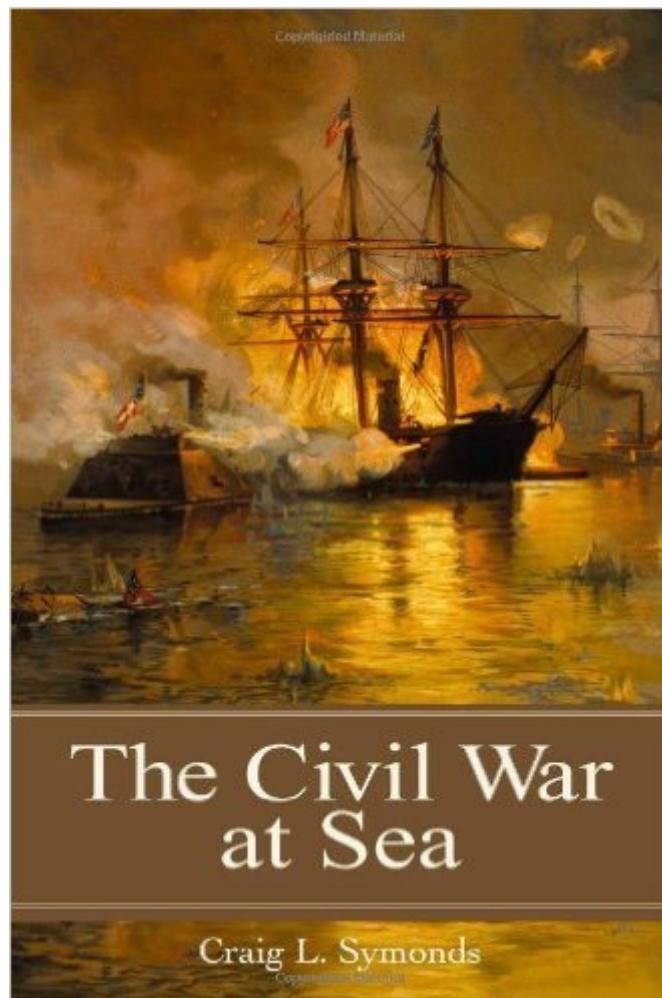


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The Civil War At Sea (Reflections On The Civil War Era)



Synopsis

From Craig Symonds, author of the 2009 Lincoln Prize award-winner *Lincoln and His Admirals*, comes a fascinating look at the era when American naval power came of age. Thoroughly researched and excitingly written, it brings to light a wealth of new information on a pivotal aspect of the Civil War. *The Civil War at Sea* covers navies on both sides of the conflict, examining key issues such as the impact of emergent technologies, the effectiveness of the Union's ambitious strategy of blockading, the odyssey of Confederate commerce raiders, the role of naval forces on the western rivers, and the difficulty of conducting combined sea and ground operations against the major Southern port cities. For Civil War buffs, fans of military and technological history, and other interested readers, it is insightful, essential reading.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Civil War at Sea is made of 5 sections (6, really): the naval technology revolution, the Union blockade of Confederate ports, privateering sponsored by the Confederacy, the River War, the Siege of Charleston, and a section on the end of the war covering siege of Mobile, the siege of Wilmington, and the Confederate privateer Shenandoah. It's an academic historiography, lack of a

hyphenated title notwithstanding. "The Civil War marked the culmination of an era of technological innovation that had a dramatic impact on the way Americans lived their lives, and eventually how they fought their wars." It also marked a sea change in warfare. "[T]he Civil War took place precisely at the time when steam-powered ships armed with heavy rifled guns had shifted the historical balance of power between ships and forts." After the Civil War, global power would be determined by naval power for the next hundred years. Symonds adopts a simple metric for judging the success of the Union blockade of the Confederate ports. Blockade running notwithstanding, the loss of Southern cotton exports surpassed the entire cost of the Union navy, so the blockade was successful. On the other hand, Confederate privateering was very successful. It drove insurance rates up from 1.5% to 6%. Just eight Confederate privateers captured and destroyed almost 300 merchant ships valued at over \$25 million. The title notwithstanding, much of the "Civil War at sea" was fought on inland rivers. Inland rivers were initially the responsibility of the army, a point of contention and confusion. But the Union had the same industrial advantages over the South by river as it did by sea, and eventually the Union was able to use the inland rivers to cut the Confederacy in half.

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