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'Damn those Confederate torpedoes" - Farragut

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Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



'DAMN THOSE CONFEDERATE TORPEDOES' – FARRAGUT

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PENSACOLA --- A Confederate torpedo, probably the only one of its type in existence, is among the many interesting Civil War relics on display at the T. T. Wentworth Jr. Museum here.

Still in good condition, the weapon was recovered from a sunken ship in the Gulf of Mexico at the entrance to Pensacola Bay more than 100 years after the vessel sank. The torpedo was given to the museum by C. F. Crooke, Jr. who salvaged it from the waters. Wentworth has assembled a remarkable museum on Floridiana as a hobby and charges no admission. It's located at 7100 Palafox Highway.

The Confederate torpedoes proved to be one of the most dangerous things used against the shipping of the Union forces, according to Dr. A. B. Moore, executive director of the Alabama Civil War Centennial Commission.

Dr. Moore made the statement during the celebration of the anniversary of the Battle of Mobile Bay in which Admiral David Farragut is credited with crying those immortal words, "Damn the torpedoes --- full speed ahead!"

Deadly underwater mines manufactured at a Confederate factory in Mobile wreaked havoc on Union ships during the Civil War. Availability of more skilled mine personnel and equipment might have altered the course of the battle thereby giving victory to Confederate Admiral Franklin Buchanan.

Then, Dr. Moore adds, Farragut's cry would have been shortened to "Damn those torpedoes!"

