mobile were heavy; 52 killed and 170 wounded. The battle for Mobile Bay was the hardest fought naval battle of the Civil War. The Hartford alone out of a crew of 310 had 25 killed and 28 wounded. She had been hit 20 times. Five shells pierced her hull. Four crews of the big Dahlgrens had been blown to pieces. The dead and wounded were quickly removed, the guns repaired and the firing resumed.

In its entire Civil War history the Hartford was hit 264 times, but Farragut was never hurt. He wrote his wife: *"Though I am worn out with mental strain and physical fatigue, I escaped—thank God—without a scratch."* He was made rear admiral in 1862, vice admiral in 1864 and full admiral in 1866. His fame was built on only six hours of actual fighting. *"Don't be afraid of doing too much; those who are, seldom do as much as they ought."* He told his men. The last time the Dahlgren 1X-inch guns were fired in anger was in the battle for Mobile Bay.

On one of Farragut's later missions for the United States to England he inspected docks and arsenals making extensive notes about the relative powerful 1X-inch Dahlgren and 14-inch rifle tested there. Information obtained from the Little Traverse Historical Society

### The Gun In The Park

In Petoskey's Pennsylvania Park there is a dark bottle-shaped gun on a cement pedestal. Except when children climb up to play on its iron barrel, the weapon, a 1X-inch Dahlgren smoothbore shell gun, is easy to ignore. But this gun with its enlargements was called by a naval historian "the gun that won the Civil War." Navy men came to regard it as the most efficient boat weapon of its day; Dahlgrens "stood well" in battle.

The gun in our park, No. 249, was cast in 1859 by the C.A. & Co., Cyrus Alger & Co. of South Boston, the same company that furnished the government with shot and shell during the War of 1812. The nine in 1X-inch refers to the diameter of the muzzle and size of the ammunition the Dahlgren could fire. Standardization of the Dahlgren battery on the Hartford and other sloop-of-war simplified the munitions needed for the guns. Considering it took an officer, loaders, rammers, spongers, tackle men, 16 in all, plus one powder monkey, a young boy, to fire each broadside gun, Dahlgren's uniformity of gun size and their munitions was a great advantage, especially in an intense battle.

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Now our Dahlgren has its muzzle safely plugged with wood. The large screw at the rear of the gun was used to elevate the gun for correct aim. Aiming such a large gun from the unstable deck of a ship took practice; guns were often fired at the instant the roll of the ship brought the target into line. The rectangular shape on the top of the breech, the back of the gun, is a rear sight base. The two box-like objects on the top of the gun are for percussion locks; one would be fitted to fire the gun. One of John Dahlgren's earliest inventions was an improvement of the percussion lock. The large metal loops were for the strong ropes used for running the guns out and for checking the length of the recoil when the gun was fired. The casabel block on the rear of our gun is reversed with the concave side to the rear. It should be turned and its pin made flush with the upper face of the casabel so the rope will pass through smoothly.

The iron Marsilly carriage, much more durable than a wooden carriage, is No. 110, weighing a hefty 1,290 pounds itself. Wooden carriages (probably of elm), if hit during battle, could splinter. Wounds from these splinters were serious and even fatal to the gun's crew. The lighter iron carriage was possibly exchanged for the heavier wooden one after the Civil War in the late 1860's when the Hartford was refitted. Iron carriages held up better under the force of the recoil and while heavy, were lighter than the massive wooden carriages. The large circles, holes in the sides of the iron carriage, were to further lighten it.

Originally the Marsilly carriage had four wheels, but the newer designs had only two wheels, a truck, so the rear of the carriage slid on the deck, checking recoil. To move the gun a large handspike was used to lift the carriage so the wheels could be maneuvered.

Appropriately the Dahlgren faces the waters of Little Traverse Bay. This piece weighting 9,085 pounds, two or three times the weight of a car, with its side projections, its trunnions, resting on the carriage, was a naval gun. On the end of the right Turin is the date the cannon was cast, 1859; on the left trunnion is a letter "P" for "proved" with the inspector's initials, "W.R.T. for William Rogers Taylor.

Dahlgren was unusually involved with the correct casting and safety testing, the proving, of his guns. During the Civil War when his new and even more powerful XV-inch., was placed in an ironclad's turret in spite of his protests that his newest weapon had been insufficiently tested and perhaps poorly cast, he instructed the crews to fire the XV-inch gun only when absolutely necessary and to load only a reduced charge. In the past gun crews often felt the possibility of the gun bursting upon firing made it almost as dangerous to shoot as to be shot at. Dahlgrens, though, were handled by the crews "with as much confidence as they drink their grog." No Dahlgren gun, not the 1X-inch or the XV-inch, ever burst, even when fired with full charges.

By the end of the Civil War a battery of twenty-six 1X-inch Dahlgrens were on the deck of the Hartford. The Hartford's Civil War battles at New Orleans, Vicksburg, Mobile Bay and Port Hudson established the ship as one of the most valuable unarmored vessels of the conflict. Gun crews called the type of gun in our park a black power gun or "the soda water bottle." John Dahlgren did not like the nickname for his gun. The 1X-inch is the result of his long struggles with the navy to change the

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practice of adapting army guns for navy use. Our gun was the first of a whole series of Dahlgren naval guns.

