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14. ABSTRACT This thesis compares and contrasts the Union and Confederate Marine Corps from 1861-1865. The primary focus of the paper is on the organization, equipment, and employment of both forces. An assessment of the Union and Confederate Marine Corps is provided based on the information available and author's analysis.												
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Comparison of the Organization, Capabilities, and Employment of the Union
and Confederate Marine Corps

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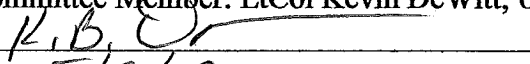
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Executive Summary

Title:

Dividitur Sed Fidelis:

Comparison of the Organization, Equipment, Capabilities, and Employment of the Union and Confederate Marine Corps

Author:

Major Kevin P. Newport, USMC

Thesis: This paper will first compare the Marine organizations of both the Federal and Confederate Marine Corps. Additionally, it will discuss how both Federal and Confederate military leadership would struggle as to how to properly employ their respective service while facing equipment and recruitment challenges. Lastly, this paper will formulate, assess, and discuss Measures of Performance and Measures of Effectiveness for each service.

Discussion: The Union and Confederate Marine Corps faced similar challenges throughout the conduct of the United States Civil War. This thesis will explore those challenges through three lenses: organization; equipment and capabilities; and employment. Neither military force would be considered wholly successful in accomplishing all of its assigned tasks and missions. However, both militaries served, according to their own beliefs and loyalties, in a manner indicative of Marines. The Marine missions of both sides changed and morphed throughout time, some out of necessity, others out of opportunity. This thesis is meant to enlighten an oft overlooked force of both militaries of the North and South.

Conclusion: Both services faced significant challenges in organization/recruitment, equipping/logistics, and employment throughout the war. Throughout the conflict, one common trend prevailed, faithfulness in duty. Both the CSA and Federal Marine Corps had to be creative in their recruitment efforts, often getting less than ideal candidates for service. Despite that, these men repeatedly accomplished difficult missions on both land and sea. *Dividitur Sed Fidelis*, “Divided but Faithful.” These brave men chose what side to fight on based on their own ideals, loyalties, and ambitions. However, they had more in common than they did apart, embodying ideals that the United States Marine Corps carries forward to this day.

DISCLAIMER

THE OPINIONS AND CONCLUSIONS EXPRESSED HEREIN ARE THOSE OF THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT AUTHOR AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF EITHER THE MARINE CORPS COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE OR ANY OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY. REFERENCES TO THIS STUDY SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOREGOING STATEMENT.

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List of Figures

Figure 1: Drewry's Bluff	7
Figure 2: Diagram of Drewry's Bluff	7
Figure 3: Union and Confederate Small Arms.....	9
Figure 4: CSS Virginia.....	10
Figure 5: Capital Area Defenses Occupied by Marines, 1861.....	12
Figure 6: Second Attack (USMC) on Fort Fisher, 1864	18

List of Tables

Table 1: U.S. Marine Corps Pre-Civil War Table of Organization	2
Table 2: Officers Who Resigned their Commission	5
Table 3: Company A Quartermaster Issue July 8, 1861	8
Table 4: Issue Receipt Signed by Captain T.S. Wilson Mobile, Alabama, September 20, 1865 ...	9
Table 5: Marine Corps Organization After Congressional Act, 1861	13
Table 6: Size of Marine Detachments Aboard Warships, 1861.....	14
Table 7: Location and Organization of Marine Barracks, 1862	16

Table of Contents

	Page
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
DISCLAIMER	ii
LIST OF FIGURES	iii
LIST OF TABLES	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
PREFACE	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
INTRODUCTION	1
THE CONFEDERATE STATES MARINE CORPS.....	3
Formation and Organization	3
Confederate Marines Equipment and Capabilities	8
Employment of the Confederate States Marine Corps	10
THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS	12
Post-Secession Organization.....	12
United States Marines Equipment and Capabilities.....	15
Employment of the United States Marine Corps	16
ASSESSMENTS.....	21
CSMC Assessment	21
USMC Assessment	23
CONCLUSION.....	25
CITATIONS AND ENDNOTES.....	27
BIBLIOGRAPHY	30

Preface

Throughout my childhood growing up in the Commonwealth of Virginia there were multiple Civil War battlefields within 30 miles of any direction. My father spent time taking myself and my siblings to see many of these hallowed grounds, instilling a sense of appreciation for the stories and sacrifices of the men who fought there. Throughout my time serving in the Marine Corps I have had multiple opportunities to visit Civil War battlefields as part of Professional Military Education and unit Staff Rides. While enlightening, there is very little, if any discussion of the contributions of either the Federal or Confederate Marine Corps. Given that these organizations have impacted the history and missions of today's United States Marine Corps, I always found it odd that there was not more discussion in this arena. Because of the limited published information available regarding the Federal and Confederate Marine Corps, I wanted to use this opportunity, through my master's thesis, to explore and research our forefathers on both sides of the Mason-Dixon.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, thank you to my mentor throughout this journey, Dr. Christopher Stowe, PhD. His advice, feedback, and most of all patience, were invaluable. I would like to thank LtCol Kevin DeWitt, USMC for serving as my second reader, and for his careful recommendations ensuring the spirit of the thesis was getting through to the reader. Additionally, I would like to thank Dr. Bill Gordon, PhD for reinvigorating my love for military history, as well as Dr. Jorge Benitez and LTCOL Paul Armstrong, USA for their tutelage in improving my skills as a writer throughout the academic year. Thank you to LtCol Lance Langfeldt, USMC, my former battalion commander and mentor for his encouragement and support of my topic. Lastly, I would like to thank my father, Gary Newport, for instilling in me a wonder and appreciation for history throughout my formative years, and to my fiancé Maj Serena Tyson, USMC for her support, patience, and critical eye in helping me throughout my research and writing of my thesis.

INTRODUCTION

On October 16, 1859, abolitionist John Brown led a small raiding party consisting of family and fellow radicals to the United States Arsenal in Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia).¹ It was Brown's hope that through stealing the weapons located within the arsenal, he would be able to arm groups of slaves and create an army to fight against the tyranny of human bondage.² A hastily assembled detachment of United States Marines, led by First Lieutenant Israel Green and commanded by Army Colonel Robert E. Lee were dispatched from Washington, D.C., via train put down the insurrection.³ Brown and his raiding party were captured with minimal casualties, and Brown was later hanged for his actions. Notably, both Robert E. Lee and Israel Green would go on to resign their commissions and fight for the Confederate States of America.

