

SILAS WRIGHT TERRY

A Wallonia Sailor's Odyssey – 1866 - 1869

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The Civil War ended at Galveston, Texas, on June 2, 1865, eight weeks after Gen. Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox, when Gen. Edmund Kirby Smith surrendered the Confederate forces in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. Peace was far from certain, however. While the United States was preoccupied fighting the Civil War, Emperor Napoleon III of France invaded Mexico, imposed a monarchy, and installed Archduke Maximilian of Austria as Emperor. The United States refused to recognize the monarchy and supported Mexican "Liberal" forces led by Benito Juárez that were fighting to restore the Mexican republic. Three weeks after Smith surrendered, British newspapers reported that a French emissary had given President Andrew Johnson "to understand very plainly that Mexico is under the protection of France... The language and tone of France is what may be called decidedly energetic." Franco-American relations became much worse when, on Jan. 4, 1866, the 118th Infantry Regiment, U.S. Colored Troops, led by a colonel who was acting without orders, crossed the Rio Grande to a now-vanished Mexican town called "Bagdad" at the river's mouth and helped Juárez's forces defeat its Imperial garrison and their French advisors. French newspapers published an account of the incident that ended with the statement, "War with the United States is inevitable."

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U.S.S. *Ticonderoga*

This was the international situation when Wallonia native Lt. Silas Wright Terry, who had remained loyal to the Union and served in the U.S. Navy throughout the Civil War, was promoted to lieutenant commander on July 25, 1866. He was assigned to the steam sloop *Ticonderoga*, under command of Capt. Charles J. Steedman. Steedman was an "old salt" who went to sea at the age of fourteen in 1825. A native of Santee, South Carolina, Steedman, like Terry, was the scion of a slave-owning Southern family who remained loyal to the Union during the Civil War.

Ticonderoga, launched in 1862, was a wooden three-masted sailing ship with a steam engine and screw propeller. The ship's speed of 11 knots (13 mph) was fast for her

time. The ship displaced 2,526 tons, was 237 feet long, 38 feet abeam, and carried a crew of 400 men. Her armament consisted of nine guns, the most powerful of which were an 8-



inch Parrott rifle swivel mounted on the forward deck and a smooth-bore 50-pounder Dahlgren cannon aft. The Parrott rifle could hurl a 150 pound explosive shell 4½ miles and blast a wooden ship’s hull to splinters with a single shot.

The ship was assigned to the U.S. Navy’s European Squadron. The Secretary of the Navy’s report to Congress dated Dec. 4, 1865 stated that the squadron was composed of the warships “*Colorado, Kearsarge, Ticonderoga, Frolic, Ino, and Guard*, to which the *Canandaigua* will shortly be added. The field of operation of this squadron, besides the coast of Europe and the Mediterranean, will comprise Madeira, the Canaries, and the African coast as far as St. Paul de Loando (Luanda, Angola).” In the event of war with a foreign power – i.e. France or Britain – the squadron’s mission was to wreak as much havoc on the enemy’s merchant shipping as possible.

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Lisbon

In August 1866 *Ticonderoga* departed New York bound for Europe. The prospect of war with France had receded, but the situation was still tense. The ship stopped for a few days at Faial Island in the Azores, and then proceeded to Lisbon, Portugal. The 1867

edition of the British Royal Navy’s “Sailing Directions for the West Coasts of France, Spain, and Portugal” described the city thus: “Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, on the north bank of the Tagus, is about 7 miles from its mouth, and has a population of 280,000 inhabitants. The broad estuary of the Tagus forms an extensive and safe harbour, in which the largest vessels can anchor close to the city, and is admirably adapted for commerce. The city rises from the bank of the river in the form of an amphitheatre, being built on a succession of hills, the highest of which is the Estrélla to the west, and the castle hill to the east. Most of the streets are steep, irregular, badly paved, and dirty: one part of the town, however, is regular and handsome. This space contains 8 or 9 well built, parallel, and wide streets, and contains the best shops of the city: these are crossed at right angles by others, that terminate in a handsome square, the Pardo de Commercio, one side of which is formed by the Tagus.”

Most of the “logistas” and “botequeiros” in its stores and saloons spoke English – or a semblance of it – and American sailors soon learned a smattering of Portuguese, because Lisbon was the U.S. European Squadron’s operating base. Silas Terry would learn to speak fluent Portuguese before his three-year tour of duty was over.

