

Robert Smalls

Occupation: Pilot of the *Planter*, congressman, Republican Party leader

Born: April 5, 1839 in Beaufort, SC

Died: February 23, 1915 in Beaufort, SC

Physical Description:

“A stoutly built man, little more than medium height, of intelligent countenance, ready speech, entire self-possession and considerable humor” (Miller 25, Billingsley 91).

Most Famous For:

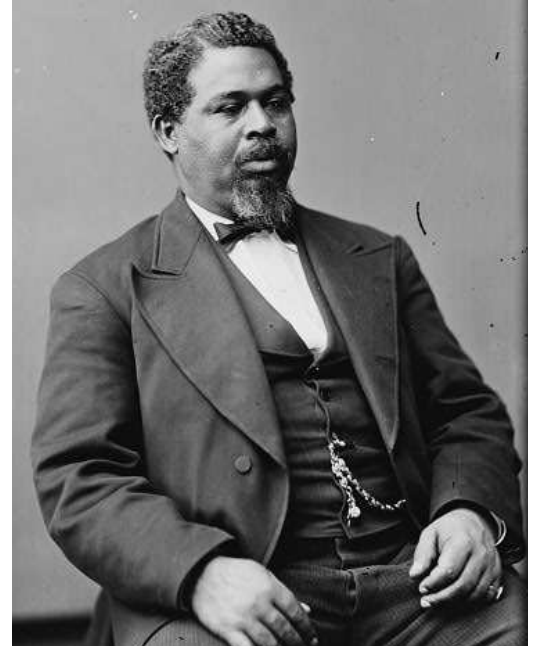
- May 13, 1862 – obtained freedom for himself, his wife and child, his crew, and their family members by steaming the Confederate vessel *Planter* into Federal lines. The ship then served the Union war effort – with Smalls eventually serving as the ship’s captain.
- Congressman in South Carolina and national legislature

Loyalties:

His family, African-Americans (especially in Beaufort, SC) and the Republican Party.

Interesting Pre-War Information:

- On the day he was born, most of the inhabitants of Beaufort were at the jail to observe a thief’s hanging.
- One of Smalls’ descendants related this family story: “One morning when Robert and his mother had finished morning chores, Lydia (his mother) took him for a walk. They passed the arsenal, where the slaves, frightened and trembling, were being sold on the block. The auctioneer was pointing to a boy no bigger than Robert, named Frederick. “Could be you,” Lydia whispered” (Billingsley 23, D. Sterling, 20). Lydia also forced him to watch the whipping of a slave named Susannah, and he sobbed the whole way home (D. Sterling 20). She was afraid that his relatively “easy” life as a household slave, and the fact that their “master” liked him, would blind him to the true horrors of slavery.
- Recent slave arrivals at the McKee plantation read Frederick Douglass’s latest speech to him: “In the law, the slave has no wife, no children, no country, no home....” That day, Robert told his mother that when he grew up he wanted “to be a man” like Douglass and be free (Billingsley 24).
- Robert’s “master”, Henry McKee, taught Robert to ride, care for animals, hunt, swim and boat. He also brought Robert on horseback when he inspected his plantations (Billingsley 28).
- Robert made a deal with Hannah and Elizabeth’s “owner”, Samuel Kingman, to buy his wife and child. He also persuaded both Kingman and Henry McKee to allow them to live together as a family (Billingsley 45-47).



Robert Smalls in the 1870s.
Library of Congress, LC-BH826- 825.

- Robert Smalls served in both houses of the South Carolina state legislature and served five times in the United States Congress (Billingsley 2).
- In a politically motivated trial in 1877, Smalls was convicted of bribery on evidence that ordinarily would not stand up in court. This fact was recognized in several northern newspapers almost immediately, and in Charleston within twenty years.
- Smalls was one of two blacks present at both the 1868 and the 1895 South Carolina Constitutional Conventions (Billingsley 1)
- An Army vessel (USS Major General Robert Smalls, christened April 2004) and a Navy training ground in IL were named after him. Smalls' grandson attended the training ground, Camp Robert Smalls.
- Feb. 22, 1976 was declared "Robert Smalls Day" by South Carolina Governor James B. Edwards: "Born in slavery, exemplified a man who through devotion to his state and people, and, by a constant faith in himself, rose above his environment to play an instrumental role in our nation's history" (Billingsley 2).

On May 13, 2002 (the 140th anniversary of the capture of the *Planter*) he was awarded the Palmetto Cross "for exceptionally outstanding service while serving in the South Carolina militia between 1870 and 1877" (Billingsley 2).

In 1989, a 15-mile stretch of US Highway 170 (into Beaufort) was named after Robert Smalls (Billingsley 111).

Only one statue of Robert Smalls exists in the US: at the cemetery at the Tabernacle Baptist Church in Beaufort – where Smalls and his wives are buried. It was installed in 1976 (Billingsley 112).

Strengths

- Possessed confidence in his abilities as well as great courage.
- Frugal and wise with money. He saved over \$700 while in slavery! After slavery he invested in property.
- Looked for opportunity and rose above his circumstances – both in the abduction of the *Planter* and after the war.
- He was an excellent public speaker.
- He valued education, possessed a strong desire to learn, and supported the growth of African-American schools.
- He possessed great internal strength in the face of opposition or attack.
- With dignity and strength, he fought for equal rights for African Americans – even when it was clearly a losing battle (anti-Reconstruction backlash).
- Treated people with respect, regardless of color – before, during and after the Civil War.
- He was loyal to Admiral DuPont (Smalls could have stayed in New York but didn't). In addition, he tried to have Gen. David Hunter's pension increased while he was a senator, in an attempt to help Hunter's widow.
- He learned many survival skills from Henry McKee, from McKee's plantation, and from days on his own in Charleston. He had experience in working with people from a variety of backgrounds; he knew how to be productive and frugal; and he learned managerial skills on the docks.

- He was able to establish close personal relationships with those committed to equal rights (or his own interests) (Billingsley 69).
- Even when his son Willie went away to school, Robert wrote frequently to him and to those taking care of him (Billingsley 217).

Weaknesses

- At times, people questioned the motivation of his public service— did he only have the well being of community in mind, or was he interested in power and personal gain as well?
- He spent much time away from his family – especially while married to Hannah, his first wife.
- He was perhaps overly strict with his family – yet this strictness bound the family as a unit and instilled values that still exist in descendants today.
- Loyalty to the Republican Party helped him rise to power. Still, he was loyal to the party despite growing Reconstruction-era corruption and the fact that the party let him (and African Americans in general) down in the end.
- He had a strong temper (Billingsley 216).
- Some people saw him as a strong African-American community leader. Others saw him as a political boss.

Famous or Notable Words:

- **American Freedmen’s Inquiry Commission Interview, 1863**

“I think the colored people would never get along if left entirely to themselves ... The Government must give them protection against the white man’s superior intelligence. No matter how smart or intelligent a colored man may be, one white man will have more influence over them than six colored men.”

Versus...

- **At the South Carolina Constitutional Convention, November 2, 1895**

“My people need no special defense, for the past history of them in this country proves them to be the equal of any people anywhere. All they need is an equal chance in the battle of life” (Billingsley 177-178).

- **To Lt. J. F. Nichols, upon surrendering the Planter, sunrise, May 13, 1862:**

“I thought this ship might be of use to Uncle Abe. I have some guns the Confederacy took away from Fort Sumter” (Billingsley 59).

- **To Abraham Lincoln, August 1862:**

“[African American soldiers] will be better fighters than the present ones because they will be fighting for their freedom” (Billingsley 70).

- **Smalls to Admiral Samuel DuPont, after a long trip to New York on behalf of abolitionists: October 31, 1862,**

“All the while I was up there my head was turned one way – toward Port Royal” (Billingsley 74).

- **To Gen. Rufus Saxton, late 1862:**

“[I am] going to enlist as a private in the black regiment. How can I expect to keep my freedom if I’m not willing to pay for it” (Miller 17)?

- **Smalls to Capt. Nickerson, Dec 1, 1863, when Nickerson wanted to surrender:**

“If we surrender, you —a white man and an officer – will be treated as such. But the rest of the crew are all runaway slaves. If the Confederates catch us, they will show us no quarter” (Billingsley 85). Smalls refused to beach the boat

- **To the New York Evening Post, early 1864:**

"I must say that from the first day of my arrival within the Union lines, General Seymour has always shown me the greatest regard, whenever in public or private" (Billingsley 86).

[It was reported that Brig. Gen. Truman Seymour had called Smalls "boy". Seymour and Smalls denied this incident, which had caused quite a scandal.]

- **Speaking at an A.M.E. Conference in 1864:**

"Although born a slave I always felt that I was a man and ought to be free, and I would be free or die" (Miller 3).

Introducing Capt. John Ferguson and John Simmons to US Gen. Rufus Saxton, March 1865:

"These men made the *Planter*, but I put the polish on her" (Billingsley 90).

[Ferguson was the former owner; Simmons taught Smalls to be a sailor and rigger.]

Introducing a resolution in the SC legislature, February 2, 1870:

"Whereas, thirty states of the American Union have ratified the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and whereas this action of the American people fixes our government firmly on the side of right, and makes it a beacon light to the nations of the earth ... Be it resolved ... that, as an expression of our deep sense of gratitude to the Almighty God for this victory of right, and in honor of this event, His Excellency, the Governor, be requested to set apart a day of Thanksgiving and prayer immediately after the official notice of the ratification has been promulgated" (Billingsley 120-121).

As a congressman, responding to a letter by R. W. Tyler, asking for support of Ohio's Wilgara Oil and Gas Company – an African-American-owned company:

"I feel very proud of your organization and shall do all I can to encourage my people to take hold of it ... It is only one of the enterprises that our people need to stimulate to greater efforts. As you say, so say I, let the company be exclusively in the hands of our own people. Let us own every dollar of the stock, and thus demonstrate our capacity to own and control, and properly manage such a corporation. I am with you; I congratulate you; I am at your services to do what I can to help you win success, and winning success gives the lie to the oft repeated assertion 'the Negro is a failure in business'" (Billingsley 106-107).

Responding to Gen. Rufus Saxton's warnings about Republican corruption, Emancipation Day, January 1, 1872

"...the reputation I gained in bringing out the *Planter* I do not intend to sully by my actions as a member of the state legislature...As well as I knew the beacon lights in the time of the *Planter*, I know the beacon lights now, and the channel that leads to honesty, virtue, purity and intelligence, and I trust that I may ever be found working with those who are anxious to guide the ship of state of South Carolina from the dark and troubled waters in which she is now, safe past the rocks, torpedoes and hostile guns of ignorance, immorality and dishonesty in high places into the calm and placid waters of that harbor where religious, social, moral and political purity reign supreme" (Billingsley 123-124).

