

USS *Monitor*

A Historic Ship Completes Its Final Voyage

JOHN D. BROADWATER

USS Monitor

Recovering a lost ship that forever changed war at sea . . .

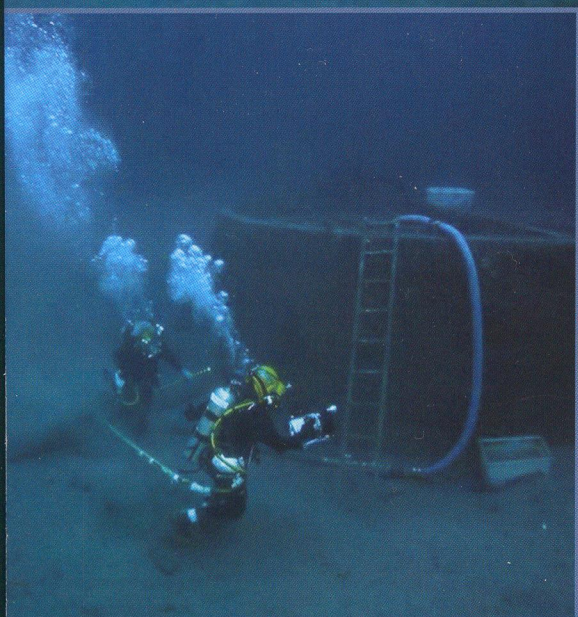
ON MARCH 9, 1862, USS *Monitor*, prototype of a new class of armored warships, fought the Confederate ironclad CSS *Virginia* at Hampton Roads, Virginia, only a day after *Virginia* had ravaged the Union fleet blockading the James River.

In the world's first clash between iron-armored warships, *Monitor* and *Virginia* exchanged gunfire at close range for nearly four hours. The events at Hampton Roads changed the world's navies. After centuries of dominating battles at sea, wooden, sail-powered warships would be rendered obsolete. Iron, steam power, and heavy guns in rotating turrets were now the means to wage naval warfare. The harbinger of that change did not last long, however. Less than nine months later, the now-famous *Monitor* was under tow, heading south to Beaufort, North Carolina, when, in heavy seas, the vessel sank, taking sixteen of its crew with it.

Monitor was considered at the time to be a total and irretrievable loss; even the location of its final resting place became a mystery. Not until 1973 was the inverted hulk located, and in 1995, partial recovery of the wreck began under the auspices of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in partnership with the US Navy. The decision to place *Monitor* in a protected zone—a national marine sanctuary—marked another historic first for the vessel. The story of this decision, the subsequent protection and management of the historic resource, and the raising of major hull components including the gun turret, add another layer of history to the *Monitor*'s fascinating story.

Lavish illustrations (photographs, site drawings, and artifact sketches) complement this informative and highly readable account by John D. Broadwater, whose decades-long career as an archaeologist included participating in several early *Monitor* expeditions and eventually heading *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary, during which time he planned and directed the major expeditions that resulted in recovery of many of *Monitor*'s most significant objects.

JOHN D. BROADWATER recently retired from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, where he had served as chief archaeologist.



Photos courtesy NOAA Monitor Collection
Front cover art © Tom Freeman



ED RACHAL FOUNDATION NAUTICAL ARCHAEOLOGY SERIES

Texas A&M University Press
COLLEGE STATION

www.tamupress.com

ISBN-13: 978-1-60344-474-3
ISBN-10: 1-60344-474-2



9 781603 444743