On his first excursion ashore, and indeed from the deck of the *Ticonderoga*, Terry’s nostrils sensed a familiar smell coming from a huge four-story stone building on the waterfront with its own landing stage where ships were unloaded – dark fire-cured tobacco. A thousand 1,600 pound hogsheads packed in Cadiz, Canton, and Clarksville were shipped to Lisbon every year. Inside the factory, nearly 2,000 workers, mostly women, manufactured the Black Patch tobacco into cigars, pipe tobacco, and mixed it with “Bahia” tobacco grown in Brazil to make a unique snuff called “Amostrinha.” The factory’s products were exported to Portugal’s colonies in Africa, India, and East Asia.

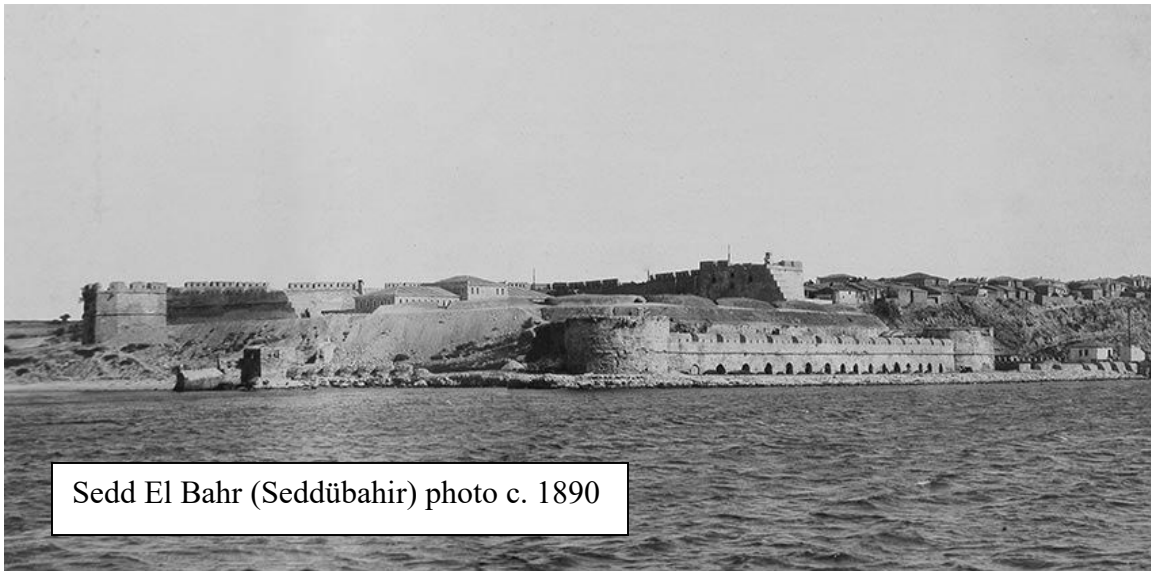
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Constantinople

After a few days at Lisbon for maintenance and the laborious task of taking on coal from a barge alongside, the *Ticonderoga* transited the Strait of Gibraltar and steamed eastward through the Mediterranean to Constantinople (Istanbul), capital of the Ottoman Empire. The visit was more than a courtesy call. France, Britain, Austria, and Russia had, in the Treaty of Paris of 1856, decreed the Dardanelles closed to the warships of all

nations. The United States was not a party to the treaty, and considered the Turkish straits and Black Sea to be international waters. *Ticonderoga's* mission was to put the Europeans on notice that the United States would not abide by their diktat restricting freedom of the seas.

One can imagine the thoughts of a boy who was born in Wallonia and schooled in Cadiz reading Homer's "Iliad" and "Odyssey" as Terry's ship entered the Dardanelles, or Hellespont as the strait was called in classical antiquity. At its entrance, the waterway is two miles wide. To the left, on the European side, is Cape Helles, the rocky promontory at the southwestern tip of the Gallipoli peninsula. A stone fortress called Sedd el Bahr (Seddübahir), also known as Eski Kale, or "Old Castle" in Turkish, built in 1659 stands guard on the point. A fortress called Kum Kaleh, on the site where according to Homer the ashes of Achilles and Patroclus were buried in a golden urn after they were killed in battle during the Trojan War more than 3,000 years ago, guards the Asian side.



