

Grace Casey
6/8/2019
AP US History
Mr. Flanagan

Of Iron Men and Wooden Ships: Remembering One of the Last in an Era of Greatness



Fig 1: Sole Surviving Portrait of Captain Clifton Henry Havener

The nineteenth century encompassed not only the large scale development and the founding of modern U.S., but it is remembered for the War of 1812 and the Civil War, for the expedition of Lewis and Clark, for the invention of the typewriter, dynamite and the lightbulb. Among such notable developments in human history, the finer minutia of the century is too often overlooked or skipped over, a tragic folly. For in this century, a man of unparalleled vigor and valor existed and furthered the reputation and career of naval merchants and sailors. Captain Clifton Henry Havener was born into a robust seafaring community in the northern reaches of Maine, Searsport. Here he joined the family profession of seafaring and went on to conduct a extravagant and extensive international naval career. Havener represented one of the last great men of his times. He was uniquely positioned to fully experience the mastery of wooden ships, but he was also alive to see and experience the birth and rapid growth of steamboats and other mechanized naval vessels. The rise of naval power during this period is largely overshadowed by the American Civil War where ocean superiority, iron boats, and naval shipping lines were central to the conflict. However, during this time period Havener traveled around the globe to Australia, China, the Philippine Islands, Cuba, and the West Indies² transporting various goods including molasses, flour, and fish.³ Furthermore, he exemplified and experienced many of the legitimate dangers of seafaring, and his history gives an unromanticized and unbutchered glimpse into naval operations and development during the late 19th century as well as the practices of naval chivalry and honor.

Clifton Henry Havener was Born to Isaac Winkenpaugh Havener and Mary Ann Young Havener on January 22, 1823, in Searsport Maine as one of eleven children⁴. His father, Isaac W., was an avid seafarer and during his lifetime commanded seven vessels including the

*Rambler, Rosa Bella, and Maine.*⁵ With such a strong family heritage, it comes as no surprise that Clifton Havener first went to sea in 1845 at the mere age of thirteen. Havener's career as a sea captain was largely due to his father's success as a naval captain and his pressure for his children to follow in his footsteps. In fact, Clifton's brothers Isaac Jr. and Ludwig L. also went on to become sea captains.



Fig 2: Isaac W. Havener Sr.

Fig 3: Isaac W. Havener Jr.

Fig 4: Ludwig L. Havener

Sometime during his early life, Clifton Havener joined the Masonic society, a decision that would have profound repercussions during his experience in the Civil War. Over the course of his life, Havener married Jane Blethen and together they had five children. Tragically, only two survived beyond childhood: Ludwig C. Havener and Mahlon E. Havener. Disease was still uncontrollable, and childbirth was often deadly to both mothers and children. Clifton Havener came from a line of sea captains, and he took up this familial mantle, deeply integrating the Havener family into the national and international trading business.

The first ship Havener ever Captained was a small Schooner, *Rainbow*, built by his

[illegible]

9

**A PRIVATEER CAPTURING FOUR VESSELS OFF
NANTUCKET SHOALS.**

[From the Providence Journal, July 13th.]

No little excitement was produced yesterday morning by our dispatch from Newport, announcing that a privateer had just been capturing vessels in Northern waters. The Newport News of yesterday afternoon contains the following report:

Brig Mary E. Thompson of Searsport, Capt. Havener, from Bangor for Antigua, with a cargo of lumber, arrived at this port about 8 o'clock this morning. Capt. Hyaener has furnished our reporter with the following interesting and important intelligence:

Tuesday, 9th inst., lat. 29 deg 16 min., lon. 67 deg. 40 min. (about 200 miles SE from Newport,) was brought to by a privateer, which came alongside. They boarded him and commenced ransacking the vessel, taking from her everything that suited their fancy, such as her only boat, oars, spare rigging, &c., and after putting on board four prisoners previously taken from other vessels, released her, they having no use for the vessel or cargo, and would not burn her, for reasons which will hereafter be stated. The privateer was alongside of the Mary E. Thompson about three hours.

THEIR MANNER OF PROCEEDING.

