

ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

The Naval War

By Laura June Davis

Resources

If you can read only one book

Author	<i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year.
Craig Symonds	<i>The Civil War at Sea</i> , New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Books and Articles

Author	<i>Title</i> . City: Publisher, Year. “Title,” in <i>Journal</i> ##, no. # (Date): #.
Armstrong, Benjamin	<i>Small Boats and Daring Men: Maritime Raiding, Irregular Warfare, and the Early American Navy</i> . Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019.
Ballard, Michael	<i>Vicksburg: The Campaign That Opened the Mississippi</i> . Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
Bennett, Michael J.	<i>Union Jacks: Yankee Sailors in the Civil War</i> . Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
Browning, Robert M., Jr.	<i>From Cape Charles to Cape Fear: The North Atlantic Blockading Squadron during the Civil War</i> . Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993.
_____.	<i>Lincoln’s Trident: The West Gulf Blockading Squadron During the Civil War</i> . Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2015.

Canney, Donald L.	<i>Lincoln's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organization, 1861-65</i> . Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1998.
Chaffin, Tom	<i>Sea of Gray: The Around-the- World Odyssey of the Confederate Raider Shenandoah</i> . New York: Hill and Wang. 2006.
_____.	<i>The H. L. Hunley: The Secret Hope of the Confederacy</i> . New York: Hill & Wang, 2008.
Cleland, Beau	<i>Between King Cotton and Queen Victoria: How Pirates, Smugglers, and Scoundrels Almost Saved the Confederacy</i> . Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2025.
Clopton, William I.	"New Light on the Great Drewry's Bluff Fight," in <i>Southern Historical Society Papers</i> , 34, (January-December 1906).
Coombe, Jack D.	<i>Thunder Along the Mississippi: The River Battles that Split the Confederacy</i> . New York: Sarpedon, 1996.
Coski, John M.	<i>Capital Navy: the Men, Ships, and Operations of the James River Squadron</i> . Campbell, CA: Savas Woodbury Publishers, 1996.
_____.	"A Navy Department, hitherto unknown to our state organization," Davis, William C. and James I. Robertson, Jr., eds. in <i>Virginia at War, 1861</i> . Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2005.
Daniel, Larry J. and Lynn N. Bock	<i>Island No. 10: Struggle for the Mississippi Valley</i> . Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1996.
Dudley, William S.	<i>Going South: U.S. Navy Officer Resignations & Dismissals on the Eve of the Civil War</i> . Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Foundation, 1981.
Durkin, Joseph T.	<i>Stephen R. Mallory: Confederate Navy Chief</i> . Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1954.
Fowler, William M., Jr.	<i>Under Two Flags: The American Navy in the Civil War</i> . Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001.

Gienapp, William E. and Edica E. Gienapp, eds.	<i>The Civil War Diary of Gideon Welles, Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy.</i> Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2014.
Gould IV, William B., ed.	<i>Diary of a Contraband: The Civil War Passage of a Black Sailor.</i> Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002.
Gosnell, Allen H.	<i>Guns on Western Waters.</i> Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1949.
Gudmestad, Robert H.	<i>The Devil's Own Purgatory: The United States Mississippi River Squadron in the Civil War.</i> Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2026.
Harris, William C.	<i>Confederate Privateer: The Life of John Yates Beall.</i> Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2023.
Hearn, Chester G.	<i>Gray Raiders of the Sea: How Eight Confederate Warships Destroyed the Union's High Seas Commerce.</i> Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992.
_____.	<i>Mobile Bay and the Mobile Campaign: The Last Great Battles of the Civil War.</i> Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1993.
_____.	<i>The Capture of New Orleans, 1862.</i> Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996.
Hoppin, James Mason	<i>Life of Andrew Hull Foote, Rear-Admiral United States Navy,</i> New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1874.
Joiner, Gary D.	<i>Mr. Lincoln's Brown Water Navy: The Mississippi Squadron.</i> Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007.
Jones, Howard	<i>Blue and Gray Diplomacy: A History of Union and Confederate Foreign Relations.</i> Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2010.
Lucas, Daniel B., comp.	"Proceedings in the Case of John Y. Beall," in <i>Memoir of John Yates Beall: His Life; Trial; Correspondence; Diary; and Private Manuscript Found Among His Papers, including His Own Account of the Raid on Lake Erie.</i> Montreal, PQ: John Lovell, 1865.