It was this type of seemingly random employment that defined the Marine Corps' existence prior to the Civil War. Despite some early expeditionary and amphibious successes by the likes of Lieutenant Presley O'Bannon in Northern Africa, or by Marines during the Mexican-American War, Marines had been relegated to "policing" naval vessels or guarding naval bases.⁴ In fact, the Marines called upon to put down John Brown's insurrection were utilized because they were the closest, and only, federal non-militia forces available to do so.⁵ The Marine response at Harper's Ferry did highlight the adaptability of the Marine Corps, and would serve as foreshadowing of how Marines would be employed throughout the Civil War.

In November 1860, the United States Marine Corps (USMC) totaled just 1775 personnel with 63 officers as shown on the following page in Table 1.⁶ Essentially, by today's standards, the Marine Corps was an over-strength infantry regiment; simply put, the USMC was drastically undersized for the tasks it was assigned to

execute even prior to the Civil War beginning.⁷ The secession of southern states, beginning with South Carolina in January, 1861, and the formation

*Table 1: U.S. Marine Corps Pre-Civil War Table of Organization*⁸

Officers	63
Non-Commissioned Officers at Headquarters	4
1 st Sergeants	46
Sergeants	63
Corporals	139
Musicians	28
Drummers	39
Fifers	37
Boys learners of music	9
Privates	<u>1347</u>
Total	1775

of the Confederate States of America (CSA) would fracture this organization, dividing loyalties and placing the current-day Marine motto “Always Faithful” in a different light. In total, half of the captains, two-thirds of the first lieutenants, and half of the second lieutenants resigned to fight for the Confederacy.⁹ The United States Marine Corps (Union/Federal Marine Corps) was not adequately organized or equipped at the onset of the American Civil War. The Federal force would lose a significant number of officers to fight for the Confederacy, while both organizations would face significant manpower and materiel challenges throughout the conflict. *Dividitur Sed Fidelis*, “Divided but Faithful;” Marines of both sides had their personal ideals and loyalties that drove them to fight for the North or the South. This paper will first compare the Marine organizations of both the Federal and Confederate Marine Corps. Additionally, it will discuss how both Federal and Confederate military leadership would struggle as to how to properly employ their respective service while facing equipment and recruitment challenges. Lastly, this paper will formulate, assess, and discuss Measures of Performance and Measures of Effectiveness for each service.

THE CONFEDERATE STATES MARINE CORPS

FORMATION AND ORGANIZATION

The Confederate Congress passed a resolution on February 14, 1861, requesting “the Committee on Naval Affairs to procure... all such persons versed in naval affairs as they may deem it advisable to consult with,” to meet in the capital of the CSA, in Montgomery, Alabama.¹⁰ Interestingly, the *Articles of War* and *Navy Regulations of the Confederate States* were simply plagiarized from the United States documents, with the only difference being changing “United States” to “Confederate States.”¹¹ The actual provision to form a Confederate States Marine Corps was passed on March 16, 1861, as *An Act to Provide for the Organization of the Navy*. Article V of this Act is responsible for establishing the Marine Corps, and reads:

“There shall be a Corps of Marines to consist of: 1 Major, 1 Quartermaster, 1 Paymaster, 1 Adjutant, 6 Captains, 6 First Lieutenants, 6 Second Lieutenants, 1 Sergeant Major, 1 Quartermaster Sergeant, and 6 companies, each company to consist of 1 Captain, 1 First and 1 Second Lieutenant, 4 Sergeants, 4 Corporals, 100 men, and 2 musicians, and the pay and allowances of the officers and men of like grade in the infantry in the Army, except that the ration of enlisted Marines shall be the ration allowed by law to seamen.”¹²

This initial structure would later be expanded following the secession of 13 states and the need for more Marines to fulfill the designated missions.¹³

Confederate Marine Corps Regulations divided the missions of the Marines into two areas: Marines when in vessels and Marines in Navy Yards.¹⁴ Marines in vessels were assigned to ensure the good order and discipline amongst the crew, as well as to serve as a boarding party or repel an enemy boarding party.¹⁵ Conversely, Marines in Navy Yards served in primarily as sentries and in administrative roles.¹⁶ The expansion of the Table of Organization (T/O) would

include another Second Lieutenant to each company and that the companies “must be more frequently called upon to act in small detachments than the companies of any other arm of military service.”^{17,18} The companies deployed aboard Confederate naval vessels, at Navy Yards, as well as manned the coastal defenses, though there was an increased demand for Marine support by various commanders as the geographic expanse of the CSA increased.¹⁹

On May 20, 1861, legislation to enlarge the CSA Marine Corps was amended authorizing 46 officers and 944 enlisted men.²⁰ This new law called for a colonel, lieutenant colonel, a major, a quartermaster (major), an adjutant (major), a paymaster (major), a sergeant major, a quartermaster sergeant, and two musicians.²¹ Three days after the reorganization act was approved, the CSA Marine Corps appointed its Colonel Commandant, Lloyd J. Beall.²² Conversely, it took several years for the position of Sergeant Major to be filled, forcing the CSA to advertise for the position. The advertisement, which appeared in the *Mobile Advertiser and Register* read in part:

“Wanted ... ALSO – A thoroughly drilled, sober, and intelligent Man for the position of Sergeant Major of the Confederate States Marine Corps. Apply immediately at the MARINE BARRACKS, on Commerce street, below Church.”²³

The position was applied for and given to Edwin Wallace, having had experience as a British Royal Marine, and on February 1, 1864, Pvt. Wallace was promoted to Sergeant Major of the Confederate States Marine Corps.²⁴ Wallace’s tenure as Sergeant Major of the CSA Marine Corps would be short-lived however. Due to an apparent disagreement with the terms of his enlistment, Wallace was reduced in rank on July 25, 1864, and subsequently deserted on July 30, 1864.²⁵ Despite the law expanding the size of the CSA Marine Corps, and recruitment efforts throughout the south, the Corps never met the original quota of Marines within the Corps.²⁶

In total, 28 of the 63 officers of the United States Marine Corps resigned or were dismissed at the onset of the Civil War. The names of the officers and their respective states are listed in

