



*A British View of the Union Navy, 1864*  
*A Report Addressed to Her Majesty's Minister*  
*at Washington*

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IN the nineteenth century Great Britain faced—or seemed to face—a series of challenges to her naval supremacy. First the French had ushered in the age of ironclad warships, and when that threat had been stabilized, a new naval colossus seemed to be rising across the Atlantic. To make matters worse, during the American Civil War relations between Britain and America had several times approached a breaking point, especially at the time of the *Trent* Affair in late 1861. That crisis passed, but in the summer of 1863 tempers again flared and there was talk of war.

In late 1863 the British minister at Washington, Lord Lyons, warned his London superiors of an impending danger—'a war with a European power, and especially a war with Great Britain, is a contingency never absent from the minds both of the men in power & of the Public at large. . . .'<sup>1</sup> The minister reminded his colleagues that in the event of war Americans almost certainly would again raise the cry 'On to Canada.' He noted that since the outbreak of hostilities in 1861 Federal strength,

NOTE. The editing of this document was a joint project. Lieutenant Basoco checked figures and statements in the document with official Union sources and collated Goodenough's statistics with those given by the Secretary of the Navy in his annual reports to Congress; Geoghegan checked the technical data and identified (whenever possible) the ships mentioned in this report; over-all co-ordination and editorial changes in the document were the responsibility of Merli (who—with the aid of his confederates—drafted the introduction). Every effort of course was made to keep the document as close to the original as possible, but because this is a copy, there seemed little point in reproducing all of the captain's quaint phrasing (though enough has been retained, we hope, to give some 'flavor' of the nineteenth-century style). Spelling has been somewhat altered, i.e. 'honor' for 'honour,' 'show' for 'shew,' and the like. Also punctuation and paragraphing were slightly modified.

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<sup>1</sup> FO 414/17, Lyons to Russell, 3 November 1863. Records on deposit at the Public Record Office, London.

and especially naval strength, had grown to formidable proportions. Some of these increases, Lyons hinted, had 'little reference to the present struggle with the Southern States.'<sup>2</sup>

Anticipating war and believing that a knowledge of American innovations in naval war might prove helpful to the admiralty in the event of hostilities, Lyons suggested that a competent naval observer be sent to the North of a fact-finding mission. He thought that, in view of the American penchant for publicity, such a mission would be well received, that it might even be considered a compliment. But the minister advised caution, for if not properly handled the mission might cause considerable embarrassment to Her Majesty's government. He feared that if the legation undertook such a venture, politicians and the press might use it as a pretext for stirring up that latent anti-British sentiment lurking beneath the surface of American political life. Lyons knew that many politicians, Secretary of State William Seward among them, had built *wide popularity by 'twisting the British lion's tail' for local audiences.* Then, too, there was another problem in the legation: neither Lyons nor his staff could keep abreast of the new technology that was then revolutionizing naval war.<sup>3</sup>

Although in 1863 England scented trouble from Europe and not from America, the foreign office saw merit in Lyons' suggestion, and within a few days of receipt of his note, Queen Victoria's foreign secretary, Lord John Russell, advised admiralty officials of the plan and requested cooperation in selecting a competent officer for the mission.<sup>4</sup> In response to this prompting the admiralty designated one of their bright young men for this visit to the new world. James Graham Goodenough, then aged thirty-two and a newly commissioned captain, had entered the royal navy in 1844, passed (with honor) his examination for a lieutenant's commission in 1851, and served with distinction and bravery in the Far East (where he received a promotion to commander and a commendation for zeal and judiciousness). Calm, courageous, competent, he was the ideal man for the task.<sup>5</sup>

Though his mission had a simple objective—information about the performance of American ships and guns—admiralty officials passed on Lyons' warning about meddling in politics. They cautioned him against expressing any opinion whatever about the war's causes or course. He

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> FO 414/17, Foreign Office to Admiralty, 20 November 1863.

<sup>5</sup> Adm 1/5852, résumé of career of James Graham Goodenough.

was ordered to impress upon his sensitive hosts that his was a nonpolitical assignment, that his primary, his only, purpose was the collection of technical data on naval affairs.

And his superiors carefully spelled out the nature of that data. The naval high command wanted to know about American ships, their number, armament, disposition; engineers sought information about engine performance, coal consumption, speed; other officials were interested in the quality, training, and performance of naval personnel. In short, the British wanted full knowledge of American naval strength—and weakness.<sup>6</sup>

Arriving at Boston in late 1863, Captain Goodenough soon embarked on an extensive examination of Northern naval and military installations. He visited Newport, West Point, the Fort Pitt foundry (where he watched the casting of a twenty-inch gun). He saw much, thought much, wrote much. After a tour of several months he prepared an extensive report of his observations for London officials.<sup>7</sup> In addition, he wrote a summary of this report for the information of Her Majesty's minister at Washington. This précis, the basis of this article, is interesting for what it says and for what it does not say. It shows the reaction of a trained observer to a navy in transition, and, more important, the conclusions he draws from his observations. From this report one could hardly guess that after the war, instead of preparing for a war with a maritime power, America would turn to its own affairs, leaving the magnificent fighting navy of 1865 to decay and nearly disappear from the sea.

