



**Volume 55, No 9
September, 2015**

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Battle Cry

Founded 1961,
Newsletter of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table
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President's Message

Greetings Fellow Round Table Members,

August was certainly a month of sad news. We learned of Scottie Hayden's death on August 13th. But I learned since that Bob Williams died the same day. Bob was a long term member and the best amateur historian I've ever known. Most of the articles in this Battle Cry were researched and penned by Bob. For an engineer to take on such a different discipline and excel to his level leaves us all with a remarkable role model. He was gentle, kind, and funny as well as our photographer for so many years.

This month, we will be hearing from Fred Bohmfalk and his talk is entitled "A Personal Look at the Lives of Generals Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan." This should be lively and informative with such a varied subject matter.

Besides our Tulare West Coast Civil War Conference in November, we are also invited to attend the Southern California Huntington Library Conference September 18 - 19, 2015. Gary Gallagher (University of Virginia) and Joan Waugh (University of California Los Angeles) are hosting. Road trip anyone?

At the end of our last meeting, I held an informal discussion about the use of the saltire Battle flag on our logo. We had various opinions. At the coming meeting on September 9th, I'll ask for a show of hands indicating if we wish to pursue the issue or postpone it until after the New Year.

Hope you all are well and enjoying the rest of summer.

Anne Peasley, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, August 12, 2015
HOF BRAU RESTAURANT, 2500 WATT AVENUE, SACRAMENTO

ATTENDANCE – 34

MEMBERS – 26: George W. Foxworth, Treasurer, Paul Ruud, Secretary, Silver Williams, Program Director, Steve Andrews, Jim Armstrong, Roy Bishop, Marsha Jutovsky Cain, Ardith Cnota, Mitch Cnota, Alice Corley, Alan Geiken, Robert E. Hanley, IPP, Jim Harper, Nina Henley, MAL, Wayne Henley, MAL, Christopher Highsmith, Dennis Kohlmann, Barbara Leon, Rick A. Peasley, John Rice, Ed Rill, Nancy Samuelson, Nick Scivoletto, Richard Sickert, Roxanne E. Spizzirri, Susan Williams.

GUESTS – 8: Esther Boeck, George Costenbader, Seanna Curler, Bret Lonsway, Darcy Mathews, Miles Matthews, Larry Spizzirri, Richard Spizzirri.

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Anne Peasley.
2. President Peasley led the Pledge of Allegiance, circulated her Civil War period sword for show and tell and introduced visitors.
3. Nina and Wayne Henley again filled in beautifully for John Zasso – the raffle rewarded winners as usual.
4. President Peasley announced that there would be a Board Meeting in the meeting room following the program to discuss whether or not the Confederate flag should be removed from the SCWRT logo.
5. Our own Nancy Samuelson was introduced as the evening's speaker. She will be talking to us about Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest.
6. Samuelson acknowledged at the start that Forrest is a very controversial player – primarily for three reasons. He was a slave trader, his role at Fort Pillow, and his post War activity with the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). By War's end, Forrest had personally killed 30 Union combatants and had 29 horses shot out from under him.
7. Forrest was a self-made man with little formal education. By the start of the War, he had acquired a substantial fortune as a planter and slave dealer. He enlisted as a private in the Tennessee Cavalry and raised and equipped at his own expense a battalion of mounted troops. Forrest was a player in most well known Western battles and was always a threat to units and their stores behind the lines. He was promoted to Major General on December 4, 1863. In April of 1864, he captured Fort Pillow – Samuelson's research had led her to believe that there was no massacre as alleged and the charges of racism against Forrest were totally untrue.
8. Forrest was invited to join the KKK after the War and he noted immediately that the organization had gotten out of hand - he continued to work at reining in certain organizational activities.
9. President Peasley thanked Nancy with kind words and good wine for her excellent presentation.
10. The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 PM. The next Board Meeting will be Wednesday, September 9, 2015, 10:00 AM, at Brookfield's Restaurant. Come one, come all!

