

CHARLESTON, Sept. 3.—A careful estimate given to THE TIMES's correspondent by prominent merchants of Charleston of the number of blockade runners engaged during the last war in running between British and Confederate ports shows that between the years 1861 and 1865 there were no less than 250 vessels employed from first to last in this service.

The great objective points of this fleet were Charleston and Georgetown, S. C.; Wilmington and Smithville, N. C.; Savannah, Ga., and Galveston, Texas. Occasional runs were made into Mobile, Ala.; Fernandina, Fla., and Beaufort, N. C., but as the blockade by the Federal war ships tightened, and as the service became more and more hazardous, the blockade runners gradually confined their operations to runs to Charleston and Wilmington, and during the last of the war Wilmington alone was accessible. Charleston was entered by the Siren on the very day of its evacuation, the blockade runner being captured at the docks, but for all that blockade runners had practically given up Charleston as an objective point ever since the beginning of the year 1865.

Charleston and Wilmington became favorite ports for blockade runners because of their strong defense. Then, too, the water on the Charleston and Wilmington bars was favorable for runs out on more than one course, while the guns of Sullivan's Island and the light Whitworth pieces pushed forward on the beach by Col. Lamb at Fort Fisher served effectually on many an occasion to stop the hot pursuit of blockading war ships.

The first outward cargo sent from Charleston through the blockade was by the steamer Ella Warley, formerly the Isabel, with a full cargo of cotton to Nassau, and the first inward voyage was by the same vessel on her return. The Ella Warley was the property of Messrs. John Fraser & Co. of Charleston, and the success attending the first round trip at once caused a number of wealthy firms to embark in the business of blockade running. The most prominent of these firms had their headquarters in Charleston, and among their number were Messrs. John Fraser & Co., the A. K. Chisolm Consolidated Company, the Bee Company, Kavenel & Co., the Colite Company, the Cobia Company, and the Chicora Company.

Fast steamers were purchased outright wherever obtainable, the majority being either former American coasting steamships or Clyde-built vessels. Among the former class the Ella and Anna, formerly the William C. Hughes of the Morgan Line of New York, and the Nashville of the Adger Line, running between Charleston and New York, were ships which made great names for themselves. But the majority of the American coasting steamers had been built with a view to carrying the maximum draught of water obtainable on Southern bars, and, in consequence, when several of these craft were turned into blockade runners, their pilots found themselves by no means as free handed as the pilots running the long, low, and lighter-draught Clyde-built steamers.

The profits resulting from blockade-running caused the port of Nassau to be fairly overrun with money. The scenes at this West India port resembled those of San Francisco during the gold fever period. The banks of Nassau became so heavily taxed with deposits that the vaults on many occasions were unable to contain all the specie presented and it soon became quite common to see gold sovereigns lying in great heaps on the floor of a bank with a soldier standing guard. Previous to the war Nassau was but little known. Blockade running made the little port one of the most prominent of England's possessions. Bermuda and Nassau were the two great objective points of outward-bound blockade runners, the near position of the two ports to the American coast alone accounting for the selection.

One of the best descriptions of the blockade period which has been afforded THE TIMES's correspondent is that given him by a prominent shipmaster of Charleston, who, under the name of Edwin Davis, earned in the blockade-running service an enviable reputation for coolness, courage, and indifference to danger. Bonneau, the famous Captain of the Ella and Anna, and Capt. Davis were running between Nassau and Wilmington during almost the same period, though if anything Davis made a considerable number of runs before Bonneau commenced his active work. It was only the other day that these two runners met after having drifted apart from each other's sight for a period of some eight years.