The report was sent with the following covering letter now in Windsor Castle, which is reproduced with the gracious permission of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

CONFIDENTIAL.

REPORT BY CAPTAIN GOODENOUGH, R.N., ON THE NAVAL RESOURCES  
OF THE UNITED STATES.

*Lord Lyons to Earl Russell.—(Received May 9.)*

(No. 284. Confidential)

My Lord,

*Washington, April 25, 1864.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a very able and interesting Report which Captain Goodenough has been so good as to make to me of the result of his inquiries respecting the naval establishment of the United States.

This Report confirms the general views which were laid before your Lordship in

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, copy of Admiralty instructions to Captain Goodenough.

<sup>7</sup> Adm 1/5879, Cap. G., 129, 'Captain Goodenough's Report on the Guns and Personnel of the American Navy.'

my despatch No. 788 of the 3rd November last. It shows that the Government of the United States is steadily making preparations to enable it to engage with advantage in foreign war, and that its means of carrying on a naval war are becoming every day more formidable.

I am afraid that there can be no doubt that these preparations are made mainly with a view to a war with England, and that in the present temper of the American people, advantage would be eagerly taken of any conjuncture of circumstances which would enable a declaration of war against England to be made with tolerable safety. It is also, I think, to be apprehended that the policy of the Americans would be to make the declaration as sudden as possible, and to commence hostilities with little or no previous warning. They conceive that a total change has taken place in the relative state of preparation of the two countries. Formerly they were restrained from provoking hostilities by fear of the advantages which the greatly superior military and naval forces, then habitually maintained by England, would confer on their enemy, at the outset. They consider the reverse to be now the case. They believe that they could throw an overwhelming force into Canada, and that sudden attacks on some of the British Colonies in this hemisphere, and in particular on Bermuda and the Bahamas, would in all probability be successful. They think that they should inflict enormous injury on British commerce, and obtain immense booty, by sending out with as little notice as possible the swift vessels they are preparing for cruises against foreign merchantmen.

It is not my purpose to discuss or to attempt to explain the bitter feelings of the great majority of the American people against England. The feeling is the less to be combated, because it is utterly unreasonable and utterly regardless of facts or arguments. It is, in fact, the result of the annoyance caused by the civil commotion, which is the first check which has been given to a previously uninterrupted course of progress and prosperity. The Americans are mortified and angry, and having an old grudge against England, they find it a relief to vent their ill-humour upon her.

In this state of things it appears to be of the utmost consequences that Her Majesty's Government should be regularly furnished with detailed information as to the amount and distribution of the naval and military forces of the United States. The reasons which led to the mission of Captain Goodenough, and of Lieutenant-Colonel Gallwey and Captain Alderson to this country, still exist in full force. Captain Goodenough has already returned to England, and the other two officers will, I believe, soon follow him.

I would suggest that a very short interval should be allowed to elapse before naval and military officers are again sent here on a similar mission. It would now, I think, be better that they should come with a distinct official character, either as naval and military Attachés to this Legation, or with any other official designation usual in such cases. They should, I conceive, be confidentially, but very particularly instructed that it is their duty to keep Her Majesty's Government constantly in possession of such details and information respecting the distribution of the United States' naval and military forces, and the forwardness of the preparations for war, as would enable the Admiralty and War Department to take proper measures, at a moment's notice, if hostilities should suddenly break out.

It is impossible that such information can be adequately supplied by unprofessional observers; and the immense amount of ordinary business which is now

thrown upon this Legation leaves to the Diplomatic members of it very little time to devote to any other objects. The more entirely the responsibility of obtaining naval and military information is thrown upon officers specially employed for the purpose, the more completely will the service be performed.

I do not think the particular title which the officers bear, nor the exact nature of their relations to the Legation, are matters of any very great importance. Whether designated as Naval or Military Attachés or not, they would, I presume, be directed to attend to any suggestions made by Her Majesty's Minister, to keep him informed of their proceedings, and not to do anything to which he objected.

It would probably be advisable that the officers should be changed from time to time, or, at all events, that they should go home at short intervals to report in person the information they collect. They might convey very valuable information to Her Majesty's Government by relating the events of the military and naval campaigns, in a more intelligent manner than unprofessional men could do, and they should therefore, perhaps, be instructed to send reports on these events from day to day; but care should, I think, be taken to guard against any tendency to substitute information sent piecemeal by each packet for comprehensive reports showing, at one view, the nature, amount, and disposition of the forces which would have to be encountered at the outbreak of a war.

I have no doubt that the Government of the United States would now prefer that officers should come with a distinct official character; but it would of course be desirable, before making public the appointment of officers with any special official designation, to ascertain formally that this Government would be willing to receive them with the designation chosen.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) LYONS.

COPY OF A REPORT ADDRESSED TO  
H.M. MINISTER AT WASHINGTON

Washington,  
April 12, 1864

MY LORD,

Having concluded my visit to the dockyards of the U.S. I have the honor to lay before Your Lordship the following report of the preparations of this country for war with a maritime power.

The navy of the U.S. consists of the following vessels, which may be easily classified for they have been built in batches on similar plans. The grand total built and building consists of 500 ships,<sup>8</sup> including the Mississippi flotilla, and it may be arranged as follows:<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> In December 1863 Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles reported to Congress that when the vessels then under construction were completed, the navy would comprise 588 ships. *Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 1863*, xii; hereafter this publication will be cited as *SNR*, with the year following.