Capt. Havener says that the manner of proceeding of the pirates in making prizes, is to inveigle them into their meshes by hoisting false colors. They first hoist a French or Dutch flag, and evince a desire to communicate. If this fails to attract, they next display a signal of distress, and when sufficiently near, "show their teeth" and take possession.

WHY THEY RELEASED THE PRIZES.

Capt. Havener learned from one of the crew of the Argo, who said he was pressed into the service, that on leaving port they had orders to burn and destroy such vessels as it would not be an object to retain, and such were the ship and brig released as above mentioned. The reason why this was not carried out in these instances was, that with their own crew weakened in manning prizes previously taken, it was feared that the accumulation of prisoners would endanger their own capture by them and that of the vessel. The release of the vessel was the cause of much dissatisfaction among the pirate crew.

The Mary Goodell would not answer their purpose, for the reason that she was too heavy draught of water to take into a Southern port, and the cargo of the Mary E. Thompson they had no use for.

10

The newspapers reported that "Tuesday, 9th ... [the *Mary E. Thompson*] was brought to by a privateer which came alongside. They boarded him and commenced ransacking the vessel."¹¹

The newspapers then went on to report that surprisingly only "oars, spare rigging, &c"¹² were taken from the boat before giving them four prisoners and leaving the ship unharmed despite orders to "burn and destroy such vessel as it would not [unintelligible] object to retain"¹³ The newspapers claim this was due to the "crew weakness in manning prizes previously taken"¹⁴ A report made by the Commandant of Midshipmen C.R.P. Rodgers at the Naval Academy to the Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Gideon Welles echoed the newspaper reports stating "The brig Mary E. Thompson of Searsport Maine, Captain Havener ... was seized."¹⁵

SIR: I have the honor to report for the information of the Navy Department that the brig *Mary E. Thompson*, of Searsport, arrived at

ATLANTIC BLOCKADING SQUADRON.

The *Jefferson Davis* was a full-rigged brig, with black mastheads and yards and a black hull. She was very rusty, and her pivot gun was visible above the rail.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
C. E. F. ROBERTS,
Commandant of Midshipmen.

Hon. GIDEON WELLES,
Secretary of the Navy, Washington, D. C.

However, in personal documents Havener later explained that when the lieutenant from the Confederate ship was sent aboard to overhaul the *Mary E. Thompson*, he “came across books of the Masonic Order; grips and passwords were exchanged, and finding that Captain Havener was a fine Mason, the lieutenant withdrew his men and permitted the prize to go free.”¹⁷ Havener's involvement in the Masonic order and his high morality convinced the opposing captain to immediately release the *Mary E. Thompson* and take no prisoners. Such acts of honor and chivalry were becoming rarer as warfare became more brutal, but this encounter represents a

unique moment when ancient strains of honorable battle still rang true in actual conflict.

Captain Havener experienced other minor challenges during his voyages. For example, an Australian newspaper states that Havener dealt with the deserters Daniel Gregory, William Palmross, Benjamin Thompson, and Francis Thompson¹⁸.

DANIEL GREGORY, William Palmross, Benjamin Thompson, and Francis Thompson are charged, on warrant, with deserting the American barque *Hayden Brown*, on the 13th instant. Description:—1st, American, 23 years of age, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high, thin build, dark complexion, hair, and moustache; 2nd, Russian, 20 years of age, 5 feet 6 inches high, stout build, light complexion and hair, clean-shaved; 3rd, English, 32 years of age, 5 feet 4 inches high, slight build, pale complexion, fair hair, clean-shaved; 4th, American, 30 years of age, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high, thin build, fair complexion, and small fair moustache. Clifton H. Havener offers £1 for each arrest.—O.6633. 21st November 1876.