Paul Ruud, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance following the August 12, 2015 meeting was \$4,804.84. Thanks to Nina and Wayne Henley and other members and guests, the raffle brought in \$74.00.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

Coming Programs for 2015 and 2016		
Date	Speaker	Topic
August 12th	Nancy B. Samuelson	"Nathan Bedford Forrest"
September 9th	Fred Bohmfalk	"A Personal Look at the Lives of Generals Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan"
October 14th	Tom Lubas	"Chicago, That Toddlin' Civil War Town"
November 11th	Tad Smith	"The Failed Struggle to Obtain Recognition of the Confederacy by England and France"
December 9th	Nicholas Scivoletto	"General Joseph E. Johnston"
January 13th	Paul G. Ruud	"Jefferson Finis Davis"
February 10th	To Be Determined	To Be Determined

NEWSLETTER CIVIL WAR ARTICLES

Civil War articles/book reviews are welcome. The submission deadline is the 1st of each month for that month's **Battle Cry**. However, you can submit articles at anytime. Please submit your items in Microsoft Word or regular email to:

gwfoxworth@sbcglobal.net

Do not submit scanned files since I need to edit files to combine the **Battle Cry**.

The **Battle Cry** is the monthly newsletter of the Sacramento CWRT. Submissions are subject to availability of space and size limitations. Submissions do not necessarily reflect the views of the organization or the Editor. The official address of this organization is: Sacramento Civil War Round Table, Post Office Box 254702, Sacramento, CA 95865-4702. <http://www.sacramentocwrt.org> is the web site address. Check the web for past newsletter editions and information about the group.

ADDITIONAL HOTELS FOR THE 2015 WEST COAST CIVIL WAR CONFERENCE

Best Western Town & Country

1051 North Blackstone Street
Tulare, CA 93274-7376
559-688-7537 (\$90 per night)

Charter Inn & Suites

1016 East Prosperity Avenue
Tulare, CA 93274-2354
559-685-9500 (\$86 per night)

Fairfield Inn & Suites

1225 Hillman Street
Tulare, CA 93274-8057
559-686-4700 (\$103 per night)

La Quinta Inn & Suites

1500 North Cherry Street
Tulare, CA 93274-2233
559-685-8900 (\$84 per night)

Motel Six (6)

1111 North Blackstone Street
Tulare, CA 93274-2347
559-686-1611 (\$52 per night)

Quality Inn

1010 East Prosperity Avenue
Tulare, CA 93274-2354
559-686-3432 (\$80 per night)

WEST COAST CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

November 13 - 15, 2015

****TULARE HISTORICAL MUSEUM, 444 WEST TULARE AVENUE, TULARE, CA 93274-3831**

Note: Conference **Seating Limited to 107, so PLEASE REGISTER EARLY—1st come 1st served!**

Hampton Inn, Tulare offers a Conference rate for us of **\$85 per night**. Free Breakfast. 1100 North Cherry Street, (844) 814-1595 or (559) 686-8700. It is always full Saturday mornings so **book early!** (Highway 99—Use Prosperity Avenue off ramps.) The Hampton Inn is West of 99, behind Apple Annie's Restaurant (on Blackstone Street).

There are several other hotels in the immediate area, but all are near 99, while the Museum is in the West part of Tulare.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION: Checks payable to San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table (SJVWCRT), \$150. (*See below for dinners for non-registered persons.) Send registration (<http://sjvcwrt.com>) to Ron Vaughan, 730 East Tulare Avenue, Tulare, CA 93274-4336. Questions: Ron Vaughan (559) 686-3633 ronvaughan@prodigy.net

TENATIVE SCHEDULE:

FRIDAY

4:00--5:30-- Registration and Social Hour

5:30--6:00—Civil War Jeopardy, Ted Savas

6:00—7:00 --Dinner

7:00—8:00—Looking Back at the Causes of the Civil War, Michael Oddinino

SATURDAY

8:30 --9:30— Forrest's Operations in 1865, Thomas Cartwright

9:30-- 10:30— CSS Shenandoah, Gary Joiner

10:30--11:30—Grant's Attempt to Take Petersburg, Edward Alexander

12:00—1:00-- Lunch

1:00—2:00— The Breakthrough at Petersburg, Edward Alexander

2:00—3:00--- Appomattox Surrender, Michael Oddinino

3:00--3:15-- Break

3:15-- 4:15—1865 Medicine, Dr. Brian Clague

4:15--5:15—Sherman's Carolina Campaign, Mike Green

5:15—6:00-- Break

6:00—7:00-- Dinner

7:00—8:00 -- 1865 Photos, Ron Perisho

8:00—9:00 – Battle of Palmito Ranch and Jo Shelby's Exodus, Ron Vaughan

SUNDAY

8:30-9:30— CSA Veterans, Evan Jones

9:45-10:45--- Early Reconstruction 1865, Jim Stanbery

10:45- 11:45— Panel Discussion

11:45—12:00-- Raffle

12:00--1:00 --- Museum Tour

*For non-registered dinner guests, the cost is \$20, but if Conference is sold out, there may not be a table space. We will do our best to accommodate you.

****Directions from hotel area to Museum:** Drive South on Highway 99, or Blackstone, or Cherry; go West on Tulare Avenue. The Parking Lot is North of the Museum, between "E" Street and "F" Street.

USS *Baron de Kalb*



James B. Eads and the Union “City Class” Ironclads

James Buchanan Eads (1820-87) was a self-educated Riverine Engineer, who was engaged in very lucrative marine salvage operations on the Mississippi River and tributaries. He was also the owner of shipyards near Saint Louis, Missouri, and Mound City, Illinois. Eads is best known today as the builder of the bridge at Saint Louis which bears his name. That bridge was opened in 1874, as the first all-steel bridge across the Mississippi. It has recently been renovated, and from all indications should remain in service for another 140 years or more. (See then and now pictures on the photos page) James Eads is also remembered for the pioneering work he did in river hydraulics during 1876-78 in the Mississippi Delta. This led to solving the problems of sedimentation and sand bar development which inhibited navigation by the construction of a series of strategically placed jetties. That work permitted large deep draft ocean-going vessels to steam all the way to New Orleans for the first time. His third contribution and the theme of this article was his role in implementing the Union’s Civil War Anaconda Plan on the Mississippi River and in acquiring the necessary vessels to do the job.

In April 1861, James Eads wrote Navy Secretary Gideon Welles offering his services as an adviser on Mississippi River matters and on how to create a “brown water” navy. He proposed that Cairo, Illinois be established as a naval base with guns and ships capable of controlling both the Upper Mississippi and the Ohio Rivers. He also offered to convert his largest salvage vessel into a warship for use by the Navy. Subsequently, this ship became the USS *Benton*, serving as Adm. D. D. Porter’s flagship. Welles was favorably impressed. He contacted the Army, under whose jurisdiction river matters were at the time, and soon thereafter sent Commander John Rodgers and Naval Architect Samuel M. Pook to advise General McClelland and later General Fremont on creating an Army-run brown water fleet.

Eads, Rodgers and Pook made an excellent team. With advice from the others, Cmdr. Rodgers acquired three steamships which were modified by Pook to become the first gun boats on the river, the USS *Lexington*, *Tyler*, and

Conestoga. Later known as “timberclads,” they were not ideal, but the best available on short notice, and they did provide good service subject to their limitations. Under the general direction of the Navy’s Chief Naval Constructor John Lenthall, Pook then turned his attention to the design of all new ironclad warships suitable for inland rivers use. Again working closely with Eads and Rodgers, he came up with a design based on a low draft river boat mode, but avoiding the use of stern or side paddlewheel propulsion systems because of their vulnerability. Instead he devised a “center wheel” system which would be protected by the ships hull and its all-around armament (see cutaway drawing). The designs were approved by Lenthall and placed to bid by QM-General Montgomery Meigs in August 1861.

Specifications called for the construction of seven identical vessels which were to be 175 feet long, have an exceptionally wide beam of 51 feet, draft of 6 feet, carry an armament of 13 guns (3 bow, 4 each broadside, and 2 stern), and be ironclad in varying thickness. The call for bids was little more than show for two days later a contract was awarded to James B. Eads. Price per ironclad was to be \$89,000. Apparently the reasoning for the quick contracting was that Eads was the only one who could complete the work in the 9-week time period allowed, and this was quite probably correct. Four of the ships were to be built at his Carondelet shipyard near Saint Louis and three at Mound City. Remarkably, Eads was also converting his largest salvage ship to become the *Benton* at the same time. Production was to have been supervised on behalf of the government by Comdr Rodgers, but as the result of disputes with Fremont, he was regrettably to his colleagues reassigned, being replaced by Captain Andrew H. Foote. Foote, however, could provide greater clout against Fremont; but the latter, fortunately for all, was soon to also be replaced by Henry W. Halleck, for a variety of valid reasons not to be discussed here.