*Table 2.*²⁷ Of these, 19 joined the CSA Marine Corps.²⁸

*Table 2: Officers Who Resigned their Commission*²⁹

1. Major Henry B. Tyler (Virginia)
2. Brevet Major George H. Terrett (Virginia)
3. Captain Jabez C. Rich (Maine)
4. Captain Algernon S. Taylor (Virginia)
5. Captain Robert Tansill (Virginia)
6. Captain John D. Simms (Virginia)
7. First Lieutenant Israel Green (New York)
8. First Lieutenant J.R.H. Tatnall (Connecticut)
9. First Lieutenant Adam N. Baker (Pennsylvania)
10. First Lieutenant Charles A. Henderson (Washington, D.C.)
11. First Lieutenant Henry B. Tyler, Jr. (Washington, D.C.)
12. First Lieutenant Julius E. Meiere (Connecticut)
13. First Lieutenant George P. Turner (Virginia)
14. First Lieutenant Thomas S. Wilson (Tennessee)
15. First Lieutenant Alexander W. Stark (Virginia)
16. First Lieutenant Jacob Read (Georgia)
17. First Lieutenant Andrew J. Hays (Alabama)
18. First Lieutenant George Holmes (Maine)
19. First Lieutenant S. H. Matthews (unknown)
20. First Lieutenant Robert Kidd (unknown)
21. Second Lieutenant George W. Cummins (unknown)
22. Second Lieutenant Calvin L. Sayers (Alabama)
23. Second Lieutenant Henry L. Ingraham (South Carolina)
24. Second Lieutenant Becket K. Howell (Mississippi)
25. Second Lieutenant J.M. Rathbone (New York)

An example as to what might have motivated such officers to resign their commission in the U.S. Marine Corps can be found in a letter from Captain Robert Tansill, who offered his resignation in a letter to the Secretary of the Navy while aboard the frigate U.S.S. *Congress* on May 17, 1861:

Sir:

I have read the inaugural address of President Lincoln, and it to me that, if the policy therein announced is carried out, civil war must ensue.

In entering public service I took an oath to support the Constitution, which necessarily gives me a right to interpret it. Our institutions, according to my

understanding, are founded upon the principle and right of self-government.

The States, in forming the Confederacy, did not relinquish that right and I believe each state has a clear and unquestionable right to secede whenever the people thereof prefer, and the Federal Government has no right or moral authority to use physical force to keep them in the Union.

Entertaining these views, I cannot conscientiously join in a war against any of the States which have already seceded, or may hereafter secede, either North or South, for the purpose of coercing them back into the Union. Such a war, in my opinion, would not only certainly and permanently destroy the Confederacy, but if successful establish an unlimited depotism on the ruins of our liberty. No personal consideration or advantage however great can induce me to aid in a cause which my heart tells me is wrong, and I prefer to endure the most terrible hardships rather than to prosper in the destruction of the freedom of my country, and believing, Sir, that it should be disingenuous in me to retain my commission until the Government might require my services in such a contest, and then my decline to serve, I consider it prudent and just to now tender my resignation as a Captain in the United States Marine Corps.

I am, Sir, respectfully,

Your obedient servant,
Robert Tansill
Captain, U.S. Marine Corps³⁰

Despite his seemingly professional and reasonable rationale for tendering his resignation, Tansill's letter, having been sent while the *Congress* was off of the coast of South America, did not reach the United States Marine Corps until August 24, 1861.³¹ This led to him being arrested and imprisoned, without trial, in a federal penitentiary upon his arrival back to the United States.³² The senior-most officer to resign his commission from the United States Marine Corps was Major Henry Tyler. Tyler, who hailed from Virginia, continued to serve in the USMC until the coasts of his home state were blockaded, serving as the "final straw" in his decision to resign and join the CSA Marine Corps.³³

The headquarters of the CSA Marine Corps was located in Richmond, Virginia, at 115 Main Street. However, the predominance of the Marine forces around Richmond were posted at

Drewry's Bluff (Camp Beall), on the heights along the James River outside Richmond as shown on the following page in Figure 1.^{34,35}



*Figure 1: Drewry's Bluff*³⁶

Camp Beall would serve as a “camp of instruction,” training officers and men to accomplish their primary mission of guarding naval stations and serving aboard CSA naval vessels.³⁷

Drewry's Bluff was important not only due to its proximity to the CSA governmental capital in Richmond, but also because of its control of the James River.³⁸ As depicted in Figure 2, it was situated where it had a commanding view of the river following a predominant bend.

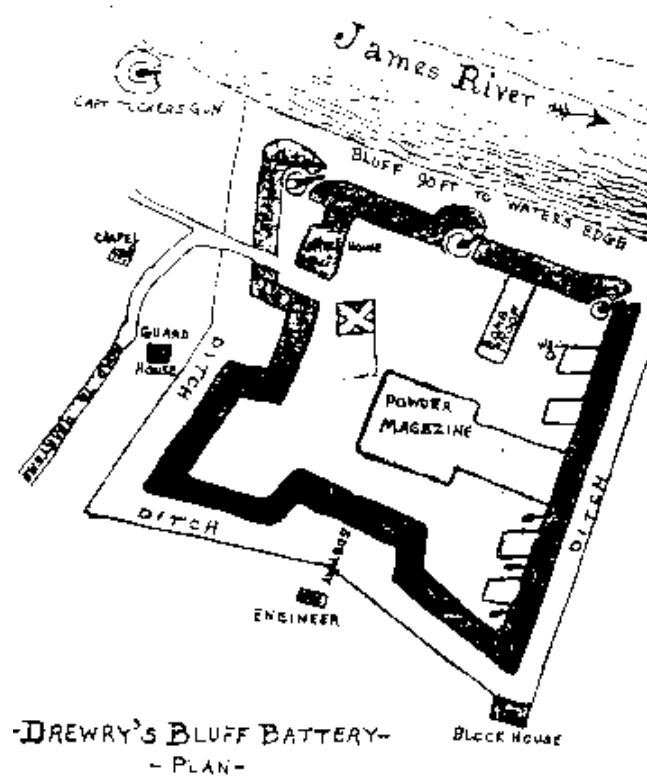


Figure 2: Diagram of Drewry's Bluff³⁹

This location was also the narrowest part of the river as it approached Richmond.⁴⁰ This enabled an easier defense against Federal ships and ironclads making a run towards Richmond. Along with the earthworks and artillery positions, the CSA Marine Corps constructed a battalion-sized barracks to house the officers and Marines posted there. Eventually, Drewry's Bluff would grow into a garrison of fairly significant size, housing the families of Marines stationed there, a post office, and even a hotel.⁴¹

CONFEDERATE MARINES EQUIPMENT AND CAPABILITIES

During the acute shortages of the early days, weapons of every description were used.”⁴² There are Quartermaster records that show company commanders signing for Enfield Rifles in some instances, and English Rifles in other.⁴³ These rifles along with various other items are listed below in Table 3 showing a company's issue from 1861 and on an equipment receipt shown on the following page in Table 4. This does not take into account the numerous instances,

and almost expectation, of the Southern man showing up at muster with his own hunting musket or rifle from home.