<sup>9</sup> For a breakdown and classification of the ships of the Union Navy see Appendix. The reader will note that the ship lists given by Goodenough do not always agree as to numbers in each class. The interested reader may wish to compare the above listing with that given by Secretary Welles in *SNR*, 1864, xxiii, xxiv.

Built	Building	[Class]
1 Ocean Ironclad	1	A
1 Dble Turret Ships	10	B
13 Single Turret Ships	25	C
1 [?] 3 Turret	—	—
5 50-gun frigates	—	D
6 30-gun frigates	—	E
12 10 to 15 gun sloops	19	F
— 20 gun sloops	9	G
7 6 to 8 gun sloops	—	H
23 5 gun gunboats	7	I
28 Dble [end?] Steamers	6	K
7 P.W. Stmrs 8 to 16 guns	—	L
125 Merchant Stmrs.	—	M
Vessels built and building		
20 [?] vessels	—	N
80 Sailing vessels	—	O
56 Mississippi Squad.	—	P
<u>385</u>		

The remainder being composed of small vessels purchased for store vessels etc.

This peculiarly constituted fleet has grown up under certain definite wants of the day since 1860, and has usually been increased by the addition of a number of vessels on nearly identical plans. . . . The principle borne in mind for sea-going vessels having been to possess a larger and faster vessel than any owned by any other maritime power and to arm her with the heaviest guns possible.

The difficulty of obtaining seamen also having always been felt, the administration has endeavored to introduce machinery to facilitate the working of heavy guns as well as to economize labor in maneuvering ships.

In 1861 the Navy consisted of about<sup>10</sup>

4 50 gun frigates	D
5 30 gun frigates	E
15 [?] 6 to 15 guns	F & H
40 Sailing vessels & a few coast service craft of various size	O
10 P.W. Steamers	L

The increase in the succeeding two years to 1863 consisted of, in the first place, the vessels necessary to maintain the blockade of the ports of the Southern Confederacy. For this purpose all of class M and part of class O were purchased and class I were built. In the second place, the Mississippi squadron, class P, was formed chiefly by building vessels especially for the purpose but [also] by purchasing and

<sup>10</sup> On 4 March 1861 there were some 42 ships in commission in the Union Navy; the total carried on the navy list (including those commissioned, undergoing repair, etc.) was 76. For Secretary Welles's breakdown, which differs somewhat from that given by Goodenough, see *SNR*, 1861, 13. In his report for 1861 Welles stated that when the ships 'now building and purchased, of every class, are armed, equipped, and ready for service' the fleet would number 264 ships.

arming river steamers.<sup>11</sup> Thirdly, class K was built and a number of small vessels were purchased for service on the coast and in the rivers of the Confederate States. Lastly, class C [Monitor class] was commenced and one of class A [*New Ironsides*] was built for the purpose of fighting on even terms with land batteries and especially with the design of taking Charleston.

So far this increase to the American Navy appears to have been wholly directed to carrying on the present war and the squadrons were all kept on the coast and in the harbors of the Northern and Southern States,—there being in the early winter of 1862-63 as far as I can learn—besides a small squadron in the West Indies, only two steam corvettes, the *Tuscarora* of 7 and *Kearsarge* of 7 guns, and three sailing vessels[,] the *St Louis*[,] the *Onward*[,] and the *Dale* between England and Madeira—and on special service the *Vanderbilt* a fast P.W. Steamer and the *Wyoming* a sloop of 7 guns.<sup>12</sup>

But about this time an . . . increase was contemplated of a different character.

At the same time the classes of ships spoken of were increased and improved, plans were drawn for the construction of a fleet of lightly armed fast steamers carrying a large quantity of coal and having large boilers in which steam can easily be maintained for a long period at a high pressure.

These vessels are nearly all under construction now. They consist of<sup>13</sup>

- 7 Steam sloops of 8 to 12 guns and 3,000 tons.
- 20 Steam sloops of 12 to 20 guns and 2200 tons.

Everything in these vessels is sacrificed to the desire of obtaining a continued high speed for 8 or 10 days consecutively under steam. The constructors are endeavoring to obtain a speed of 15 knots per hour [*sic*] from them.

They are built of timber and (in consequence of its scarcity) of unseasoned timber—with the exception of five of the class first named which are being built in the navy yards of New York and Boston where a large quantity of seasoned timber has been for a long time in store and has been husbanded with much care although at one time it did not appear probable that wooden vessels would any longer be required as men of war.<sup>14</sup>

Nearly coincidentally with the contemplation of this increase, designs were ac-

<sup>11</sup> In *SNR*, 1863, Welles told Congress that it was a 'little over two years since we had not a naval vessel on all these [Western] waters, where we now have a squadron of one hundred vessels, carrying 462 guns, with crews amounting in the aggregate to about 5,500 men.' (P. ix)