Through a number of subcontractors, Eads hired a work force of over 4,000 shipwrights and others from throughout the Midwest. Work proceeded around the clock seven days a week. Some slowdown was experienced due to lack of timely receipt of funds and with the supply of engines, but two ships were launched on 12 October 1861 and the rest over the next three weeks, an amazing accomplishment. To some, the vessels had the appearance of large turtles. Hence, they became known as *Pook’s Turtles*. Their true names were after cities along the Upper Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. They were officially the USS *Saint Louis*, *Carondelet*, *Cairo*, *Mound City*, *Louisville*, *Cincinnati*, and *Pittsburg*. The name *Saint Louis* was later changed to *Baron de Kalb* because the Navy all of a sudden discovered it already had a USS *Saint Louis*. (Obvious

question; Why not name it *Paducah* for consistency? Answer; Paducah was held by the rebels at the time!) De Kalb was a colleague of La Fayette.

These seven Union river warships became collectively known as the Eads “City Class” Ironclads. They formed the backbone of the Union’s inland waters navy throughout the Civil War; commanded by Admirals Foote, Charles H. Davis, and David Dixon Porter, respectively. The seven vessels were nearly identical and could not be distinguished at a distance. To do this, color bands were painted on the smokestacks; as follows in order with the above names; yellow, red, gray, orange, green, blue, brown. Outfitting with guns and other equipment was completed at Cairo and the vessels were commissioned for service in January 1862. They displaced 512 tons, carried a crew of 251, and had a speed of 9 knots. Not long thereafter jurisdiction of the new western flotilla was changed from the Army to the Navy.

The USS *Benton* was commissioned one month later. It was very similar in appearance with the seven city class casemate ironclads, but larger at a length of 202 feet; beam 72 feet, 9 foot draft, and carrying 16 guns. But speed at 6 knots was less. Another Eads conversion was the USS *Essex* designed by Commander William David (a.k.a. “Dirty Bill”) Porter, David Dixon Porters’ older brother, and later captained by him. This vessel was also similar in design and appearance to the city class ironclads. (“Dirty Bill” Porter became known to many historians as the best liar in the Union military, but he only slightly out distanced his brother David.

In addition to the nine warships described above, James Eads was also responsible for building seven additional ironclad warships for the Union Navy. They were: the river rams USS *Choctaw* and *Lafayette*; the turreted river monitors USS *Neosho* and *Osage*; and three of the four dual turreted monitors of the Milwaukee Class. They were the USS *Winnebago*, *Kickapoo*, and *Milwaukee*.

Choctaw and *Lafayette* were conversions of side-wheeler river boats, easily damaged, rather cumbersome, and only moderately successful as warships. Although equipped to be rams, they were ineffective due to slow speed and lack of maneuverability. On the river monitors, Eads proposed to use revolving gun turrets of his own design which were almost totally steam operated. He and many others considered them to be vast improvements over both the Ericsson and Cowles (British) systems. He believed that with his turret, 11-inch guns could be loaded, aimed, and fired every 45 seconds, eight times

as fast as the other designs. His request to use or even test his own design was denied by the Navy Department. Only the Ericsson-type turret would be permitted on the single turreted monitors. This was obviously due to the John Ericsson-Gustavus Fox generated “monitor fever” then prevalent in Washington, D.C. and elsewhere. However, on the dual turreted river monitors of the Milwaukee Class, Eads was permitted to place one turret each of his own design, subject to removal and replacement with an Ericsson turret at his cost if they proved unsatisfactory. They proved to be quite superior, and Assistant Navy Secretary Fox later agreed that the Eads turret was indeed the better one.

