

FROM CHARLESTON.

PHILADELPHIA, August 23.—The following is the substance of the latest news from Charleston brought by the steamer Arkansas, which arrived here this morning.

MONDAY.—The attack on Fort Sumter commenced at daybreak on the morning of August 17th by the siege guns of Gen. Gillmore, and the naval battery on shore.

At six o'clock Admiral Dahlgren proceeded on board the Weehawken and raised his flag, when the Ironsides and the whole monitor fleet attacked Forts Wagner and Gregg with great fury, completely silencing Wagner and almost silencing Gregg. The wooden gunboats, seven in number, joined in the assault, and enabled the shore batteries to pour shot and shell into Sumter.

At ten o'clock Admiral Dahlgren changed his flag to the Passaic, and with the Patapsco proceeded to within 1,400 yards of Sumter, and shelled the sea wall. His rifle guns rained missiles against the Confederate works for over an hour with marked effect.

Sumter fired fifty return shots, doing no damage to the vessels, while the walls of Sumter were badly scarred. Fleet Captain George W. Rodgers took command of the monitor Catskill, and went into the fight to within one hundred and fifty yards of the beach, in front of Wagner, and after firing a number of shot, a shot from Wagner broke a piece of the interior of the lining of the pilot-house, which struck the head of Commodore Rodgers, instantly killing him, as well as Paymaster Woodbury, who was standing at his side.—Both of their heads were split open. They were the only persons injured during the six hours' engagement.

The damage to Fort Sumter by the siege batteries of General Gillmore was visible without the aid of glasses. The Confederates had erected a false wall against the wall exposed to the army batteries, which extended to within ten feet of the top wall, which is over forty feet high and ten feet thick. This wall now is a mass of ruins, while the old wall is bored full with deep holes. The parapet is crushed, and the northwest corner of the fort cracked to the water's edge.

The harbor of Stono river is filled with torpedoes, about a dozen of which have been picked up. In the Stono a torpedo exploded under the Patapsco, raising her a foot out of water, but doing no harm to the vessel. None of the vessels were injured.

The Admiral and his officers are confident of the ability of the monitors to batter down Sumter.

The Admiral is anxious to save his vessels for the heavy work required of them after Sumter is taken. The army will reduce Fort Sumter if possible. The fleet, except the Weehawken and Nahant, retired before two o'clock, but remained within distance to keep Wagner silent during the afternoon, and to prevent the remounting of the guns.

The shore batteries continued firing all the afternoon and night on the walls of Sumter, with good effect.

TUESDAY.—This morning the weather was cool and clear. The batteries are at work.—The Weehawken and Passaic are keeping Forts Wagner and Gregg silent, and up to noon of the day the Arkansas sailed the remainder of the fleet were lying at their moorings.

The bodies of Captain Rogers and Paymaster Woodbury have been embalmed, and were brought North on the Arkansas.

Gen. Gillmore announces the work entirely satisfactory. The fort is badly damaged and the work progressing finely. Admiral Dahlgren is much depressed by the loss of his fleet captain, but is highly gratified with the operations, and is hopeful of success.

When the Arkansas sailed at noon General Gillmore's siege guns were hurling their shell at Fort Sumter with marked effect; two of the monitors, the Ironsides and some of the gunboats are shelling Wagner and Gregg.

PHILADELPHIA, August 23.—The Press has received a Richmond Examiner of the 21st, containing the following:—"We have not heard either directly or indirectly that Sumter has fallen, or been destroyed, or evacuated; but from the dispatch which is published this morning it is reasonable to be supposed that it has been much injured, and may become untenable. The event has proven what was hitherto thought, that the heavy ordnance now used will do considerable injury to fortifications constructed of any known material other than earth, even at the distance of three thousand yards.

"Fort Wagner was exposed during forty days to the whole artillery of the enemy at only eight hundred paces, yet it still hold its own, and if in danger only from the cannonading would evidently last forever; while Sumter, which received the shot of a single battery at the immense distance stated, with occasional assistance from scary monitors, suffers severely, and probably would have already crumbled but for the sand bags with which its walls have been strengthened."

The article thus concludes: "If Morris Island should fall entirely into the possession of the enemy, he may shut up Charleston as a port of entry, but it will not enable him to take the city while its defenders are determined to fight it out."

NEW YORK, August 23.—The Mobile Tribune copies approvingly an article from the Charleston Mercury, which says:

"Since the Federal success Beauregard had better lay aside his engineering and artillery dueling, which are now played out, and take to the bayonet, and advise the authorities to reinforce Morris Island, or else abandon Charleston to the flames."

PHILADELPHIA, August 23.—The United States supply steamer Arkansas arrived at the Navy-yard to-day, from the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron, with one hundred and seventy passengers, prisoners and invalids.—She left Charleston on Wednesday morning.

She reports that the naval and army shore batteries have effected tremendous destruction on Fort Sumter, the south and east faces of which look like "honeycomb," and that the complete demolition of the walls is looked for within a week.

None of the Federal vessels were injured.—Fort Wagner was silenced. Captain Rodgers has been killed. The Arkansas experienced very heavy weather from Charleston to the Capes of Virginia.

The Arkansas left the fleet at seven o'clock on Wednesday morning, and at that time huge volumes of smoke were seen issuing from Fort Sumter, as if from the burning of cotton; and the officers of the Arkansas believe the fort would be captured or entirely destroyed by noon. Her guns were replying feebly to the Federal shot.

Fort Gregg had been entirely silenced. Fort Wagner still held out.

The bombardment continued without cessation during Tuesday night, and was renewed on Wednesday morning.

There was furious firing when the Arkansas left; the Ironsides, five monitors, and the shore batteries being all engaged.

Two refugees from Savannah, are passengers on the Arkansas. They report there is nearly a famine in Savannah. Dr. Robert Gibbs, surgeon of the relief ram Fingal, is a passenger aboard. He will be sent to Fort Delaware.

ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE
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