Across the bay in Harbor Springs' Zorn park is another Dahlgren 1X-inch from the Hartford. Harbor's gun is No. 678, cast in 1862, weighing 9,061 pounds. Cheboygan has one on a carriage in front of its County Building. Three more are in the Marina Park at Mackinaw City, mounted on metal carriages. These three are elevated with their muzzles pointing skyward. One of the three had previous; been in the Fort Michilimackinac grounds but was moved during the fort's renovation because the gun was not from the fort's period in history. Hedges almost surround the three carriages at the waterfront setting. All these Dahlgren guns except the ones in Petoskey and in the yard of the City-County Building in Gaylord were cast during the Civil War years.

Gaylord's gun is No. 250 from the same foundry as the Petoskey Dahlgren. Two more 1X-inch Dahlgrens from the Hartford were placed in parks in Bay City. The Civil War gun in the Veteran's Park in Boyne City is a land artillery piece, a Columbiad on a metal Barbette Carriage, which may have been mounted on a pivoting mechanism.

We are lucky to have these relics from the Civil War in Northern Michigan. In Bay City during World War 11 historic cannons, city streetcar rails and other steelwork were gathered up during patriotic scrap drives. Some believe that the cannons were too large to be used for scrap and may still exist buried in some junkyard. In trying to track down the location of all the Dahlgren's from the Hartford it was learned from the Naval Archives that unfortunately the records of the gun's relocations are lost. Perhaps some other of the 1X-inch guns were collected for scrap during World War 11. Maybe a few are in other locations in the United States.

The power of this seemingly ornamental fixture quietly resting in our park was dreadful. During pre-war trials in 1852 the shell from our 1X-inch Dahlgren hit a target of white oak 30 thick at a range of 1,300 yards. The explosion displaced 27 cubic feet of wood Think of a cube made of yard sticks to visualize the approximate destruction.

When fired at ironclads the 1X-inch shell could pierce 4.5 inches of iron plate backed by 20 inches of solid oak. The inventor of the gun in our park by painstakingly crafting the best cannon possible for naval warfare with wooden ships prepared the U.S. Navy for war with the more formidable ironclads.



## OUR CAMMON IN PENNSYLVANIA PARK

By Barry Cole

The cannon is from the *USS Hartford*, the flagship of Adm. Farrigut, commander of the coastal squadron responsible for the naval actioin and blockade of the Gulf shore during the Civil War.

**Aug. 5, 2014; 150th anniversary of the Battle of Mobile Bay.** Mobile Bay was the last open major port to be held by the South.

Farrigut, the first US Navy officer ever promoted to Admiral, was on the flagship as the fleet ran the gauntlet of forts, cannons and Confederate ships protecting the bay that day. The Union ships were in single line formation, the *Hartford* second in line. The lead ship, the *USS Tecumseh*, hit a torpedo (today called a mine), immediately capsized taking 113 of its crew down as it sank.

As the sloops and gunships started to stack up behind the *Hartford*, against his staff recommendation he order the *Hartford* to take the lead by giving the immortal naval command, "**Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!**" The cannon smoke on the bay became so thick he ordered his staff to tie him to the mainmast so he could see above the smoke to command the fleet. Farrigut later said this three hour battle was the most ferocious battle yet in the history of the US Navy. The news of the great victory was said to have been a major boost to Lincoln in gaining his second term nomination and election.

This battle is the last time the cannon was fired in combat. Prior to Mobile Bay the *Hartford* took part in two other key naval battles that helped separate the Western confederacy from the East; the capture of New Orleans, the South's richest and most populous city (1862) and Vicksburg (1863) that denied the rebels access to the Mississippi. Farragut was promoted to rear admiral after the battle of New Orleans.

The Dalgren IX Inch Cannon was a formidable weapon during the war. This one cast in iron in 1859, was designed to fire solid shot as well as explosive shells at high velocity and great range and at a flat trajectory, greatly increasing accuracy. It was capable of firing shot, shell, shrapnel, canister and grapeshot. No Dahlgren shell gun burst during service, a notable distinction for the time. At 15 degrees of elevation with a 90 lb. shell its range was two miles. The cannon weighs over 2 1/2 tons.

Since 1905 the IX Inch Dalhgren Cannon has resided on a pedestal in Pennsylvania Park in downtown Petoskey, Michigan. It was dedicated on July 4th. Many members of the Grand Army of the Republic (Civil War Union veterans) were in attendance.