Smalls commenting on poor South Carolinians caught in the "contract system" which left them hopelessly in debt:

"The contract system is such that hundreds of people never see a dollar the whole year round, they only receive orders on [company] stores and at the end of the year are in debt to their employers, having to pay seventy or one hundred per cent [interest] on goods sold on such orders" (Miller 67).

About a \$10,000 bribe offer from Wade Hampton and the SC Democrats in November 1877:

"[Mr. Drayton] came to me and said, 'Smalls, we don't want to harm you. Get out of the way. We know you were kind to our people just after the surrender, and Governor Hampton says he doesn't want to injure you. We want this government, and we must have it. If you will vacate your office we will pay you \$10,000 for your two years' salary.' Said I ... 'I would suffer myself to go into the penitentiary and rot before I would resign an office that I was elected to on a trumped-up charge against me for the purpose of making me resign'" (Billingsley 147).

After being defeated in the 1886 election:

"They tell you that my vote has fallen off. No, sir. The vote is the same today, and more, but the Democrats have improved their methods of preventing votes from getting into the box" (P. Sterling, 92).

To the members of the 1895 South Carolina Constitutional Convention:

"My race needs no special defense, for the past history of them in this country proves them to be as good as any people anywhere. All they need is an equal chance in the battle of life ... I stand here the equal of any man. I started out in the war with the Confederates; they threatened to punish me and I left them. I went to the Union army. I fought in seventeen battles to make glorious and perpetuate the flag that some of you trampled under your feed. Innocent of every charge attempted to be made here today against me, no act or word of yours can in any way blur the record that I have made at home and abroad" (Billingsley 177-178).

- **In a letter to Frederick Douglass, 1903**

"I am deeply interested in the common school system, because it was the first public act of my life to work for the establishment of this at Beaufort" (www.robertsmalls.org).

- **Of life in slavery, later in his life:**

"Our lives were one long eternal night, not even an occasional silver lining to bid us hope for a happier day" (Billingsley 25).

- **In a letter to Booker T. Washington, 1913**

"During the twenty odd years I have held the position of Collector, I have succeeded to so manage affairs that when I leave it, I will do so with credit to myself, my family, and my race" (www.robertsmalls.org).

How Described By Others:

- **New York Commercial Advertiser, May 19, 1862:**

"We suppose few events that have taken place during the war have produced a heartier chuckle of satisfaction than the capture of the rebel armed steamer Planter ... the fellow who managed this affair proves that, in spite of his name, he is no Small man" (Miller 9-10).

- **Hannah Smalls, on her decision to escape on the Planter with her husband, April 1862:**

"I will go, and where you die, I will die" (Billingsley 54).

- **Admiral DuPont describing Robert Smalls in a report to Gideon Welles, May 14, 1862:**

"The bringing out of this steamer would have done credit to anyone ... This man Robert Smalls is superior to any who has yet come into lines, intelligent as many of them have been. His information has been most interesting, and portions of it of the utmost importance." (Billingsley 60-61, P. Sterling 81-82, Miller 4).

- **New York Daily Tribune, September 10, 1862:**

"This man, though black is one of the few history will delight to honor. He has done something for his race and for the world of mankind. If each one of the Generals in our army had displayed as much coolness and courage as he did when he saluted the Rebel flag and steamed past the Rebel fort, by this time the Rebellion would have been among the things that were" (Billingsley 72).

- **Inscription on a medal given to Robert Smalls on October 2, 1862:**

"Presented to ROBERT SMALLS by the colored citizens of New York, October 2, 1862, as a token of their regard for his heroism, his love of liberty and his patriotism." This medal is now in the US Navy Museum in Washington (Billingsley 73-74).

- **An observer writing about Smalls, piloting the *Planter*, during the flag-raising ceremony at Ft. Sumter, April 1864:**

[Smalls was among the freedmen], a prince among them, self-possessed, prompt and proud, giving his orders to the helmsman in ringing tones of command" (Billingsley 91).

- **A white observer, commenting on Smalls' return to Charleston in March 1865:**

"[Smalls was] able to give bread to half the bank presidents and brokers on Broad Street" (Billingsley 90).

- **New York Times, July 30, 1876:**

"Hon. Robert Smalls, of South Carolina, who bravely defended his race against the mean attack of Sunset Cox, a few

days since, in the House, is one of the best representatives of the colored race in official position, and has quite an interesting history.” (http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?_r=1&res=9D07E2DA1F3FE73BBC4850DFB166838D669FDE&oref=slogin, Accessed Jan. 24, 2008).

- **Beaufort Republican, March 21, 1872**

”It is understood that Sen. Smalls will receive the regular nomination for Adjutant and Inspector General, a position he has earned by organizing the only efficient regiment of militia in the state” (Miller 65).

- **“T.G.W.” in the July 15, 1878 issue of Charleston News and Courier, covering a Republican meeting at Brick Church, St. Helena Island:**

”The redoubtable Congressman Smalls was next called upon, and took the stage amid the vociferous cheers of an adoring multitude. It is perfectly astonishing to witness the increasing influence of this Negro. He seems to possess the confidence of his race to a degree that no other Negro can hope to attain. The men, women and children seem to regard him with a feeling akin to worship” (Billingsley 151-152).

- **Charleston News and Courier, after hearing Robert Smalls speak at the 1895 Constitutional Convention:**

”...we believe it safe to say that [Smalls] could not be convicted before a jury of impartial white men anywhere on the same evidence today. Perhaps some of the lawyers or citizens of Columbia will take the trouble to correct or confirm what we have said in the interest of justice” (Billingsley 179).

- **William Elliott Jr., in an undated memoir:**

”It was said of him, and I believe the story, that when his former owner, Mrs. McKee, came back to Beaufort after the war in great poverty he took her to his house, which had belonged to her and which he had acquired at Direct Tax sale, and gave her the best room in his house, which was a rather fine one. He brought her meals to her, and when she protested that he was now a United States General and a man of prominence and had servants he replied, “Madam, when you were my owner and had power over me you always treated me with kindness and consideration, and now that our positions are somewhat changed, I shall not fail in showing my great respect for you,” and continued to bring meals” (Billingsley 104).

- **William Robert Smalls, about his father’s education accomplishments:**

”...his dream was that of public free education. Smalls had made many friends, both white and colored throughout the country. He now sent out his plea on behalf of the people ... money was raised because his friends believed in him. Upon his return to Beaufort, he purchased with this money, a large estate with buildings and several acres of ground. This site he deeded to “The Negro Children of Beaufort as a school” (Billingsley 107).

- **William Robert Smalls, remembering his father:**

”My father was fearless. Not afraid of anybody or anything. He was never intimidated until his dying day” (Billingsley 216).

- **Thomas Miller, Robert’s political protégé, late in Smalls’ life:**

”Smalls was educated practically in the school of contact with the very best cultured minds of businessmen on the wharves and ware houses in the city of Charleston ... a kind of education that fits a man for service” (Billingsley 43).

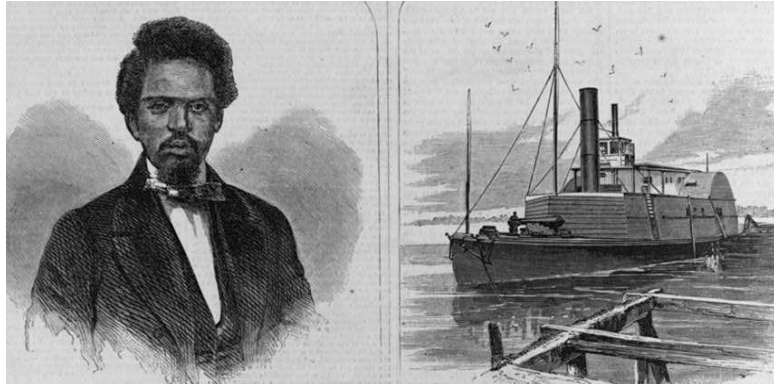
Timeline of Events:

- April 5, 1839 Born in Beaufort, S.C, in a two room shack behind the Jane & Henry McKee house. His mother, Lydia, 43, was a house slave for the McKees. Robert also became a house servant.
- 1851 At age 12 Robert was taken to Charleston to live with Jane’s sister, Eliza Ancrum. His first job was as waiter at the Planter Hotel. His next job was as a lamplighter. Next he was a stevedore – loading and unloading ship cargo. By age 15 he was a supervisor at the docks (Miller 8).
- After this, Robert worked for John Simmons. He became an expert rigger (in the winter) and an excellent sailor (in the summer). He sailed on coastal vessels and inland waterways from Charleston into Georgia and Florida (Billingsley 43).
- Dec 24, 1856 At age 19, he married Hannah Jones, a slave and hotel maid. She was 33 and had two children, Clara (15) and Charlotte (17).
- Feb. 12, 1858 Elizabeth Lydia Smalls was born -- named after Elizabeth McKee and Smalls’ mother, Lydia.
- Robert spent 1858 to 1861 memorizing all the channels, shoals and reefs in Charleston harbor and becoming an expert boatman (Billingsley 47).
- 1861 Robert Smalls, Jr. was born
- July 1861 In Charleston, Smalls was hired as a deck hand on the *Planter*, a Confederate transport steamer. He was one of 8 enslaved crewmen (Billingsley 52).
- Nov. 7, 1861 Port Royal Harbor was captured by the Union.
- March 1862 Abolitionist Maj. Gen. David Hunter took command of the Department of the South, Port Royal.
- March 1, 1862 Robert Smalls was promoted to “wheelman” of the *Planter*.
- April 1862 Smalls, his wife Hannah, and several other African Americans began their plans to escape on the *Planter*.
- May 12, 1862 The crew of the *Planter* finished a two-week supply duty. Captain C. J. Relyea, Pilot Samuel H. Smith, and Engineer E. Zerich Pitcher violated regulations and went ashore to be with their families (Billingsley 54).
- May 13, 1862 At 3 AM, Smalls and his “family of liberation” began their trip to freedom. Smalls looked like Captain Relyea, from a distance by wearing the Captain’s jacket and hat and adopting his mannerisms (Miller 2). The *Planter* then went to the *Etowah* and picked up several passengers, including Hannah, Elizabeth and Robert Smalls, Jr., as well as Robert’s stepdaughter Clara Jones (Billingsley 56).
- At sunrise, Lt. J. F. Nichols of the USS *Onward* saw the *Planter* and prepared to fire; Smalls took down the South Carolina and Confederate flags and raised a white flag. By 10 AM, the ship was turned over to US Admiral Samuel DuPont (Billingsley 59).