The European and Asia Minor shores are very different. On the European side, the Gallipoli peninsula is a rocky ridge that rises steeply from the water's edge to an elevation of nearly six hundred feet. The Troad, as the Asia Minor shore was called in ancient times, is a treeless, fertile alluvial plain that slopes gently to a range of shrub forested hills. Atop one of those hills visible in the distance, called Hisarlik, a Turkish word that means "Place of Fortresses," lay the buried ruins of Troy.

Ticonderoga passed rocky, forested shores and seaside villages with red clay tile roofs during the two hours that it took to steam 12 miles against the surge, a strong river-like current that flows down the strait, to the Ottoman quarantine station at Çanakkale on the Asian side, where all ships had to stop for medical inspection. At that point the waterway narrows to three-quarters of a mile. Çimenlik Castle, a towering, square gray stone fortress built in the 15th century, guards the strait on the Asian side. Kilitbahir (“Lock of the Sea”) Castle, its high, gracefully curving sand-colored walls built in the form of a three-leaf clover by the Turks between 1452 and 1463, stands guard at the water’s edge on the European side. Immediately behind it, the chestnut, hazelnut, and tamarind forested Gallipoli shore rises steeply to a plateau of farm fields and olive groves that is invisible from the sea. After passing Çanakkale, the strait widens until it gives way to the Sea of Marmara, or Propontis as it was called by the ancient Greeks and Romans.

Darkness was falling when the *Ticonderoga* resumed her journey up the Dardanelles and 130 miles round the European shore of the Sea of Marmara. At mid-morning the next day, the ship was passing the walls of an old fortress called Yedi Koulé



Topkapı Palace (modern photo)

at the mouth of the Bosphorus. For about a mile, the European shoreline was a continuous

row of medieval fortifications, domed mosques with tall minarets, and palaces. Last in the line was fabled Topkapı Palace, the living quarters of the Ottoman Sultan's harem, atop a high bluff called Seraglio Point where in 657 BC, King Byzas, who according to Greek mythology was the son of Poseidon, god of the seas, founded a city called Byzantion. Romans Latinized the city's name to Byzantium more than two centuries before the birth of Jesus. Emperor Constantine made it the eastern capital of the Roman Empire and renamed it Constantinople after himself in AD 330. Westerners still knew it by that name. The Turks who battered a breach in the city's massive walls with gigantic stone-hurling cannon and took it by assault in 1453 called it Stambûl. Muezzin in the minarets that towered over the city's many mosques were calling the Muslim faithful to noon prayers when on Friday, Sept. 7, 1866, *Ticonderoga* dropped anchor in the city's famous harbor, the Golden Horn.

Next day the American naval officers were invited to dinner aboard the Ottoman navy's flagship *Mahmudiye*, an enormous three-deck, 128-gun sailing ship-of-the-line built in 1829 that, though now antiquated, was still the largest warship in the world. The great man-of-war's wardroom table was set for them with low, wide bowls of Kuzu Tandır, the traditional Turkish feast of roasted lamb served on a bed of brown rice with grilled potatoes, onions, nuts, and currants garnished with green mint leaves. E. Joy Morris, the U.S. Minister to the Ottoman Empire, wrote that in addition to Turkish folk music, an Ottoman navy band played "Hail Columbia" and "Yankee Doodle" while the Americans and their hosts ate. The Americans toured the ship and marveled that her massive armament included two gigantic mortars on the forecastle deck that fired 500 pound stone balls.

Sultan Abdul Aziz, a large, boisterous man with a jet black beard who liked rough sports, hunting, horseback riding, and wrestling, hosted a reception for the *Ticonderoga*'s officers in Dolmabahçe Palace. Mr. Morris wrote that the Sultan, who spoke English, received the Americans "with a few cordial words of welcome; expressed his gratification at the visit of courtesy made by the *Ticonderoga* to his capital; rejoiced that the late devastating war in the United States had terminated in the preservation of the integrity of the Union; and, in conclusion, said that he should always be happy to

reciprocate the good will and friendly sentiments which the United States had ever shown to Turkey.”

