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Infernal Machines: The Story of Confederate Submarine and Mine Warfare

Milton F. Perry

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Milton F. Perry : Infernal Machines: The Story of Confederate Submarine and Mine Warfare before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Infernal Machines: The Story of Confederate Submarine and Mine Warfare*:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An excellent resource about Civil War "torpedos"By James D. CrabtreeThis book presents a study of explosive devices known collectively at the time as "torpedos" but mostly what we consider today to be mines. Few people are aware today but mine warfare, both on land and in the water, saw great advancement, mostly in the hands of the Confederates as mines are primarily a defensive weapon. Charleston saw considerable use of mines to keep Union soldiers at bay and landmines made the assault of some rebel forts almost prohibitively expensive. Offensive mines (spar torpedos) encouraged the development of submarines, torpedo boats and destroyers. Unfortunately for the Confederates they were never able to effectively use this slight technological advantage to defeat the Union.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. We should have won the WarBy Ron BraithwaiteThis is a beautiful little book on a little known subject, Confederate submarine and mine warfare. Here we read discussions and see little known drawings of some absolutely remarkable contraptions including mines the likes of which destroyed the Union warship, "Cairo", on the Yazoo river. At the end of the book is a table, tabulating all the Union warships damaged and sunk by Confederate 'torpedos' [in fact, mines]. There are a total of 43, an incredible

number, and most of these were significant ships that sunk. We also read the description of the first successful submarine in world history, the 'Hunley' and how heroic crews volunteered to service the dangerous vessels. All of her crews died but not before sinking the Union Battleship 'Housatonic.' There is also a discussion of one of the most 'infernal' machines of all. It was a bomb made up to look like a lump of coal. Most ships of the time were steamships operating on coal power. One lump of this stuff into the boiler room and the whole thing blows up...and the ship goes down. One of the greatest losses of lives during the war [actually just after the war] was possibly due to one of these devices. A paddlewheeler taking thousands of Union troops and Union ex-POWs blew up unexpectedly, taking hundreds down with her. It's fascinating to think that a nation--any nation, really--with its back against the wall, can really become innovative...more innovative than the more powerful enemy has to be. Ron Braithwaite author of novels--"Skull Rack" and "Hummingbird God"--on the Spanish Conquest of Mexico

Milton F. Perry tells the story of the torpedoes and booby-traps employed by the Confederacy during the Civil War to harass and repel invading Union forces. "Perry wrote well on an interesting and relatively unexplored subject. Through the use of diaries and letters, he lends color to a subject which could have been dull and technical... This book will be of interest to scholar, buff, and casual reader." - Journal of American History. Despite the vast amount of literature concerning the American Civil War, there's no detailed account of the development and application of torpedoes and mines by the Confederacy. This is an attempt to do that. This book has 9 illustrations and 2 maps. It deals with Maury's torpedoes, the submarine battles, shells, first blood, spreading success, from Charleston to the James, Captain Lee's torpedo, beneath the surface, the Secret Service Corps, the Roanoke and the Rappahannock, and opening the James and Western waters. It includes an extensive index and a bibliography. It also includes a list of the union ships sunk or damaged by Confederate torpedoes.