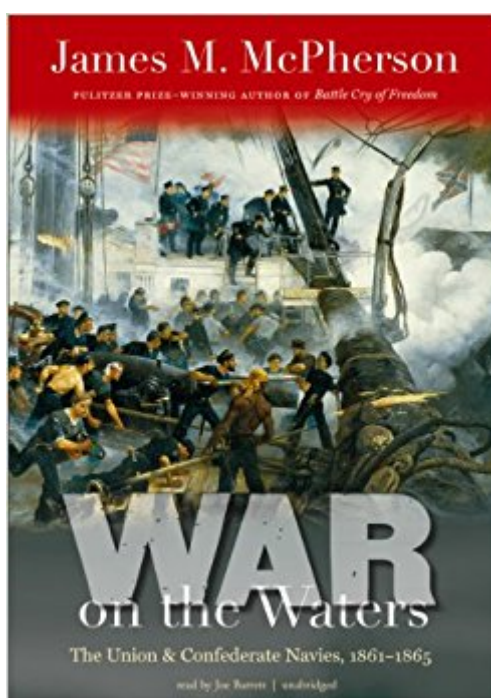


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War On The Waters: The Union And Confederate Navies, 1861-1865 (The Littlefield History Of The Civil War Era)



Synopsis

[Read by Joe Barrett] Although previously undervalued for their strategic impact because they represented only a small percentage of total forces, the Union and Confederate navies were crucial to the outcome of the Civil War. In *War on the Waters*, James M. McPherson has crafted an enlightening, at times harrowing, and ultimately thrilling account of the war's naval campaigns and their military leaders. McPherson recounts how the Union navy's blockade of the Confederate coast, leaky as a sieve in the war's early months, became increasingly effective as it choked off vital imports and exports. Meanwhile, the Confederate navy, dwarfed by its giant adversary, demonstrated daring and military innovation. Commerce raiders sank Union ships and drove the American merchant marine from the high seas. Southern ironclads sent several Union warships to the bottom, naval mines sank many more, and the Confederates deployed the world's first submarine to sink an enemy vessel. But in the end, it was the Union navy that won some of the war's most important strategic victories -- as an essential partner to the army on the ground at Fort Donelson, Vicksburg, Port Hudson, Mobile Bay, and Fort Fisher, and all by itself at Port Royal, Fort Henry, New Orleans, and Memphis.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"McPherson, professor emeritus of Princeton and dean of Civil War historians, enhances our knowledge with this history of the conflict's naval aspects. As definitive as it is economical, the work establishes beyond question the decisive contributions of maritime power to Union victory."

--Publishers Weekly (starred review)"With all the narrative grace, original scholarship, and equal grasp of both big picture and telling detail, Civil War historian nonpareil James McPherson has provided his admirers with another authoritative entry in his roster of essential books. McPherson never argues that the Union navy won the Civil War, but readers will argue that no Civil War library will ever be complete without this volume." --Harold Holzer, award-winning author and chairman of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Foundation "McPherson displays his massive knowledge of the Civil War, this time specifically concerning the naval battles . . . A solid contribution to Civil War scholarship." --Kirkus Reviews"James McPherson's many admirers in the Civil War community will be thrilled that he has turned his keen eye and eloquent pen to the naval war. In this new, concise history of the war at sea, McPherson not only tells an important story well, he shows how the Union navy, with only five percent of Union military assets, had a disproportionate impact on the war." --Craig L. Symonds, award-winning author of Lincoln and His Admirals "Wonderfully written and researched . . . Balanced, objective, and highly readable." --Howard Jones, University of Alabama

With all the narrative grace, original scholarship, and equal grasp of both big picture and telling detail, Civil War historian nonpareil James McPherson has provided his admirers with another authoritative entry in his roster of essential books. McPherson never argues that the Union Navy won the Civil War, but readers will argue that no Civil War library will ever be complete without this volume.--Harold Holzer, Chairman, Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial FoundationWonderfully written and researched. . . . Balanced, objective, and highly readable.--Howard Jones, University of AlabamaJames McPherson's many admirers in the Civil War community will be thrilled that he has turned his keen eye and eloquent pen to the naval war. In this new, concise history of the war at sea, McPherson not only tells an important story well, he shows how the Union Navy, with only five percent of Union military assets, had a disproportionate impact on the war.--Craig L. Symonds, author of Lincoln and His Admirals --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

The author has done a remarkable job of condensing a plethora of research material into a very readable book that effectively covers the the significant naval engagements of the Civil War to control the rivers, Southern ports, and commerce on the high seas. The ships, technologies, strategies, and their evolution are also detailed, as well as the individuals behind them. The book includes many observations from the participants obtained from journals, letters, reports, etc. as well as maps, photos, and other illustrations where appropriate.While a few reviewers have criticized the author for focusing too much on Union Naval aspects, I felt the book is well balanced, considering

the Confederate strategy was dominated by the use of static fortresses and shore batteries against Union warships. Those actions where Confederate ships were involved are effectively covered, as well as Confederate blockade running and commerce raiding, and Confederate efforts to build and acquire war ships at home and abroad. The author is even-handed in highlighting the failures and successes on both sides, and simply presents the facts for the reader to discern. He is not responsible for the outcome of engagements or the war. This is a professional and polished book from the way it is structured to the way it is written. One of the best Civil War-era books I have read.

This striking account of the Union Navy's crippling effect on the Rebel's attempts to supply and fund their cause is a masterful writing. Employing eyewitness testimony and US Navy documents, Mr. McPherson tells us the all - too truthful history of command, politics and personal feelings of those brave men who chose to fight for their freedoms on US waters, international ports and open seas. Cause and effect simplify way too easily the intrigues of this book; one which any reader of the Civil War must read for him or herself.

I have always wanted to know more about the brown water vessels of the Civil War. A time, or war, where the end of sail and beginning of steam overlap, with side wheel, screw prop, iron, timber and tin clad ships and monitors slug it out on the rivers of the interior, as well as the coasts. A great read, I just wish it had more pictures, as I had to jump to Wiki to view pictures of each belligerent ship. It should probably lose a star or two for this, but I am always in a generous mood after a good book.

I found this cell-written book a wonderful read. It vastly increased my understanding of what, to me, was a little known area of Civil War history. I gained much knowledge and tremendous respect for the naval people who fought the war on both sides and continued high regard for James McPherson as a writer and historian.

I would highly recommend this work to those looking for an introduction to the roles played by the respective navies in the Civil War. As with all of this author's previous works, it is a great read. Wonderful insights into the personal and professional motivations of some of the high ranking participants including Welles, Farragut, DuPont, Porter and Foote.

McPherson is the gold standard for comprehensive one-volume accounts on the Civil War. Though

shorter than some books on the naval aspect, this is a great introduction.

That is almost all you have to say about this book. I have not read a book by McPherson that was not extremely well written, fascinating to read, educational and a can't miss good time. He is one of the preeminent Civil War scholars but writes in a style us plain old folks can read and enjoy.

Fantastic book on the naval war. Lots of good information and reads very well.

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