19

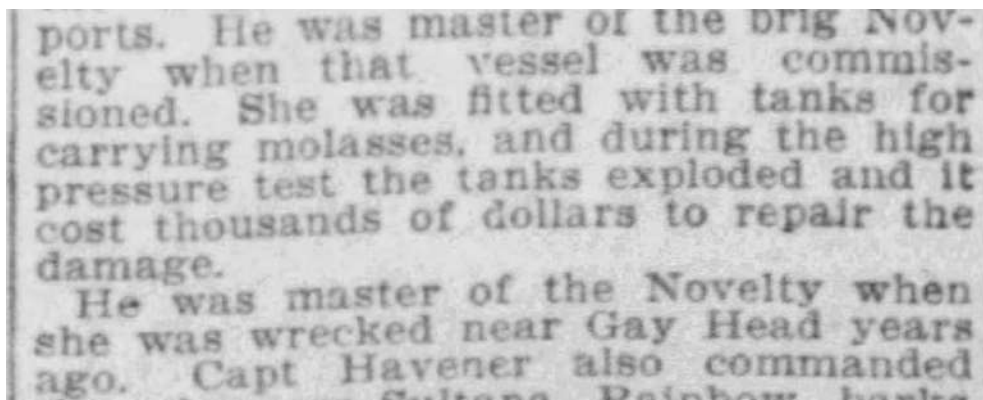
Furthermore, in 1874 when the *Mary E. Thompson* was hit by a hurricane on September 2nd, this article in the Boston Globe appeared.

was loading on the 13th inst with old iron for Boston.
Brig Mary E Thompson, Hooper, from Boston for Surinam, which sailed from St Thomas August 22d, returned to the latter port Sept 10, leaking badly, having encountered a hurricane on the 2d, and lost everything but mainmast and nearly all her sails. The vessel is very badly strained, and the cargo of flour and fish is damaged by sea water.
The American barque Europa, 550 tons, Capt Chasell

20

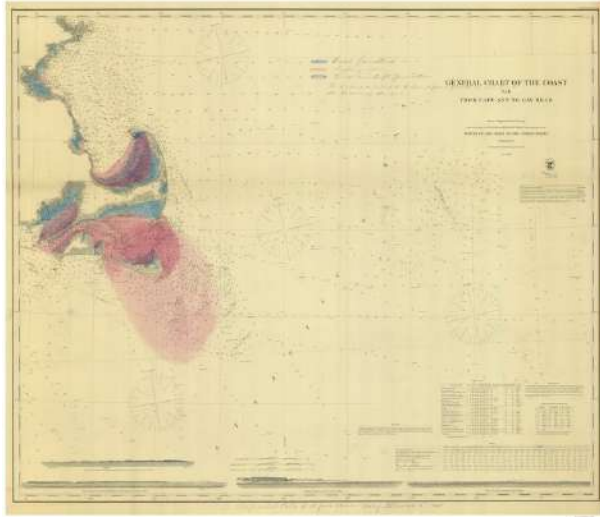
His voyages were not pristine and perfect as often depicted in romanticized modern renditions of naval business. He was a steadfast sailor who endured such hardships without abandoning the treacherous career.

Havener's second truly great sea escapade dealt with his prize ship, the *Novelty*. She was custom built and outfitted with "7 huge iron tanks made to be filled with molasses."²¹ From 1869 to 1873 Havener completed many international voyages to Cuba and the Bahamas to take part in the lucrative sugar trade. However, this unique ship came with a unique set of difficulties. In his obituary, the writer says that "During the high pressure test the tanks exploded and it cost thousands of dollars to repair the damage."²²



23

After only four years of operation, In 1873, the *Novelty* "sprung a leak and went down on while a trip to Cuba."²⁴ The *Novelty* was wrecked near Gay Head, a particularly treacherous region off the coast of Massachusetts. Luckily, the entire crew and Havener escaped the wreckage. The *Novelty* was the only ship Havener ever lost. The *Novelty* showcases Havener's adaptability. The inclusion of new technology into his way of life perfectly illustrates his willingness to continually progress and change with the times.



25

Over the course of his naval career from 1845 to 1890, an astounding forty-five years, Captain Havener commanded seven documented vessels: the schooners *Sultana* and *Rainbow*, the barks *Benjamin Concord*, *Orchilla*, and *Hayden Brown*, and the brigs *Mary E. Thompson* and *Novelty*. When he retired in 1890 at the age of 58, he and his wife moved to Worcester, Massachusetts, and his son Ludwig C. took up the mantle and became a sea captain. Havener died on November 12, 1906, in his home in Worcester. In his will, he left everything to his wife.

