



CONSTRUCTION OF FLOATING MORTAR BATTERIES BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, AT THE UPPER FERRY, ST. LOUIS, MO.

Among the engines for attack and defence, provided early in the war for operations on the Mississippi, was a fleet of 38 mortar boats, or floating batteries. They were constructed at St. Louis under the direction of General Fremont. Work upon them was pushed night and day. The mortars were made at Pittsburg. They were 13-inch guns. At the same time eight steam tugs were built to tow the mortar fleet, and two powerful river steamers were altered for gunboat service and armored with iron. These vessels were intended to convey the mortar boats and support their fire when in action.