The meeting of the two men was in itself unique: "Hello, old man!" "Hello, Bonneau!" and then the two strode over to each other, and each grasped the two hands of the other, and then both laughed a little, and there they stood, neither saying a word, but both laughing and shaking hands until finally they managed to drift over to a snug corner, and there for a whole afternoon the two lived over the days of 1861-5. And they laughed hearty laughs as they recalled the discomfiture of this or that blockading warship, when on certain dark nights the Ella and Anna and the Pet dashed through the Union fleets with the ships of the latter firing whole broadsides; or how again Wyman, with the fleet Santiago de Cuba, was given the slip in among the Bahama Keys. And they stopped laughing when they recalled how at times some lubberly pilot nearly spoiled all by flunking at the last moment. But despite all their experiences these two men are hale and hearty to-day and as ready as ever to undertake risky work. Some of the experiences of Capt. Davis during that period of 1861-5 are best related as told by himself.

"It was in the Spring of 1862," he said, "that I took command of a little schooner of about fifty tons burden, the Johanna Ward by name, and ran her out one night through the Charleston blockading fleet. It was about the beginning of the heavy blockade, and at that time we had but few steamers employed. I ran the Johanna Ward over to Matanzas, Cuba, unloaded, and took on board a general cargo, then stood out and up the Florida coast for Charleston.

"It was a bright, warm day in the Spring and with a dead calm on when I found myself somewhere off Fernandina. As we were lying there without hardly a breath of wind blowing, black smoke showed up on the horizon, and it was not very long before I saw the familiar spars of the United States revenue steamer Harriet Lane, now doing duty in the navy, come out in bold relief. I said nothing, but it looked as if the game with me was up. Down the Lane came, and out flew from her gun ends British colors. I smiled to myself as I heard some of the crew declare that she was a British gunboat. I knew the Harriet Lane too well before the war to be fooled by a piece of bunting. My supercargo was a Spaniard, Francisco Elias by name, and as the Harriet Lane ran up to within easy speaking distance I hoisted Spanish colors and told Francisco to reply in Spanish as I directed him. As for myself, I stretched out unconcernedly on the schooner's lazy board, leaving Francisco to stalk about and play Captain.

"What schooner is that?" was called out from the Lane in Spanish, and by no less a man than David D. Porter, afterward Admiral, but at that time a commander, commanding the Harriet Lane. Fortunately, we had no name painted on the stern, so that Francisco supplied a fictitious one in Spanish. To the query of where we were from and where bound, Francisco replied, at my prompting, that we were from Havana, bound to St. John's, N. B. As the Lane was coming up, my supercargo remarked to me that he was sure the stranger was British. "Don't fool yourself, Francisco," I said. "Look up at her gall end. Do you see that little snug roll there, all ready for breaking out? Just wait a few minutes." And sure enough, the first word had hardly left Porter's lips when the roll broke and out fluttered the Stars and Stripes. As they fluttered in the air the British colors slowly descended to the deck. "There, Francisco," I said, half laughingly, in an undertone, "is your British gunboat. Now don't make a botch of your replies."

"Porter asked a number of questions and appeared satisfied with our Spanish character. He had even rung to go ahead, when I observed some officer suddenly approach him, say a few words, and then Porter rang to stop. Down went a boat and over the schooner's rail came the same officer. His name, I think, was Schultz. I had known him slightly before the war, when he sailed as Captain of a coasting schooner into Charleston. 'Hell, D—' he exclaimed as he clambered up over the side, 'glad to see you.' 'Well, I'll be hanged if I'm glad to see you,' I replied, for it now was all up with us—that was very certain.

"Well, of course, I am sorry for you," said Schultz, "but fortunes of war, you know." We all were transferred aboard the Harriet Lane. I was quartered down in the wardroom, and found a good lot of officers in her mess. Schultz was the sailing master.

Porter ran the Lane down to Key West, and we were there sent ashore and turned over to the commander of Fort Taylor at that place. The fort, I remember, was garrisoned by a Pennsylvania regiment of infantry, and I doubt if there was a single day that I could not have

made my escape, the guard maintained being extremely lax. This was due in part to a knowledge that we were soon all to be exchanged, but as day after day passed and no exchange came several of us determined to make a break. In all there were over twenty prisoners in the fort, and one fine night eighteen of us slipped out through a gun embrasure in the rear without even saying good-bye.