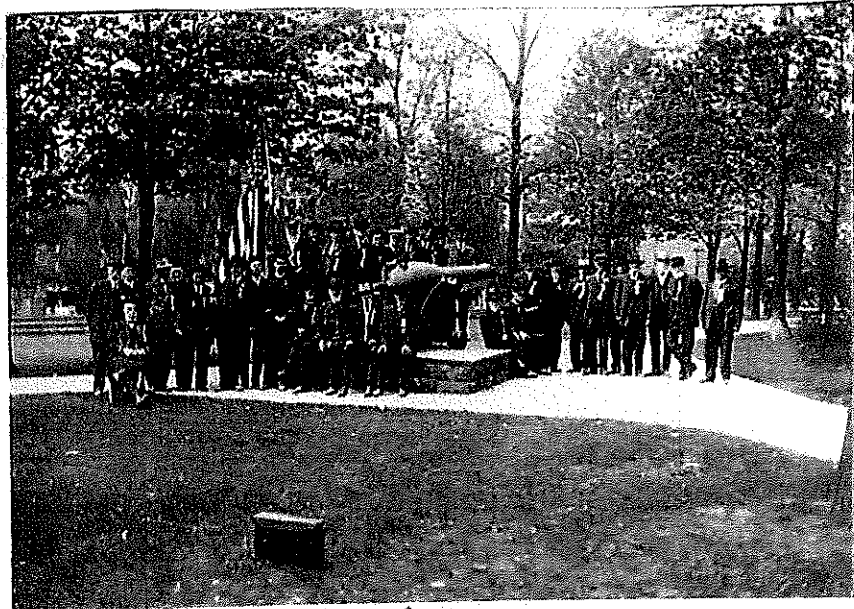
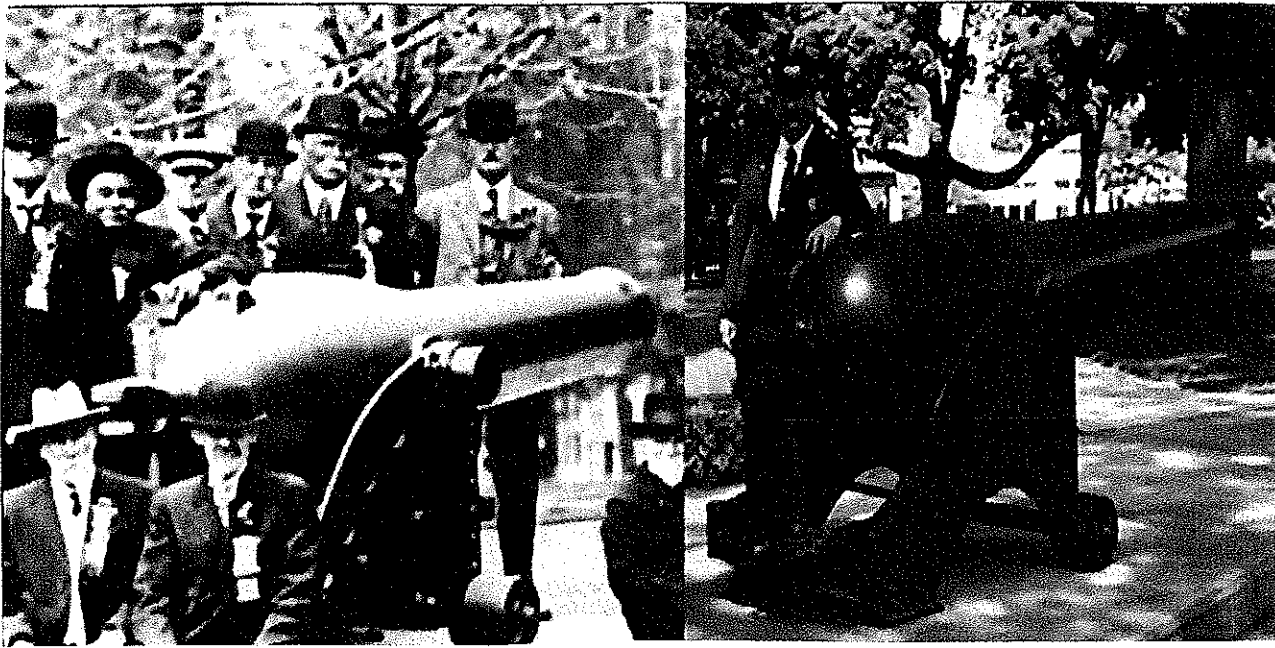
As you can see from the pictures this national treasure, a key piece of US Naval history, is showing the effects of weather exposure for the last 109 years. It is time to have it restored and preserved for this and future generations. Currently there is inadequate signage for the cannon and the vast majority of locals and visitors to this popular resort town, itself on the National Register of Historic Places, have no idea of the significance of the cannon or even to which war it belongs. Sadly many have never heard of Adm. Farragut or "Damn the Torpedoes, Full Speed Ahead!" Funds are being raised to purchase a state historical marker, to enlist a metallurgist for an assessment and strategy for reconditioning, and then the work itself.

Depending on the source the *USS Hartford* carried either 20 or 26 of the Dahlgrens; it may have differed over the ship's 40 plus years as a commissioned Naval ship. It's final decommission was in 1926 and the storied ship unfortunately became a derelict and sank in its berth in 1956 then subsequently dismantled.