Luraghi, Raimondo	<i>The Confederate Navy</i> . Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1996. Translated by Paolo E. Coletta.
Maffitt, Emma Martin	<i>The Life and Services of John Newland Maffitt</i> . New York: The Neale Publishing Company, 1906.
McPherson, James M.	<i>War on the Waters: The Union and Confederate Navies, 1861-1865</i> . Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012.
Milligan, John D.	<i>Gunboats Down the Mississippi</i> . Annapolis: United States Naval Institute, 1965.
Naval History Division of the United States Navy Department	<i>Civil War Chronology 1861-1865</i> . Washington, D. C.: United States Navy, 1971.
Porter, David Dixon	<i>The Naval History of the Civil War</i> . New York: The Sherman Publishing Company, 1886.
Ringle, Dennis J.	<i>Life in Mr. Lincoln's Navy</i> . Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1998.
Salecker, Gene Eric	<i>Destruction of the Steamboat Sultana</i> . Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2022.
Scharf, J. Thomas	<i>History of the Confederate States Navy</i> . New York: Random House, 1996.
Semmes, Raphael	<i>Service Afloat: The Remarkable Career of the Confederate Cruisers Sumter and Alabama during the War Between the States</i> . New York: P.J. Kennedy, 1896.
Smith, Myron J.	<i>The Timberclads in the Civil War: The Lexington, Conestoga, and Tyler on the Western Waters</i> . Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2008.
_____.	<i>Tinclads in the Civil War: Union Light Draught Gunboat Operations on Western Waters, 1862-1865</i> . Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2010.
_____.	<i>The CSS Arkansas: A Confederate Ironclad on Western Waters</i> . Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2011.
Still, William N.	<i>Confederate Shipbuilding</i> . Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1969.

_____.	<i>The Confederate Navy: The Ships, Men and Organization, 1861-65</i> . Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1997.
_____.	<i>Iron afloat: the story of the Confederate Armorclads</i> , Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971.
Symonds, Craig L.	<i>Confederate Admiral: The Life and Wars of Franklin Buchanan</i> . Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2008.
_____.	<i>Lincoln and His Admirals</i> . Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2008.
_____.	<i>Civil War at Sea</i> . New York: ABC-CLIO, 2009.
_____.	<i>Union Combined Operations in the Civil War</i> . New York: Fordham University Press, 2010.
Taaffe, Stephen	<i>Commanding Lincoln's Navy: Union Naval Leadership during the Civil War</i> . Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2023.
Tomblin, Barbara Brooks	<i>Bluejackets and Contrabands: African Americans and the Union Navy</i> . Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2009.
_____.	<i>The Civil War on the Mississippi</i> . Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2016.
Tucker, Spencer	<i>Blue & Gray Navies: The Civil War Afloat</i> . Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2006.
Weitz, Mark A.	<i>The Confederacy on Trial: The Piracy and Sequestration Cases of 1861</i> . Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005.
Wells, Tom Henderson	<i>Confederate Navy: A Study in Organization</i> . Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1976.
Wise, Stephen R.	<i>Lifeline of the Confederacy: Blockade Running During the Civil War</i> . Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991.

Organizations

Organization Name	Description, Contact information including address, email
The National Civil War Naval Museum, Columbus Georgia	The National Civil War Naval Museum tells the story of the Sailors, Soldiers, and Civilians, both Free and Enslaved as affected by the Navies of the American Civil War and provides a repository for relevant archives and artifacts on the subject including exhibits relating to blockade running. The museum is open Sunday and Monday 12:30-4:30 and Tuesday-Saturday 10:00-4:30. The address is 1002 Victory Drive, Columbus, GA 31901, (706) 327-9798. Their website is: https://www.portcolumbus.org/
The Hampton Roads Naval Museum, Norfolk Virginia	The Hampton Roads Naval Museum is part of the Naval History and Heritage Command. It recounts naval history in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia from the Revolution to the present day with a specific exhibit devoted to the Battle of Hampton Roads. The museum is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 5pm. The address is One Waterside Drive Ste 248 Norfolk, VA 23510-1607, 757-322-2987. The website is: https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/museums/hrnm.html
The <i>H.L. Hunley</i> Project and Submarine Tours, Charleston South Carolina	The <i>H.L. Hunley</i> Project serves as an active laboratory and preservation site of the submarine CSS <i>Hunley</i> . Weekend and group tours are available. The museum is open Saturday 10:00-5:00 and Sunday 10:00-3:00. The address is Warren Lasch Conservation Center, 1250 Supply Street North Charleston, South Carolina 29405, 843-743-4865. Their website is: https://www.hunley.org/
The Mariners' Museum and Park, Newport News Virginia	The Mariners' Museum and Park is one of the largest maritime museums in the country and is home to the USS <i>Monitor</i> Center which houses 200 tons of artifacts from the famed ironclad, including its revolving gun