<sup>12</sup> This summary of the status and position of the Union fleet is inaccurate and misleading. The following corrections may be noted: In September 1863 *Tuscarora* carried 10 guns, not 7 (*Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion* [30 vols. and Index, Washington, 1894-1927], Series II, Vol. I, 227). *Wyoming* served with the East India Squadron, not in the Atlantic during this period (*SNR*, 1862, 23; *SNR*, 1863, xi). *Dale* served as an ordnance store ship at Key West for the East Gulf Blockading Squadron from 10 December 1862 to 3 July 1865 (*Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, II, 233). Goodenough also fails to note the existence of a Pacific squadron of some eight ships (*SNR*, 1862, 22-23; *SNR*, 1863, x). *James-town* was en route to and serving in the East India squadron; *Constellation* was in the Mediterranean Sea; *Saratoga* was on Africa station, *San Jacinto*, *Mohican*, *Sabine*, and *Ino* were also 'cruising to protect our commerce. . . .' *SNR*, 1862, 63, *passim*. It is clear from the above that Union ships were operating on the high seas to a much greater extent than indicated in Goodenough's report.

<sup>13</sup> This list evidently refers to seven *Ammonoosuc* class and twenty ships of *Java*, *Hassalo* and *Contoocook* classes.

<sup>14</sup> Of *Ammonoosuc*-class ships two were built in the New York Navy Yard, two in the Boston Navy Yard, and one in the Philadelphia Navy Yard.

cepted and [the] keel laid of a ship called the *Dunderberg*.<sup>15</sup> Carrying but 10 heavy guns, armored throughout, and carrying a 60 foot projecting spur of solid wood and iron, she [is] intended to steam 15 knots for 8 days consecutively. The following turreted vessels also were commenced: first, *Dictator* and *Puritan* to steam 15 knots, second, four wooden vessels carrying four guns each and intended to have the same speed, third, twenty vessels on Mr. Ericsson's plan carrying one turret each and two guns were designed.<sup>16</sup>

A few of them are building on the Mississippi, but the majority are in ports on the Eastern coast and as they cannot go out of their own harbors can only be useful in defending them.

Finally, Mr. Welles has informed the president in his report of Dec. 7, 1863 that he contemplates building 'vessels of greater size than any turret ships yet completed . . . to maintain our rightful maritime position and for predominance upon the ocean.' Not 'only must they carry guns of a heavier calibre than have heretofore been used [at sea], but in order to make long cruises and to cope successfully [with any force] these vessels must have all possible strength, endurance, and speed. Being without distant colonies where coal depots can be established on the shore of almost every sea, we must build ships with capacity sufficient to take on board fuel for a long cruise.'<sup>17</sup>

Plans for vessels answering to these requirements have been offered by a Mr. Taft of Boston and Mr. Cramp of Philadelphia, but I am not aware that any have yet been accepted.<sup>18</sup>

It seems clear from Mr. Welles' statement that this country is preparing for war against a maritime power by protecting [home] ports with vessels of a peculiar construction, by breaking any blockade with the aid of swift, manageable, invulnerable vessels, and by aiming at destroying [enemy] commerce. My own observations having shown me that the increases pointed to in the report are being carried out, it remains for me to report to Your Lordship what force is now available for these purposes, what additional force is under construction with the probable date of their completion [*sic*], and the means of manning and officering the whole.

I consider the force at present available for service in a foreign war to be:<sup>19</sup>

	Guns
1 ocean ironclad	16
a 6 Dble Turret ships	24
1 3 Turret ship	6

<sup>15</sup> *Dunderberg* was an ironclad screw frigate of 16 guns launched in July 1865 but never commissioned. She was later sold to France (*Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, II, 305).

<sup>16</sup> 'Second' refers to four vessels of *Monadnock* class; *Miantonomoh* of this class later cruised to European ports on a voyage of some 17,767 miles. 'Third' refers to light-draft monitors of *Yazoo* class. These proved to be something of a disappointment to the Union Navy.

<sup>17</sup> Goodenough is here quoting the *SNR*, 1863, xiii-xiv, but not quoting exactly. After 'strength, endurance, and speed' the *SNR* reads: 'Their structure must, therefore, afford space enough for full sailing power, and for the most powerful steam machinery, and the large supplies of fuel needful to keep it at work. Being, unlike the other great maritime nations, without distant colonies, where coal depots can be established on the shore of almost every sea, we must conform to the necessities of our condition, and build ships with capacity enough to take on board fuel sufficient for a long cruise.'

<sup>18</sup> William Cramp and Sons; the editors were not able to identify the Mr. Taft referred to by Goodenough.

<sup>19</sup> For breakdown of this list see supplementary note.



	14 Single Turret ships	28
b	10 Single Lt. draft	20
	5 50 gun frigates	250
j	6 30 gun frigates	180
	7 P.W. Steamers	180
	15 10 to 15 gun sloops	50
g	7 6 to 8 gun sloops	75
	40 Purchased —?— vessels	300
w	28 P.W. Lt. —?— Dble End —?—	180
z	30 5 gun gunboats	150

Of these classes a & b are fit for coast and harbor defence, and, in the event of . . . a port being blockaded class a are able to make destructive excursions against the blockading squadrons and probably, as they are more heavily armored than any ships yet built to cross the ocean, to relieve the blockade during moderate weather.

