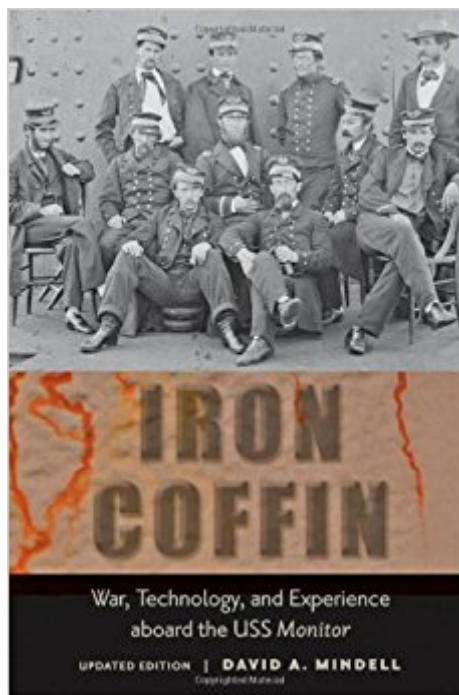


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# Iron Coffin: War, Technology, And Experience Aboard The USS Monitor (Johns Hopkins Introductory Studies In The History Of Technology)



## Synopsis

The USS Monitor famously battled the CSS Virginia (the armored and refitted USS Merrimack) at Hampton Roads in March 1862. This updated edition of David A. Mindell's classic account of the ironclad warships and the human dimension of modern warfare commemorates the 150th anniversary of this historic encounter. Mindell explores how mariners "fighting 'blindly,' below the waterline" lived in and coped with the metal monster they called the "iron coffin." He investigates how the ironclad technology, new to war in the nineteenth century, changed not only the tools but also the experience of combat and anticipated today's world of mechanized, pushbutton warfare. The writings of William Frederick Keeler, the ship's paymaster, inform much of this book, as do the experiences of everyman sailor George Geer, who held Keeler in some contempt. Mindell uses their compelling stories, and those of other shipmates, to recreate the thrills and dangers of living and fighting aboard this superweapon. Recently, pieces of the Monitor wreck have been raised from their watery grave, and with them, information about the ship continues to be discovered. A new epilogue describes the recovery of the Monitor turret and its display at the USS Monitor Museum in Newport News, Virginia. This sensitive and enthralling history of the USS Monitor ensures that this fateful ship, and the men who served on it, will be remembered for generations to come.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Mindell takes us back in time so we become 'witnesses' to the events surrounding the Union

Navy's most famous ironclad." (Pirates and Privateers)"The excellence of this volume confirms its continuing usefulness... Iron Coffin is a veritable gem of a book." (John F.M. McDermott IEEE Technology and Society Magazine)"Mindell's research is impeccable and supports his argument with considerable authority from contemporary sources as well as his own experiences after the partial recovery of the Monitor's components. The book, as with its earlier incarnation, is an important bridge between operational military history and the human side to science and technology." (Gregory Stern H-War, H-Net Reviews)"Midell conveys life aboard the Monitor with realism and honesty." (Robert C. Stewart Industrial Archaeology)

"An original and stimulating study that raises serious questions about relations between warriors and their death-dealing machinery." (War, Literature, and the Arts)"Well researched and wide in its scope, this work raises issues that transcend the Civil War and resonate in our own time." (American Historical Review)"This book offers important new insights into the Monitor as a national icon, the ironclad's association with the modern U.S. Navy, and the evolving role of innovation and heroism in twenty-first-century warfare." (Virginia Magazine of History and Biography)"Mindell provides an intriguing and richly textured analysis that makes effective use of contemporary diaries and other reports. These accounts help Mindell convey the flavor of life aboard the Monitor with candor and insight." (Journal of Southern History)

Great book. I liked every thing about it except the last chapter about Melville. The ship and it's crew fascinated me, I wasn't bored at all, at least until they started talking about Melville and his poems about the Monitor. I hope one day I will go to the Monitor museum.

You can smell the gunpowder and coal smoke, feel the cramped and heated space and the Monitor comes alive. Come aboard!

Holy crap thesis paper! It's great that there's a story about the Monitors but there is a lot of technical wordsmithing that does not lead to good reading.

Informative.

A good revue of the technical aspects of the monitor, but missing aspects of the single-cylinder two-piston steam engine .

This book was amazing! Never knew that ironclads were used during the Civil War, this is a must read, highly recommend it!

As a veteran of the US Navy's submarine force I'm familiar with iron coffins and as an experienced with UAVs for attack operations also familiar with the moral concepts of autonomous warfare. Mindell's insights into how these notions applied to the Monitor were interesting interesting when he correlated them with first hand historical accounts.

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