*Table 3: Company A Quartermaster Issue July 8, 1861**

32 muskets
 30 screwdrivers
 32 wipers
 3 spring devices
 3 ball screws
 32 nipples
 32 cartridge boxes
 32 bayonet scabbards
 32 waist belts
 64 gun slings

**A few months after the above weapons were returned, CSA General Braxton Bragg, whose ordnance officer had issued the weapons, charged “neglect by officers and men” based on the condition in which they were returned.*

Table 4: Issue Receipt Signed by Captain T.S. Wilson in Mobile, Alabama, September 20, 1865⁴⁴

Enfield Rifles and Muskets	48	Enfield Rifles and Muskets Bayonets and Scabbards	28
Cartridge Boxes	40	Knapsacks	45
Cap Pouches	35	Haversacks	30
Waist Belts	37	Canteens	40
Cartridge Box Belts	18	Canteen Straps	51
Sword Bayonets	22	Breast Plates	1
Sword Bayonet Scabbard	21	Enfield Cartridges	5,660
Sword Frogs	21	Musket Caps	2,140

Revolvers were carried by Marines of all ranks, generally issued to officers and staff non-commissioned officers, but would also be carried by junior Marines serving on raiding parties.⁴⁵

As with the rifles, there was no singular make or model issued.⁴⁶ The assortment of rifles and revolvers carried by both Confederate and Union Marines are shown in Figure 3.

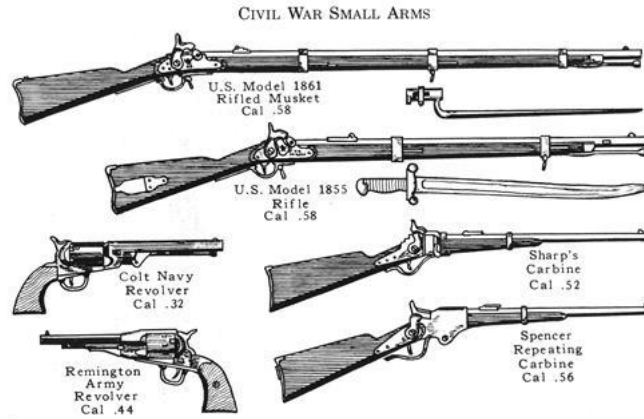


Figure 3: Union and Confederate Small Arms⁴⁷

The CSA Marine Corps uniform was essentially the same as the CSA Army uniform: a cadet gray, double breasted coat, high collar (emblematic of the USMC dress blues of today), seven brass buttons on either side of the coat, a crimson sash, and light blue trousers.⁴⁸

EMPLOYMENT OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES MARINE CORPS

The CSA Marine Corps saw its first combat at Hampton Roads, Virginia on March 8, 1862. Serving aboard the CSS *Virginia*, Figure 4, Marines provided rifle and naval infantry support against enemy on the shore in addition to manning the guns of the ironclad ship.⁴⁹ More than 50 Marines were listed on the crew roster of the ship, and during the battle the CSS *Virginia* had a decisive role in sinking the USS *Cumberland* and the destruction of the USS *Congress*.⁵⁰ On March 9, 1862, when the CSS *Virginia* steamed out to complete the destruction of the *Congress*, it was met by the USS *Monitor*, a fellow ironclad, marking the first time in history when two ironclad ships met in naval battle.

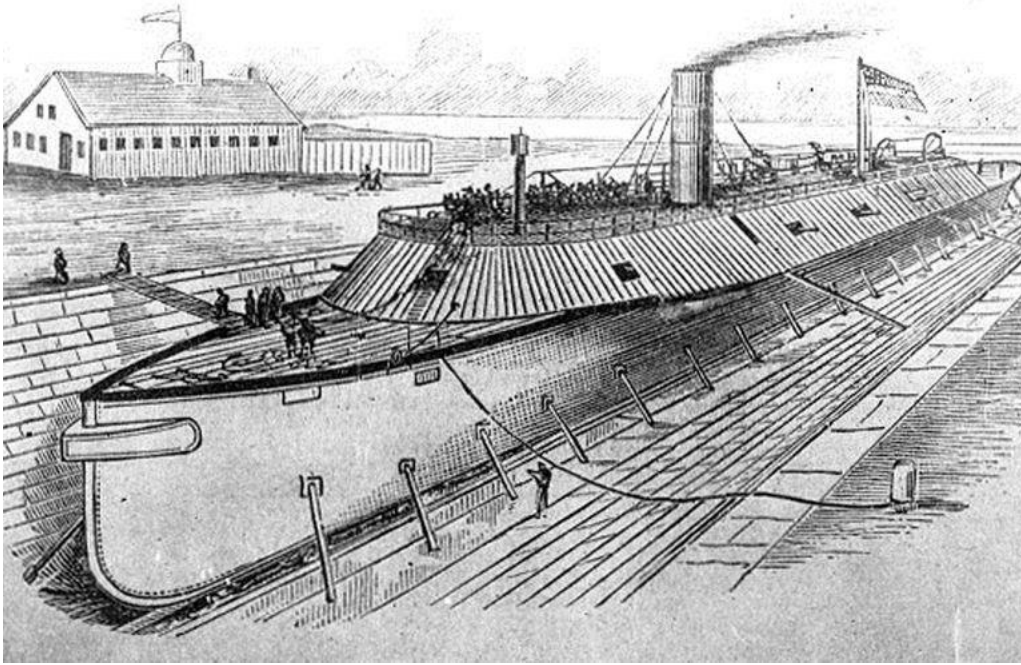


Figure 4: CSS Virginia⁵¹

Outside of manning naval batteries or serving aboard naval vessels, the CSA Marines served various special missions throughout the war.⁵² One such mission was to board ironclads participating in the Union blockade of Charleston harbor, and use a 19th-Century form of chemical warfare consisting of sulfur, gunpowder, and wet blankets to gas the crew out and force their surrender.⁵³ Serving as boarding parties, the CSA Marine Corps seized both the USS *Underwriter* (New Bern, NC, 1864) and USS *Water Witch* (Ossabaw Island, GA, 1864).⁵⁴ Both missions led to hand-to-hand combat between the Marines and the crew, with the *Underwriter* being burned afloat, and the *Water Witch* being seized and conscripted into the CSA Navy.⁵⁵ CSS Navy Commander John T. Wood, commanding officer of the *Underwriter* mission, gave great credit to the Marines stating, “Though their duties were more arduous than those of the others, they were always prompt and ready for the performance of all they were called upon to do. As a body they would be a great credit to any organization and I will be glad to be associated with them on duty at any time.”⁵⁶

