



## **BESIEGED : MOBILE 1865**

*Jr., Russell W. Blount*

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In no other battle of the Civil War is the lack of rapid communication more tragic than in the campaign for the city of Mobile, Alabama, in 1865. Hours after Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered, the Union efforts to capture the port ravaged a city that had remained nearly unscathed through five brutal years of war. Author Russell W. Blount, Jr. crafts a vivid narrative of his hometown during these desperate times as revealed through diaries, letters, and journals of those who lived through the turbulent siege of nearby Spanish Fort and the subsequent battle for Mobile.

Considered the last major battle of the Civil War, it is seen by many historians to be a punitive action by Union commanders who were loath to leave such a prize unconquered. Mobile's value as a blockade-running port for the South was no longer a threat to the Union. By this time in the action, the city known as the "Paris of the South" remained primarily as a refuge for those who were exhausted by deprivation and hardship; their defenders were a ragtag band of soldiers holding on to fading strength, determined to protect the city against all odds. Their poignant defense of what was not only a battlefield but also their home front is as tragic as it was courageous. Blount provides an eyewitness account that brings us into Mobile in the last months of the war and allows a glimpse of what it must have been like for both civilians and the soldiers charged with defending them.

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