"Of course, as soon as our absence was discovered there was a hubbub and uproar. The Pennsylvanians turned out and raked the island over pretty thoroughly, but all that night and all next day the entire eighteen of us lay concealed in a bunch of chapparal not over one hundred yards from the fort. On the second night we broke up into squads and made our way into town. Four others and myself were secreted at the house of a friend, and there we remained for several days until a small boat, well provisioned and equipped, was made ready. One dark night we slipped singly down to the beach, reached the boat, and by daylight were well clear of Key West Island.

"We worked our way up the west coast, hauling the boat up at night on the beach and getting under way in the early morning. We escaped from Key West Island May 1, 1862, and ten days later ran into Tampa Bay. We saw no signs of the Federal forces until we were about entering Tampa Bay. There we ran across the Union bark Kingfisher, lying off the port. From Tampa we tramped it to Gainesville, a distance of 175 miles. That tramp was the hardest part of the escape. We suffered greatly for want of food. By the last of May I was back in Charleston. I afterward learned that the entire number of prisoners who made their escape on the night of May 1 succeeded in getting clear of the island.

"It was in the early Summer of 1863 when I had an offer made me in Wilmington, N. C., by an agent of a New-Orleans stock company to take command of the English-built blockade runner Pet. The Pet was built at Newcastle-on-Tyne and was a propeller measuring about 200 feet in length and drawing about 10 feet of water. Her hold admitted of 900 bales of cotton. She was, at the time I first mention, in command of Capt. Ross Davis, and had made one successful round trip between Nassau and Wilmington. Capt. Davis was broken down in health, and it was necessary that a new Captain be found. I was offered a salary of \$7,000 for every round trip I should make, the money to be paid in gold, one-half at Nassau and one-half at Wilmington, each payment to be made immediately upon my arrival at the places named.

"I accepted the terms offered and took passage for Nassau in a blockade runner called the Victory. The Victory ran through the fleet off Wilmington without discovery, and was fast approaching the Bahama coast when the Santiago de Cuba made her appearance on the horizon. The fleet Federal steamer saw us almost as soon as we did her, and then the race commenced. But it was no use. The old Victory was anything but a match for Wyman's racer, and finally, when the Santiago de Cuba yawed off a couple of points, just enough to bring her broadside guns to bear when trained sharp forward, the Victory broke out a white flag.

"An officer from Wyman's ship immediately boarded us. Every one was transferred and examined, and then, on the approach of a Bahama schooner, acting as tender to the Federal fleet, all of us who were passengers were permitted to go aboard and continue our journey. I expected when the old Victory surrendered that I was good for Fort Warren then, but as plain Mr. Edwin Davis, passenger, I was allowed to proceed on my journey.

"I found the Pet in port loaded up and ready for a run. I reported to Capt. Davis, and, as had been arranged, assumed the duties of mate for the run to Wilmington. I was considerably disappointed to find the Pet unable to make much more than eight knots an hour. I saw at once that any chase by a blockading ship meant sure capture, and that success depended wholly upon not being discovered. We slipped into Wilmington without a mishap, and there I relieved Capt. Davis. On about the first run out I had to play fox. It was the custom of all blockade runners about to run out to steam down the Cape Fear River to just inside of Fort Caswell, and then await night for a dash through the lines. All during the day the Federal vessels could see us at anchor inside, and I have known as many as thirty vessels to be at the Southport anchorage at one time, all waiting for a favorable chance to make a dash. Slack high water was the time usually chosen, or, better still, just on the last of the flood tide, which gave one a little more chance of getting free in the event of running aground.

"On their first run out, the night was dark and overcast. I headed the Pet out over the bar and stood to the southward and eastward. The vessel had not cleared the bar more than a couple of miles when right after me, under full headway, I made out in chase a blockading steamer. How long he had seen me I do not know. Possibly he made me out as I crossed the bar and perhaps purposely allowed me a sufficient free run to enable him to get between me and the bar channel. As I saw him rapidly overhauling me, I gave the Pet the helm hard-a-starboard, throwing her head broad off the beach. The Federal ship saw my move, and, of course, assuming that I proposed to make a break straight out to sea, sheered to port himself. But instead of righting my helm when the Pet's head was well off shore, I instead allowed the little vessel to wheel right around.