The classes j would be chiefly adapted for cruising off the coast to keep off an enemy's cruisers and clear the roads to their own ports on the principal lanes of coast trade. They are about equal to French and English frigates nominal force and slightly superior in weight of broadside.

Class g to which many more could soon be added by purchase are adapted for cruising against foreign commerce, but for the most part would be frequently obliged to replenish coal and could not keep the sea for long. If, however, . . . they were allowed to reach China, the supplies of bituminous coal in Formosa island[,] Japan and in parts of Borneo would be open to them.

Class z which are not fast but good sea boats would be of use, as well to protect the coasting trade of the U.S. as to harass that of a neighboring country, as that of Cuba or of Nova Scotia.

Several of the Mississippi Squadron might be taken apart and sent overland to the lakes from Pittsburg and Cincinnati and from St. Louis.<sup>20</sup>

Class w are very fast vessels but are not good sea boats. Some of them might, however, be sent in the early part of a war to the Pacific Ocean by the Straits of Magellan and might find sufficient sympathy on the W. Coast of S. America and have enough influence in the Sandwich islands to enable them to procure supplies of fuel there as well as in California.

The ships under construction are as follows:<sup>21</sup>

		[Guns]	Date of Completion
a	1 ocean ironclad	10	Oct. 1864
	1 dble turret ship	4	July 1864
	4 dble turret ship	16	July 1865
b	10 light draft turret ship	20	Jan. 1865
g	7 lt. sloops 3000 tons	84	Jan. 1865
	12 lt. sloops 2200 tons	96	Jan. 1865
	8 lt. sloops 2200 tons	160	July 1865

<sup>20</sup> The casemated ironclads of the Mississippi squadron, due to their lack of freeboard, would not have performed satisfactorily in the open waters of the Great Lakes. The river monitors of *Osage* and *Sandusky* classes might have been useful in the harbors of the Lakes, but to disassemble them, ship them overland, and reassemble them at their destination, would have required more time than building new vessels on the Lakes.

<sup>21</sup> See Appendix.

Class a being very fit to defend the coast from blockade[,] b useful as floating batteries for defense of ports[,] and g the most formidable class of steamers ever built for the purpose of injuring an enemy's commerce.<sup>22</sup>

An illustration of their value is given by the injury inflicted on American commerce by the *Alabama* and her consorts.<sup>23</sup>

They will not form a fleet properly so called for their object will be to avoid each other's company but, thrown out as a chain across the great lines of commerce, they will be able to destroy an enemy's ships (or if the latter are convoyed will be able to cut off stragglers), and by their speed evade pursuit.<sup>24</sup>

Guns made in this country for arming ships are well adapted for their service, though inferior to corresponding weapons in Europe. They consist of cast iron smooth bore guns of all calibres and guns banded with wrought iron hoops and rifled on the system of Mr. R. P. Parrott.

The cast iron smooth bore [Dahlgren] guns have been much improved in this country and are perhaps superior to cast iron [guns] in Europe. But it is difficult to establish a comparison between their endurance and that of similar guns in England, for in this country it has been sought to throw a large shot with a low velocity while in England we use larger charges of powder and therefore higher velocity with comparatively smaller bores.

The rifled ordnance of Mr. Parrott with wh[ich] the American Navy is now partly armed and wh[ich] is superior to any other system as yet brought forward in the U.S. is inferior in endurance, penetration, range & precision to the best systems of European rifled ordnance and could never be brought into successful competition with them, but, being simple and easily worked[,] cheap and quickly produced has been a more useful arm in the hands of the volunteer forces than a more elaborate[,] delicate weapon would have been; the large number of guns injured when in the hands of volunteers, compared with those in the hands of the regular navy[,] shows the necessity of training men to the use of even so simple a rifled gun as the Parrott, and the value of its simplicity. . . . The carriages on which these guns are to be mounted have been much improved and are worthy of imitation. They are made of wrought iron and by means of simple, elegant contrivances are made to work smoothly and easily.

The classes are armed with smoothbore guns of XV inch diameter and with

<sup>22</sup> The fate of 'the most formidable class of vessels ever built for the purpose of injuring an enemy's commerce' would have interested Goodenough. Of the seven ships of *Ammonoosuc* class, one was broken up on the stocks, and one other was not built. Of *Java* class, four were broken up on the stocks. The two *Hassolo* class were not built. Only four of *Contoocook* class were built, but were shortlived. Built of unseasoned timber they decayed rapidly and six years after the war some of them were too rotten to merit repair.

<sup>23</sup> The reference is, of course, to the most famous Civil War commerce raider. Built in England by Laird for the Confederate Navy, *Alabama* had a successful career against Union merchant shipping. In 1864 she lost a celebrated engagement to the Union *Kearsarge* in the English Channel off Cherbourg.