	turret. The museum is open daily 9:00-5:00. The address is 100 Museum Drive Newport News, VA 23606, (757) 596-2222. Their website is: https://www.marinersmuseum.org/
The <i>Sultana</i> Disaster Museum, Marion Arkansas	In 2022, the <i>Sultana</i> Historical Preservation Society officially broke ground on a new museum that will tell the story and tragedy of the <i>Sultana</i> disaster of April 27, 1865. The museum will officially open in 2026 and will tell the full story of the steamboat, share compelling accounts of the victims, and recount the harrowing rescue efforts. The museum is open Thursday-Saturday 10:00-4:00. The address is 104 Washington Street, Marion, AR 72364, 870-635-2954. The web site is https://www.sultanadisastermuseum.com/
USS <i>Cairo</i> Gunboat and Museum	The USS <i>Cairo</i> was sunk at Vicksburg in 1862. Starting in 1972 the <i>Cairo</i> was raised and is now restored and open to the public. The museum contains displays of artifacts recovered from the <i>Cairo</i>. The ironclad and museum are located at 3201 Clay Street, Vicksburg, MS 39183. 601 636 0583 and are open from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday to Saturday. Their web address is: https://www.nps.gov/vick/u-s-s-cairogunboat.htm

Web Resources

URL	Name and description
https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/wars-conflicts-and-operations/civil-war.html	The Naval History and Heritage Command's Civil War page that includes images, publications, and background information.
https://www.history.navy.mil/content/dam/nhhc/browse-by-topic/War%20and%20Conflict/civil-war/cwse.pdf	<i>The Civil War at Sea</i> edition of "The Daybook," Hampton Roads Naval Museum's publication. This special issue provides an overview of the naval war, highlighting the blockade, riverine warfare, and the international reach of the United States and Confederate navies. It includes

	several primary source accounts.
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Other Sources

Name	Description, Contact information including address, email
The Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies	The Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies The 31-volume set of Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies (ORN) contains the most important administrative and operational documents of both the Union and Confederate navies. These duplicate much of what is in the collections of the National Archives. This publication is the single-most important published primary source available. Baylor University Libraries Making of America contains a free on-line version of the ORN at: https://collections.library.cornell.edu/moa_new/moawar.html
<i>Civil War Navy – The Magazine</i>	A quarterly magazine founded in 2012 that explores the naval war in detail.
U.S. Naval Academy Museum (Annapolis MD)	Has items from the battle on display, including the wheel of the USS <i>Hartford</i> .

Scholars

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Topic Précis

Civil War navies fought on five oceans and dozens of rivers. When they were not fighting, naval vessels were blockading (or running the blockade), transporting troops, supplying armies, or acting as floating warehouses, universities, hospitals, and recruiting depots. Benefitting from the industrial revolution, the naval war marked a key shift in maritime conflicts—one dominated by steam powered technology, ironclad ships, and torpedo boats. By war's end, the United States had amassed the largest navy in the world, spending

\$587,000,000 to build 671 warships carrying 4,610 guns. The United States Navy fought many battles, both in cooperation with the army or by itself. The Confederacy, meanwhile, fought an asymmetrical naval war, relying on innovative new technologies, privateering, and commerce raiding to challenge the Union's naval superiority. Starting from nothing, the Confederate Navy constructed or purchased 121 warships carrying 400 guns, including 20 ironclads, 8 torpedo boats, and 2 submarines. And while the two maritime foes are best known for the fateful duel of the ironclad at Hampton Roads in March 1862, each played a pivotal role in the successes of their country, the duration of the conflict, and the ultimate outcome.