Not only was the *Planter* valuable for its size and capabilities, it had valuable weapons on board. Smalls himself was valuable because he knew the inland and coastal waters very well. He knew the locations of mines, troops, and possessed a book of Confederate flag signals (www.robertsmalls.org).

Smalls was kept as pilot of the *Planter* under Admiral DuPont. He also piloted other vessels, including DuPont's flagship, the *Wabash* (www.robertsmalls.org).

April 13, 1862 Gen. Hunter declared that all slaves in his territory were free and eligible to fight for the Union (Miller 3-4). However, Abraham Lincoln canceled this declaration.



Robert Smalls and the *Planter*, a print from Harpers' Weekly. June 14, 1862. Library of Congress, LC-USZ62-117998

May 19, 1862 Took part in military action in the Stono River area, which fell under Union control.

May 30, 1862 Smalls and the group on the *Planter* were awarded prize money for their capture of the *Planter*. Robert himself received \$1,500. However, the actual worth of the *Planter* was much higher.

June 1862 Smalls was appointed as Admiral DuPont's representative to the Port Royal Experiment. (Smalls spoke both Gullah and "regular" English, plus understood the views of both the blacks and whites). He met northern abolitionists for the first time, and some became personal friends and co-workers for the rest of his life (Billingsley 67-68).



Preparing cotton for the cotton gin, Port Royal, SC, 1862. Library of Congress: LC-B811- 159

July 15, 1862 Admiral DuPont sent the *Planter's* South Carolina and Confederate flags to the Secretary of the Navy for historic preservation (Billingsley 64).

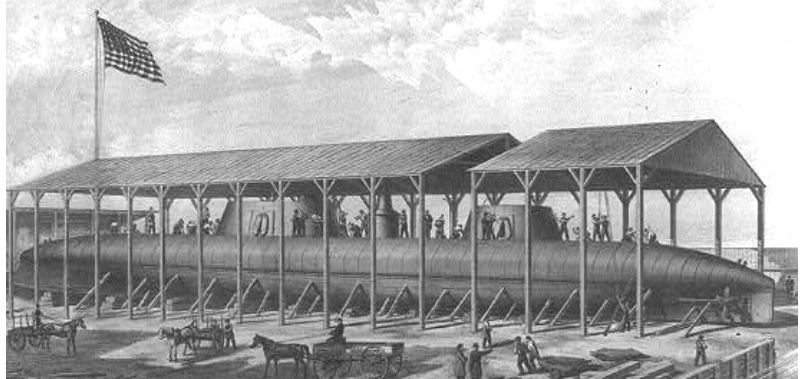
August 20, 1862 At Maj. Gen. David Hunter's request, Robert Smalls and Mansfield French (a northern abolitionist missionary) met with Sec. of War Edwin Stanton. A few days later they met with Abraham Lincoln. On August 25 permission was granted to recruit black troops (www.robertsmalls.com, Billingsley 70). Back at Beaufort, Smalls personally recruited black soldiers.

Sept. 7, 1862 Smalls, Hannah and Robert Jr. went to New York on an abolitionist sponsored speaking tour (www.robertsmalls.org). He was an excellent speaker & role model. Admiral DuPont, however, feared he would lose Smalls' services. In October 1862, the free black citizens of New York presented Smalls with a gold medal while he was speaking at the Shiloh Church (Miller 16).

April 7, 1863 Robert Smalls piloted the USS *Keokuk*, a monitor with experimental features, during

Admiral DuPont's failed attack on Ft. Sumter and Charleston Harbor. Smalls himself displayed great bravery. During this attack he was wounded in the face, which affected his eyesight for the rest of his life. The *Keokuk* was hit over 90 times and sank on the morning of April 8th. He and his crew were rescued in the nick of time (Billingsley 75-81, www.robertsmalls.org).

Admiral DuPont decided not to salvage the *Keokuk* – or its Dahlgren guns. The Confederacy did salvage the guns, however. Today, one of the guns can be seen at the intersection of East Bay and South Ferry Streets (Billingsley 81).



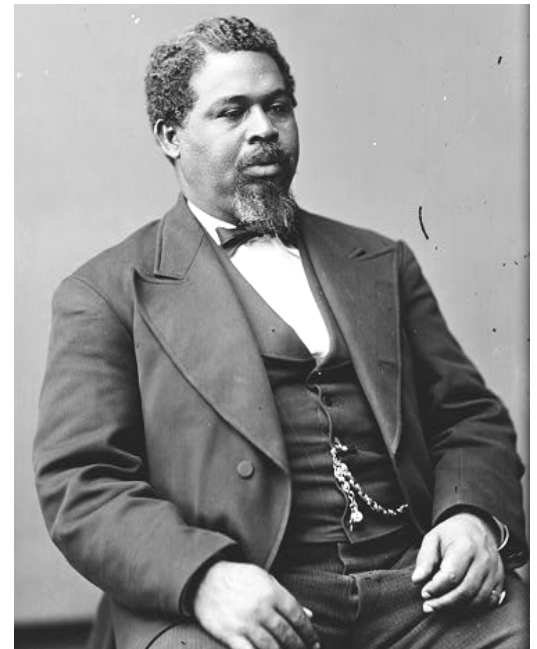
Launching of the USS Keokuk, April 1862. Library of Congress LC-USZ62-59491

- mid-1863 Son, Robert Smalls, Jr., dies of disease.
- The house at 501 Prince Street – where Robert and his mother lived in slavery – was auctioned at a tax sale. Robert placed the winning bid and came to own the house where he or members of his family lived for 90 years (Miller 24).
- July 1863 Robert ferried men to Morris Island – including men of the 54th and 55th Massachusetts.
- Dec. 1, 1863 At Light House Inlet, near Secessionville, the *Planter* came under intense crossfire from a ship and two batteries. Captain Nickerson hid below deck in a coal bunker! Smalls took charge and brought the vessel to safety. Nickerson was dismissed as a coward; Smalls was appointed captain. He was the first black Navy captain in the service of the United States (www.robertsmalls.org, Miller 20-21).
- Dec. 1, 1863 Daughter, Sarah Voorhees Smalls, was born.
- May 13, 1864 to Dec. 24, 1864 Smalls arrived in Philadelphia to have the *Planter* repaired. While there, he spoke with church groups, Freedmen's Aid Societies, abolitionists and other groups.
- He had hired a retired naval officer to help him read maps and teach him the route to Philadelphia prior to this journey (Billingsley 87). After he arrived, he may have hired tutors to teach him reading and writing (Bampfield 3).
- Unfortunately, Smalls and a fellow sailor were ejected from a streetcar because of his color (www.robertsmalls.org).
- Feb. 1865 Smalls received a contract to take families from Savannah, GA to their new homes as part of Gen. William T. Sherman's "Special Field Order No. 15" – setting aside 40 acres of land to newly freed African Americans (Billingsley 88, Miller 24). Unfortunately, after Lincoln was assassinated, many blacks were evicted when Johnson took office.
- Feb. 17, 1865 The 21st US Volunteer Regiment and the 54th Massachusetts Colored Infantry occupied Charleston – transported there by Robert Smalls. In March, Robert entered Charleston for the first time since his escape.
- Apr. 14, 1865 Ceremonial flag raising at Ft. Sumter – first time the Union flag was raised since the Civil War Preservation Trust Gifted Module: Character and Leadership During the Civil War * www.civilwar.org * Biography 1

beginning of the war. Smalls piloted the *Planter* – carrying 3,000 people! – in the “massive water parade” in which generals, abolitionists and admirals nationwide were in attendance (Billingsley 90-91).

On this same day, John Wilkes Booth shot Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln died the next day.

- Dec. 1865 The *Planter* was transferred from the Army to the Freedman’s Bureau. In June, 1866, it was transferred to the Treasury Department to be sold (Billingsley 92).
- On December 6, 1865, the 13th Amendment was added to the Constitution.
- 1866-1868 Smalls bought a large amount of property in Beaufort County, including the Lady’s Island plantation where his mother was born into slavery. He also opened a general store on Carteret Street (Billingsley 105).
- Feb. 1867 Member of the Beaufort County School District Board and bought land for a school.
- 1867 Smalls and 37 other black men formed the Beaufort Republican Club, the first republican organization in SC (www.robertsmalls.org). Smalls was nominated to go to the Constitutional Convention (Miller 45).
- Jan. 1868 Smalls was selected as a delegate to the (South Carolina) State Constitutional Convention. He was active in the education and finance committees (Billingsley 116-117; www.robertsmalls.org). His resolution for the creation of a system of free public schools was accepted by the Convention.
- July 7, 1868 South Carolina ratified the 14th Amendment, making enough states to making the amendment Federal law. On July 9th the state was readmitted to the United States.
- 1868-1870 Served in SC House of Representatives.
- Because African Americans were being intimidated – or killed – for attempting to exercise their civil rights (especially the right to vote), Smalls called for a measure to use force to enforce the Civil Rights Act. This was unsuccessful.
- 1869 Smalls became a member of the Lincoln Republican Guard (Militia) (Miller 57). By 1873 he had risen to Major General.
- Feb. 1870 15th Amendment added to the Constitution.
- 1870-1874 Served in SC State Senate. In 1874 he was elected to the US House of Representatives.
- Dec. 6, 1874 Robert Smalls took his seat in the House of Representatives. He moved to an apartment on Second Street in Washington, DC. His daughter, Elizabeth, joined him as his secretary (Billingsley 125).



Robert Smalls in the 1870s.
Library of Congress, LC-BH826- 825.

His major achievements were getting Port Royal, SC to be the South Atlantic Navy Base, and promoting a successful bill to return Federal “tax land” to Beaufort County. By

1890, African Americans owned $\frac{3}{4}$ of the land in Beaufort County (Billingsley 126).

March 25, 1876 With sorrow, Smalls read in the newspaper that the *Planter* sank while on a rescue mission (Miller 27).

July 8-9 1876 Hamburg Massacre. Hundreds of armed whites on horseback, under former Confederate General Matthew C. Butler, killed approximately 30 militiamen, and then ransacked the homes and stores of black citizens in Hamburg, SC. Smalls was able to receive a Congressional investigation. Seven men were indicted for murder – with dozens named as accessories. President Grant himself promised extra troops to keep the peace in SC.