288
289

Allen Hagan, Catherine Hagan and Edward Hagan:

My home and lot of land connected therewith at No 24 Cedar Street known as the Shattoucks place I give and devise to my daughter Mary Lynch but subject to the condition nevertheless that out of said property there be paid to my grandson William Tranque the sum of one hundred dollars and to my grandson Sam Tranque also the sum of one hundred dollars.

4 I nominate my wife Margaret Hagan to be executrix of this my last will and I request that she be exempted from giving a surety on execution on her official bond on such executrix

In testimony whereof I hereunto set my hand and in the presence of three witnesses declare this to be my last will this seventh day of October in the year one thousand nine hundred

WILLIAM T. HANCOCK

On this seventh day of October A. D. 1906 William Hagan of Westborough Massachusetts, signed the foregoing instrument in our presence, declaring it to be his last will and he witnesses thereof we three do now, at his request, in his presence, and in the presence of each other, hereby subscribe our names:

John W. Hartney
Michael J. Ray
Thomas W. Humphrey

Will allowed Nov. 21, 1906
A true record, attest:

Clifton H. Havener

Case 18861

I, Clifton H. Havener of Worcester Massachusetts do make and declare this my last will and testament, all my just debts must be paid.

All the rest and residue of my estate after the payment of debts, I give and bequeath to my beloved wife Jane E. Havener.

I hereby nominate my wife, Jane E. Havener as executrix of this my will, as I do not intend to leave any debts unpaid at my decease. I request that my said executrix shall be exempt from giving any sureties or securities on her bond as my executrix and that she may not be required to file any schedule of property in the Probate Court.

I give all my estate to my said wife that she may be able to maintain a home for herself, and one where she can receive all my dear children as we have been accustomed to do, during our joint lives. I am confident she will manage with good discretion and fidelity what is committed to her and that when she shall no longer need the property it will be equally divided between my two sons viz: Edward and William E. Havener or their representatives

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand, and in the presence of three witnesses declare this to be my last will, this 20th day of April A.D. 1906

Clifton H. Havener

On this 20th day of April A.D. 1906, Clifton H. Havener of Worcester Massachusetts, signed the foregoing instrument in our presence declaring it to be his last will, and as witnesses thereof we three do now at his request and in his presence hereby subscribe our names.

D.E. Vile
Emma A. Vile
E. Gertrude Smith

Test:

I nominate my wife as sole executrix because there will be very little to do in the settlement of the estate and whatever advice and assistance she may need she will have and she will be entirely competent and I have no doubt will be quite willing to render it. I hope as long as she remains single she will continue to make it her home with her mother

J. H. Havener

Allowed Nov. 21, 1906
A true record, attest:

Clifton H. Havener

Register.

26

ALL NAMES TO BE IN FULL
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
91

RETURN OF A DEATH

WORCESTER
(CITY OR TOWN)

FULL NAME Clifton H. Havener

Place of Death Worcester, 46 William Street.

Residence Worcester

Age 74 years 9 months 21 days

STATISTICAL DETAILS		
SEX <u>Male</u>	COLOR	SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED <u>Married</u>
MAIDEN NAME <u>Mary A. Young</u>		
HUSBAND'S NAME <u>Son, L.C. Havener</u>		
BIRTHPLACE <u>Searsport, Me.</u>		
NAME OF FATHER <u>Isaac W.</u>		
BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER <u>Searsport, Me.</u>		
NAME OF MOTHER <u>Mary A. Young</u>		
BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER <u>Searsport, Me.</u>		
OCCUPATION <u>Retired</u>		
INFORMANT <u>Son, L.C. Havener</u>		
PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL <u>Searsport, Me.</u>	DATE OF BURIAL <u>Nov. 16, 1906</u>	
UNDERSTANDER <u>Geo. Sessions and Sons</u>	ADDRESS <u>Worcester</u>	

REGISTERED NO. 2144

DATE OF DEATH November 12, 1906

PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I attended deceased during last illness, from 1906 to 1906, that to the best of my knowledge and belief death occurred on the date stated above, and that the CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:

Primary: Apoplexy.

Contributory: Apoplexy.

(Signed) R. W. Swan M.D.

Nov. 14, 1906 (Address) Worcester

SPECIAL INFORMATION only for Hospital, Institution, Transient, or Recent Residents.