Additional major battles in which the CSA Marine Corps played a key role include the defense of Wilmington, North Carolina, at Fort Fisher and as part of Tucker's Naval Brigade supporting the Army of Northern Virginia.⁵⁷ At Fort Fisher, Marines manned the coastal battery guns until its fall in January, 1865, at which point many Marines were taken prisoner.⁵⁸ Supporting the Army of Northern Virginia, fighting valiantly as a part of Lieutenant General Richard Ewell's Corps during the final stages of the war.⁵⁹

THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

POST-SECESSION ORGANIZATION

At the onset of the Civil War, the United States Marines had much of its force in and around Washington, D.C.⁶⁰ With the predominance of the U.S. Army stationed on the American frontier, this made the USMC the logical, and realistically only force able to defend the capital if needed.⁶¹ Early missions immediately following South Carolina's secession included securing Fort Washington, across the Potomac River from Mount Vernon, Virginia, as well as Fort McHenry in Baltimore, Maryland.⁶² These detachments were to protect the forts and their adjacent strategic waterways, until properly relieved by Army units as they were recalled from the frontier or raised from President Lincoln's requirement for 75,000 more troops.⁶³ Of note, both the Fort Washington and Fort McHenry detachments, shown in Figure 5, were commanded

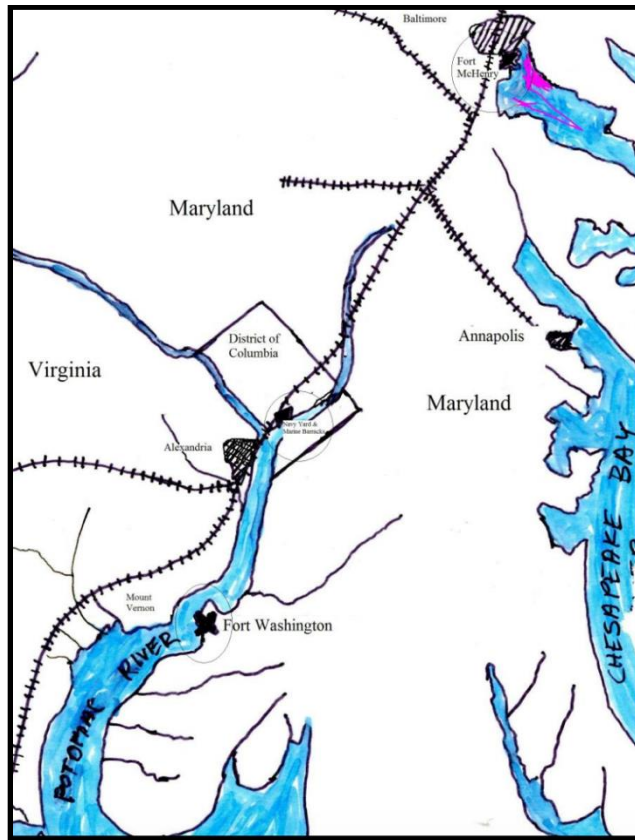


Figure 5: Capital Area Defenses Occupied by Marines, 1861⁶⁴

by southern officers, staunch professionals who carried out their duties until properly relieved, at which point they resigned their commissions to fight in support of their southern states (Virginia and Alabama, respectively).⁶⁵

“An Act for the Better Organization of the Marine Corps” was passed by the U.S. Congress in July of 1861.⁶⁶ The Act authorized an increase in T/O of over 1,000 Marines, including 1,000 privates, several dozen Staff Non-Commissioned Officers, and 30 more officers.⁶⁷ The specific delineation of ranks are listed below in

Table 5: Marine Corps Organization After Congressional Act, 1861.

Table 5: Marine Corps Organization After Congressional Act, 1861⁶⁸

Officer:	Colonel Commandant (1)		
	Colonel (1)		
	Lieutenant Colonel (2)		
	Major (4)		
	Captain (20)		
	First Lieutenant (30)		
	Second Lieutenant (30)		
	Adjutant and Inspector (1) *		
	Paymaster (1) *		
	Quartermaster (1) *		
	Assistant Quartermaster (2) *	Officer Total:	93
Enlisted:	Sergeant Major (1)		
	Quartermaster Sergeant (1) *		
	Principal Musician (1) **		
	Drum Major (1) **		
	Sergeant (200)		
	Corporal (220)		
	Musician (30)**		
	Fifer (60)**		
	Private (2,500)	Enlisted Total:	3,014
		Service Total:	3,107
Notes:	* Staff	** Band	

After the Congressional Act, President Lincoln authorized an additional 1220 to assist in the guarding of naval bases and be stationed aboard naval vessels.⁶⁹ Examples of distributions for

these increased personnel numbers are listed on the following page in Table 6. While these increases by President Lincoln were not permanent changes in structure, they did help fill necessary gaps throughout the Navy and Marine Corps.⁷⁰

Table 6: Size of Marine Detachments Aboard Warships, 1861⁷¹

Type of Ship and Example	Officers	NCOs	Privates	Total
Frigate (<i>Potomac</i>)	1	7	42	49
Steam Frigate (<i>Niagara</i>)	2	7	51	60
Receiving Ship (<i>North Carolina</i>)		6	45	51
Screw Frigate (<i>San Jacinto</i>)	1	5	34	40
Screw Sloop (<i>Hartford</i>)	2	5	36	43
Steam Sloop (<i>Mohican</i>)		3	10	13
Sloop of War (<i>Cumberland</i>)	1	7	42	50
Sloop (<i>Cyane</i>)		3	22	25

Despite these needed and necessary increases in T/O, the USMC faced the same recruiting issues as the CSA. By the end of 1861, the Marine Corps was mandated an end strength of 4,500, yet in reality it had only 2,354 on its rolls.⁷² There are several factors that affected the manpower shortfalls. First, the Marine Corps was slow to request an increase in its manpower.⁷³ Secondly, the Corps did not change its recruiting practices to meet the demand for more Marines.⁷⁴ Essentially, a Marine Corps at war recruited in the same fashion as a peacetime Marine Corps.⁷⁵ It refused to adapt and branch out, recruiting using the same methods during the antebellum era, and ignoring newly available recruits, to include African Americans, namely focusing their recruiting efforts in New York and Philadelphia.⁷⁶