<sup>24</sup> There is striking similarity between Goodenough's observations regarding the possible use of American warships and the views expressed by Representative Thomas B. King in 1846. In reporting the House Naval Affairs Committee's 'Report on War Steamers' (on 20 May 1846) King argued in favor of a fleet of steam-propelled men-of-war. He said: 'In time of war our navy should be scattered as widely as possible over the oceans of the world, for the purpose of . . . seeking the enemy in single combat, destroying his commerce and cutting off his supplies. . . . These steamers . . . would be able to pursue or escape from the enemy at pleasure, . . . attack . . . his ships, when scattered by a gale . . . or from any other cause, and destroy them with impunity when [they are] disabled either in action, or by storms of the ocean.' (House Report, No. 681, 29th Congress, First Session, III, 3-4.)

rifled guns of 8 inch diameter, according as they are required to work at long or short range, and class b [Monitor class] with XI inch cast iron guns. Class j are armed generally with two [pivot] guns, either XI inch or 8 inch rifles and the remainder of IX inch smooth bores [in broadside]; classes g, w, z are armed variously with 2 or 3 pivot guns of 8 inch or 6.4 inch Parrott[s], the remainder being IX inch smooth bores.

The XV inch are valuable at close quarters as a gun to be used from turret ships against broadside ironclad vessels, and the Parrott guns, though not equal to an engagement with the Armstrong[.] . . . are quite equal to their task of bringing-to a merchant vessel at long range.

As your Lordship is aware, to man and officer ships for the service every effort has been made by agents in seaport towns and among officers of the merchant service. A large number of officers have been enlisted from the merchant service, but as neither the pay nor the position offered to them has been higher than that of acting lieutenant, the government has not as yet succeeded in obtaining the best men for the navy.<sup>25</sup> With the stoppage of lines of ocean steamers, the most intelligent part of the merchant officers would be thrown out of employment and would be a valuable adjunct to the National navy, on board their own vessels, which might be strengthened and armed.

The number of officers of the merchant service engaged by the government in December, 1863 was<sup>26</sup> . . .

	On E. Coast	On Mississippi
Actg Lieuts.	68	17
Actg Masters	467	62
Actg Ensigns	725	169
Actg Master's Mates	717	184

These officers are daily acquiring experience in their duties, and the study of gunnery and practice of arms [having been?] introduced into the schools in N. York and Boston, they might be recruited by intelligent young [navy department agents?] in a popular war.

The regular service is composed as follows:

	Active	Retired
Admirals	6	8
Commodores	18	31
Captains	36	24
Commanders	90	22
Lieut. Commanders	144	0
Lieuts.	85	23
Ensigns	90	0

<sup>25</sup> At the time of Goodenough's report, no volunteer officer held rank higher than that of acting lieutenant, but by 1 January 1865 there were thirteen acting volunteer lieutenant commanders (SNR, 1865, 122). Secretary Welles recognized the important contribution that volunteer officers were making to the Union war effort. In 1863 he wrote: 'The important service rendered by volunteer officers, and the courage and skill displayed by them . . . commends them to the consideration of Congress.' SNR, 1863.

<sup>26</sup> Goodenough's figures here are apparently derived from the 1864 *Navy Register*, though there are one or two minor variations. This is true also of the second list of officers in the regular service.

As officers on the retired list do shore duties nearly the whole of those on the active lists are free for sea duty. For the future supply of officers to the regular service a very admirably managed college is established at Newport, Rhode Island. A large building on shore, two old frigates, and two exercising corvettes are set apart to the use of the cadets studying there. There are now 450 students who undergo a course of 4 years study in ordinary time, but have, during the last three years, been allowed to leave at the expiration of their third year. The examinations are rigid, and, of 100 students who enter, about 60 are rejected at different periods of their course, leaving about 40 to enter the navy annually.<sup>27</sup>

Lately, however, a measure has passed the congress by which there will be nearly 800 students and the annual addition to the navy will on the same percentage be nearly 80, which—where the difference of age at the time of entry is taken into account—is as great as the annual addition to the list of officers of the British Navy.<sup>28</sup>

In spite of the great demand for officers and the difficulties caused by the necessary removal of the college from Annapolis to Newport, the government has wisely never diminished the staff of officers or instructors of the college or neglected its support. Officers of all ranks speak in the highest terms of the younger officers who have received education there.

The discipline is excellent and though the education received up to the time of entry at college is probably inferior to that of youngsters who enter the British navy, yet the education which they receive [at Newport] is calculated to make them their professional superiors.

The importance of this college, its bearing on the fleet of the future, cannot be too highly estimated. The act of congress of this session by which the annual production is increased from 45 to 75—none of whom can come into service for three years (after the present war may be supposed to have ended)—shows an intention to maintain a navy equal to that of the greatest maritime nation.

It remains for me to examine how the U.S. navy would find men.

The Secretary of the Navy stated in December that 36,000 men, including officers, marines, and boys, were . . . [carried on the naval register]. The increase of the marine force has not corresponded with that of the naval officers and men, but there can be no doubt that this always popular force could be recruited at any time. Under the recent act, seamen who have entered the army can be transferred to the navy, and it is calculated that 8,000 men can be [thus] obtained, but this is quite uncertain. Undoubtedly the first effect of the law will be to make men enter the army with a view of being transferred to the navy as soon as they have received their bounty.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> The 'large building on shore' apparently was Atlantic House. The school ships for the Academy were frigates *Constitution* (an 'old' ship, having been launched in 1797) and *Santee* (launched in 1855). *Macedonian*, a British frigate captured in 1812 and rebuilt in 1835-1836 as a sloop of war, was at Newport at about this time. The *SNR*, 1863, states that in November 1863 there were 463 midshipmen at the Naval Academy. Further Goodenough views on the navy at Newport will be found in the *Rhode Island History* journal, October 1966.