Unfortunately, Democrats took the legislature in the fall elections and the men were acquitted. Butler himself won a seat in the US Senate (Billingsley 127-129).

Summer 1876 underpaid Smalls helped end a dispute between rice plantation workers (with whom he can speak in Gullah) and their white employers. In the end, the black workers were paid in cash instead of company scrip (Billingsley 130-131).

August 1876 Members of the ‘Red Shirts’ threaten to kill Robert Smalls while he is campaigning for Gov. Chamberlain at Edgefield, SC.

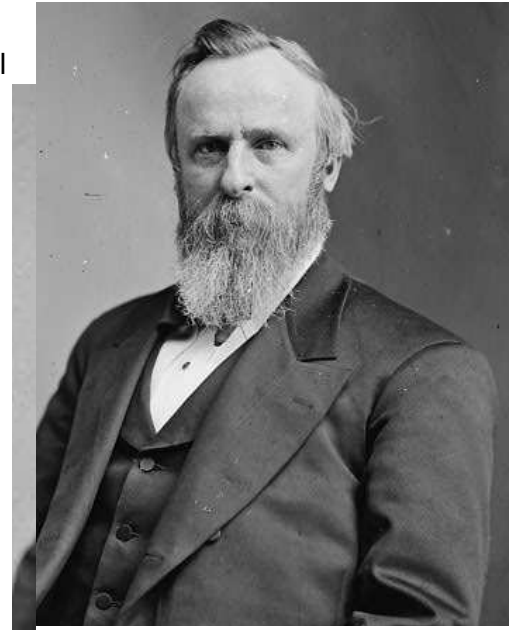
Fall 1876 Former Gen. Wade Hampton was elected the Democratic governor of South Carolina, effectively marking the end of Reconstruction in the state (Billingsley 131).

1875-1886 Served in 44th, 45th, 47th, 48th and 49th U.S. Congresses.

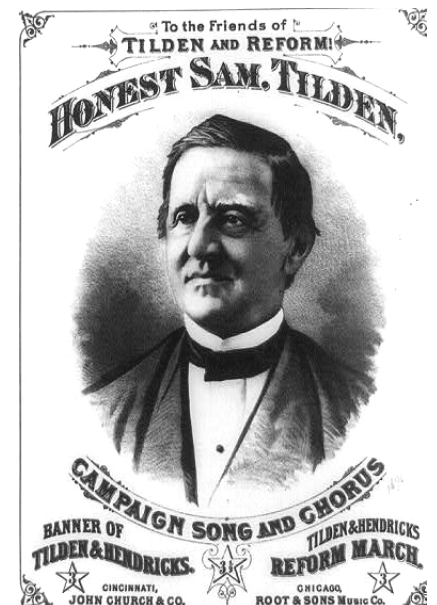
Fall 1876 Hayes-Tilden Compromise. In the 1876 presidential election, Republican Rutherford B. Hayes (OH) ran against Democrat Samuel J. Tilden (NY). Tilden won the popular vote but was one vote short of an absolute majority in the Electoral College. The House of Representatives was unable to decide on a winner. The parties compromised: Democrats would support Hayes if he would remove Federal troops from the South.

Unsuccessfully, Smalls and several black leaders urged Hayes not to remove the troops – for fear that black civil rights victories would be lost without military backing. However, Hayes had made a deal with the Southern Democrats and did not budge.

October 6, 1877 Smalls was arrested at home and accused of accepting a bribe in January 1873 while a



President Rutherford B. Hayes. Library of Congress LC-BH826- 400



Samuel Tilden on campaign song sheet. Library of Congress LC-USZ62-89311

state senator. He was very quickly found guilty – largely due to the testimony of a known felon who was testifying to save his own hide. Smalls was sentenced to three years of hard labor (Billingsley 132; New York Times December 15, 1877).

Smalls was among several African-American leaders who were publicly humiliated and/or removed from office.

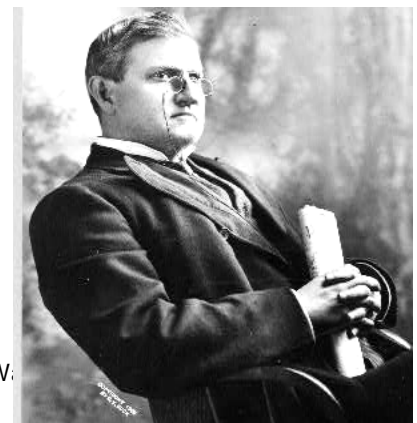
Smalls took his case all the way to the US Supreme Court. Gov. Wade Hampton pardoned Smalls on April 23, 1879, before the trial. This pardon was part of a political deal: if the US would “overlook” South Carolina voting fraud and the Hamburg Massacre, SC would pardon Smalls and two other blacks (Billingsley 149).

Despite this defeat, Smalls served three more terms in Congress.

- 1879 Captain of the Beaufort Light Infantry.
- 1880 George G. Tillman defeated Smalls in the Beaufort district. Smalls contested the election and after a full year and a half, the House of Representatives decided in his favor. Unfortunately, the term was almost expired!
- 1882 Smalls withdrew his bid for the House of Representatives in favor of E. M. Mackey. However, Mackey died soon after election, and Smalls was sent to replace him. One of Smalls’ actions was to attempt to increase Admiral Hunter’s pension to support Hunter’s widow. The measure was passed by both the House and the Senate, but vetoed by Grover Cleveland (Billingsley 159). Smalls verbally attacks Cleveland in the House.
- July 28, 1883 Hannah Smalls died and was buried at Tabernacle Baptist Church.
- 1884 Smalls defeated former CS veteran and attorney William Elliott, Sr., in the 1884 election.
- 1886 William Elliott, Sr. defeated Smalls – marking the end of Smalls’ congressional career (Billingsley 161). Elliott had extensive support from Senator Wade Hampton and President Grover Cleveland – especially since Cleveland was angered by Smalls’ attacks during the 1882-1884 term.
- 1889-1911 Served as U. S. Collector of Customs, with the exception of 1894-1898 (because of Democratic president Grover Cleveland). He had been appointed in 1889 by Republican Benjamin Harrison as a reward for his faithful campaign support (Billingsley 162).
- April 9, 1890 Smalls married Annie Wigg.
- Benjamin Tillman was elected governor of South Carolina; violence against blacks was at a peak. Smalls began to travel with a handgun (Billingsley 165-166).
- Feb. 27, 1892 William Robert Smalls was born.
- Aug. 1893 A category three hurricane hit the Sea Islands; 2,000 were drowned and tens of thousands were destitute and homeless. Smalls worked with relief workers, including Clara Barton and the Red Cross, to distribute food and clothing. The relief efforts lasted for almost a year (Billingsley 110).

Sept. 10, 1895 Gov. Ben Tillman had called for a

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Benjamin Tillman. Library of Congress
LC-USZ62-104434

Constitutional Convention – largely to counter the 15th Amendment and the 1868 Constitution (Billingsley 165). Smalls is one of 6 black delegates. Robert Aldrich, the temporary chair, calls the 1868 Constitution “the fruit of the Reconstruction Acts, which were notoriously unconstitutional...That Constitution was made by aliens, Negroes, and natives without character, all the enemies of South Carolina” (Billingsley 166). Benjamin Tillman is the Chair of the Committee on the Right of Suffrage.

Smalls, and the rest of the black delegates from Beaufort, earned praise from observers for their eloquence, reasoning and knowledge (Billingsley 169).

Tillman verbally attacked Smalls – reminding the convention of his 1877 bribery conviction. On November 2nd, Smalls responded with his famous speech: “My race needs no special defense, for the past history of them in this country proves them to be as good as any people anywhere” (Billingsley 177).

- Nov. 5, 1895 Annie Wiggs Smalls died. She was buried next to Hannah in the Tabernacle Baptist Church cemetery. On November 14th, Smalls returned to the Constitutional Convention.
- Dec. 4, 1885 The SC Constitutional Convention was officially concluded. African Americans lost their voting rights – until 1965. Smalls refused to sign the document – and in response, a delegate suggested that those members refusing to sign should not be paid. Smalls stated that he would walk home rather than sign (Billingsley 178).
- 1897 President William Henry Harrison signed a relief bill restoring Smalls to the Navy pension rolls (www.robertsmalls.org).
- 1900 Congress awarded Smalls an additional \$5,000 for his capture of the *Planter* – after many unsuccessful attempts (www.robertsmalls.org).
- 1911 Despite many pleas and petitions, Smalls was not reappointed to his post as Collector of Customs, largely due to poor health.
- Feb. 23, 1915 Died in Beaufort. Buried at Tabernacle Baptist Church between his first wife, Hannah, and his second wife, Annie. He had been suffering from diabetes and at one point his foot was amputated due to the disease (Billingsley 220).

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Connections to the NCSS Curriculum Strands (with points for exploration):

I. Culture –

During Robert Smalls' early years in Beaufort and Charleston, he learned much from his proximity to people from different cultures: the Gullah-speaking slaves on the McKee plantation, the McKees (from whom he learned about the culture of wealthy white southerners), international laborers and visitors at the Charleston docks, and his mother (from whom he learned confidence, the value of hard work, and his African heritage). How would this socialization help him later in life – especially as a state and national politician?

How did the culture of plantation owners, plantation slaves, household slaves, free blacks and poor whites differ during antebellum South Carolina? How did these cultures change as a result of the Civil War? As a result of Reconstruction? After the failure of Reconstruction?

What was the structure of slave families before and during the war? How did this structure help or hinder African American families after the war?

Why was Smalls' support of African American schools so important to the community?

How did the 1868 and 1895 SC constitutions reflect changing cultural values in South Carolina? How did Rutherford B. Hayes' decision to remove Federal troops from the South – which Smalls protested – reflect changing cultural values across the nation?

II. Time, Continuity and Change—

How did Charleston – and South Carolina itself – change before, during and after the war?

What were Robert's duties on the (Confederate) *Planter*? How did he serve the Union during the war? How did Confederate and pre-war experience help him in the service of the Union? How did his overall war record, as well as his character and leadership, help him become serve in the South Carolina and Federal legislatures?

Why did the Union Army eventually decide to enlist African American soldiers? How did Union losses at Bull Run and during the Peninsula Campaign influence the decision to recruit African American soldiers? When and why did the Confederate Army eventually come to the same conclusion? What was the outcome?