By 1862, the Navy had begun targeting and recruiting emancipated slaves to fill their ranks in order to make its recruitment quotas.⁷⁷ Perhaps the biggest hurdle in recruitment was that the naval services were regular services.⁷⁸ This meant that individuals were contracted for set enlistments, and did not offer opportunities for all-volunteer units or to be bolstered by

militia.⁷⁹ The U.S. Army offered all of those options, many of which proved more appealing to individuals wanting to do their part in the war effort.⁸⁰ The final issue hindering USMC recruitment efforts was that of money.⁸¹ Similarly to today's Marine Corps, the U.S. Army was able to offer much more significant enlistment bonuses to soldiers.⁸² Additional bonuses were often provided by the state or city in which the soldier enlisted.⁸³ This led Marine recruiters to employ creative, and potentially illegal, recruitment efforts, including paying a third-party "finders fees" for assisting in identifying enlistees.⁸⁴ Most interestingly, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Colonel John Harris authorized the recruitment of Confederate prisoners of war in order to bolster the service's numbers.⁸⁵

The recruiting woes did not affect the filling of the ranks in the officer corps. Despite 28 of the 63 Marine officers resigning or being dismissed following secession, the USMC received more than enough applicants and letters of recommendation to fill its commissioned officer ranks.⁸⁶ The influx of officer candidates forced the Marine Corps to come up with a system by which to identify and choose the most qualified applicants.⁸⁷ This new board process screened the applicants between the ages of 20-25, including a medical screening, and determine whether the candidate had the "mental and moral qualifications" to be commissioned as a Marine officer.⁸⁸

UNITED STATES MARINES EQUIPMENT AND CAPABILITIES

The USMC faced significant logistical issues throughout the Civil War. In 1861, the Corps did not possess a single, standard-issue rifle.⁸⁹ The rifles ranged from smooth-bore .69 caliber muskets to new .58 caliber Springfield rifles.⁹⁰ This variety in the primary weapon system carried by Marines made it nearly impossible to logistically support. A logistics resupply request from a commander had to specify numbers, calibers, and types of weapons in order to ensure he

would receive the appropriate ammunition and powder.⁹¹ The inefficiency of this system led the Navy's Ordnance and Hydrography Bureau to threaten to stop providing ammunition for the Marine Corps.⁹² Commandant Harris was forced to procure new weapons for the Marines; however this was not a sweeping change. Harris prioritized ship-board units to receive the new weapons first, which made sense as they needed that capability during the conduct of amphibious landings; however, he did not prioritize the newly formed infantry battalions, who would also take part in upcoming combat operations.⁹³

The USMC during the Civil War was inextricably tied to the Navy. These ties, both in structure and in sustainment, would set the stage for and carry the Marine Corps through the mid-20th Century. The "do more with less" attitude prevalent during the Civil War is a badge of honor Marines still have today.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

The USMC essentially had four roles throughout the Civil War: guarding Marine Barracks on naval facilities; serving aboard a naval vessel; serving as structured detachments aboard ship as a part of larger combat formations; or fulfilling special missions within assigned battalions.⁹⁴ Assignment to the Marine Barracks was, for the most part, viewed as an administrative duty. Locations of barracks and associated number of Marines assigned are enumerated in

Table 7. While the other duties provided chances to be tactically employed in

Table 7: Location and Organization of Marine Barracks, 1862⁹⁵

Location of Barracks	Approximate Number of Marines
Washington, D.C.	10-13 officers, 300-400 Marines
Brooklyn, New York	1-2 officers, 130-150 Marines
Boston, Massachusetts	1-2 officers, 80-100 Marines
Cairo, Illinois (later Mound City, Illinois)	2-3 officers, 150-170 Marines
Mare Island, California	2-3 officers, 150-170 Marines
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	3-4 officers, 100-150 Marines
Portsmouth, New Hampshire	1 officer, 60-70 Marines

combat operations, barracks duty consisted of guarding government property, restricting access to areas if required, or responding to any emergency aboard the naval station.⁹⁶ That said, Marines did find a creative way of keeping themselves busy, while also honing their tactical skills. Marines stationed in New York assisted local law enforcement in quelling draft riots in 1863.⁹⁷ Additionally, Marines from Mound City, Illinois, were authorized to conduct missions into Kentucky to counter Confederate guerilla attacks.⁹⁸ While conducting these counter guerilla operations, the Marines formed raiding parties to increase the variety and quantity of food available to them.⁹⁹ While barracks duty was generally routine, and out of harm's way, it did provide a central location for recruiting efforts and the training of new recruits.¹⁰⁰

The majority of the force were assigned to detachments aboard naval warships.¹⁰¹ There, they served a variety of functions, from acting as a pseudo police force, repelling boarders, or serving as sharpshooters. These were also the detachments that could serve as a small boarding party or amphibious force if required.¹⁰² When it comes to amphibious operations, many of the command-and-control problems discussed today were issues then as well. Often Marine officers were not given control of the landing force; instead this role was commanded by naval or even Army officers.¹⁰³ These assignments grew alongside the increase in the size of the naval fleet.

Advancements in naval technology, specifically the advent of armored ships, steam power, and changes to the naval disciplinary system, changed the roles Marines filled aboard naval vessels, having negated the need for sharpshooters or a dedicated policing force.¹⁰⁴ The

Marines adapted by training in naval artillery, serving in teams as part of the ship's fire support system.¹⁰⁵ Many consider the greatest contribution the USMC made during the Civil War to be in its naval gunnery skills. Of note, 13 of the 17 Marines awarded the Medal of Honor during the Civil War were serving on naval gun crews.¹⁰⁶ Marines did maintain their role as serving in boarding or landing parties, maintaining the amphibious legacy of the Corps.

The "Ad Hoc" forming of larger Marine units naturally came to be as the size of naval flotillas got larger.¹⁰⁷ Basing the concept upon experiences during the Mexican-American War, these elements could come together from various ships, to form larger units (generally a company reinforced or battalion reduced) capable of accomplishing a variety of combat operations.¹⁰⁸ One of the most famous examples of the employment of these "ad hoc" battalions is in the seizure of Fort Fisher (Wilmington), North Carolina as depicted in Figure 6. Fort Fisher