<sup>28</sup> Goodenough may be referring to section 11 of 'An Act to Establish and Equalize the Grades of Line Officers of the United States Navy,' passed 17 July 1862. This provided that each member of the House of Representatives could appoint two midshipmen, two were to be appointed from the District of Columbia, three could be appointed from the enlisted ranks, and ten were to be appointed at large.

<sup>29</sup> See section seven of 'An Act to amend an act entitled "An act for enrolling and calling out the

But at the conclusion of this war probably the seamen serving in turret and other harbor vessels would be transferred to the sea going cruisers and their places filled up with discharged soldiers seeking employment.

This question [i.e. that of naval recruitment] is a difficult one in England and is doubly so here. Of real seamen of American nationality there must always be a lack, as long as the Western states continue to offer inducement to immigrants from the Eastern. Still it is quite possible that the want of experience may to a certain extent be replaced by the apt versatility wh[ich] characterizes the people of the Eastern States, particularly as the fleet of the future will be more dependent on steam than sail—and a show rather than an exercise of its force will be mainly necessary for the accomplishment of its principal object of destroying commerce.

In the duties wh[ich] the American Navy is likely to be called on to perform—depending, as it would, chiefly on its steam power a large proportion of the complements might be other than seamen, more particularly as the body of regular officers who have received an excellent training is yearly increasing.

I have the honor to be My Lord  
Your Lordship's obed't Servant,  
JAMES G. GOODENOUGH, Captain, R.N.

## APPENDIX

### Class A; Ocean Ironclads:

- 1 *Dunderberg*, casemate vessel, 10 guns, 5,090 tons, building.
- 1 *New Ironsides*, casemate vessel, 16 guns, 3,486 tons, built.
- 1 *Dictator*, turret vessel, 2 guns, 3,033 tons, building.
- 1 *Puritan*, turret vessel, 4 guns, 3,265 tons, building.

### Class B; Double-Turret Ships:

- 4 *Kalamazoo* Class, 4 guns, 3,200 tons, building.
- 4 *Monadnock* Class, 4 guns, 1,564 tons, building.
- 4 *Winnebago* Class, 4 guns, 970 tons, building.
- (Only 6 double-turret monitors completed before end of war.)
- 12 Building.
- 1 *Onondaga*, 4 guns, 1,250 tons, built.

### Class C; Single-Turret Ships:

- 10 *Passaic* Class, 2 guns, 844 tons, built. (*Weehawken* sunk, 12/6/63.)
- 3 *Osage* Class, 2 guns, 523 tons, built.
- 13 Built.

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national forces, and for other purposes," approved 3 March 1863,' approved 24 February 1864. The act limited the number of transfers from the Army to the Navy at 10,000 men. Congress also foresaw the possibility of bounty abuses. The same amendment cited above stated that 'the bounty money which any mariner or seaman enlisting from the army into the navy may have received from the United States, or from the State in which he enlisted in the army, shall be deducted from the prize money to which he may become entitled during the time required to complete his military service.'

9 *Canonicus* Class, 2 guns, 1,034 tons, building.

20 *Yazoo* Class, 2 guns, 614 tons, building.

2 *Sandusky* Class, 2 guns, 479 tons, building.

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31 Building.

Class -; Three-Turret Ship:

1 *Roanoke*, 6 guns, 3,435 tons (converted frigate, *Merrimac* Class), built.

Class D; 50-gun Frigates:

4 *Merrimac* Class, 44-50 guns, 3,200-3,400 tons, built.

*Merrimac* destroyed, 4/20/61. *Roanoke* converted to ironclad, 1862-1863.

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4 Built. 6 in class originally, although *Niagara* was actually a sloop, even though often referred to as a frigate.

Class E; 30-gun Frigates (1st Class Sloops):

5 *Brooklyn* Class, 22-30 guns, 1,900-2,362 tons, built.

1 *San Jacinto*, 14 guns, 1,446 tons, built.

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6 Built.

Class F; 10-15-gun Sloops:

2 *Ossipee* Class, 10-13 guns, 1,240 tons, built. 4 in class; 2 lost, as noted below.

4 *Kearsarge* Class, 8-12 guns, 1,023 tons (average), built.

6 *Shenandoah* Class, 8-16 guns, 1,367-1,533 tons, built.

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12 Built. *Adirondack* wrecked, 8/23/62. *Housatonic* torpedoed, 2/17/64. (*Ossipee* Class.)

8 *Nipsic* Class, 7-12 guns, 593 tons, building.

10 *Contoocook* Class, 13 guns, 2,348 tons, building.

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18 Building.

Class G; 20-gun Sloops:

7 *Ammonoosuc* Class, 17-19 guns, 3,213-3,713 tons, building.

1 *Idaho*, 8 guns, 2,368 tons, building.

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8 Building. *Bon Homme Richard* of this class never built.

Class H; 6-8-gun Sloops:

4 *Mohican* Class, 8 guns, 994-1,016 tons, built.

3 *Narragansett* Class, 7 guns, 801-1,289 tons, built.

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7 Built.