By what processes did Reconstruction end in South Carolina? How did Robert Smalls try to fight this process? Who were the key players? How were African-Americans affected?

Why is it significant that US Admiral Samuel DuPont set aside the *Planter's* South Carolina and Confederate flags for historic preservation?

Why should Civil War battlefields be preserved? What would we lose as a nation if these hallowed grounds were lost to development? What could you learn about Robert Smalls by visiting the Charleston and Beaufort areas?

III. People, Places and Environments –

What natural features made Charleston harbor a “tricky” place to navigate? How did Robert Smalls' knowledge of these features make him useful to both the Confederacy and the Union?

How were the Sea Islands different from the mainland? What crops were grown there? How were/ are the Sea Islands vulnerable in hurricane season? What was the “Port Royal Experiment”? When did Clara Barton and Robert Smalls work on the same project?

On a map, locate the military actions in which Robert Smalls took part. How did Navy and Army vessels support land operations?

IV. Individual Development and Identity –

In the 1800s, conflicts existed between the following groups in South Carolina: whites and blacks, free blacks and slaves, newly arrived slaves and American-born slaves, house slaves and field hands, light-skinned and dark-skinned African Americans. What were some of the issues at the core of these conflicts? In what ways could Robert Smalls identify with members of all of these groups?

How did Smalls' upbringing affect his character and his leadership skills?

How did hearing a portion of a Frederick Douglass speech change Robert Smalls' life? Are there any books, poems,

How did Smalls gain important skills when he worked “on his own” in Charleston? What skills were they, and how did they help him in the Civil War and as a legislator?

How did Smalls’ capture of the *Planter* change his self-image? How did it change his standing in Northern opinion? In what ways was his standing NOT changed?

How did the *Planter* help him to become wealthy and enter the political arena? How did it boost his reputation?

How did Smalls’ trial (and conviction) in 1877 affect his reputation? How did it affect his personal resolve to both preserve African American rights and stay in the political arena? What happened to Gov. Hampton’s other “victims”?

V. Individuals, Groups and Institutions –

During the years of slavery many African American families were split as family members were sold to different “owners” – and because it was often difficult for married couples to live in the same household. How might generations of split families affect African American culture? Some have stated that Robert Smalls’ “owner”, Henry McKee, acted as a “sociological father” to Robert Smalls (Billingsley 32). What does this mean, and do you agree?

Andrew Billingsley states that Robert Smalls had a “family of origin”, a “family of procreation”, and a “family of liberation” (Billingsley 65). What does this mean?

How was it possible for blacks to “own” other blacks in the 1800s?

What role did churches – especially the African Methodist Episcopal Church – play in the lives of African Americans? What role did Robert play in supporting local churches?

After the Civil War, how did the institution of family change in the African-American community? When Robert Smalls bought the McKee house, a very large family lived with him. How would you describe this family? What were the difficulties in reuniting family members after the Civil War? In gaining official recognition for African-American marriages?

What institutions were closed to African Americans before and after Reconstruction? Who controlled these institutions? What was Robert Smalls’ role in attempting to prevent these losses?

VI. Power, Authority and Governance –

Why was the Port Royal Experiment begun? Why was it necessary to send Robert Smalls to mediate between the former Port Royal slaves and the northern missionaries? What compromise was worked out?

During Reconstruction, how did African Americans gain political power in the South Carolina legislature? How did they lose it? How was the right to vote won and lost? What northern states also restricted black voting rights, and how did they do this?

Why did the Union levy taxes on properties abandoned by Southern planters in the Beaufort and Charleston area? What happened if the taxes were not paid? How did this situation lead to a US Supreme Court case after the war? How did Robert Smalls come to own the house in which he and his mother had labored as slaves?

How does the process of amending the US Constitution work? Why was South Carolina’s ratification of the 14th Amendment particularly significant – to the Nation and to South Carolina? Why was it ample reason for Robert Smalls to launch an eloquent speech and call for a day of “Thanksgiving and prayer”?

What is the role of the Electoral College in presidential elections? What was the crisis in the 1876 election? What was the Hayes-Tilden Compromise? Why was the compromise harmful to African Americans? How might American history be different if Robert Smalls and his delegation had successfully convinced Rutherford B. Hayes NOT to remove Federal troops from the South in 1877?

Why was Robert Smalls convicted of taking a bribe in 1877? What was the evidence against him? After the guilty verdict, how did Smalls continue the legal proceedings? What were the flaws in the case against Smalls? If the trial occurred today instead of in 1877, would Smalls have been convicted? Why was Smalls pardoned? How did the whole incident affect his political career after 1877?

How did the United States attempt to establish order and security in South Carolina after the war? Was “order and security” extended to African Americans? How did the situation change after the election of Rutherford B. Hayes?

Who were the “Red Shirts”? How did they create problems for Robert Smalls and other African Americans in the South? What “terrorist” organizations existed in the South (and across the United States)? How did they operate, and what power did they wield? Do any of these groups still operate today, and do they operate in the same manner?

How did Wade Hampton and his followers wield such enormous power? Was this power legal? What makes “legitimate” power? What other kinds of power exist? How did the press wield power in the 1800s? What power does the media hold today?

Robert Smalls was one of two African-Americans who attended both the 1868 and 1895 Constitutional Conventions in SC. What were the differences between these two constitutions? How did the differences between the two documents reflect the changing power structure in SC? Why was the second Constitutional Convention called? Why did many South Carolinians object to the first Constitution?

VII. Production, Consumption and Distribution –

What agricultural products were produced on the plantations in South Carolina? For what product were the Sea Islands especially suited? Why was Smalls’ role in settling the rice-worker strike especially important? What issues were involved in this strike?

How did Robert Smalls help supply Union troops with supplies during military campaigns?

How did the Union blockade affect production, consumption and distribution? How did it provide opportunities for blockade runners and well-connected “entrepreneurs”?

VIII. Science, Technology and Society –

What kind of ship was the *Planter*? How was it “improved” during the war?

The (Confederate) *Planter* helped lay torpedoes for unsuspecting Union ships. What is the difference between a modern day “torpedo” and a Civil War “torpedo”? What were an “ironside” and a “monitor”?

Robert Smalls also piloted the *Keokuk* – under heavy fire. What features made the *Keokuk* different from the rest of the US fleet? Why did the *Keokuk* sink? The US gave up the *Keokuk* when it sank – but what item on the ship was so important that the Confederacy undertook a risky salvage mission to retrieve it? Why?

IX. Global Connections --

How was Charleston tied to the global economy before the Civil War? How did Robert Smalls come into contact with people from other countries while he was a slave? How did the Union blockade affect the Charleston (and southern) economy and war effort?

How did the practice of slavery affect the world’s view of the Confederacy – especially French and English views?

X. Civic Ideals and Practices –

What legal and social rights did free African Americans possess in the 1800s? What legal and social rights were withheld? Which civil rights did South Carolina freedmen gain – and lose – in the course of Reconstruction? Why? How did Robert Smalls fight to prevent this course of events?

When Smalls went to New York on an abolitionist-sponsored speaking tour, he could have stayed in the North. Instead, he returned to South Carolina to serve Admiral DuPont. Why?

Why did many African Americans enlist in the Union Army? How did Robert Smalls help in the enlistment of African American soldiers? Why was this an important step towards (eventual) civil rights?

South Carolina ratified the 14th Amendment on July 9, 1868 – making the required 2/3 states necessary to make the 14th Amendment a permanent part of the US Constitution – and as such, Federal law. Robert Smalls was elated, and launched an eloquent speech in the SC House of Representatives. Some states ratified the amendment very late – for example, Kentucky in 1976! Have any states not ratified the 13th, 14th and/or 15th amendments?

Why did Robert Smalls refuse to resign when “requested” to by Governor Wade Hampton and the Democrats? Would you have the same strength and courage to stand up for something you believe in?

Why did Smalls refuse to sign the South Carolina Constitution of 1895?

Six Pillars of Character

from Character Counts! by the Josephson Institute

Trustworthiness

- + Smalls was reliable in his work – for the McKees, John Simmons, and for the Union.
- + He was loyal to African Americans, his country, his party and his allies.
- + While he was convicted of bribery in 1877, evidence shows that he was probably innocent of the charges and had a respectable political career.
- + He had the courage to keep campaigning despite repeated political and physical threats. He also had the courage to do the right thing in not signing the 1895 South Carolina Constitution due to its unfairness to African-Americans.
- + When the *Planter* came under heavy fire and Captain Nickerson wanted to surrender, Robert had the courage to take over and lead the ship to safety. (Surrender meant death to the African-Americans.)
- +/- Some might argue that his abduction of the *Planter* was unfair to the vessel's owner – still, Smalls did what he had to do to bring freedom to himself and his family (and quite a few others).
- Stayed out past curfew many times as a child, so Henry McKee had to get him out of jail repeatedly. Still, the curfew was a racial one and therefore unfair.

Respect

- + Robert could understand the viewpoints of whites and blacks of different backgrounds
- + He had great respect for Admiral DuPont and his superior officers during the Civil War.
- + Smalls knew that taking the *Planter* was risky, so ultimately it was Hannah's decision to come with Robert – he did not make the decision for her.
- Robert had a temper and didn't always respond calmly and peacefully to personal insults.

Responsibility

- + Robert was excellent at saving and making money. Even before his family's escape, he had made a (largely successful) plan to "buy" his wife and child from their "owner".
- + He provided a better future for his family by escaping to freedom. Robert, Hannah, and the crewmembers took great care in planning the abduction of the *Planter*. It was not a spur-of-the-moment affair. They knew the consequences of failure.
- + Even though the Reconstruction era was ending – with tragic results for African Americans – he persevered in his work to protect the civil and human rights of African Americans..
- + Smalls took his responsibilities as Collector of Customs seriously, knowing that he wasn't the only one who would be judged by his work – African Americans in general would be judged.

Fairness

- + When one of Smalls' associates did NOT want to be involved in the abduction of the *Planter*, he allowed the man not to participate provided he vowed to be silent. This was risky because one "slipped" word could have had serious consequences for everyone involved.
- + When Smalls knew that his political career was seriously damaged and he would never be a legislator again, he supported a newcomer in his political campaigns.
- + When he criticized politicians and others who attacked him, his criticisms were generally valid.
- + Smalls was open-minded and would listen to other viewpoints, which helped him as a mediator and a politician.
- When a newspaper claimed that a Union officer had called him "boy", Smalls came to the officer's defense.
- Some might argue that in spending so much time in the legislature, in campaigning, in speaking tours, and so on, he spent too little time with his first wife and his young children.