"The Pet flew about like a top, and just as we were almost overlapping our pursuer he opened on us with his starboard guns. Before the smoke of his first discharge had cleared I had passed him on his starboard beam and was going full speed to his rear. The smoke of his guns must have blinded all on board for he kept at full headway on his original course, still firing gun after gun supposedly at me. The eyes of all his people must have been directed right ahead. No one could have looked abeam or over the quarter, for if one had, I must certainly have been seen making all possible speed in the opposite direction to the bar.

"As I worked back, I could hear the dull boom of my pursuer's guns thundering away in the distance, his shots being aimed doubtless at some imaginary vessel. I heard his last gun just as I was engaged in dropping anchor inside of Fort Caswell. The report of his last gun sounded fully fifteen miles distant, off to the southward and eastward. It was no use attempting to run out again that night, for by this time the whole Federal fleet had been stirred up, and the whole Federal fleet meant some thirty ships of war.

"I made in all seven round trips in the Pet. All seven trips were made between Nassau and Wilmington. It was my practice to time my arrival at Wilmington bar at a favorable stage of water. I would run the Pet to a point hull down on Wilmington and then await night. But it was seldom that I had to slow down, for I calculated the time of the run beforehand from Nassau and then took my departure from the latter place accordingly.

"I had a ticklish experience on one of the seven runs when endeavoring to get into Nassau. I had run pretty close up to Abaco when I made out in broad daylight the fast Federal war ship Rhode Island, distant not more than two miles ahead. It was blowing a gale of wind at the time, accompanied by heavy rain squalls. The Rhode Island, I could see, was hoove to. Right behind me and coming up fast was a heavy rain squall. Without a moment's hesitation I put the Pet about, right into the heavy sea she had been running before, and jumped into the rain. Instantly all objects about us were lost to sight, and with the squall for a covering, I turned the Pet's head to the westward and let her run off in the trough of the sea.

"I have seen rolling, and considerable of it, in my lifetime, but the performance of the Pet when she stood to the westward to clear the Rhode Island beat anything I have ever seen. I doubt if the vessel's hull could have been made out a mile away. I stood to the westward some forty miles, and then hauled around for a good sweep and made Nassau.

"The Pet was lost on her eighth run from Nassau to Wilmington. It was on the night of Feb. 2, 1864, when the United States blockading steamer Montgomery, doing duty off Wilmington, captured me. I was just passing by Lockwood's Folly Inlet when I ran across the Montgomery. To the southward of that old inlet a shoal then made out well to the eastward. I approached this shoal, the wind being fresh at the time and the night fairly dark from the southward and eastward. I kept close into the breakers and up to the time of reaching the easternmost point of the shoal had not seen a single blockading ship. But just as I rounded the breakers I saw right ahead of me, lying back of the breakers, the outlines of a blockader. I put the Pet's helm hard over and ran down over the course I came up. Having run well to the southward, I sheered out to sea with the intention of making a sweep around to the northward and then run for the inlet on a southerly course.

"No sooner had I sheered off the shoals than I found that the war ship was closely following me. As I ran out of the darkness of the shore he opened up gun after gun on the Pet. Fully six shots had struck us when I discovered that the little Pet was done for. She was being overhauled rapidly, and as the Montgomery, which she proved to be, was between me and the inlet, there was no earthly prospect of getting by. I consequently stopped the Pet's engines. The Montgomery came bowling along with so much headway on that she ran right by me. Had the Pet's head been inshore then, instead of to seaward, I believe now I could have reached the inlet before the Montgomery could have turned. As it was, it was all over with the Pet, and in very short time Faxon, the Montgomery's commander, had us as prisoners on his deck. I was sent North shortly and for eighteen months was confined in Fort Warren, Boston Harbor. The confinement had no other hardship attending it than restriction. We were allowed everything we cared to purchase, and as the majority of us had money, we did not stint ourselves."