Class I; 5-gun Gunboats:

23 *Unadilla* Class, 4-7 guns, 507 tons, built.

Class K; Paddle-wheel Steamers, Double-enders:

12 *Octorara* Class, 7-11 guns, 730-955 tons, built.

27 *Sassacus* Class, 10-14 guns, 974 tons, built.

1 *Wateree* Class, 12 guns, 974 tons, iron, built.

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40 Built.

7 *Mohongo* Class, 10 guns, 1,030 tons, iron, building.

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Class L; Paddle-wheel Steamers, 8-16 guns:

- 7 *Powhatan*, 16 guns; *Saginaw*, 4 guns; *Susquehanna*, 12 guns; *Pulaski*, 3 guns; *Saranac*, 9 guns; *Michigan*, 6 guns; *Waterwitch*, 4 guns; *Mississippi*, 11 guns, had been destroyed at Port Hudson, 1863; *Fulton*, burned by Confederates, 1862.

Class M; Merchant Steamers:

- 149 Screw steamers purchased, captured, etc., fitted for naval service.  
 174 Paddle-wheel steamers purchased, captured, etc., fitted for naval service.  
 323 Total. (December 1864.)

Class N; Vessels Built and Building:

- 8 *Java* Class, 25 guns, 3,177 tons, building.  
 2 *Hassalo* Class, 25 guns, 3,365 tons, building.  
 10 *Contoocook* Class, 13 guns, 2,348 tons, building.  
 20 Building.

Class O; Sailing Vessels:

- 112 Sailing vessels of all classes. (December 1864.)

Class P; Mississippi Squadron:

- 73 Armed vessels. (29 February 1864.)

Class a	1 Ocean Ironclad ( <i>New Ironsides</i> ).	16 guns.
	6 Double-Turret Ships ( <i>Onondaga</i> ; 4 <i>Winnebago</i> Class; <i>Monadnock</i> , 4 guns each.	24 guns.
Class b	14 Single-Turret Ships (10 <i>Passaic</i> Class; 3 <i>Osage</i> Class; <i>Dictator</i> ; 2 guns each.	28 guns.
	10 Light-draft ( <i>Yazoo</i> Class) 2 guns each.	20 guns.
Class j	5 50-gun Frigates. (See list, page 38.)	250 guns.
	6 30-gun Frigates. (See list, page 38.)	180 guns.
	7 Paddle-wheel steamers. (See list, page 38.)	180 guns.
Class g	15 10- to 15-gun sloops. (See list, page 38.)	150 guns.
	7 6- to 8-gun sloops. (4 <i>Mohican</i> Class; 3 <i>Narragansett</i> Class.)	75 guns.
Class g	40 Purchased vessels. (Impossible to list by name.)	300 guns.
Class w	28 Paddle-wheel Steamers, Double-enders; (27 <i>Sassacus</i> Class and <i>Wateree</i> . At 10 guns each would be	280 guns.
Class z	30 5-gun Gunboats. (23 <i>Unadilla</i> Class.) (The 7 vessels of the <i>Mohongo</i> Class double-enders may have been erroneously added to this class.)	115 guns.
Class a	1 Ocean Ironclad. ( <i>Dunderberg</i> .)	10 guns.
	1 Double-Turret Ship. ( <i>Puritan</i> .)	4 guns.
	4 Double-Turret Ships. ( <i>Kalamazoo</i> Class.) ( <i>Kalamazoo</i> Class never completed.)	16 guns.

Class b	10 Light-draft. ( <i>Yazoo</i> Class.)	20 guns.
Class g	7 Sloops, 3,000 to 3,713 tons. ( <i>Ammonoosuc</i> Class.)	84 guns? (17 to 19 guns.)
	10 Sloops, 2,200 tons. ( <i>Contoocook</i> Class.)	96 guns? (13 guns.)
	8 Sloops, 3,177 tons. ( <i>Java</i> Class.)	160 guns? (25 guns.)
	2 Sloops, 3,365 tons. ( <i>Hassalo</i> Class.)	(25 guns.)
	<u>27</u> Total.	

(Evidently some confusion in reporting statistics of these classes.)

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#### CLASSICAL CAPER

During the past century, it was the custom of commanding officers to make free use of Latin proverbs and appropriate phrases in their official letters to the Navy Department. To ridicule this practice, which few readers could understand, a fictitious and facetious general order was widely circulated in the navy, during the stewardship of John D. Long, which read as follows:

'General Order No. 472 Navy Department.  
Washington 1 April 1897.

The Department notes the frequency with which officers quote Vergil in their official correspondence, in the form of metrical translation. It desires to impress upon them, however that while the line, *Multum ille et terris jactatus et alto vi superum*, undoubtedly refers to an eminent military personage being tossed about at sea through the agency of the superior powers, it is distinctly improper for junior officers to render it by:

Merrily we'll roll a Long,  
Roll a Long, roll a Long;  
Merrily we'll roll a Long,  
O'er the dark blue sea.

because junior officers are not superior powers to the Secretary of the Navy, nor can they by any poetic license, be officially recognized as rolling him over anything.

Commanding officers will therefore strictly prohibit and report any attempt

CAPTAIN EDGAR K. THOMPSON, U.S.N. (Ret.)