Caring

- + Robert forgave the McKees, his former "owners". He was kind and compassionate to the family whenever possible. He showed great respect to elderly Jane McKee (by inviting her to live in his home and bringing meals to her room).
- + He opened his home to several people besides direct family members, taking them "under his wing".
- + Robert was grateful to the McKee family, former employers, his mother, and others who helped him be successful in life.
- + Robert wanted to do his best for the Union and to serve his constituents in Beaufort County, SC.

Citizenship

- + Smalls supported education in order to make life better for the African American community. He also supported the churches.
- + He respected legitimate authority, but fought "authority" based on fraud, violence and terror.
- + Smalls did his best to help his community after the devastating Sea Islands hurricane disaster.
- + He did his best to protect Beaufort County and African Americans in South Carolina – especially as evidenced after the Hamburg Massacre (when he demanded troops for protection), the showdown with the "Red Shirts", and his pleas (to the Hayes administration) to keep Federal troops in the South.
- +/-- Smalls was, almost without exception, loyal to the Republican Party. However, one might question whether Smalls' unswerving loyalty was helpful or hurtful to his cause, especially after the betrayal by the Rutherford B. Hayes administration.

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<http://charactercounts.org/defsix.htm>

Ten Characteristics of Effective, Caring Leaders

by Larry C. Spears, The Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership

- **Listening:**

- + Smalls identified the will and needs of the African-American community in Beaufort and did his best to support that will.
- + He listened to the positions of both white employers and black rice plantation workers and assisted in bringing a fair solution to end a strike.
- + Robert listened to his INNER voice, and knew he was a strong person with great potential.

- **Empathy:**

- + Smalls helped the McKees– his former “owners” – when they were destitute after the war.
- + Robert could understand the views and needs of whites and blacks of many backgrounds – even if he didn’t always agree with them.
- +/-- He assumed the good intentions of fellow Republicans – however that wasn’t always the case.

- **Healing:**

- + He understood that many people were mentally and emotionally hurt by the war – the McKees, his own family, and blacks/whites of all backgrounds.
- + Robert hoped to heal his community partly through supporting African-American education, churches, and other institutions in Beaufort County.
- + Smalls understood that his actions as a black legislator, customs collector, self-freed man and Captain of the Union *Planter* were a source of hope and inspiration to many slaves and freedmen, before and after the war.

- **Awareness:**

- + Smalls was painfully aware of the political games used to convict him of bribery and to oust other black leaders from power. This strengthened his resolve.

- **Persuasion:**

- + Through his good reputation and his responsibility with money, Robert managed to persuade Samuel Kingsman, his wife and newborn daughter’s “owner”, to do several remarkable things: 1) let them live in the same household, 2) let Robert purchase his wife and daughter, and 3) allow Robert to pay part of the money now, and the rest later.

- + Also through his reputation (and a lot of hard work) he was able to persuade many freedmen voters to vote for the candidates he supported (much of the time).
- **Conceptualization:**
- + Smalls consistently dreamed great dreams – hoping for African-American voting rights, civil rights, business ownership, land and property ownership, and so on. Yet, he understood the day-to-day realities and hurdles to be overcome.
- **Foresight:**
- + Robert Smalls could foresee the likely (and eventual) outcome of removing Federal troops from the South upon the election of Rutherford B. Hayes – a complete rollback of African American rights.
- + He could foresee that African Americans would make excellent soldiers during the Civil War because they would be fighting for their freedom.
- **Stewardship:**
- + Smalls did his best as a legislator for the common good of the people of Beaufort County. He understood that he was under scrutiny as an African-American, Reconstruction, Republican legislator.
- While Smalls was innocent of taking any bribes, after this unfortunate incident he might have served his party and Beaufort County better by supporting his “protégés” and not running for office himself.
- **Commitment to the growth of people:**
- + Robert Smalls contributed to budding black businesses, church groups, schools and other institutions.
- + He set a strong example to his family – and that strength was handed down through the generations.
- + Smalls also supported the rice plantation workers during their strike – while also working with the white plantation owners. He knew that the workers would perpetually be in debt due to the contract system and systems that paid workers in company script, not cash.
- **Building community:**
- + Smalls presence at political rallies – despite physical and political threats – showed his responsibility to and concern for African Americans in his community. His example – of not being intimidated by threats – built up the African American community.

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www.greenleaf.org/leadership/read-about-it/articles/On-Character-and-Servant-Leadership-Ten-Characteristics.htm

Primary Source

Recent slave arrivals at the McKee plantation read Frederick Douglass's latest speech to Robert Smalls when he was a child: "**In the law, the slave has no wife, no children, no country, no home....**" That day, Robert told his mother that when he grew up he wanted "to be a man" like Douglass and be free (Billingsley 24). This is the speech from which that sentence was taken.

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Excerpt from **MY BONDAGE and MY FREEDOM,**
By **FREDERICK DOUGLASS**
1855

THE NATURE OF SLAVERY

Extract from a Lecture on Slavery, at Rochester, December 1, 1850

More than twenty years of my life were consumed in a state of slavery. My childhood was environed by the baneful peculiarities of the slave system. I grew up to manhood in the presence of this hydra headed monster--not as a master--not as an idle spectator--not as the guest of the slaveholder--but as A SLAVE, eating the bread and drinking the cup of slavery with the most degraded of my brother-bondmen, and sharing with them all the painful conditions of their wretched lot. In consideration of these facts, I feel that I have a right to speak, and to speak strongly. Yet, my friends, I feel bound to speak truly.

Goading as have been the cruelties to which I have been subjected--bitter as have been the trials through which I have passed--exasperating as have been, and still are, the indignities offered to my manhood--I find in them no excuse for the slightest departure from truth in dealing with any branch of this subject.

First of all, I will state, as well as I can, the legal and social relation of master and slave. A master is one--to speak in the vocabulary of the southern states--who claims and exercises a right of property in the person of a fellow man. This he does with the force of the law and the sanction of southern religion. The law gives the master absolute power over the slave. He may work him, flog him, hire him out, sell him, and, in certain contingencies, kill him, with perfect impunity. The slave is a human being, divested of all rights--reduced to the level of a brute--a mere "chattel" in the eye of the law--placed beyond the circle of human brotherhood--cut off from his kind--his name, which the "recording angel" may have enrolled in heaven, among the blest, is impiously inserted in a master's ledger, with horses, sheep, and swine.

In law, the slave has no wife, no children, no country, and no home. He can own nothing, possess nothing, acquire nothing, but what must belong to another. To eat the fruit of his own toil, to clothe his person with the work of his own hands, is considered stealing. He toils that another may reap the fruit; he is industrious that another may live in idleness; he eats unbolted meal that another may eat the bread of fine flour; he labors in chains at home, under a burning sun and biting lash, that another may ride in ease and splendor abroad; he lives in ignorance that another may be educated; he is abused that another may be exalted; he rests his toil-worn limbs on the cold, damp ground that another may repose on the softest pillow; he is clad in coarse and tattered raiment that another may be arrayed in purple and fine linen; he is sheltered only by the wretched hovel that a master may dwell in a magnificent mansion; and to this condition he is bound down as by an arm of iron.

From this monstrous relation there springs an unceasing stream of most revolting cruelties. The very accompaniments of the slave system stamp it as the offspring of hell itself. To ensure good behavior, the slaveholder relies on the whip; to induce proper humility, he relies on the whip; to rebuke what he is pleased to term insolence, he relies on the whip; to supply the place of wages as an incentive to toil, he relies on the whip; to bind down the spirit of the slave, to imbrute and destroy his manhood, he relies on the whip, the chain, the gag, the thumb-screw, the pillory, the bowie knife, the pistol, and the blood-hound. These are the necessary and unvarying accompaniments of the system. Wherever slavery is found, these horrid instruments are also found. Whether on the coast of Africa, among the savage tribes, or in South Carolina, among the refined and civilized, slavery is the same, and its accompaniments one and the same. It makes no difference whether the slaveholder worships the God of the Christians, or is a follower of Mahomet, he is the minister of the same cruelty, and the author of the same misery. Slavery is always slavery; always the same foul, haggard, and damning scourge, whether found in the eastern or in the western hemisphere.

There is a still deeper shade to be given to this picture. The physical cruelties are indeed sufficiently harassing and revolting; but they are as a few grains of sand on the sea shore, or a few drops of water in the great ocean, compared with the stupendous wrongs which it inflicts upon the mental, moral, and religious nature of its hapless victims. It is only when we contemplate the slave as a moral and intellectual being that we can adequately comprehend the unparalleled enormity of slavery, and the intense criminality of the slaveholder. I have said that the slave was a man. "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a God! The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals!"

The slave is a man, "the image of God," but "a little lower than the angels;" possessing a soul, eternal and indestructible; capable of endless happiness, or immeasurable woe; a creature of hopes and fears, of affections and passions, of joys and sorrows, and he is endowed with those mysterious powers by which man soars above the things of time and sense, and grasps, with undying tenacity, the elevating and sublimely glorious idea of a God. It is such a being that is smitten and blasted. The first work of slavery is to mar and deface those characteristics of its victims which distinguish men from things, and persons from property. Its first aim is to destroy all sense of high moral and religious responsibility. It reduces man to a mere machine. It cuts him off from his Maker, it hides from him the laws of God, and leaves him to grope his way from time to eternity in the dark, under the arbitrary and despotic control of a frail, depraved, and sinful fellow-man. As the serpent-charmer of India is compelled to extract the deadly teeth of his venomous prey before he is able to handle him with impunity, so the slaveholder must strike down the conscience of the slave before he can obtain the entire mastery over his victim.

It is, then, the first business of the enslaver of men to blunt, deaden, and destroy the central principle of human responsibility. Conscience is, to the individual soul, and to society, what the law of gravitation is to the universe. It holds society together; it is the basis of all trust and confidence; it is the pillar of all moral rectitude. Without it, suspicion would take the place of trust; vice would be more than a match for virtue; men would prey upon each other, like the wild beasts of the desert; and earth would become a hell.

Nor is slavery more adverse to the conscience than it is to the mind. This is shown by the fact, that in every state of the American Union, where slavery exists, except the state of Kentucky, there are laws absolutely prohibitory of education among the slaves. The crime of teaching a slave to read is punishable with severe fines and imprisonment, and, in some instances, with death itself.

