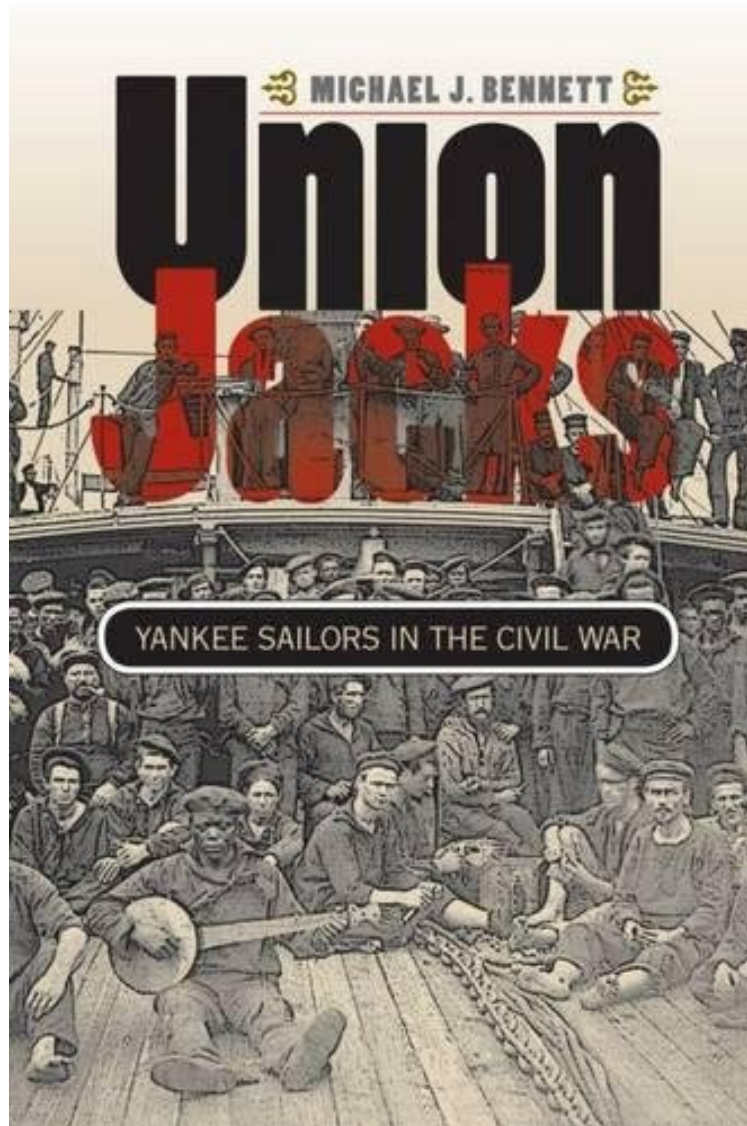


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Union Jacks: Yankee Sailors in the Civil War (Civil War America)

Michael J. Bennett

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Historians have given a great deal of attention to the lives and experiences of Civil War soldiers, but surprisingly little is known about navy sailors who participated in the conflict. Michael J. Bennett remedies the longstanding neglect of Civil War seamen in this comprehensive assessment of the experience of common Union sailors from 1861 to 1865. To resurrect the voices of the "Union Jacks," Bennett combed sailors' diaries, letters, and journals. He finds that the sailors differed from their counterparts in the army in many ways. They tended to be a rougher bunch of men than the regular soldiers, drinking and fighting excessively. Those who were not foreign-born, escaped slaves, or unemployed at the time they enlisted often hailed from the urban working class rather than from rural farms and towns. In addition, most sailors enlisted for pragmatic rather than ideological reasons. Bennett's examination provides a look into the everyday lives of sailors and illuminates where they came from, why they enlisted, and how their origins shaped their service. By showing how these Union sailors lived and fought on the sea, Bennett brings an important new perspective to our understanding of the Civil War.

Bennett set out to write 'a social history of the bluejackets' . . . and has succeeded magnificently. . . . an essential work. -- Blue Gray Magazine, Holiday 2004 Union Jacks is an eye-opening book, containing much new information about the Union war effort at sea. . . . An excellent work on a subject too long neglected by those interested in Civil War history.--Free Lance-Star (Fredricksburg, VA) Bennett's book is social history at its best. . . . Well conceived, meticulously documented, and nicely written, Union Jacks may be considered the standard against which social histories of Civil War sailors should be measured.--Journal of American History Union Jacks is a valuable addition to the literature on the Civil War at sea.--Civil War Times Interesting and easy to read. . . . Union Jacks: Yankee Sailors in the Civil War should be in the library if anyone wants to learn more about the Civil War. It provides information that can't easily be found any place else. If you are a Civil War buff, get a copy, you can't go wrong.--Mexia Daily News A significant contribution to the historiography of the Civil War. . . . Bennett's marvelous book rides the wave of maritime social history that has surged in recent years. . . . [Bennett] convincingly demonstrates that the Civil War was not just a soldier's war and that sailors had a unique wartime experience. Union Jacks is a terrific book.--Journal of Social History Michael J. Bennett's extensive archival research has produced the best picture to date of the sailors of the Civil War. In this pathbreaking and readable book, Bennett writes about the origins, society, and culture of the men Abraham Lincoln called 'Uncle Sam's web feet.' . . . For both the serious student of Civil War naval history and the casual reader, this is a must-have book.--Civil War Book A remarkably effective job of capturing the voices of ordinary sailors. . . . A gem, joining social history methodology with the vivid story-telling loved by Civil War buffs.--Military History of the West An innovative and thoughtful approach to a unique group of Americans. . . . Outstanding. . . . A thought-provoking bridge between antebellum and Civil War social history.--Journal of African American History An outstanding contribution to the fields of the American Civil War, U.S. Military History, naval history, as well as the history of race, ethnicity, and class in nineteenth-century America. . . . Recommended for classroom use as well as general readers.--Florida Historical Quarterly This well written book is a valuable addition to the historiography on American sailors and on the Union navy during the Civil War.--Journal of Military History This book is a treasure-trove of references about the Union Navy. . . . Bennett's sources, primarily diaries, letters, and journals, were skillfully used to make each topic come alive, making Union Jacks excellent reading and a useful resource for scholars interested in the role of the Union Navy during the Civil War.--Peekskill Sea History Bennett has provided an excellent look at the forgotten world of Union sailors, and his book will be the standard reference for those interested in their watery lives.--Journal of Illinois History Michael Bennett set out to write 'a social history of the bluejackets' in the Civil War and has succeeded magnificently. Indeed, his book not only fills a yawning gulf in Civil War scholarship, it also offers fresh insights into race relations as well as the origins of 'Hard War.' It is certain to take its place as an essential work on the Civil War Navy.--Blue Gray Will prove very useful to anyone interested in the naval side of the Civil War, and in the life of the ordinary man in the service.--The NYMAS Union Jacks is an original and fascinating study that fills a huge hole in the historical scholarship about the Civil War. Despite all that is known about the experience of soldiers, the sailors' war has remained shrouded in a combination of mystery and myth. In one stroke, Michael Bennett brings the sailors out of the shadows and situates them within the distinctive maritime culture of seafarers and roustabouts and the broader political culture of mid-nineteenth-century working men.--Joseph P. Reidy, Howard University An important new book. . . . A mine of information that turns many assumptions upside down. No doubt it will be widely read and discussed by scholars in the months and years to come. It is clearly an important milestone in the historiography of the war at sea.--North South This is an eye-opening, well written book.--Civil War News About the Author Michael J. Bennett is an attorney and independent scholar living in University Heights, Ohio.