The Sultan granted the Americans a “firman” or royal pass to visit the city’s many palaces, mosques, churches, and other attractions. Constantinople, for centuries the crossroads of the Old World, was a multi-ethnic, multi-religious city of more than a million people. Its character was more Greek than Turkish, and more cosmopolitan than either. On the streets and in the Grand Bazaar – a labyrinthine shopping mall 7½ acres in area with vault-roofed pedestrian streets and 4,500 shops – one was apt to encounter people from every nation and ethnic group in Europe, the Balkans, Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, North Africa, the Caucasus, Central Eurasia, and even sub-Saharan Africa, India, and China. Greek was the language of trade. Most of the merchants were Greeks; though there were Armenians, Arabs, and Jews among them. Muslims of every nationality conversed among themselves in Turkish and Arabic. Educated Turks were fluent in French or English. French and English were the common tongues among the resident Europeans, all of whom were called “Franks” by the Turks. The greater portion of the city’s “Franks” were members of a multi-national colony called “Levantines” that numbered in the thousands. The Levantines, though the families from different countries had been in the Near East for several generations and were extensively intermarried with one another, maintained their ancestral European nationalities in the male line and enjoyed extraterritorial status that exempted them from Ottoman law. Beneath its harmonious surface, the Ottoman Empire was a seething cauldron of ethnic and religious tensions.

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Cyprus, Palestine, and Egypt

Then, after eleven days, Silas Terry’s shore leave was cut short. A message transmitted from Constantinople to the New York *Herald* via London on the Atlantic telegraph cable on Sept. 30, 1866, stated “in consequence of a difficulty which has existed for some time past between the United States Consul at Island Cyprus and the Turkish authorities ... the United States ship *Ticonderoga*, which has been off the point of Veniee (i.e. in the Golden Horn off Constantinople’s old Venetian quarter), was sent to Cyprus.”

Ticonderoga remained at Larnaca, Cyprus, for a few days and then steamed to Jaffa, Palestine. A British traveler wrote that Jaffa was “a very dangerous harbour; no vessel stays in it longer than they can help; about half a mile all round, almost forming a circle, are rocks, and unless the sea is very calm no vessel dare put in.” A missionary from Maine described his experience upon landing at Jaffa in a letter published in the *Lewiston Evening Journal* on July 26, 1869: “We anchored more than a mile from the shore, and were carried in a boat manned by swarthy Arabs over the waters, full of rocks and shallows, as far as we could go, then the Arabs took us on their shoulders, and, wading through the water, carried us upon their backs to the shore.” One would hope that Silas Terry, a U.S. Navy officer who spent his childhood summers frolicking with the other Cadiz boys in Little River, waded through the surf on his own two legs.

Terry had no opportunity for sightseeing in the Holy Land. Three days after arrival, the onset of windy weather forced *Ticonderoga* to leave. The ship arrived at Alexandria, Egypt, on the morning of Oct. 6, 1866. Zoulfikar Pasha, the governor of Alexandria, invited Capt. Steedman and the ship’s officers to visit Cairo. Steedman agreed, and allowed the officers to go in two groups on different days. They immediately noticed that the Egyptian Railway’s steam locomotives and passenger carriages were American-made. Express trains made the 130 mile trip through the low-lying Delta, crossing iron drawbridges over the flood-swollen Rosetta and Damietta branches of the Nile enroute, in 3 hours and 20 minutes. Charles Hale, the U.S. Consul General, informed Secretary of State Seward that “nearly all of them went to Cairo, and notwithstanding the great height of water just now, from the overflow of the Nile, made the journey across the valley somewhat difficult, visited the Pyramids.”

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A Soirée in Paris

The frigate *Franklin*, flagship of Admiral David Farragut, joined the squadron in the spring of 1867. *Franklin*’s junior officers included George Dewey, William T. Sampson, and Henry B. Robeson – future admirals who would earn significant places in U.S. Navy history. They would be Silas Terry’s companions in many of the events that followed.

Capt. Steedman was relieved in a routine change of command and returned to the United States. Capt. Robert H. Wyman, a New Hampshire native whose Navy career began in 1837 at the age of fifteen, replaced him as captain of the *Ticonderoga*. Silas Terry became third officer in the ship's chain of command.