In speaking of the measures resorted to by the Federal war ships to enforce the blockade, both Capt. Bonneau and Capt. Davis agree that had a half dozen fast Federal war ships taken station at a distance of some forty miles from Wilmington Bar it would have been next to impossible for any of the slow blockade runners to cut through the lines. The majority of the blockade runners could not make over ten knots an hour. Calculating on the time of departure from the mouth of Cape Fear River, which

could be done by the Federal ships as well as the blockade runners, as high water only was taken advantage of, a blockading ship, by taking up a station to the southward and eastward of the bar at a point which should disclose a blockade runner just before daylight, would have secured the opportunity of an all-day chase. Why some such plan was not resorted to both Bonneau and Davis declared they often wondered at. Both united in saying that the break of day was always their most anxious time. The disclosure of a Federal ship with plenty of sea-room around meant sure capture to all vessels of as slow speed as the Pet.

Although the Pet was lost on her eighth run, she had more than paid for herself on her first voyage. It was expected that a newly-purchased vessel should clear herself on her first run. Every succeeding run meant enormous profits to her owners. Money was so plenty in Nassau that men gambled, drank, and seemed crazy to get rid of their money. Prodigious wagers were put up by blockade runners in their efforts to spend gold. The cause of this was that the Confederates were paying the English importers and jobbers at Nassau large prices for goods, but these figures of cost were multiplied enormously in the Confederacy. The price of cotton was not increased in the same ratio, and this large difference in values between imports and exports gave the enormous profits which induced these ventures. Ten dollars invested in guine in Nassau would bring from \$400 to \$600 in Charleston.

As an item of curiosity, indicating the prices of imported goods in Confederate currency, the following bill of purchases from a blockading company is taken from the annual review of 1883 of Charleston's Mayor, the Hon. William A. Courtenay:

MAJOR E. WILLIS TO HENRY COBIA & CO. DR.	
1863.	
Oct. 15.—For 1 Box (K) containing 400 doz. Coates's spool cotton, @ \$12½ per doz.....	\$5,000.00
" 17 Rolls Sole Leather, H. W. Wg 3,204 lb., @ \$9¼ per lb.....	\$29,637.00
" 5 Rolls Sole Leather, H. (W) C, Wg 575½ lb., @ \$9¼ per lb.....	5,323.87
" 4 Cases Foolscap Paper, H. (W) C, 50 reams each—200 reams, @ \$72.....	14,400.00
" 1 Case Yellow Envelopes (H F) No. 46, 100 M Envelopes, @ \$40.....	4,000.00
" 3 Cases Steel Pens, H. (W) C, No. 405-507, 500 gross each—1,500 gross, @ \$8.50.....	12,750.00
" 6 Gross, in case, 18 Handles, @ \$35.....	630.00
" 40 Doz. Spades (W) @ \$180 per doz.....	7,200.00
Total.....	\$78,940.37

The National Guardsman of these days has more dangers to face, more foes to encounter, than he is usually given credit for. He often finds himself beset by his employer in the most menacing way. The employer has it in his power to threaten the soldier with discharge from his bread-winning position if he goes about his military duty, and the family of the employe cuts an important figure in a case like this.

Except in cases of national trouble the guardsman's first duty is to his family, and this divided allegiance is not always a good thing for the efficiency of the National Guard.

A veteran and high-ranking member of the guard was talking of this very phase of the matter the other day. It was in view of the service at Buffalo and the reported consequent discharge of men from their business positions.

"I have known many such cases," said he, with regret. "I remember once, while I was Colonel of the —th Regiment, the day for annual muster and inspection was approaching. It was the ambition of every Captain to turn out the whole strength of his company for the ceremony. One of the Captains came to me privately, and said:

"Colonel, I am sure of having every man but one of my company out for the muster. That man says he will lose his place if he comes. You pass his place of employ every day, and if you would speak to his employer, I think the man would be allowed to come."

"Of course I said I would, and I called at the place and told the proprietor what was wanted. He said: 'Certainly, the man may go.'