How long ill years months days

Place of Death? years months days

Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death?

Filed Nov. 19, 1906 6. H. J. [Signature] City Clerk

* City or town, street and number, if any. If death occurs away from USUAL RESIDENCE, give both called for under "Special Information." If in a Hospital or Institution, give its NAME instead of street and number.

† In case of married or divorced women, or widows.

‡ Date of burial; also city, town or county, if known.

§ Name and address of person giving statistical details.

|| Name of undertaker.

27

Captain Havener was one of the greatest honorable sea captains. He prevented the ransacking and burning of the *Mary E. Thompson*, ensured the survival of his entire crew during the sinking of the *Novelty*, and represented general chivalry in all interactions. In his obituary, the writer remembered Havener saying, “He was well known among the older generation of shipping people”²⁸ Havener lead an adventurous life, one that is best remembered for its international voyages, strong family life, and numerous acts of naval mastery and bravery.

Endnotes

1. "Captain Clifton Henry Havener." Captain Clifton Henry Havener | Penobscot Bay History Online. 2012. Accessed June 10, 2019.
<http://penobscotmarinemuseum.org/pbho-1/collection/captain-clifton-henry-havener>.
2. Black, Colonel Frederick Frasier. *Searsport Sea Captains*. Vol. 478. 500 vols. Japan: Penobscot Maritime Museum, 1960. Pg. 118
3. "Memoranda." *The Boston Globe* (Boston), September 22, 1874. Accessed June 10, 2019. <https://basic.newspapers.com/image/428235291/?terms=Brig Mary E. Thompson>.
4. Black, Colonel Frederick Frasier. *Searsport Sea Captains*. Vol. 478. 500 vols. Japan: Penobscot Maritime Museum, 1960. Pg. 118
5. Ibid
6. Tyler II, Kenneth Dean. "Isaac Winkenpaugh Havener (1804-1883) - Find A..." Find A Grave. December 3, 2010. Accessed June 10, 2019.
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/62472641/isaac-winkenpaugh-havener> .
7. Black, Colonel Frederick Frasier. *Searsport Sea Captains*. Vol. 478. 500 vols. Japan: Penobscot Maritime Museum, 1960. Pg. 119
8. Tyler II, Kenneth Dean. "Ludwig L. Havener (1830-1860) - Find A Grave..." Find A Grave. December 20, 2010. Accessed June 10, 2019.
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/63094127/ludwig-l-havener> .
9. Ancestry. "U.S., Civil War Draft Registrations Records, 1863-1865 for Clifton Havener." Ancestry. Accessed June 10, 2019.
10. "A Privateer Capturing Four Vessels off Nantucket Shoals." *Chicago Tribue* (Chicago), July 18, 1861. Accessed June 10, 2019.
<https://basic.newspapers.com/image/466161819/?terms=Mary E. Thompson>.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1897, Robert H. Woods, and Lieutenant Commander Richard Rush. *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*. Vol. 5. Series 1. Honorable H . A. Herbert, Secretary of the Navy.
16. Ibid.
17. Black, Colonel Frederick Frasier. *Searsport Sea Captains*. Vol. 478. 500 vols. Japan: Penobscot Maritime Museum, 1960.
18. "Newspapers; Clifton Henry Havener." Ancestry. Accessed June 10, 2019.
19. Ibid
20. "Memoranda." *The Boston Globe* (Boston), September 22, 1874. Accessed June 10, 2019. <https://basic.newspapers.com/image/428235291/?terms=Brig Mary E. Thompson>.
21. Black, Colonel Frederick Frasier. *Searsport Sea Captains*. Vol. 478. 500 vols. Japan: Penobscot Maritime Museum, 1960.