By then Napoleon III, faced with an American ultimatum, had been forced to withdraw the French army from Mexico. Mexican Liberal forces equipped with arms supplied by the United States promptly overthrew the monarchy. Emperor Maximilian was captured, tried by a military court martial, and condemned to death. On June 19, despite threats from Napoleon III and pleas for clemency from the British, Austrian, and Prussian governments, the Mexicans stood Maximilian in front of a firing squad and shot him. News of the execution was released to the world on July 1.

The Parisian newspaper *Moniteur*, Napoleon III's official press, expressed the French ruler's outrage: "The assassination of Emperor Maximilian will arouse a reeling of universal horror. The act of infamy ordered by Juárez stamps on the heads of those who call themselves the representatives of the Mexican Republic an ineffaceable stigma. The reprobation of all civilized nations will be the first punishment of a Government which has at its head such a ruler." On July 26, Secretary of State William H. Seward reaffirmed that the United States "recognized the republican government of Mexico, of which Juárez is President."

Polite cordiality prevailed despite the friction in Franco-American relations. At Cherbourg on July 28, *Ticonderoga* and five other American warships participated in a naval review honoring Empress Eugénie de Montijo, the Spanish-born wife of Emperor Napoleon III. Empress Eugénie dined with Admiral Farragut aboard his flagship. Young officers were detailed to escort her ladies in waiting on tours of the American ships. In return the court ladies treated their escorts to an excursion to Paris aboard the royal train to visit the Exposition Universelle world's fair followed by an evening party at the Grand Café Parisien, described as "an immense place, on the Boulevard St. Martin."

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Welcome to Russia!

On Aug. 15, 1867, the Washington, D.C. *Evening Star* reported, "A later dispatch from Admiral Farragut, dated Cherbourg, July 30, announces that on that day he would

sail for Cronstadt (Kronstadt), accompanied by the *Canandaigua* and the *Frolic*. The *Ticonderoga* was to follow in a few days.” Farragut’s ships made a brief port call at Stettin, Prussia (now Szczecin, Poland), to allow the *Ticonderoga* time to join them, and then proceeded to Russia.

The Russians, who had just agreed to sell Alaska to the United States, and whose own relations with France were tense, gave them a grand reception. Russian warships met the American squadron as it was passing heavily fortified Kotlin Island into Kronstadt, the harbor of St. Petersburg “with the American flag at the foremast, the yards manned, and salutes from all the vessels and batteries. Admiral Lessofky (i.e. Stepan Lesovsky, the admiral who commanded the Russian fleet that came to New York in the fall of 1863 and remained there for seven months, giving the impression the Russia would support the Union if Britain intervened in the Civil War) immediately welcomed Farragut to Russia. The Mayor of St. Petersburg and other officials extended the hospitalities and freedom of their city to the American squadron.” The officers were given a guided tour of the Hermitage, or Winter Palace, that was the residence of the Czar. Admiral Farragut noted in his report to Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles that many of his officers “availed themselves of invitations to visit Moscow, the ancient capital, and other parts of the empire.”

On Sept. 23 the *Evening Star* told its readers, “A dispatch has been received by the Navy Department from Admiral Farragut, commanding the European Squadron, dated U.S. flag-ship *Franklin*, off Warholm, below Stockholm, Sept. 3d, 1867, announcing that he left Cronstadt on the 30th of August with the *Franklin*, *Ticonderoga*, *Canandaigua*, and *Frolic*, and proceeded to Trongsend Roads (Trongzund, Finland). This excursion was made because of a wish expressed by Grand Duke Constantine (brother of Czar Alexander I) that Admiral F. should visit the iron-clad fleet assembled there. Upon entering the roads our fleet was received with a salute. On the following day, Admiral Farragut, with his staff, went on board the two-turret ship *Smertch*... In the evening they dined on board the Russian flagship... In conclusion Admiral F. says, “At 2 p.m., September 1st, we got underway and proceeded to sea, exchanging salutes with the flag-ship, and thus, amid cheering from all the ships of the two squadrons, concluded a visit which from first to last has been marked by the interchange of the warmest friendship.”

