

1999

Ironclads at War: The Origin and Development of the Armored Warship, 1854-1891

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Recommended Citation

Hackemer, Kurt (1999) "Ironclads at War: The Origin and Development of the Armored Warship, 1854-1891," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 52 : No. 3 , Article 25.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol52/iss3/25>

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earlier work, *Before the Ironclad* (1990). Brown's affection for his profession, its history, and players is evident in the research (much of it from primary sources) and in the sense of humor he applies to the task. He explains ship design complexities in layman's terms and provides useful appendices on the basics of ship stability and related subjects. The text is liberally supplied with diagrams, drawings, charts, and photographs, many from the author's personal collection. A detailed index, a glossary and abbreviations page, and the author's commentary on principal sources round out the comprehensive attributes of the book.

Warrior to Dreadnought should appeal to many tastes. Those who enjoy the narrative style and personality descriptions of Daniel Boorstin's histories will be delighted with this effort. Those attracted to the lore of ships, whether to their physical beauty, technological intricacies, or battles with the elements, will be equally satisfied, especially given the book's visual strengths. On a third level, readers familiar with the U.S. Navy's contemporary effort to redefine itself in the post-Cold War era will be quite interested in the many parallels to the Royal Navy experience a century ago. Chief among these are the struggle to identify the capital-ship role ("Strategy should govern the types of ships to be designed; ship design should govern tactics; tactics should govern armaments") and specify needs. (There had never been a full study of the naval requirements of the Empire; the procedure had been for the First Lord to get as much money as he could from the cabinet and for the Board to do the best they could with those funds.) Others

are resource debates ("Few were disposed to pay for a large navy to defend against a distant and ill-defined threat"), and the timeless battle concerning change ("Many did not understand new technologies and sought for wonder-weapons, which would give them victory at low cost").

On a concluding, lighter note, young U.S. Navy officers currently serving in that most dreaded of division officer assignments, "damage control assistant," may find a concise, coherent "bootstrap" on ship stability in the appendices of this book. The measure of effectiveness is that if this reviewer could understand the author's explanation, anyone can.

PAUL ROMANSKI
Naval War College

Greene, Jack, and Alessandro Massignani.
Ironclads at War: The Origin and Development of the Armored Warship, 1854-1891. Conshohocken, Penna.: Combined Publishing, 1998.
423pp. \$34.95

If asked for the first image that comes to mind upon seeing the title of this book, most knowledgeable readers would probably respond with something from the American Civil War or the battle of Lissa. However, as Jack Greene and Alessandro Massignani make abundantly clear, ironclads consistently saw service in one form or another worldwide during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The authors, better known for their work in twentieth-century

succinct, and broad ranging in scope. Not surprisingly, the United States appears only peripherally in these sidebars; American naval ascendance is still on the horizon as the book comes to a close.

Ironclads at War is not the last word on the subject, but it does have much to offer. Those with an interest in ironclad operations outside the United States will find it a valuable resource that synthesizes scholarship otherwise unavailable to most American readers. Specialists might not always agree with the authors' conclusions and will want to consult more focused monographs, but the tradeoff, a global perspective, makes this book a worthwhile contribution to naval history.

KURT HACKEMER
University of South Dakota

Anders, Curt. *Disaster in Damp Sand: The Red River Expedition*. Carmel: Guild Press of Indiana, 1998. 175pp. \$21

The Red River expedition? Why would anyone want to write a book about that? Whoever heard of it? Curt Anders has chosen to write about a little-known yet actually significant episode in the American Civil War. His is an absorbing account of a campaign that failed.

The purposes of the expedition, as defined by the general in chief, Henry Halleck, to General Nathaniel P. Banks in November 1862, were to open the lower Mississippi by capturing Vicksburg; destroy the railroad yards at Jackson and Marion, Mississippi; and open the Red River as far as it was

navigable to provide an outlet for the sugar and cotton of northern Louisiana. Halleck also suggested that the Red River in Union possession would be the best base for operations in Texas.

The campaign opened in February 1863 with a strike by Confederate general Richard Taylor (a protégé of Stonewall Jackson) against a Federal installation west of New Orleans. Banks retaliated by attempting to encircle and annihilate Taylor, which permitted some cotton and commodities to get through to New Orleans but delayed Banks's operations in furtherance of his mission. By May 1863, Banks was finally ready to start, with an assault against Confederate fortifications. He had a three-to-one advantage, but his vague orders resulted in failure and heavy Union losses. General Ulysses S. Grant's success at Vicksburg, however, caused the Confederate commander at Port Hudson, southeast of the juncture of the Red River and the Mississippi, to surrender. However, General Taylor, in almost guerrilla warfare style, stymied further Union advances. This led Banks to a variety of operations in western Louisiana, including a failed amphibious attempt on Galveston, Texas, and a land movement via the Sabine Pass at the Texas-Louisiana border in September 1863. The balance of 1863 and the period up to May 1864 was taken up with a series of assaults, retreats, successes, and disasters, up and down and around the Red and Sabine Rivers. When Taylor was transferred east of the Mississippi in the summer of 1864, the generals and troops he left behind kept Banks and the Yankees from making any more attempts for the balance of the war in the Trans-Mississippi. They