22. "Waterfront News." *The Boston Globe* (Boston), November 19, 1906. Accessed June 10, 2019. [https://basic.newspapers.com/image/430721290/?terms=Clifton Havener](https://basic.newspapers.com/image/430721290/?terms=Clifton%20Havener).
23. Ibid.
24. Black, Colonel Frederick Frasier. *Searsport Sea Captains*. Vol. 478. 500 vols. Japan: Penobscot Maritime Museum, 1960.
25. Ape Ann to Gay Head -1873 Nautical Map Massachusetts Reprint 1:400,000 Chart 7. Etsy.
26. Ancestry.com. *Massachusetts, Wills and Probate Records, 1635-1991* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2015.
27. Ancestry. "Massachusetts, Death Records, 1841-1915 for Clifton H Havener." Ancestry. Accessed June 10, 2019.
28. "Memoranda." *The Boston Globe* (Boston), September 22, 1874. Accessed June 10, 2019. [https://basic.newspapers.com/image/428235291/?terms=Brig Mary E. Thompson](https://basic.newspapers.com/image/428235291/?terms=Brig%20Mary%20E.%20Thompson).

Bibliography

"A Privateer Capturing Four Vessels off Nantucket Shoals." *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago), July 18,

1861. Accessed June 10, 2019.

<https://basic.newspapers.com/image/466161819/?terms=Mary E. Thompson>.

Ancestry. "Massachusetts, Death Records, 1841-1915 for Clifton H Havener." Ancestry.

Accessed June 10, 2019.

Ancestry.com. *Massachusetts, Wills and Probate Records, 1635-1991* [database on-line]. Provo, UT,

USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2015.

Ancestry. "U.S., Civil War Draft Registrations Records, 1863-1865 for Clifton Havener."

Ancestry. Accessed June 10, 2019.

Ape Ann to Gay Head -1873 Nautical Map Massachusetts Reprint 1:400,000 Chart 7. Etsy.

Black, Colonel Frederick Frasier. *Searsport Sea Captains*. Vol. 478. 500 vols. Japan: Penobscot Maritime Museum, 1960.

"Captain Clifton Henry Havener." Captain Clifton Henry Havener | Penobscot Bay History Online. 2012. Accessed June 10, 2019.

<http://penobscotmarinemuseum.org/pbho-1/collection/captain-clifton-henry-havener>.

Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild. "Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild." ISTG Vol 15 - Brig Mary E. Thompson. August 30, 2014. Accessed June 10, 2019.

<https://www.immigrantships.net/v15/1800v15/maryethompson18620626.html>.

"Memoranda." *The Boston Globe* (Boston), September 22, 1874. Accessed June 10, 2019.

<https://basic.newspapers.com/image/428235291/?terms=Brig Mary E. Thompson>.

"Newspapers; Clifton Henry Havener." Ancestry. Accessed June 10, 2019.

Potential for Building a Wooden Schooner. January 19, 2017. Wooden Boat Forum.

"The Depredations of the Jeff. Davis." *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Philadelphia), July 16, 1861.

Accessed June 10, 2019. <https://basic.newspapers.com/image/167432921/?terms=Brig>

Mary E. Thompson.

Three-masted Barque (US Revenue Cutter Salmon P. Chase, 1878–1907). May 20, 2019.

Barque,

Wikipedia.org.

Toppan, Andrew. *Bonhomme Richard*. US Warships from the Revolution to 1941 Sailing Warships, USNSM.

Tyler II, Kenneth Dean. "Isaac Winkenpaugh Havener (1804-1883) - Find A..." Find A Grave. December 3, 2010. Accessed June 10, 2019.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/62472641/isaac-winkenpaugh-havener> .

Tyler II, Kenneth Dean. "Ludwig L. Havener (1830-1860) - Find A Grave..." Find A Grave. December 20, 2010. Accessed June 10, 2019.

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/63094127/ludwig-l_-havener.

U.S. Government Printing Office, 1897, Robert H. Woods, and Lieutenant Commander Richard Rush. *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*. Vol. 5. Series 1. Honorable H . A. Herbert, Secretary of the Navy.

"Waterfront News." *The Boston Globe* (Boston), November 19, 1906. Accessed June 10, 2019.

[https://basic.newspapers.com/image/430721290/?terms=Clifton Havener](https://basic.newspapers.com/image/430721290/?terms=Clifton%20Havener).

"Work Done by the Confederate Navy." *Wilmington Journal* (Wilmington, North Carolina), May

28, 1863. Accessed June 10, 2019.

[https://basic.newspapers.com/image/55333164/?terms=Brig Mary E. Thompson](https://basic.newspapers.com/image/55333164/?terms=Brig%20Mary%20E.%20Thompson).