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Sweden and Denmark

King Charles XV of Sweden invited Admiral Farragut and his officers to visit Stockholm. While there Terry and the other officers were guests at a dance held to entertain King Charles' daughter and only child Louise, the lonely 15-year old princess who referred to herself as "the Stockholm urchin." Gallant young U.S. Navy officers in dress blues with sash belts round their waists and gold fringed epaulettes on their shoulders twirled Princess Louise and her ladies in waiting round the dance floor. A telegraphic report received in New York stated, "Stockholm, Sept. 13. – A grand feature of the occasion was a fête at the Imperial palace, given by the King of Sweden, which was attended by Admiral Farragut and officers, at which the warmest good feelings and enthusiasm was manifested."

The warmth of Swedish hospitality is proverbial, but the Baltic is infamous for icy Arctic gales in winter. Terry and the other Americans bid their Swedish acquaintances goodbye and, in the teeth of a fierce storm that coated their rigging with ice, the ships steamed past the big islands Gotland and Bornholm to Copenhagen. After a few days being entertained by the Danes, the squadron returned to southern climes to spend the winter.

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Winter in the Mediterranean

Ticonderoga spent several weeks at Lisbon undergoing repairs. The ship then visited Gibraltar, called at Mahón on the Spanish island of Minorca, stopped briefly at Malta, and visited Genoa and Naples. The ship then passed through the Strait of Messina between Sicily and Italy and steamed up the Adriatic to visit Venice and Trieste, then the seaport of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Leaving Trieste, the ship cruised south along the Dalmatian coast among its many scenic islands, called at Fiume (Rijeka, Croatia) and Corfu, and turned east round the rocky Peloponnesian capes at the southern tip of Greece.

Silas Terry and the rest of the crew celebrated Christmas 1867 at anchor in Suda Bay, on the north coast of Crete, whose Greek inhabitants were waging a bloody guerrilla-war rebellion against their Ottoman Turkish rulers. William J. Stillman, the U.S. Consul, wrote of the warship's visit, "Her stay for a few days was a demonstration of

force which, so far as I was concerned, left a most healthy impression as to my being supported by the United States government.” The ship spent January 1868 cruising among the Ægean Sea islands and visiting Piræus, the port of Athens.

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Rome

The squadron rendezvoused at Naples in February. The situation in Italy was tense. Giuseppe Garibaldi, who had previously lived in New York as a refugee, was getting ready to renew the Italian nationalists’ struggle to unify Italy. Napoleon III was preparing for war to prevent Italian unification. Several thousand French soldiers were garrisoned in Rome. French newspapers asserted that the U.S. Navy’s visit to Naples was “designed as a counterpoise to the French forces in Rome, and to sustain the Liberals of Italy, with whom Admiral Farragut holds intimate relations.”

On Feb. 22, 1868, Terry was among the officers who accompanied Admiral Farragut to Rome, where Farragut was received by Pope Pius IX. The officers and sailors in Farragut’s retinue were given several days liberty to tour Rome. French soldiers uniformed in long-tailed blue woolen coats, loose fitting bright red trousers, and red kepi hats looked on suspiciously.

Ticonderoga, in company with *Franklin* with Admiral Farragut on board, returned to the eastern Mediterranean. The ships visited Smyrna (Izmir, Turkey) and cruised along the Syrian coast to Lebanon. A French frigate kept the Americans under surveillance. The ships arrived at Malta from Syracuse, Sicily, in late April and remained there to await the other American vessels. The reassembled squadron sailed for Gibraltar enroute to Lisbon on May 31, 1868.

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Belgium

On Sunday morning, June 21, 1868, *Ticonderoga* was at anchor in the River Scheldt at Antwerp, Belgium. It was supposed to be a day of rest. Terry was probably at the worship service being conducted by the ship’s chaplain when, “A mutiny broke out on the American clipper ship *Nereus*, during which her officers were severely handled by the crew and nearly overpowered. The police were notified and boarded the ship. The

United States steamer *Ticonderoga*, which was lying nearby, sent some of her crew to the assistance of the police, and after a desperate fight the mutiny was suppressed.”

Next day, at Ostend, *Ticonderoga*, along with her squadron mates, passed in review before King Leopold II and Queen Marie-Henriette of Belgium. Though it was an overcast day “the harbor was crowded with craft of every description crowded with sight-seers and the shore lined for miles with spectators. The American vessels were decked with a profusion of bunting and all the shipping in the harbor gaily decorated with flags.” As the American ships passed the royal barge, “All the batteries of the fleet burst into salutes and the men who manned the yards cheered with great enthusiasm. The salute was returned from the fortifications and Belgian men-of-war, and the cheers taken up and repeated by the crowds in the boats and on shore.”