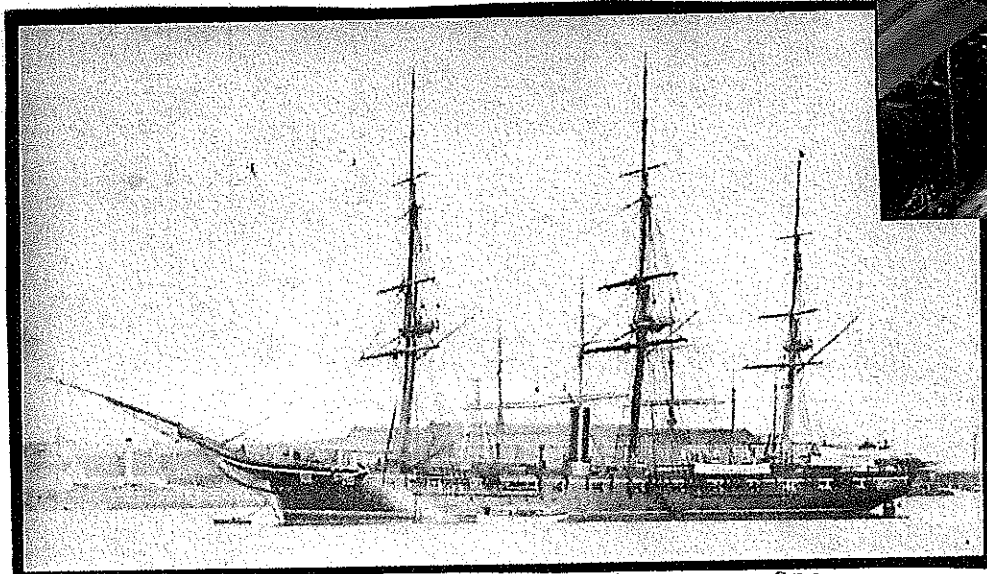
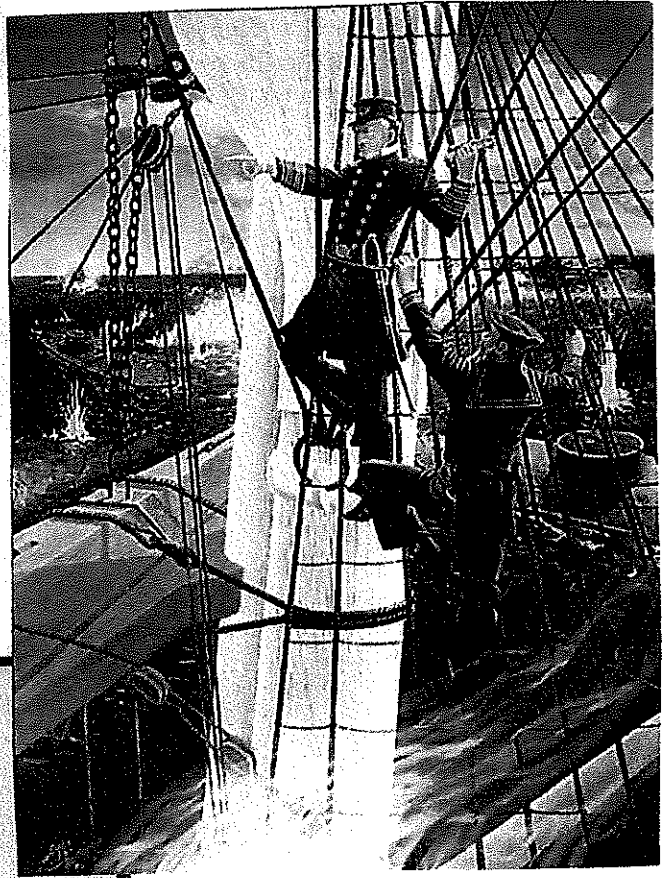
Please contribute and save this impressive part of US history for this and future generations.

More annotated photos at: [www.facebook.com/PetoskeyFarragutCannon](http://www.facebook.com/PetoskeyFarragutCannon)



