



# **Southern Service On Land & Sea: Wartime Journal Of Robert Watson Csa/Csn (Voices of the Civil War Series)**

*R. Thomas Campbell*

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Many men distinguished themselves on either land or sea during the Civil War. Robert Watson's service to the Confederacy included stints in both the army and navy, and his story brings a vital new voice to the chronicles of the conflict.

A Floridian who first served in his state's coast guard as a member of "The Key West Avengers," Watson was assigned to the 7th Florida Infantry and saw action at Chickamauga, Lookout Mountain, and Missionary Ridge. Later transferred to the Confederate Navy, he served on the ironclad Savannah until it was destroyed to avoid capture; still later he participated in the battle for Fort Fisher.

Watson kept a journal through all of his service, offering many fascinating glimpses of action. His account of coastal defense in Florida provides a rare look at the early part of the war in the Tampa area and includes much human-interest material on the seaman's life—including use of alcohol and visits to prostitutes. Later reports on action in Tennessee convey much about the miseries that inadequate food and shelter forced upon the average Confederate soldier. After transferring to the navy, Watson records valuable observations on the fall of Savannah and Wilmington and his unit's ultimate capture at Drewry's Bluff.

Because of its scant population at the time, Florida has given us few records and firsthand accounts of Civil War activity. Watson's journals provide that insight, along with descriptions of war scribbled under a blanket in a Tennessee encampment and a stirring eyewitness account of the fate of the C.S.S. Savannah. The book offers a captivating look at two spheres of action as experienced by a single serviceman—a record shared by few of Watson's contemporaries.

The Editor: R. Thomas Campbell is the author of *Sea Hawk of the Confederacy: Lt. Charles W. Read and the Confederate Navy*, *The C.S.S. H. L. Hunley: Confederate Submarine*, and *Academy on the James: The Confederate Naval School*. A native of North Carolina, he presently lives in West Chester, Pennsylvania.

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