Henry S. Sanford, the U.S. Minister to Belgium, wrote that after the review, King Leopold and Queen Marie-Henriette “accompanied by all the members of the cabinet save one, and by several of the foreign ministers, members of the royal household & c. ... visited the *Franklin* and *Ticonderoga*. ... Their Majesties were received by Admiral Farragut and his officers with due courtesy and attention, and after spending several hours witnessing various exercises, target practice & c., and partaking of lunch, returned to Brussels.”

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Meeting HRH Queen Victoria

The American squadron steamed across the North Sea to Southampton, England, and “arrived off that city early on the 24th of June, anchoring off the great naval hospital, and in full view of the noble ruins of Netley Abbey on one side and of the extensive plains of the New Forest directly opposite.” The ship’s officers were given an opportunity to visit London.

A month later, the ships were anchored in the Solent off Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, when Albert Edward, the 27-year old Prince of Wales who in 1901 became King Edward VII, paid them a visit. The July 20 *Pittsburgh Commercial* printed a dispatch, “From Europe by the Atlantic Cable – London, July 19. – On Thursday last Admiral Farragut received, through the Prince of Wales, who was visiting the American fleet off Cowes, an invitation to visit the Queen. Next day the Admiral and Prince, with the

officers of his fleet, proceeded to Osborne House, where Queen Victoria was then stopping, and were received in a most cordial manner by Her Majesty, the Prince of Wales, Duke of Edinburgh and members of the royal court.”

Following the audience with Queen Victoria, the American officers returned to their ships and the squadron dispersed. *Ticonderoga* initially went to Havre, France, and then to the Netherlands. The squadron reassembled at Lisbon in September.

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The Greek-Turkish Crisis

A dangerous European crisis began in October. On Dec. 23, 1868, several major American newspapers published an alarming report from London: “Greek and Turkish War – A war between Greece and Turkey seems likely to occur in spite of the earnest efforts of the western powers of Europe to prevent it.” Mainland Greeks were supplying weapons and ammunition to the Greek guerrillas fighting the Turks on Crete. “Turkish cruisers had orders to overhaul Grecian vessels cruising near Candia (Heraklion), to prevent the landing of contraband materials of war. The government of Greece, regarding this as an insult, ordered their navy to fire upon any Turkish vessel that should attempt to overhaul them. Such a contingency occurred recently when a Turkish man-of-war chased a Greek steamer, the latter fired into the Turk and steamed off out of reach. The Turks viewing this as an act of war, are preparing for open hostilities against Greece, and the latter government is making counter preparations, covertly encouraged by the Russians... Meantime all the great powers of Europe are striving to prevent the collision, (lest) the ultimate result will be that Russia and perhaps Prussia will be drawn into the fight against Turkey, absorb the territory of the latter, and thus disturbing the present equilibrium of the European powers.” A Russian attempt to march an army through the Balkans to assist the Greeks “would be resisted by France and Austria, and probably by England. It would, in fact, involve a general war in Europe.”

This was the potentially explosive situation when *Ticonderoga* passed Gibraltar headed east in November. Luckily, European diplomats defused the crisis and prevented what might otherwise have become an earlier Great World War. While the Greek-Turkish crisis was playing out through the winter of 1868-69, *Ticonderoga* cruised among the Ægean Sea islands to, in the words of the Secretary of the Navy’s report to Congress

“investigate the report, which proved untrue, that the American flag had been improperly used by Greek vessels in that quarter.”

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Home to Cadiz

Daybreak on Wednesday, March 17, 1869, found *Ticonderoga* at anchor in the Tagus at Lisbon. Silas Terry probably paused in his early morning duties on deck to watch the sun rise from behind the heights commanding the city that had become familiar to him. After breakfast, the crew assembled on deck. Signalmen hoisted a homeward-bound pennant, and a cheer went up from the 400 sailors. A few minutes later the ship raised her anchors and steamed slowly down the river. Capt. Wyman ordered the gunners to fire a salute as the ship passed old Fort São Lourenço do Bugio on the rocky, low-lying island off the river’s mouth, and then set course for North America. After an absence of eleven years, Silas Wright Terry was on his way home to Cadiz.