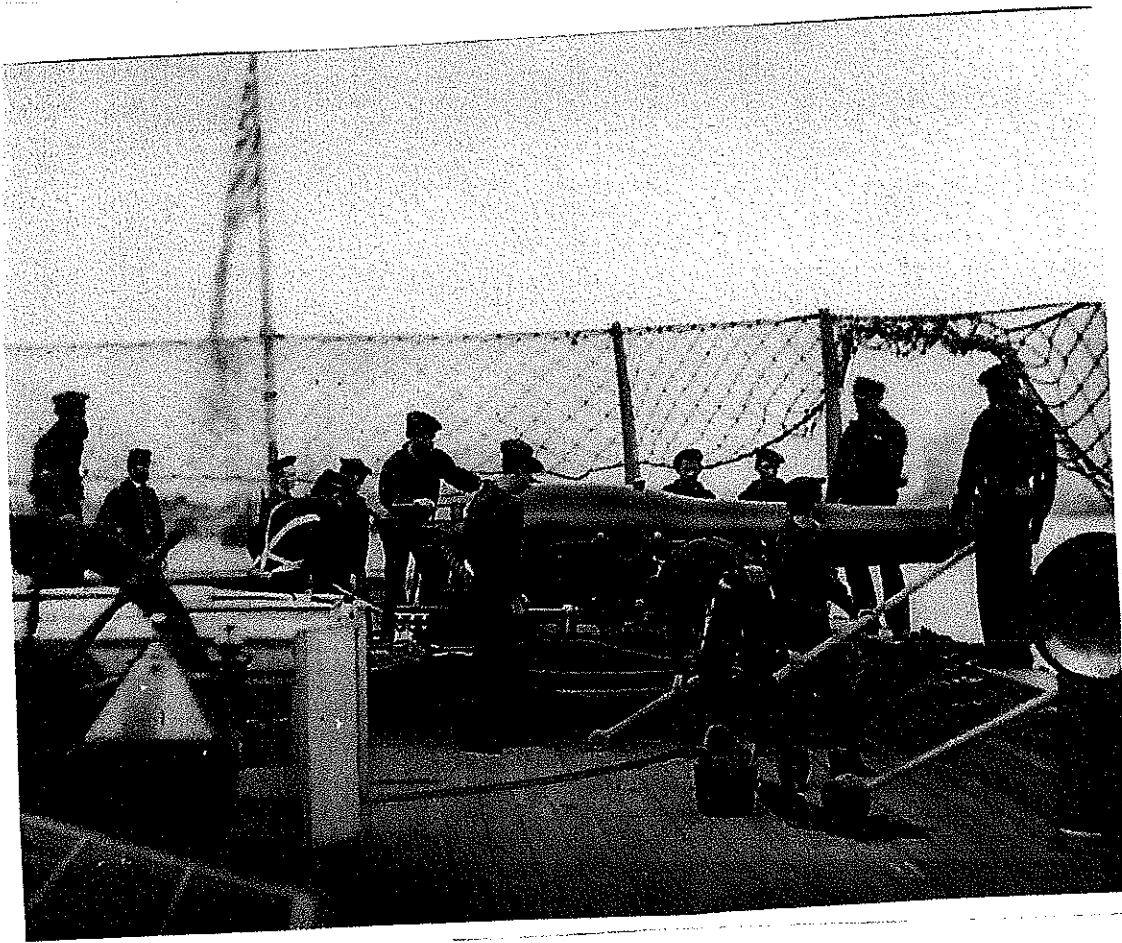


GAR 1913 Reunion



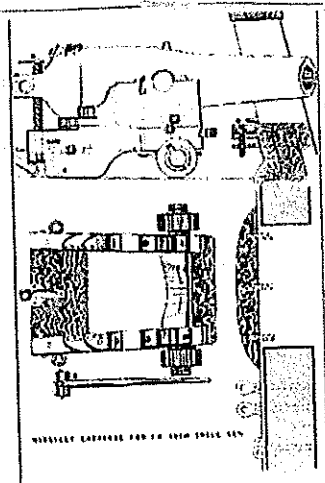
USS HARTFORD 1859-1926

Cannon  
Pennsylvania Park  
Petoskey, Michigan  
USS Hartford  
1859 -- 1926

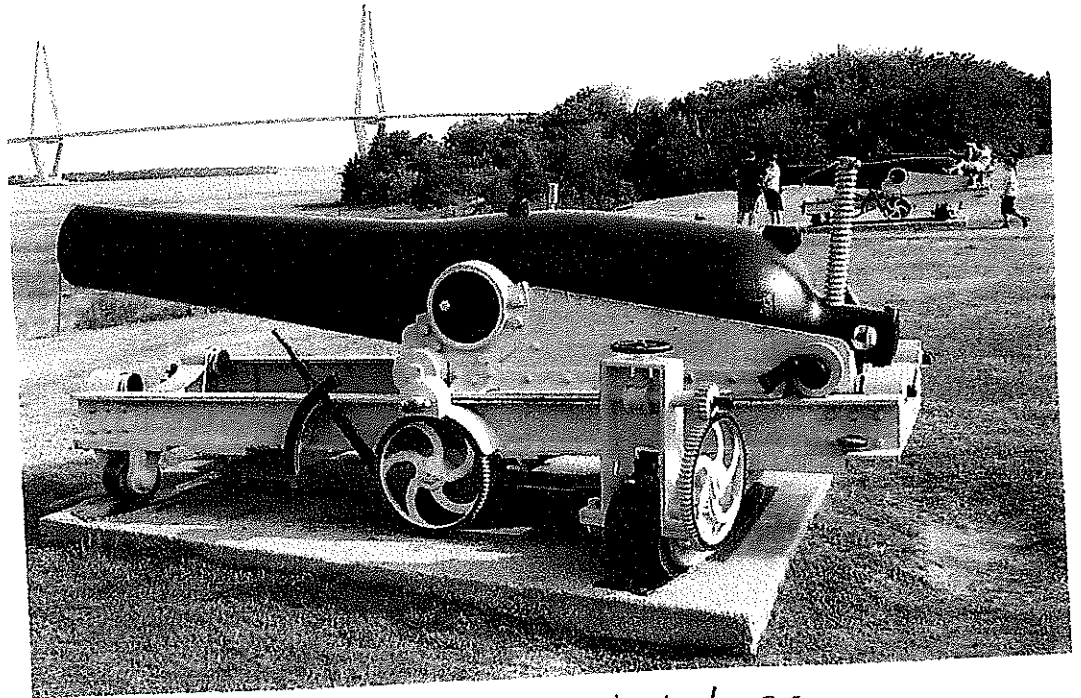


16 MAN GUN CREW

USS MIAMI, 1864

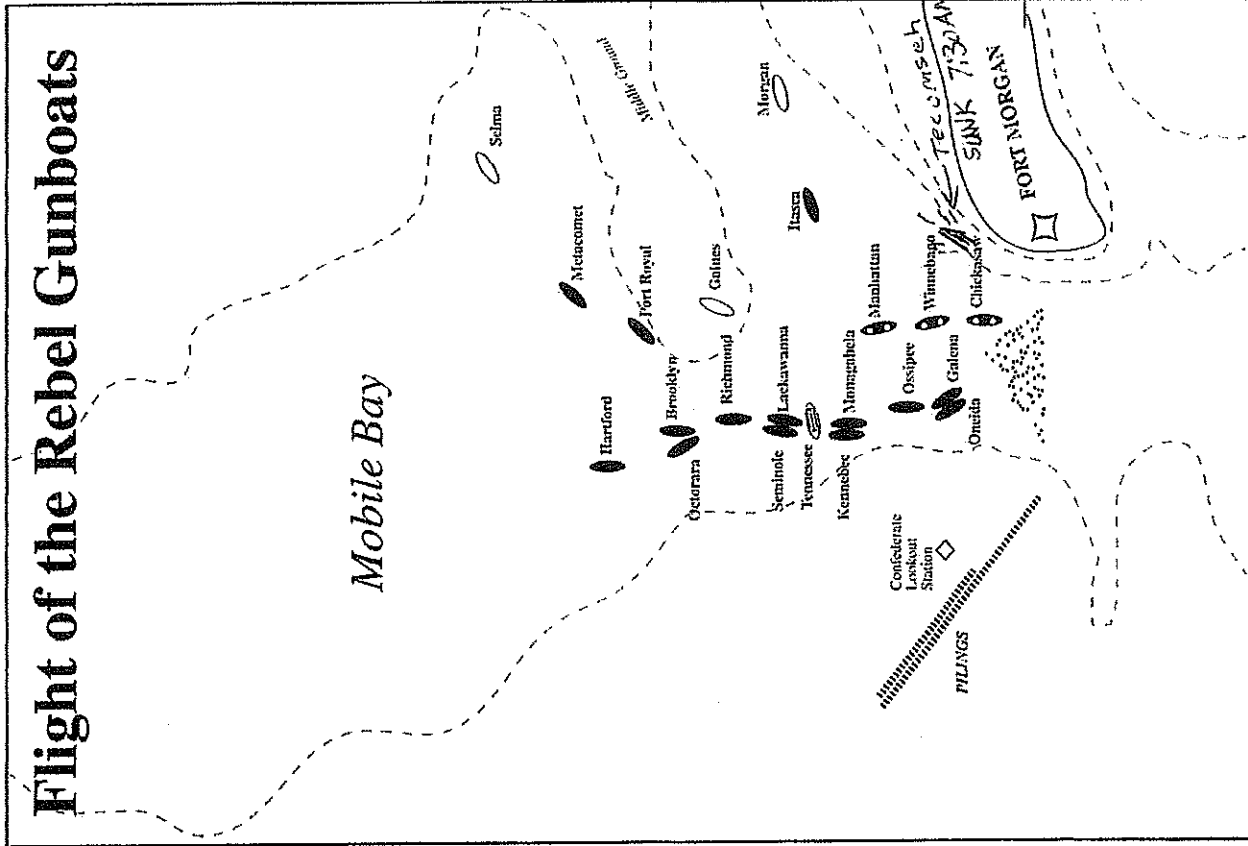


19-inch Dahlgren mounted on a Marsilly Carriage

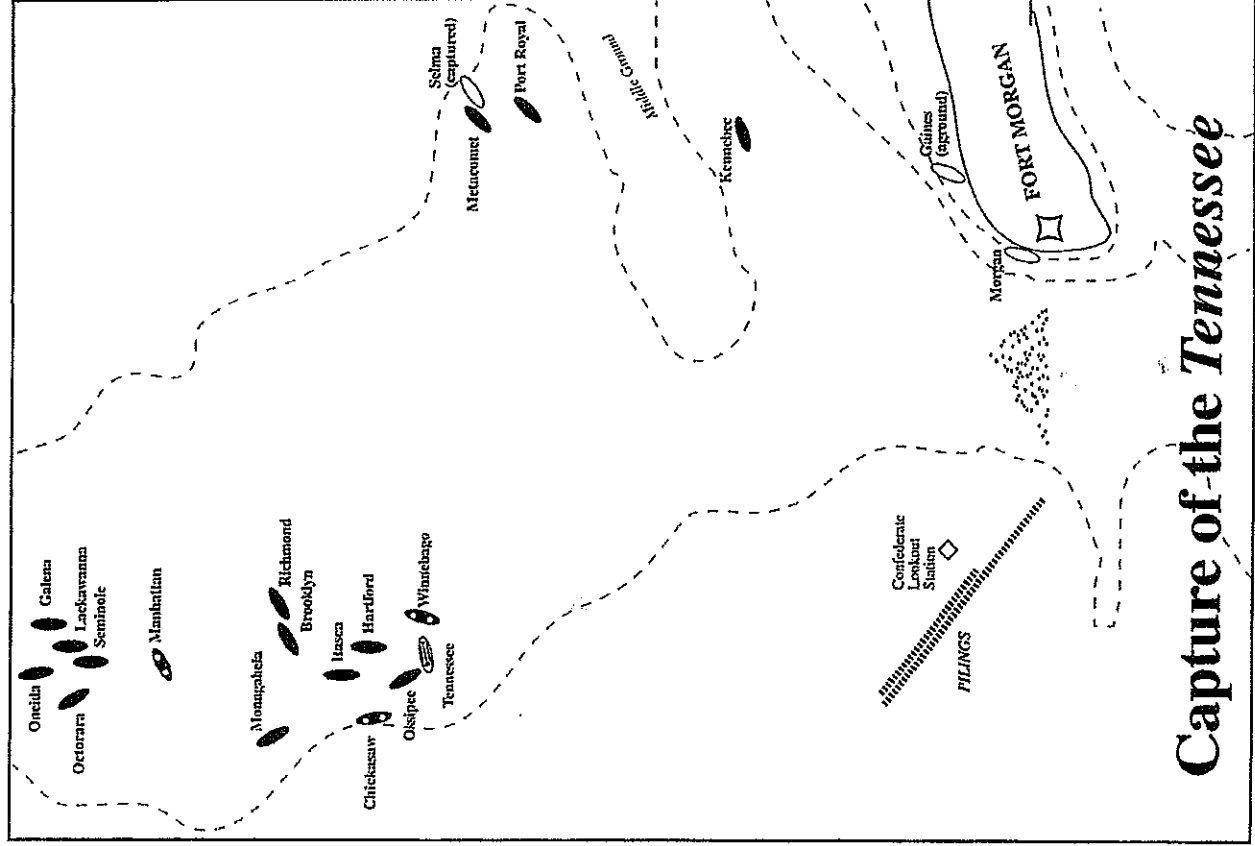


PATRIOTS POINT - Charleston, SC





West Gulf Blockading Squadron



AUG 5, 1864