The Union river ironclads were designed as the strategic tools by which the Union could wrest control of the Mississippi River and its tributaries from the Confederates. Actions in which the Eads City Class and/or his other ironclads and river monitors participated to that end are as follows: *Forts Henry and Donelson (February 1862); *Island No. 10 (March-April 1862); *Fort Pillow and Memphis (May-June 1862); The White River Expedition (June 1862); *The Yazoo River and Vicksburg (July-August 1862); *Arkansas Post (January 1863); *Grand Gulf (March 1863); *Siege of Vicksburg (April-July 1863); Red River Campaign (March-May 1864); *Mobile Bay (August 1864); and, *Nashville (December 1864). The ironclad “turtles” and their sister ships the *Benton* and *Essex* lacked the glamour of the USS *Monitor* and apart from a brief encounter fighting the CSS *Arkansas* around Vicksburg, none saw action in a dramatic engagement with other ironclads. Even that affair was less than glamorous for the Union fleet got caught with their “steam down;” resulting in the near loss of *Carondelet*, and a humiliation for the entire Western Rivers Squadron. Notwithstanding, the ironclads on America’s western waters are considered by many historians to have been the real arbiters in the Civil War. Without their support, the Union armies would have been hard pressed to advance into the Confederate-held heartlands of the Western Theater. A brief discussion of the sinking and recovery of the USS *Cairo* was included in the *Battle Cry*, September 2003 edition.

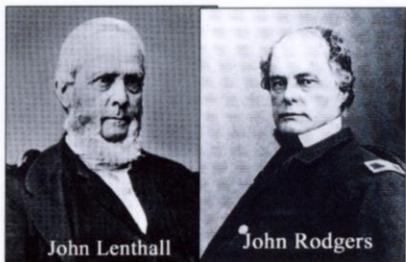
References:

“Battles and Leaders” Vol. I Pt. I
“The Old Steam Navy” Vol. II “The Ironclads”, by D. L. Canney, 1993; “Union River Ironclads”, by A. Konstam, 2000; “Guns on the Western Waters”, by H. A. Gosnell, 1949.

