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John B. Hattendorf

Editor in Chief

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Confederate commander in chief was Admiral Franklin Buchanan, who had aggressively commanded the ironclad ram CSS *Virginia* on the first day of the Battle of Hampton Roads (March 8–9, 1862). Coal was running low, as was morale, and a concentrated attack by the monitors was inevitable. Accordingly, Buchanan also ordered his flagship to make a suicidal charge. Perhaps a few wooden ships could be destroyed before surrendering.

Farragut signaled his wooden sloops to ram the ram, which was quickly surrounded and pummeled at point-blank range in what the Union admiral described as “one of the fiercest naval combats on record.” The underpowered Confederate ironclad found it nearly impossible to ram ships underway. Yet repeated Union broadsides failed to penetrate *Tennessee*'s armor, though her crucially exposed steering chains were shot away, her smokestack toppled (further reducing speed), and a 15-inch solid shot from the monitor *Manhattan* had conclusively smashed a large hole through her casemate. Trapped, with her commander himself wounded from splinters, Buchanan finally hauled down mighty *Tennessee*'s colors. It was 10 A.M.; the battle was over.

Union casualties were 145 killed and 170 wounded, including those of *Tecumseh*, while the Confederates suffered only 30 casualties, with a single man wounded at Fort Morgan. Farragut's order of battle might be questioned, since two parallel columns running through the gantlet would inevitably find themselves bottlenecked as they approached the minefield. The monitors themselves were given the rather contradictory tasks “of keeping down the fire from the water battery and the parapet guns of the fort, as well as to attack the ram *Tennessee* as soon as the fort was passed.” In the confusion that followed, Captain Craven displayed initiative that cost him his life, while Farragut was spared.

Nevertheless, the U.S. Navy's triumph at Mobile Bay was overshadowed by the far bloodier campaigns in Georgia and Virginia. Still, Gideon Welles found cause to celebrate. “The possession of Mobile Bay,” he wrote, would “close the illicit traffic which had been carried on by running the blockade in that part of the Gulf,” while Farragut had “demonstrated what had been previously doubted, the ability of naval vessels, properly manned and commanded, to set at defiance the best constructed and most heavily armed fortifications.”

[See also Coastal Defense; Navies, Great Powers, *subentry* on United States, 1775 to the Present; Tactics; Technology and Weapons, *subentry* on 1850 to the Present; Underwater Weapons; and Wars, Maritime, *subentry* on Nineteenth-Century Wars.]

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HOWARD J. FULLER

Mocha is a Yemeni Red Sea port city that thrived from the sixteenth through the twentieth century. Spelling variations include Mocca, Moka, Mokha, and Mokka in European languages and al-Makhā, al-Mukhā, and al-Mukhā, in Arabic.

Mocha did not begin as an international commercial center, but rather it began as a small fishing village that rose to local renown during the residence of the Sufi saint Shaykh 'Alī bin 'Umar al-Shādhilī, who died in Mocha in 1424. The tomb and the monumental mosque named after this patron saint still stand in the midst of the city's ruins today. Although the popular legend of Mocha's foundation attributes its growth as a major international port to al-Shādhilī's lifetime, in fact it was the Ottomans who developed Mocha as a port of trade during their first occupation of Yemen in the sixteenth century. Under Turkish sponsorship the trade of Mocha surpassed that of its neighbor Aden, which had served as the key coastal entrepôt of Yemen's long-distance

trade throughout the medieval period. After the Ottomans were ousted from Yemen in 1635, the Qāsimīs, a family of local Shī'ī imams who ruled from the Yemeni highlands for over two centuries, continued to develop Mocha for trade until the Ottomans returned on the Red Sea coast for a second period of rule in 1849. However, by that time British occupation had set the stage for the reinvigoration of Aden, which surpassed Mocha as a modern port. Mocha witnessed brief periods of revival under the twentieth-century imams of Yemen, who built a new port to the south of the old jetty. But the larger and more active port of al-Ḥudayda, located to the north of Mocha, handles most of the contemporary trade of the Yemeni Red Sea.

In its heyday the port was frequented by major trade and pilgrimage vessels from India and the Persian Gulf, as well as by European ships and local vessels that traveled both sides of the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea coast. Although Mocha is famous for its legacy in the global coffee trade, Mocha was not Yemen's main coffee entrepôt and coffee was only one of the many commodities that were traded and shipped at the port through the centuries. Other goods included bulk metals, textiles, spices, aromatics, medicinal products, ceramic and metal wares, and dyestuff.

Mocha's history is often told through the eyes of the European merchants who left detailed records of the city's trade and urban life. The Dutch and English East India Companies maintained temporary trade establishments in the city since the early seventeenth century, and the French East India Company appeared in 1709. The Ostend, Danish, and Swedish East India Companies made occasional stops at the port in the eighteenth century, and American merchants appeared in 1798.

Today the international port city of the past lies in ruins, with its towering merchants' mansions, trade facilities, and defensive forts crumbling in disrepair. Nothing remains of its seventeenth-century wall and old market place.

[See also East India Companies, *subentries on* Dutch East India Company *and* English East India Company.]

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NANCY UM

Mombasa Along more than 6,000 kilometers (3,700 miles) of Africa's eastern coastline north of Durban and south of the Suez Canal, Mombasa, Kenya, is the largest and most important city and port. Linked by road, rail, and air to a wide East African hinterland that includes Nairobi (Kenya's capital) and parts of Uganda and Tanzania, Mombasa is the key to the land and sea exchanges of a region with a population of 50 million.

Mombasa is an ancient city founded and named more than a thousand years ago by Persians, who are believed to have named it after an Omani town called Mombaza. Its early history centers on the roughly rectangular Mombasa Island, 5 kilometers long and 3 kilometers wide (3 miles long and 2 miles wide), its long axis trending northwest to southeast, with modern Kilindini Harbor on the western side and the old dhow port on the eastern shore. The joint entrance to the two ports is protected by a reef with a narrow and dangerous breach. An island encircled by a natural moat, Mombasa attracted Persian traders, Arab Islamic proselytizers, Turkish seafarers, Portuguese colonists, and British imperialists. The largest structure in Mombasa is the Portuguese-built Fort Jesus, begun in 1593 and still overlooking the dhow harbor and the narrow, winding streets of the Swahili Old Town, the oldest district in the city. Today the fort is a museum, with a maritime section displaying finds from the waters below.

Modern Kilindini Harbor on the opposite side of the island has expanded onto the mainland, to which the island is now linked by two bridges and several ferries. Mombasa