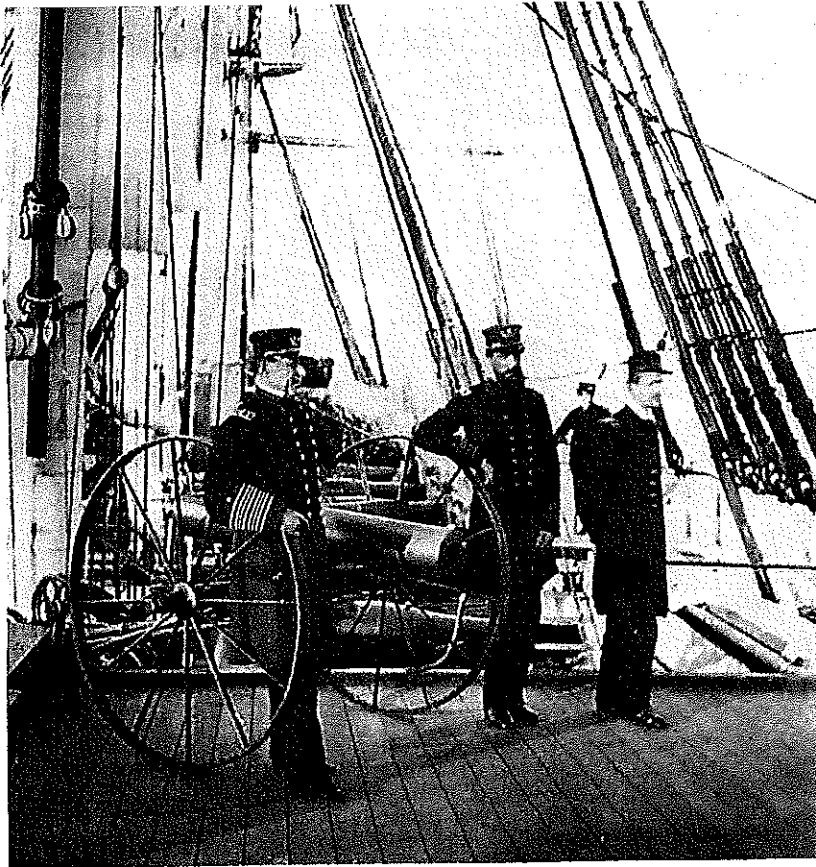
THIS GUN  
IS ONE OF TWENTY-SIX NINE INCH GUNS  
COMPOSING THE BATTERY OF  
ADMIRAL FARRAGUT'S  
HISTORIC FLAGSHIP  
"HARTFORD"  
DURING THE WAR OF REBELLION 1861 – 1865  
AT THE BATTLES OF  
NEW ORLEANS, VICKSBURG, PORT HUDSON, MOBILE

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FOREVERMORE A REMINDER  
TO THE RISING GENERATIONS OF THE  
GLORIOUS DEEDS OF OUR NAVY DUR-  
ING THAT FIERCE CONFLICT IN  
WHICH THE GOD OF BATTLES WATCH-  