R. A. Williams: 8-15-06; rev. 7-15-15

James B. Eads and the Union "City Class" Ironclads Photo Page One

RAW: 8-15-06; 6-30-15



John Lenthall

John Rodgers



Andrew H. Foote



James B. Eads



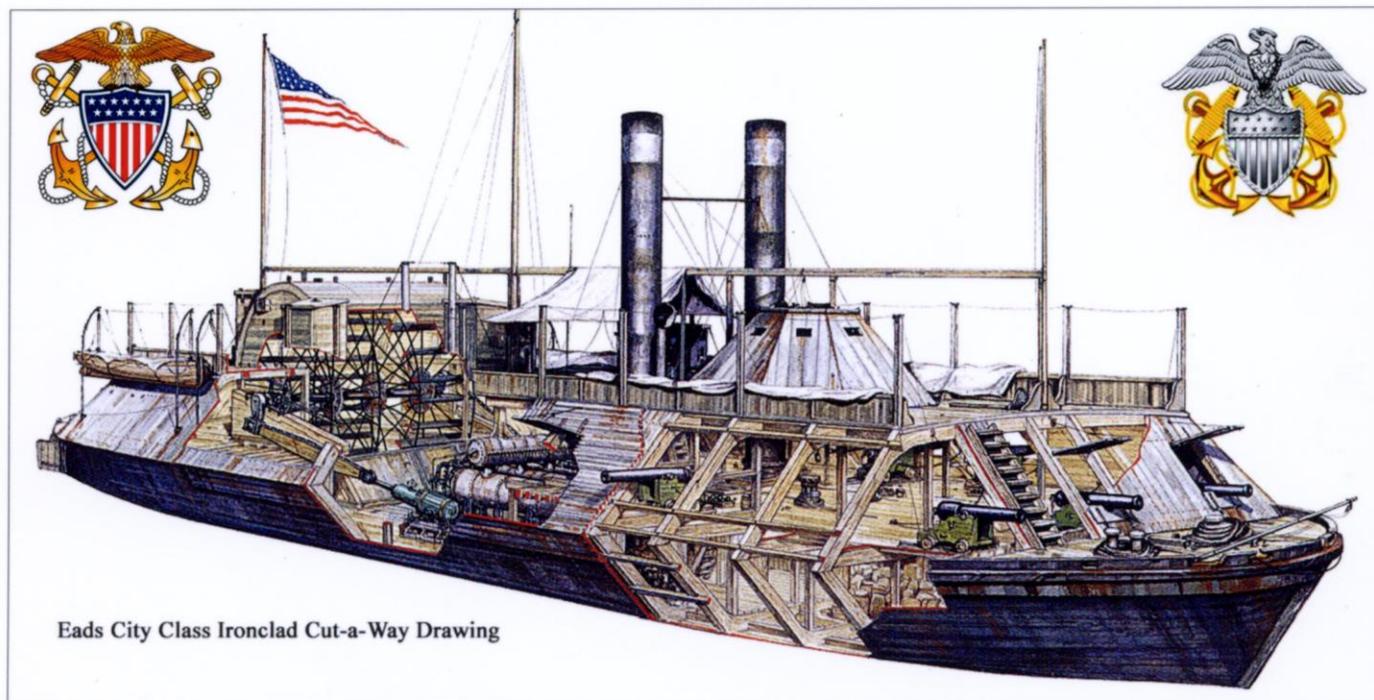
Charles H. Davis



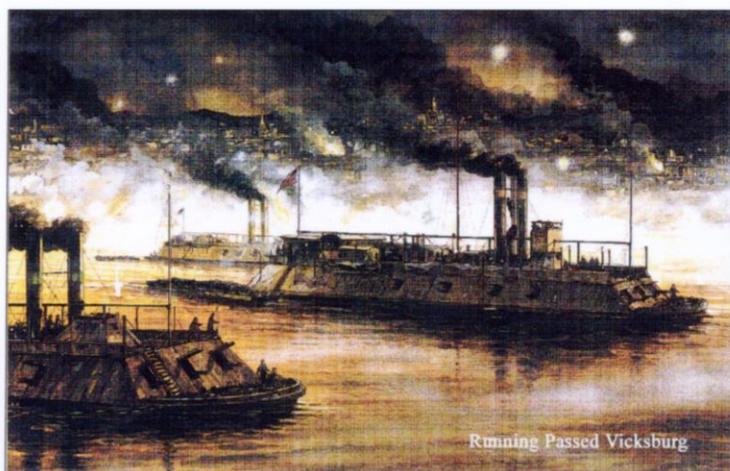
David D. Porter



William D. Porter



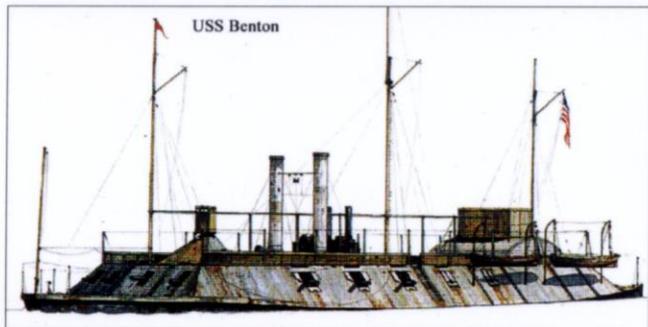
Eads City Class Ironclad Cut-a-Way Drawing



