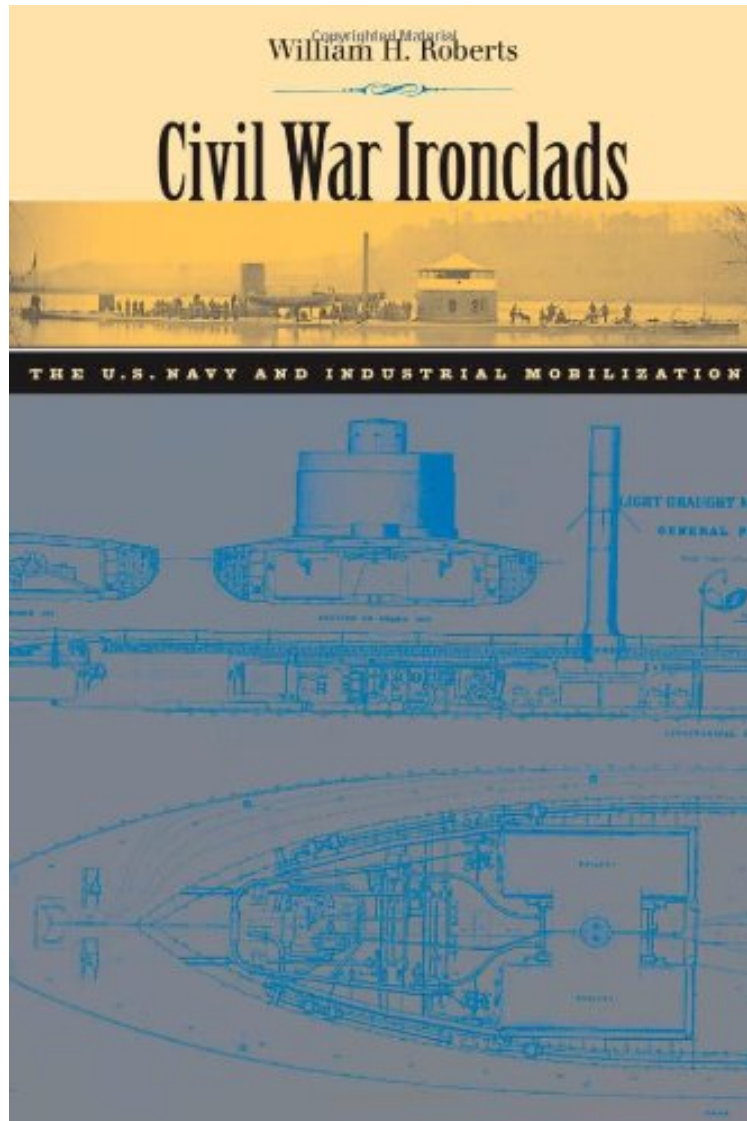


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## Civil War Ironclads: The U.S. Navy and Industrial Mobilization (Johns Hopkins Studies in the History of Technology)

*William H. Roberts*

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Civil War Ironclads supplies the first comprehensive study of one of the most ambitious programs in the history of naval shipbuilding. In constructing its new fleet of ironclads, William H. Roberts explains, the U.S. Navy faced the enormous engineering challenges of a largely experimental technology. In addition, it had to manage a ship acquisition program of unprecedented size and complexity. To meet these challenges, the Navy established a "project office" that was virtually independent of the existing administrative system. The office spearheaded efforts to broaden the naval industrial base and develop a marine fleet of ironclads by granting shipbuilding contracts to inland firms. Under the intense pressure of a wartime economy, it learned to support its high-technology vessels while incorporating the lessons of combat. But neither the broadened industrial base nor the advanced management system survived the return of peace. Cost overruns, delays, and technical blunders discredited the embryonic project office, while capital starvation and never-ending design changes crippled or ruined almost every major builder of ironclads. When Navy contracts evaporated, so did the shipyards. Contrary to widespread belief, Roberts concludes, the ironclad program set Navy shipbuilding back a generation.

"An important study of institutional response to a new technology that holds lessons for today." (Choice)"In this impressively researched and broadly conceived study, William Roberts offers the first comprehensive study of one of the most ambitious programs in the history of naval shipbuilding, the Union's ironclad program during the Civil War. Perhaps more importantly, Roberts also provides an invaluable framework for understanding and analyzing military-industrial relations, an insightful commentary on the military acquisition process, and a cautionary tale on the perils of the pursuit of perfection and personal recognition." (Robert Angevine Journal of Military History)"Well researched... Any Civil War scholar or naval historian, regardless of specialty, will find something of interest in the volume." (James E. Sefton History: s of New Books)"Well-conceived and well-written... One of the strengths of the book is the author's comparison of ironclad-building efforts with modern military-industrial efforts such as the Polaris Fleet Ballistic missile program." (David Surdam EH.Net)"Roberts does an excellent job detailing the rise and fall of the [monitor-building] programs, including the major design elements and changes that contributed to the debacle. He skillfully weaves in the key operations that disclosed the monitors' shortcomings... Every major character involved is presented... Civil War Ironclads is an excellent addition to the literature of the period." (Donald L. Canney Nautical Research Journal)"Roberts's study, illuminating on many fronts, is a welcome addition to our understanding of the Union's industrial mobilization during the Civil War and its inadvertent effects on the postwar U.S. Navy." (William M. McBride Technology and Culture)"[A] readable and well-researched account of Civil War ironclad production." (Benjamin Franklin Cooling Journal of American History)"This is an important book that should be in the library of all those interested in the Civil War at sea." (Spencer C. Tucker North and South)"A highly readable study of Civil War ironclad construction that integrates diverse aspects of industrial development, government-industry relations, naval warfare, and engineering. Based on extensive research, Civil War Ironclads provides a vivid and detailed portrait of what was arguably one of the most ambitious naval shipbuilding programs in U.S. history. Roberts draws fascinating connections between military strategy, marine engineering, bureaucratic management, and business strategy." (Thomas Heinrich, Baruch College)"A valuable read for the specialist in Civil War navies." (NYMAS )"Civil War Ironclads could easily be a case study to accompany any text in the history of technology or management. Anyone concerned with managing complex technology, of which building warships is still among the most complex, will be able to apply lessons learned." (Kathy Crewdson and Ian Dew The Northern Mariner)From the Publisher"A highly readable study of Civil War ironclad construction that integrates diverse aspects of industrial development, government-industry relations, naval warfare, and engineering. Based on extensive research, Civil War Ironclads provides a vivid and detailed portrait of what was arguably one of the most ambitious naval shipbuilding programs in U.S. history. Roberts draws fascinating connections between military strategy, marine engineering, bureaucratic management, and business strategy."—Thomas Heinrich, Baruch CollegeFrom the Back CoverIn Civil War Ironclads, the first comprehensive study of one of the most ambitious programs in the history of naval shipbuilding, William H. Roberts explores the enormous task of constructing the U.S. Navy's new fleet of ironclads. This process involved establishing a "project office" that was virtually independent of the existing administrative system, broadening the naval industrial base, granting shipbuilding contracts to inland firms?all under the intense pressure of a wartime economy.