ED OVER OUR NATION AND IN  
WHICH THIS GUN EFFECTIVELY  
SPOKE FOR LIBERTY AND A  
UNITED COUNTRY

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MOUNTED  
JULY 4<sup>TH</sup>, 1905

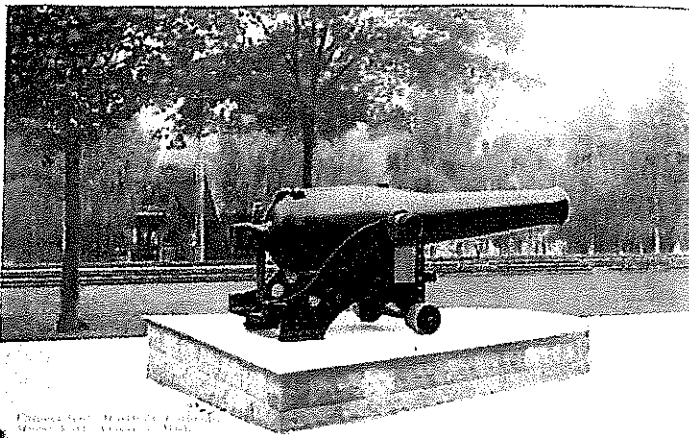


ADM FARRAGUT CAPT. DRAYTON  
ON BOARD USS - HARTFORD

Name: USS Hartford  
 Builder: Boston Navy Yard  
 Launched: 22 November 1858  
 Commissioned: 27 May 1859  
 Decommissioned: 20 August 1926  
 Fate: Sank at her berth, 20 November 1956, subsequently dismantled