Running Passed Vicksburg



Running Red River Rapids



USS Benton

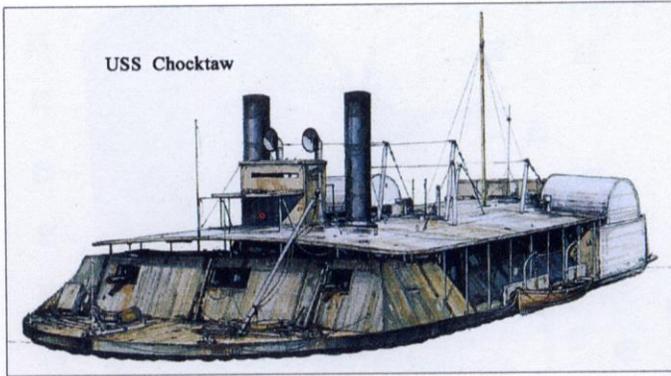


USS Essex

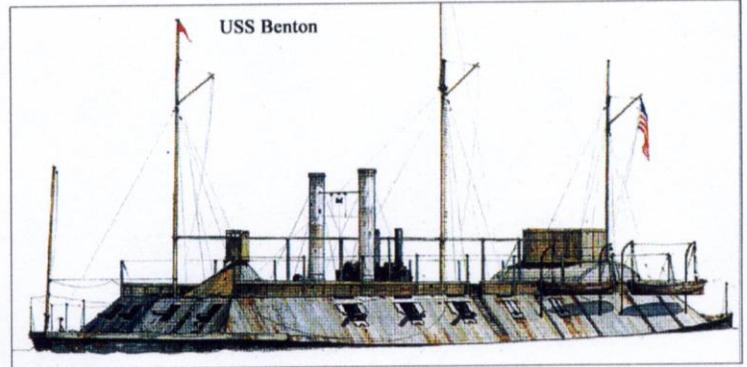
James B. Eads and the Union "City Class" Ironclads

Photo Page Two

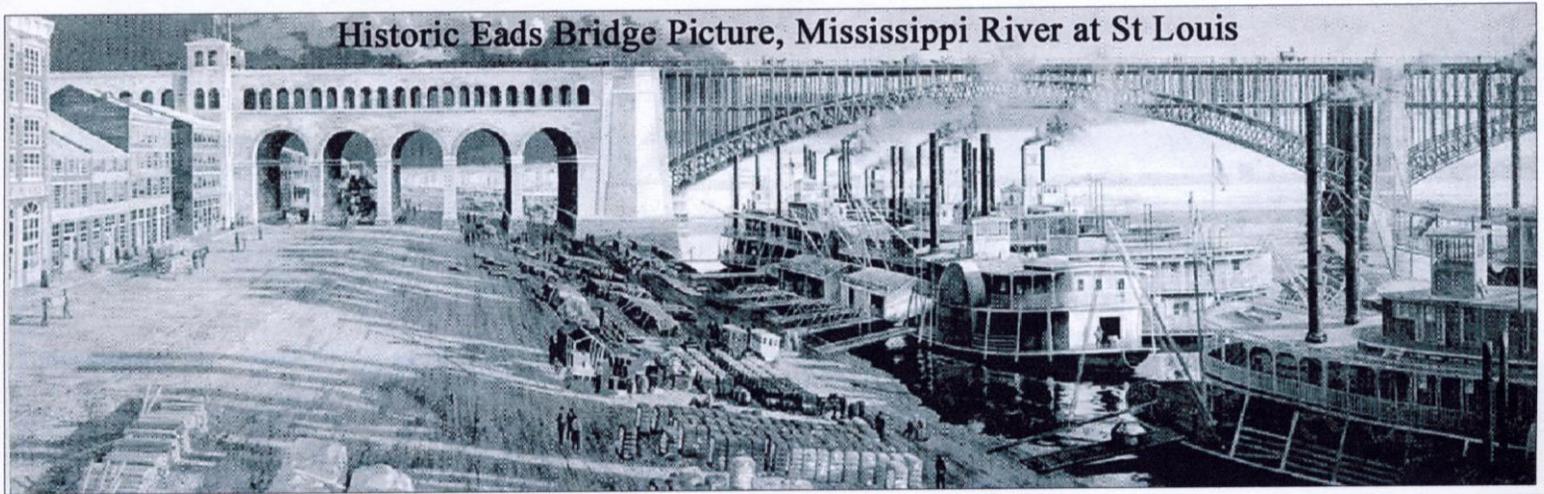
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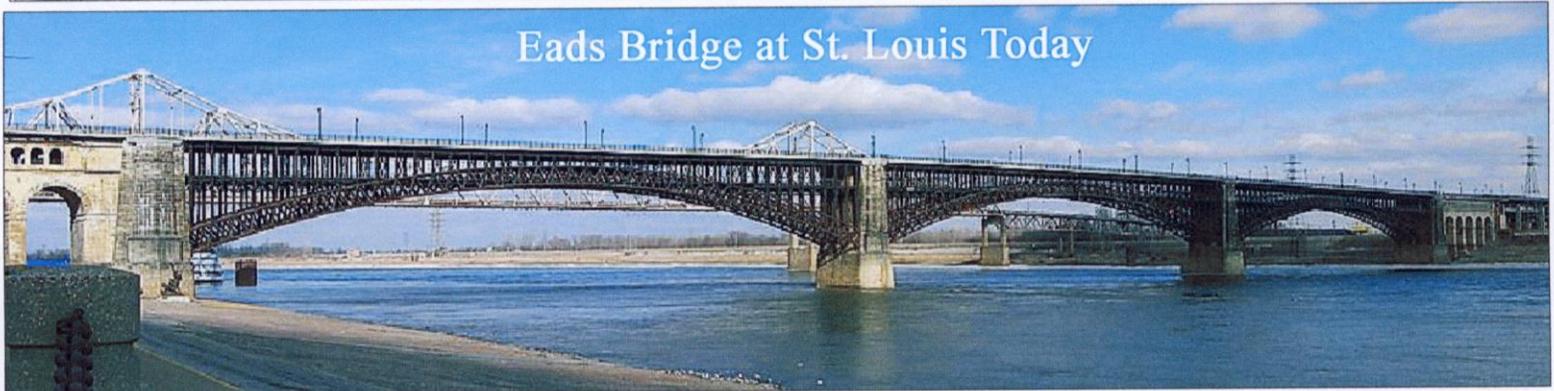
USS Chocktaw