"My first thought was that the man had been lying to his Captain to avoid attendance. I thanked the proprietor, and he repeated: 'Of course the man can go for military duty on that day; and if that is not enough, he may go the next day, and the next.'

"I said: 'You mean you will put some one in his place temporarily?'

"No," said he. "I will put another man in permanently."

"Naturally, that man did not attend the muster."

"The worst of this is that there appears no good remedy. If a law should be passed making it a misdemeanor for an employer to interfere in such a way with military duty, then members of the National Guard would not be able to find employment. They would be debarred, simply on account of their patriotism, which is a virtue we are taught to reverence in others and cultivate in ourselves.

"All are not like that. I know of a firm which had an important man in its employ, a member of the Guard. He was summoned out on duty. One member of the firm said to the other: 'What are we going to do? Shall we let him go?'

"We will," was the reply. "He is needed, and he shall go. If he refuses to, discharge him. I will do his duties myself until he returns."

"I myself saw a mother come to the armory one day during the Buffalo trouble. She had just heard that the regiment was ordered out. Her son was a member of the regiment.

"Is it true, Colonel?" said she.

"Yes, Madam," said he.

"Then I must telegraph Charlie at once," she replied. "He is out of the city on his vacation, and he wouldn't miss this for anything, I know. And I am sure I wouldn't have him," she added.

"That is the kind of spirit that makes the guards efficient. But not all people can be so unselfish. Some must think of the dollars employers are earning for them. There is every chance in the world that some day they may have to call upon the National Guard for help and protection. Will they remember then their acts of the present? I hope so, and that they may be properly ashamed at the recollection. But it will make no difference to the National Guard; that will do its duty in any case."

Judge Patterson of the Supreme Court yesterday handed down his opinion in the case of Olive Kent Turner, who recently began suit to establish her marriage with Maurice S. Wormsær. Judge Patterson denies the motion of the plaintiff for alimony and counsel fees. The text of the opinion is as follows:

"Before an application of this character can be granted it must be proved to the satisfaction of the court that the relation of husband and wife exists between the parties to the action. It is not pretended here that a ceremonial marriage ever took place between the parties, but the plaintiff asserts that they agreed to become man and wife, and that her cohabitation with the defendant was consequent upon such agreement.

"This is explicitly denied by the defendant. There is nothing to support the plaintiff's claim but her own affidavit and those of certain other persons, whose testimony is to the effect that the defendant publicly recognized and introduced the plaintiff to them as his wife.

"Opposed to this is an overwhelming mass of testimony that the plaintiff was known to certain affidants as the mistress of defendant; that she acknowledged to some of them that such was her relation to him since the time at which she says the marriage was contracted. Again the defendant swears that his acquaintance with the plaintiff began in a house of ill fame, and he has produced the affidavit of the man who then lived there to the plaintiff; and, further than that, he also presents the affidavit of the person who moved the personal effects of the plaintiff from the house of ill fame to the Park Avenue apartments.

"It is also shown that the plaintiff had been an inmate of another house of ill fame. In addition to all this, there is the letter of the plaintiff herself, utterly at variance with the idea that she was the lawful wife of the defendant, and her release, executed for the sum of \$700. Her alleged reason for signing these papers is altogether insufficient, and there is such a strong and convincing preponderance of testimony against her that the motion must be denied. Further comment on the facts at this time is unnecessary."

The members of the Plasterers' Association are going to hold a meeting in Brevoort Hall, in East Fifty-fourth Street, Tuesday night, to protest because non-union men are at work on the new Harlem Court House. They also propose to lay their grievances before the Board of Aldermen. The plastering on the building is being done by H. Sinclair & Sons, and the union men claim that they are employing Italians who do not belong to the union, and that instead of using paper-maché moldings, as required by the specifications, they are using plaster.

Deputy Commissioner of Public Works Holahan was of the opinion that the trouble on the building was a race trouble, and it was said at the Bureau of Repairs and Supplies, which inspects the work, that if the work was not done according to specifications it would have to be done over again.