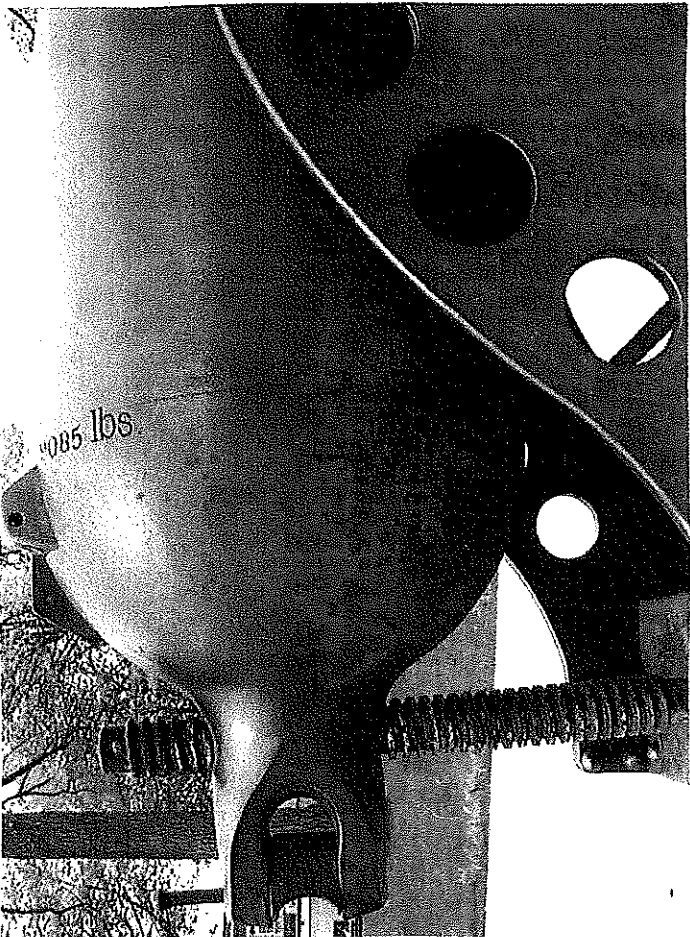
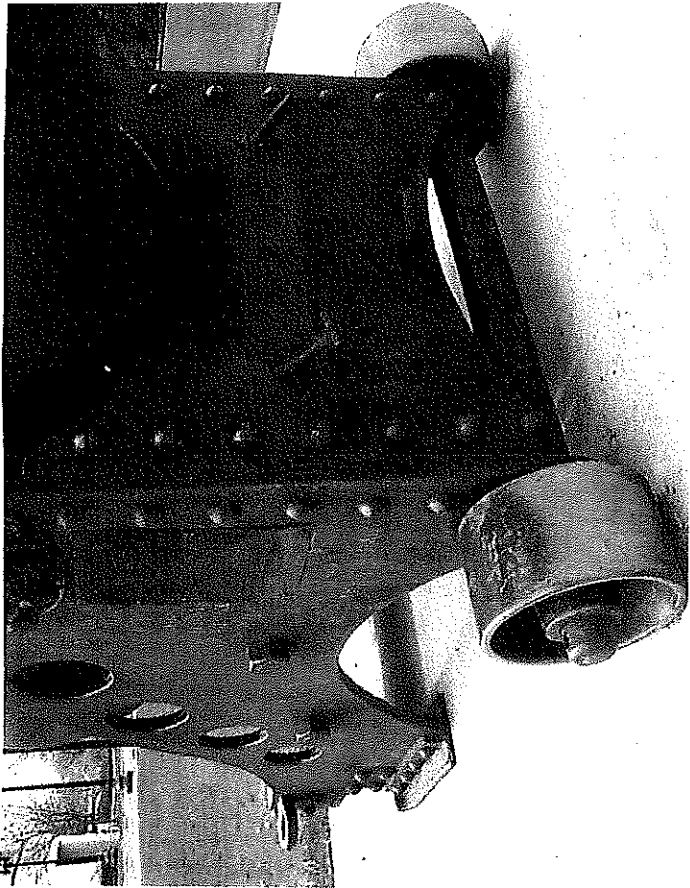
**General characteristics**

Type: Sloop-of-war  
 Tonnage: 2900  
 Length: 225 ft (69 m)  
 Beam: 44 ft (13 m)  
 Draft: 17 ft 2 in (5.23 m)  
 Propulsion: Steam engine and Sails  
 Speed: 13.5 knots (25.0 km/h; 15.5 mph)  
 Complement: 310 officers and enlisted<sup>(1)</sup>  
 Armament: • 20 x 9 in (230 mm) smoothbore Dahlgren guns  
 • 2 x 20-pounder Parrott rifles  
 • 2 x 12-pounder guns



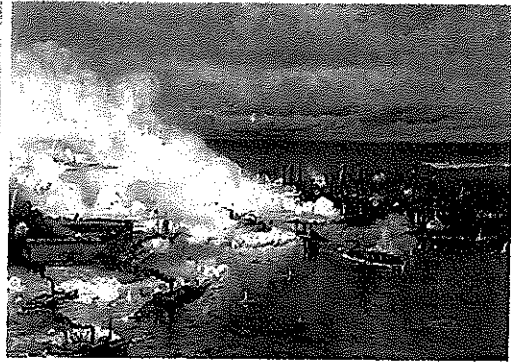
POST CARD CAPTION  
 "Cannon From Hartford, Cushman Park, Petoskey, Mich."





## Battle of Mobile Bay

Part of the American Civil War



*Battle of Mobile Bay, by Louis Prang.*

**Date** August 2, 1864–August 23, 1864<sup>(1)</sup>





**Location** Mobile Bay, Alabama

**Result** Union victory

### Belligerents

 United States (Union)  CSA (Confederacy)

### Commanders and leaders

 David Farragut (Navy)	 Franklin Buchanan (Navy)
 Gordon Granger (Army)	 Richard L. Page (Army)

### Strength

12 wooden ships	3 gunboats
2 gunboats	1 ironclad
4 ironclad monitors	1,500 men
5,500 men	

### Casualties and losses

151 killed	13 killed
177 wounded	22 wounded
1 ironclad sunk	1,587 captured
	1 gunboat captured
	1 gunboat destroyed
	1 ironclad captured