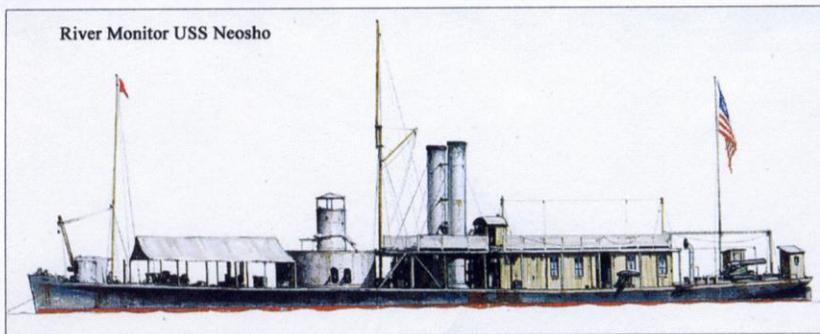
USS Benton



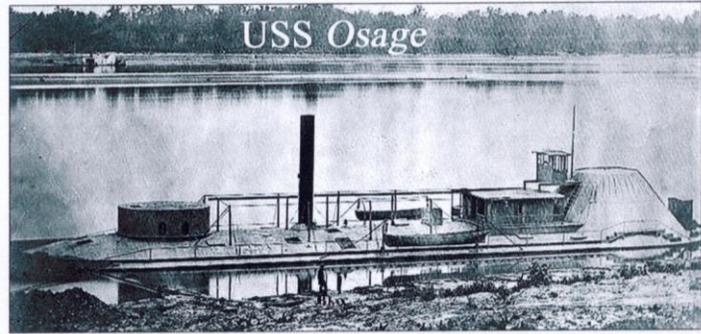
Historic Eads Bridge Picture, Mississippi River at St Louis



Eads Bridge at St. Louis Today



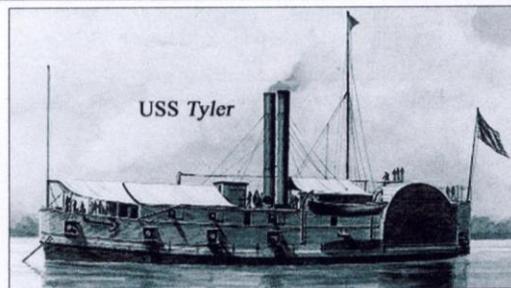
River Monitor USS Neosho



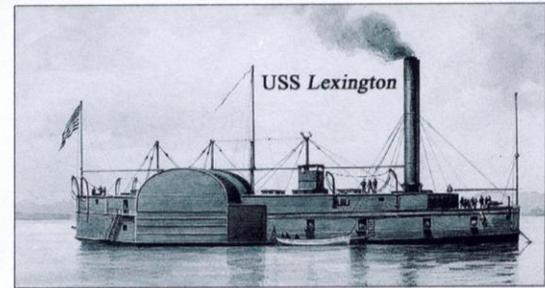
USS Osage



USS Conestoga



USS Tyler



USS Lexington