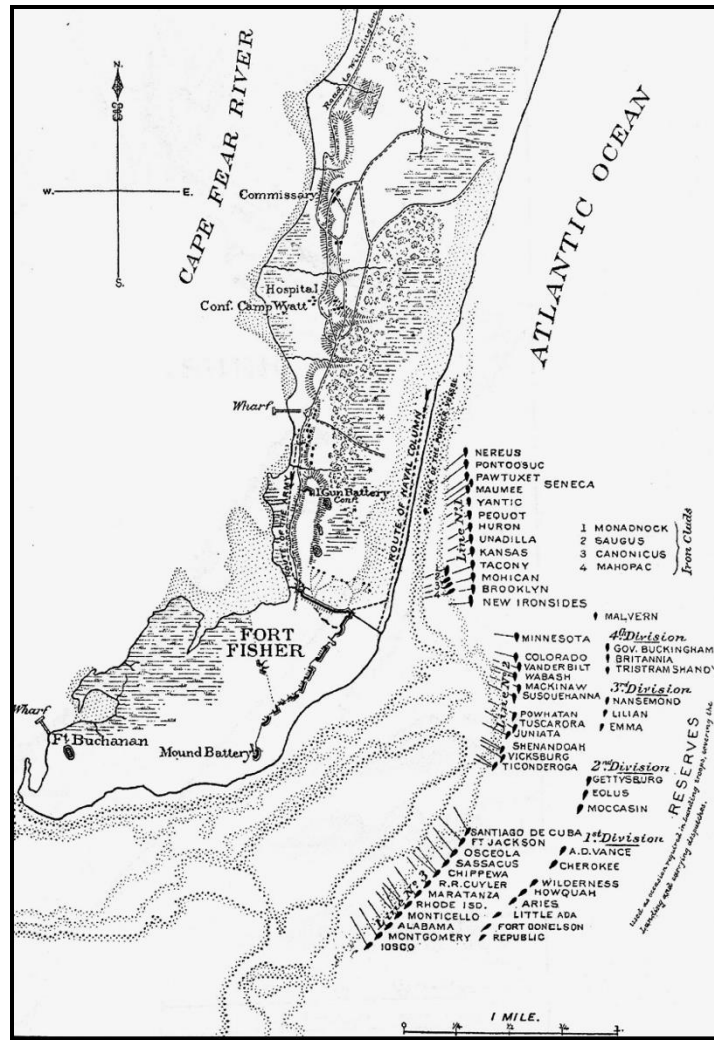


Figure 6: Second Attack (USMC) on Fort Fisher, 1864¹⁰⁹

was also an example of United States Marines conducting an amphibious landing against Confederate States Marines.¹¹⁰ The USMC battalion was cobbled together following a failed U.S. Army attempt to seize the fort previously.¹¹¹ The amphibious attack on Fort Fisher would be the largest such assault in history until Gallipoli in World War I.¹¹² Admiral David Porter, in charge of all of the naval assets, hastily formed a Naval Brigade of approximately 2,000 Marines, sailors, and soldiers. His plan to take Fort Fisher was surprisingly simple:

“That we may have a share in the assault when it takes place, the boats will be kept ready, lowered near the water on the side of the vessels. The sailors will be armed with cutlasses, well sharpened, and with revolvers. When the signal

is made to land the boats, the men will get in, but not show themselves. When a signal is made to assault, the boats will pull around the stern of the monitors and land right abreast of them, and board the fort in a seaman-like way. The Marines will form in the rear and cover the sailors. While the soldiers are going over the parapets in the front, the sailors will take the sea face of Fort Fisher. We can land 2,000 men from the fleet and not feel it. Two thousand active men from the fleet will carry the day.”¹¹³

These composite landing forces can be compared to the Battalion Landing Teams formed today that embark upon amphibious shipping.

Lastly, the Marine Corps began organizing in semi-permanent battalions able to operate autonomously over extended periods of time.¹¹⁴ The first example of this was during the First Battle of Bull Run, where a Marine battalion fought alongside Federal Army units, and unceremoniously retreated alongside them, before mounting a limited counterattack.¹¹⁵ The second standing Marine battalion would serve as an amphibious-assault unit/landing party for the Navy. In fact, this battalion was advocated for by Admiral Samuel DuPont, who had seen the utility of Marine landing forces during the Mexican-American War.¹¹⁶ While the Army still had a major role in seizing coastal forts, these standing battalions provided options and flexibility to naval commanders conducting blockade operations along major Confederate ports and Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs).

ASSESSMENTS

Present day Joint Doctrine provides a framework to evaluate Measures of Performance (MOPs) and Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs). It will be this current framework through which one can attempt to evaluate the actions of the USMC and CSMC throughout the Civil War. Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 *Joint Operations*, and JP 5-0 *Joint Operation Planning* provide an assessment framework that can apply to historical and present-day operations.^{117,118} For this paper a Measure of Performance is defined as: a criterion used to assess friendly actions that are tied to measuring task accomplishment.¹¹⁹ Concurrently, a Measure of Effectiveness is defined as: a criterion used to assess changes in system behavior, capability, or operational environment that is tied to measuring the attainment of an end state, achievement of an objective or creation of an effect.¹²⁰ Lastly, MOPs and MOEs will be a guideline, but not the driving factor in assessing the overall effectiveness of either the CSMC or USMC.

It is a difficult thing to determine both performance and effectiveness of Federal and Confederate Marine Corps units throughout the Civil War. Much of that is because both forces were under-staffed, under-equipped, and were mandated similar missions; both units were employed differently throughout the conflict. The services will be assessed through the same lens with which they were discussed throughout the paper: organization, equipment, and employment.

CSMC ASSESSMENT

Organization

Simply evaluating the actions of the individuals does not paint a holistic picture for the force writ large. The CSMC was never able to achieve its desired end strength. Recruiting efforts were unsuccessful, and therefore the force was stretched thin throughout the entire conflict. This had cascading effects throughout the capabilities and employment of the Confederate Marines.

From a Table of Organization perspective, the Confederate Marine Corps looked a lot like the Federal Marine Corps. As previously mentioned, even the *Navy Regulations of the Confederate States* was plagiarized from the United States Navy.¹²¹

Equipment and Capabilities

The CSMC faced many of the same issues as the USMC. The disparity within the CSMC weapons was constant throughout the Civil War. This caused a burden upon the logistical elements of the Confederate States military due to having to supply ammunition to various caliber weapons. Logistically, the Confederate States Army and CSMC lacked the industrial base with which to provide basic needs to the troops. Once the “bread basket” of Virginia was razed by Federal forces, it became extremely difficult to feed the CS (Confederate States) military. The seizure of railroad hubs by U.S. Army units led by the likes of Generals William Tecumseh Sherman and Philip Sheridan further sealed the fate of the CSA and CSMC. The inability of the Confederate military to retain key equipment and logistical nodes directly led to the capitulation of the Confederate States of America (CSA).

Employment

Military strategic and operational endstates are even harder to assess, due the near stalemate in successes and defeats of both forces as well as the similar structure and materiel shortfalls experienced by both sides. Confederate Marines achieved successes during individual battles on both land and sea throughout the war. The CS Navy, with Marines aboard, had limited successes in both controlling waterways and interdicting US Naval vessels, evidenced in the battle of Hampton Roads. Additionally, the CS Army, often with Marine support, had several successful campaigns in the eastern theater leading up to the battle of Gettysburg. However, in the end, the CSMC was unable to accomplish the military goals of the Confederate States

government, evident in the downfall of the CSA epitomized by the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Courthouse.