Nor are the laws respecting this matter a dead letter. Cases may occur in which they are disregarded, and a few instances may be found where slaves may have learned to read; but such are isolated cases, and only prove the rule. The great mass of slaveholders look upon education among the slaves as utterly subversive of the slave system. I well remember when my mistress first announced to my master that she had discovered that I could read. His face colored at once with surprise and chagrin. He said that "I was ruined, and my value as a slave destroyed; that a slave should know nothing but to obey his master; that to give a Negro an inch would lead him to take an ell; that having learned how to read, I would soon want to know how to write; and that by-and-by I would be running away." I think my audience will bear witness to the correctness of this philosophy, and to the literal fulfillment of this prophecy.

It is perfectly well understood at the south, that to educate a slave is to make him discontented with slavery, and to invest him with a power which shall open to him the treasures of freedom; and since the object of the slaveholder is to maintain complete authority over his slave, his constant vigilance is exercised to prevent everything which militates against, or endangers, the stability of his authority. Education being among the menacing influences, and, perhaps, the most dangerous, is, therefore, the most cautiously guarded against.

It is true that we do not often hear of the enforcement of the law, punishing as a crime the teaching of slaves to read, but this is not because of a want of disposition to enforce it. The true reason or explanation of the matter is this: there is the greatest unanimity of opinion among the white population in the south in favor of the policy of keeping the slave in ignorance. There is, perhaps, another reason why the law against education is so seldom violated. The slave is too poor to be able to offer a temptation sufficiently strong to induce a white man to violate it; and it is not to be supposed that in a community where the moral and religious sentiment is in favor of slavery, many martyrs will be found sacrificing their liberty and lives by violating those prohibitory enactments.

As a general rule, then, darkness reigns over the abodes of the enslaved, and "how great is that darkness!"

We are sometimes told of the contentment of the slaves, and are entertained with vivid pictures of their happiness. We are told that they often dance and sing; that their masters frequently give them wherewith to make merry; in fine, that they have little of which to complain. I admit that the slave does sometimes sing, dance, and appear to be merry. But what does this prove? It only proves to my mind, that though slavery is armed with a thousand stings, it is not able entirely to kill the elastic spirit of the bondman. That spirit will rise and walk abroad, despite of whips and chains, and extract from the cup of nature occasional drops of joy and gladness. No thanks to the slaveholder, nor to slavery, that the vivacious captive may sometimes dance in his chains; his very mirth in such circumstances stands before God as an accusing angel against his enslaver.

It is often said, by the opponents of the anti-slavery cause, that the condition of the people of Ireland is more deplorable than that of the American slaves. Far be it from me to underrate the sufferings of the Irish people. They have been long oppressed; and the same heart that prompts me to plead the cause of the American bondman, makes it impossible for me not to sympathize with the oppressed of all lands. Yet I must say that there is no analogy between the two cases. The Irishman is poor, but he is not a slave. He may be in rags, but he is not a slave. He is still the master of his own body, and can say with the poet, "The hand of Douglass is his own." "The world is all before him, where to choose;" and poor as may be my opinion of the British parliament, I cannot believe that it will ever sink to such a depth of infamy as to pass a law for the recapture of fugitive Irishmen! The shame and scandal of kidnapping will long remain wholly monopolized by the American congress. The Irishman

has not only the liberty to emigrate from his country, but he has liberty at home. He can write, and speak, and cooperate for the attainment of his rights and the redress of his wrongs.

The multitude can assemble upon all the green hills and fertile plains of the Emerald Isle; they can pour out their grievances, and proclaim their wants without molestation; and the press, that "swift-winged messenger," can bear the tidings of their doings to the extreme bounds of the civilized world. They have their "Conciliation Hall," on the banks of the Liffey, their reform clubs, and their newspapers; they pass resolutions, send forth addresses, and enjoy the right of petition. But how is it with the American slave? Where may he assemble? Where is his Conciliation Hall? Where are his newspapers? Where is his right of petition? Where is his freedom of speech? His liberty of the press? And his right of locomotion? He is said to be happy; happy men can speak. But ask the slave what is his condition--what his state of mind--what he thinks of enslavement? And you had as well address your inquiries to the silent dead. There comes no voice from the enslaved. We are left to gather his feelings by imagining what ours would be, were our souls in his soul's stead.

If there were no other fact descriptive of slavery, than that the slave is dumb, this alone would be sufficient to mark the slave system as a grand aggregation of human horrors.

Most who are present, will have observed that leading men in this country have been putting forth their skill to secure quiet to the nation. A system of measures to promote this object was adopted a few months ago in congress. The result of those measures is known. Instead of quiet, they have produced alarm; instead of peace, they have brought us war; and so it must ever be.

While this nation is guilty of the enslavement of three millions of innocent men and women, it is as idle to think of having a sound and lasting peace, as it is to think there is no God to take cognizance of the affairs of men.

There can be no peace to the wicked while slavery continues in the land. It will be condemned; and while it is condemned there will be agitation. Nature must cease to be nature; men must become monsters; humanity must be transformed; Christianity must be exterminated; all ideas of justice and the laws of eternal goodness must be utterly blotted out from the human soul--ere a system so foul and infernal can escape condemnation, or this guilty republic can have a sound, enduring peace.

Primary Source

These are the official Confederate reports concerning Robert Smalls' abduction of the steamer Planter in May, 1862.

OFFICIAL RECORDS: Series 1, Vol. 14, Part 1 (Secessionville) Page 13, Chapter XXVI. ABDUCTION OF STEAMER PLANTER

MAY 13, 1862. - Abduction of the Steamer Planter from Charleston, S. C. *

***By Robert Smalls. See Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, December 1, 1862.**

REPORTS.

Numbers 1. -Major General C. Pemberton, C. S. Army, commanding Department of South Carolina and Georgia.

Numbers 2. -Brigadier General Roswell S. Ripley, C. S. Army, commanding Second Military District of South Carolina.

Numbers 3. -Lieutenant F. G. Ravenel, C. S. Army, Aide-de-Camp.

Numbers 4. -Major Alfred Rhett, First South Carolina Artillery.

Numbers 1. Report of Major General John C. Pemberton, C. S. Army, commanding Department of South Carolina and Georgia.

HDQRS. DEPT. OF SOUTH CAROLINA AND GEORGIA,
Savannah, Ga., May 13, 1862.

I have just learned by telegraph that steamer *Planter*, with five guns aboard, intended for the harbor, was stolen in Charleston this morning.

Very respectfully, &c.,
J. C. PEMBERTON,
Major-General, Commanding.
General R. E. LEE, Richmond, Va.

Numbers 2. Report of General Roswell S. Ripley, C. S. Army, commanding Second Military District of South Carolina.

HDQRS. 2nd MILITARY DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA,
Charleston, S. C., May 14, 1862.

MAJOR: I have the honor to inclose herewith a copy of a report from Lieutenant Ravenel, aide-de-camp, concerning the stealing of the steamer *Planter* from this post; also a report from Major Alfred Rhett, commandant at Fort Sumter. The mischief has occurred from the negligence of the captain and officers of the boat and their disobedience of orders, a copy of which is herewith inclosed, and which had been repeatedly urged upon them. I shall prefer charges against them at an early and lay them before the general commanding the department.

R. S. RIPLEY,
Brigadier-General, Commanding.

Major J. R. WADDY,
Assistant Adjutant-General, Charleston, S. C.

Numbers 3. Report of Lieutenant F. G. Ravenel, C. S. Army, Aide-de-Camp.

HDQRS. 2nd MILITARY DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA,
Charleston, S. C., May 13, 1862.

GENERAL: I have the report that the steamer *Planter* was stolen from Southern Wharf at between 3 and 3.30 o'clock this morning and taken to the enemy's fleet, off the bar, where she was visible till late in the forenoon. By telegram from Stono this afternoon it is reported that she has gone south. The *Planter* is high-pressure light-draught boat, drawing ordinarily not more than 3 1/2 miles to 4 feet, and has been employed in the Confederate service in the transportation of ordnance, &c., to and from the various posts in the harbor and other localities in the neighborhood. She was under the command of C. J. Relyea as master, Samuel H. Smith, a Charleston pilot, being mate, and Zerich Pitcher engineer, with a colored crew, eight in number, and all slaves. Neither the captain, mate, nor engineer were on board at the time of her departure, notwithstanding paragraph VIII, in Orders, Numbers 5, viz: All light-draught steamers in the employ of the Government will be in readiness to move at once, their officers and crews when at the wharf remaining on board day and night.

Four of her colored crew and one of the colored crew of the steamer *Etowah* are missing, and are supposed to be parties to the theft. The *Planter* was to have taken to the Middle Ground Battery early this morning a portion of the armament for that fortifications, which had been put on board yesterday afternoon, viz, a a banded rifle 42, one 8-inch columbiad, one 8-inch seacoast howitzer, and one 32-pounder. She had also mounted for her own use one 32-pounder and a 24-pounder howitzer, and for use in Fort Sumter a 10-inch columbiad carriage, all of which have fallen into the hands of the enemy.

From an examination of the guard in the neighborhood of the wharf whence the *Planter* was stolen it would appear that about 8 o'clock last night two white men and a white woman went on board of her, and as they were not seen to return it is supposed that they have also gone in her. The sentinel on post about 50 yards from where the *Planter* was moored noticed her movement from the wharf at between 3 and 3.30 o'clock, but did not hinge it necessary to stop her, presuming that she was but pursuing her usual business. The *Planter* after leaving the wharf proceeded along the bay as far perhaps as the Atlantic Wharf, where, after a short stoppage and the blowing of her whistle, she was turned and proceeded on her course to sea. She passed Fort Sumter at 4.15 o'clock, and was reported by the sentinel on duty to the officer of the day. She was supposed to be the guard-boat and allowed to pass without interruption.

I have the honor to be, yours, most respectfully,

F. G. RAVENEL,
Aide-de-Camp.

Brigadier General R. S. RIPLEY,
Second Military District.

Numbers 4. Report of Major Alfred Rhett, First South Carolina Artillery.

HEADQUARTERS ARTILLERY REGIMENT,
Fort Sumter, S. C., May 13, 1862.

CAPTAIN: I have the honor to report that at 4.15 o'clock this morning the sentinel on the parapet called for the corporal of the guard and reported the guard-boat going out. It was so reported to the officer of the day, and as it is by no means unusual for the guard-boat to run out at that hour, no further notice was taken of the occurrence.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ALFRED RHETT,
Major.

Captain LEO. D. WALKER,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

Primary Source

These are the official Union reports concerning Robert Smalls' abduction of the steamer *Planter* in May, 1862, as well as activities to honor Smalls and his associates.

Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion: Series I Vol. XXII, pp. 820-826

Abduction of the Confederate Steamer Planter from Charleston, S. C., May 13, 1862.

Report of Flag-Officer Du Pont, U. S. Navy.

FLAGSHIP *WABASH*,
Port Royal Harbor, S. C., May 14, 1862.

SIR: I enclose a copy of a report from Commander E. G. Parrott, brought here last night by the late rebel steam tug *Planter*, in charge of an officer and crew from the *Augusta*. She was an armed dispatch and transportation steamer attached to the engineer department at Charleston, under Brigadier-General Ripley, whose barge, a short time since, was brought out to the blockading fleet by several contrabands. The bringing out of this steamer, under all the circumstances, would have done credit to anyone. At 4 in the morning, in the absence of the captain, who was on shore, she left her wharf close to the Government office and headquarters, with palmetto and Confederate flag flying, passed the successive forts, saluting as usual by blowing her steam whistle. After getting beyond the range of the last gun she quickly hauled down the rebel flags and hoisted a white one.

The *Onward* was the inside ship of the blockading fleet in the main channel, and was preparing to fire when her commander made out the white flag.

The armament of the steamer is a 32-pounder, on pivot, and a fine 24-pounder howitzer. She had, besides, on her deck, four other guns, one 7-inch rifle, which were to be taken the morning of the escape to the new fort on the middle ground. One of the four belonged to Fort Sumter, and had been struck, in the rebel attack on that fort, on the muzzle.

Robert, the intelligent slave and pilot of the boat, who performed this bold feat so skillfully, informed me of this fact, presuming it would be a matter of interest to us to have possession of this gun.

This man, Robert Smalls, is superior to any who has yet come into the lines, intelligent as many of them have been. His information has been most interesting, and portions of it of the utmost importance.

The steamer is quite a valuable acquisition to the squadron, by her good machinery and very light draft. The officer in charge brought her through St. Helena Sound and by the inland passage down Beaufort River, arriving here at 10 last night.

On board the steamer when she left Charleston were 8 men, 5 women, and 3 children.

I shall continue to employ Robert as a pilot on board the *Planter* for the inland waters, with which he appears to be very familiar.

I do not know whether, in the views of the Government, the vessel will be considered a prize; but, if so, I respectfully submit to the Department the claims of this man Robert and his associates.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
S. F. DU PONT,
Flag-Officer, Comdg. South Atlantic Blockading Squadron.

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

Report of Commander Parrott, U. S. Navy, commanding U. S. S. Augusta.

U. S. S. AUGUSTA
Off Charleston, May 13, 1862.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that the rebel armed steamer *Planter* was brought out to us this morning from Charleston by eight contrabands and delivered up to the squadron. Five colored women and three children are also on board. She carries one 32-pounder and one 24-pounder howitzer and has also on board four large guns, which she was engaged in transporting.

I send her to Port Royal at once, in order to take advantage of the present good weather. I send Charleston papers of the 12th, and the very intelligent contraband who was in charge will give you the information which he has brought off.

I have the honor to request that you will send back, as soon as convenient, the officer and prize crew sent on board.

I am, respectfully, etc., your obedient servant,

E. G. PARROTT,
Commander and Senior Officer Present.

Flag-Officer S. F. DU PONT,
Commanding South Atlantic Blockading Squadron.

Report of Acting Volunteer Lieutenant Nickels, U. S. Navy, commanding the U. S. ship Onward.

U. S. SHIP ONWARD,
Off Charleston, S. C., May 13, 1862.

SIR: I have to report that this morning at sunrise I saw a steamer coming from the direction of Fort Sumter and steering directly for this ship. I immediately beat to quarters and sprung the ship around so as to enable me to bring her broadsides to bear, and had so far succeeded as to bring the port guns to bear, when I discovered that the steamer, now rapidly approaching, had a white flag set at the fore.

The steamer ran alongside and I immediately boarded her, hauled down the flag of truce, and hoisted the American ensign, and found that it was the steamer *Planter*, of Charleston, and had successfully

run past the forts and escaped. She was wholly manned by negroes, representing themselves to be slaves.

I herewith place the steamer in your hands for disposition.
Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. F. NICKELS,
Acting Volunteer Lieutenant, Commanding U. S. Ship Onward.

Commander E. G. PARROTT,
Senior Officer, Commanding Blockading Squadron off Charleston.

Order of Commander Parrott, U. S. Navy, to Acting Master Watson, U. S. Navy, to proceed with the steamer Planter to Port Royal, S. C.

U. S. S AUGUSTA,
Off Charleston, May 13, 1862.

SIR: You will take charge of the prize steamer *Planter*, proceed with her to Port Royal, and report to Flag Officer S. F. Du Pont.

You will make every exertion to rejoin this vessel with your prize crew and the arms, etc., intrusted to your care as soon as possible.

I am,

[E. G. PARROTT,
Commander]

Acting Master WATSON.

Order of Acting Secretary of the Navy to Flag-Officer Du Pont, U. S. Navy, regarding appraisalment.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, May 18, 1862.

SIR: The Department has received your interesting dispatch in relation to the rebel armed steamer *Planter*, brought out from Charleston by eight contrabands and delivered to our naval forces off that port.

You will please have the *Planter* appraised and the report of appraisalment forwarded to the Department.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

G. V. Fox,
Acting Secretary.

Flag-Officer S. F. DU PONT,
Comdg. South Atlantic Blockading Squadron, Port Royal, S. C.

Memorandum.

The following memorandum was found on board the rebel steamer *Planter*, brought out of Charleston by Robert Smalls (contraband), on 13th May, 1862, written in pencil without date or signature:

The enemy appeared to be conversant with the locality of the forts.

The channel in by Martin's Industry gave them some considerable trouble and delay.

It is presumed that the enemy met with some loss. One of the heavy shot from Bay Point struck the flagship amidships and no doubt, caused some loss of life.

The enemy kept up an animated fire, outflanking with their light gunboats Hilton Head Fort to the westward.

The troops in the fort fought with great courage and determination. At Bay Point the order to retreat was felt to be judicious, but the soldiers were anxious to remain and battle it out to the last.

Captain Elliott spiked his guns and destroyed most of his ammunition.

It is thought that 120,000 Northern troops have landed on Hilton Head. The enemy's facilities were complete, and from this time Port Royal will be held at will.

Their powerful Navy possesses every advantage, but on the land their troops are bound to be badly whipped.

Letter from the Secretary of the Navy to Flag-Officer Du Pont, U. S. Navy, transmitting copy of an act of Congress in the case of Robert Smalls and others.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, July 15, 1862.

SIR: I transmit herewith a copy of an act of Congress for the relief of Robert Smalls and others; also a duplicate of a letter in reference to the same, addressed to you from this Department the 6th ultimo.

Your dispatch of the 9th ultimo states the appraisal of the vessel, exclusive of the loose guns sent to New York, to be \$9,000.

The loose guns were appraised at \$168, making the total \$9,168, one-half of which (\$4,584) is to be divided between Robert Smalls and his associates.

You will inform the Department in what proportion this amount should lie divided between them. I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GIDEON WELLES.

Flag-Officer S. F. DU PONT,
Comdg. North Atlantic Blockading Squadron, Port Royal, S. C.

[Enclosure.]

NAVY DEPARTMENT, June 6, 1862.

SIR: I transmit herewith a copy of the act of Congress for the relief of Robert Smalls and others.

Your attention is called to the last clause of the first section.

You will have the, boat appraised, as before ordered, and, with the appraisal, forward to the Department the names of the associates of Robert Smalls, with the amount which, in your opinion, should be apportioned to each of them.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
GIDEON WELLES.

Flag-Officer S. F. DU PONT,
Comdg. South Atlantic Blockading Squadron, Port Royal, S. C.

[Subenclosure.]

PRIVATE No. 12. — An act for the benefit of Robert Small[s] and others.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Navy be, and he is hereby, authorized to cause the steam transport boat *Planter*, recently in the rebel service in the harbor of Charleston, and all of the arms, munitions, tackle, and other property on board of her at the time of her delivery to the Federal authorities, to be appraised by a board of competent officers, and when the value thereof shall be thus ascertained to cause an equitable apportionment of one half of such value so ascertained as aforesaid to be made between Robert Smalls and his associates who assisted in rescuing her from the enemies of the Government.*

Section 2. And be it further enacted, That the Secretary of the Navy may, if he deems it expedient, cause the sum of money allotted to each individual under the preceding section of this act to be invested in United States securities for the benefit of such individual, the interest to be paid to him or to his heirs annually until such time as the Secretary of the Navy may deem it expedient to pay to him or his heirs the principal sum as aforesaid.

Approved May 30, 1862.

Letter of Commander Rodgers, U. S. Navy, commanding the U. S. S. Wabash, to the Secretary of the Navy, regarding the flags of the Planter.

U. S. S. WABASH,
Philadelphia, July 15, 1862.

SIR: In obedience to an order from Flag-Officer Du Pont I have the honor to send to you, through Adams Express, the two flags of the steamer *Planter*, brought out of the harbor of Charleston in May last by Robert Smalls and his associates, and by them delivered to the blockading squadron.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

C. R. P. Rodgers
Commander, Commanding U. S. S. Wabash.

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

Report of Flag-Officer Du Pont, U. S. Navy, regarding the apportionment of prize money to Robert Smalls and others.

FLAGSHIP WABASH,
 Port Royal Harbor, S. C., August 19, 1862.

SIR: I have the honor to submit to the Department the following apportionment of the one-half of the appraised value of the steamer *Planter*, with her armament and loose guns found on board, among Robert Smalls and his associates:

The appraised value of the vessel and her armament was	\$9,000
The appraised value of loose guns	168
Total	\$9,168

Amount to be apportioned is one-half, or4,584
 To be distributed as follows:

Robert Smalls, leader of the party	\$1,500
John Smalls	450
A. Gridiron, old engineer of <i>Planter</i>	450
J. Chisholm	400
A. Alston	400
G. Turno	400
A. Jackson	400
W. Morrison, who joined the <i>Planter</i> after she left the wharf	384
Annie...] Unprotected women of the party	100
Lavinia]	
 Total	 4,584

The other women (not mentioned above) derive benefit through their various relationships to the men; these two have no such connection, and are destitute and unprovided for.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
 S. F. DU PONT,
Rear-Admiral, Comdg. South Atlantic Blockading Squadron.

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