USMC ASSESSMENT

Organization

Despite losing a significant number of officers to the CSMC, the USMC, though short staffed, was able to accomplish both of its primary duties; provide detachments aboard naval vessels and provide security at Naval bases. Holistically, and similarly to the CSMC, the USMC was unable to accomplish its recruiting goals. Competition with the U.S. Army severely reduced the available recruits as the USMC could not compete with the salary and benefits of the U.S. Army, and as such never reached its desired end strength.¹²² This led to the conscription of captured Confederate soldiers, sailors, and Marines, who given the choice between a prison camp and joining the enemy, chose to fight with the Federal Marine Corps.

Equipment and Capabilities

Initially, the United States Marine Corps faced many of the same issues as its Confederate counterparts. There was little standardization in weapons, therefore challenging Quartermasters when it came to resupply.¹²³ The industrial base of the North did enable it to produce and supply ample munitions to the entirety of its armed forces, something the Confederate States did not have. Union strategy throughout the war also enabled its forces to live off of the land. Through seizing assets and food stores from civilians, the “total war” concept employed towards the end of the conflict ensured that the Union army would retain the ability to feed its forces.

Lastly, Union control of the southern ports and waterways via naval and Marine forces, starved the southern states while giving Federal vessels freedom of movement. The “Anaconda

Plan” was successful from Virginia to New Orleans and the Mississippi River. The numerically superior naval ships operated by the Union could never be matched by the CSA. Through utilizing the industrial base inherent in the North, and choking out the southern ports, the Union government and military ensured it continued to retain the edge in equipment and capabilities.

Employment

Militarily the USMC assessment is more quantifiable. The battle of Fort Fisher is an example of Marines being utilized as a detachment aboard ship, then successfully transitioning to an assault force leading to the capture of a key fort. This battle highlighted yet again the adaptability of a Marine amphibious force. Additionally, the US Navy had significantly more success throughout the war than the Confederate Navy, some of which can be attributed to the USMC performing its duties well while aboard. Ultimately the Federal military was able to accomplish its strategic, theater, and operational goals on both land and sea with contributions from the USMC.

CONCLUSION

Both services faced significant challenges in organization, recruitment, equipping/logistics, and employment throughout the war. Neither service was truly able to accomplish all that was tasked of it throughout the entirety of the conflict, mostly due to the lack of every reaching their desired force structure goals. Because of this, leaders had to assume risk in how their Marines were being employed. Towards the end of the conflict, CSMC Marines were often used as additional ground forces, as they no longer had control of the majority of the naval bases throughout the CSA. For the Union, their successes towards the end of the Civil War and the limited ability for the Confederate military to project power north of Washington, D.C. provided flexibility in the employment of its Marines. This, as highlighted by the aforementioned attack on Fort Fisher, North Carolina, meant shipboard Marines conducting amphibious landings and assaults, the hallmark mission of present-day Marines.

Whether fighting for the Union or Confederacy, the motivations of individuals to either resign their commissions or to remain in service of the Union were largely personal ones. Each individual calling upon their own personal interpretations of the Constitution, and the loyalties therein. From Lieutenant Israel Green who led a detachment of United States Marines prior to the secession movement to put down a raid at the U.S. Arsenal at Harpers Ferry, to Captain Robert Tansill who believed that the United States Constitution gave states the right to secede when the state felt that the federal government was infringing on its sovereign rights. The individual motivations of Marines on both sides of the Mason-Dixon provide a human context to the complexity of a conflict that pitted brother against brother and where loyalty to one's beliefs was paramount.

Throughout the conflict, one common trend prevailed, faithfulness in duty. Both the CSA and Federal Marine Corps had to be creative in their recruitment efforts, often getting less than ideal candidates for service. Despite that, these men repeatedly accomplished difficult missions on both land and sea. *Dividitur Sed Fidelis*, “Divided but Faithful.” These brave men chose what side to fight on based on their own ideals, loyalties, and ambitions. However, they had more in common than they did apart, embodying ideals that the United States Marine Corps carries forward to this day.

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- ² Hannah, 109.
- ³ Hannah, 109.
- ⁴ Robert P. Broadwater, *Civil War Special Forces; The Elite and Distinct Fighting Units of the Union and Confederate Armies*. (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, LLC. 2014), 133.
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- ¹³ Gardner, 3.
- ¹⁴ Gardner, 274-281.
- ¹⁵ Gardner, 274-281, 284-285.
- ¹⁶ Gardner, 274-281.
- ¹⁷ Gardner, 3.
- ¹⁸ Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion (30 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1894-1927), Ser. 2, II, 53. Hereafter cited as O.R.N.
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- ²⁵ Donnelly, 9.
- ²⁶ Broadwater, 141.
- ²⁷ Donnelly, 7.
- ²⁸ Gardner, 7.
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- ³² Gardner, 9.
- ³³ Gardner, 11.
- ³⁴ Gardner, 5.
- ³⁵ Donnelly, 48.
- ³⁶ "Drewry's Bluff (Ft. Darling) Battlefield, <https://www.theclio.com/web/entry?id=22811>, View from Drewry's Bluff, HQ CSA Marine Corps showing the artillery batteries commanding the bend in the James River.
- ³⁷ Broadwater, 141.
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- ⁴¹ Donnelly, 48.
- ⁴² Gardner, 41.
- ⁴³ Gardner, 41-42.
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- ⁴⁷ “Civil War Weapons, Firearms, and Small Arms: Union and Confederate,” <http://www.thomaslegion.net/americancivilwar/civilwarweaponsfirearmssmallarms.html>. This is a representation of a sample of the weapons carried by the USMC and CSMC but is not a comprehensive list.
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- ⁵⁴ Broadwater, 141-142.
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- ⁷² Krivdo, 202.
- ⁷³ Krivdo, 203.
- ⁷⁴ Krivdo, 203.
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- ⁷⁷ Krivdo, 205.
- ⁷⁸ Krivdo, 206.
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- ⁸⁰ Krivdo, 206.
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- ⁸³ Krivdo, 207.
- ⁸⁴ Krivdo, 207.
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- ⁸⁶ Krivdo, 209-210.

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- ⁸⁷ Krivdo, 209-210.
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- ⁹⁰ Krivdo, 216.
- ⁹¹ Krivdo, 216.
- ⁹² Krivdo, 216.
- ⁹³ Krivdo, 216.
- ⁹⁴ Krivdo, 241.
- ⁹⁵ Krivdo, 244.
- ⁹⁶ Krivdo, 242.
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- ¹⁰⁰ Krivdo, 244.
- ¹⁰¹ Krivdo, 245.
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