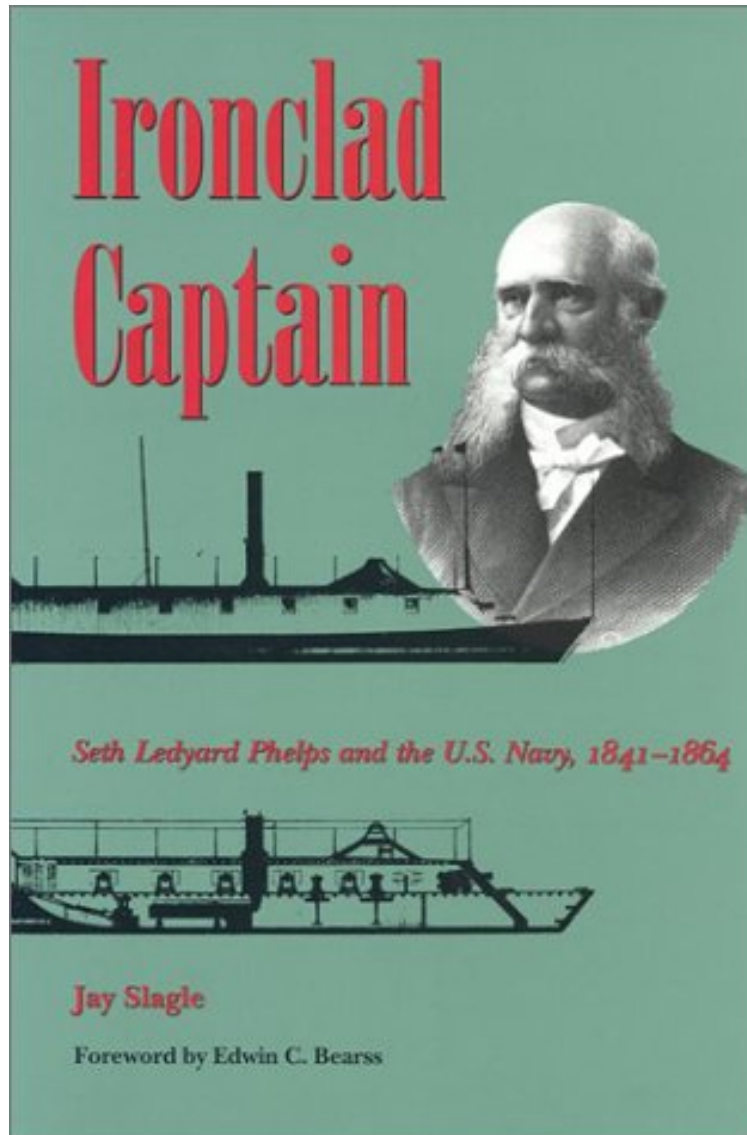


(Get free) Ironclad Captain: Seth Ledyard Phelps and the U.S. Navy, 1841-1864

# Ironclad Captain: Seth Ledyard Phelps and the U.S. Navy, 1841-1864

Jay Slagle

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**Jay Slagle : Ironclad Captain: Seth Ledyard Phelps and the U.S. Navy, 1841-1864** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ironclad Captain: Seth Ledyard Phelps and the U.S. Navy, 1841-1864:

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By A Customer Jay Slagle has done an excellent job of detailing S. Ledyard Phelps' career in the Navy and on the Mississippi. Unfortunately, the work appears to be biased in favor of the author's family connection with the subject. Notably, Phelps's relations with the rest of the officers of the Western Gunboat Flotilla are obviously skewed in favor of Phelps... Henry Walke of the Carondelet is portrayed in a decidedly poor light, while the highly controversial William D. "Dirty Bill" Porter is seen to be almost heroic. A potentially fine biography is partially sabotaged by the author's obvious sympathy for his ancestor.  
4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A fascinating look at national and naval events in the 1800s  
By A Customer Jay Slagle has produced a book that offers so much. It gives the reader a real feel of what life was like for a young officer in the pre-Civil War Navy and how the development of the sectional conflict was perceived. This book is also one of the best accounts of the Western Flotilla/Mississippi Squadron that I have read. I couldn't put it down for two weeks. I highly recommend it for anyone interested in the naval events of the Civil War or life in 19th-century America..

Seth Ledyard Phelps was of the Old Navy and the New. As a midshipman and junior officer he served under sail off West Africa, in the War with Mexico, and in the Mediterranean and Caribbean. As a senior officer in the river squadrons of the Civil War he saw combat at its closest. Phelps, a native of Chardon, Ohio, was a prolific and observant correspondent. His private letters, to his wife, his father, and to political patrons and other naval officers, are among the most compelling and descriptive extant. The heart of Ironclad Captain are these letters, which Jay Slagle has set in context through the judicious use of published documents, memoirs, and scholarly histories of the navy. The result is a small history of the navy and its officer corps for the middle third of the nineteenth century. Phelps's self-confidence fueled a driving ambition. He was one of the severest critics of the navy's seniority system, which seemed to thwart those ambitions. After long and often heroic service on the Western Rivers, he left the navy in 1864 to pursue a less exciting career in commerce and diplomacy. Unfortunately for historians, his correspondence ends at that time as well. Notwithstanding his bitter leave-taking Seth Phelps loved his country and his service. His letters are a permanent and invaluable legacy to both.

From the Back Cover Seth Ledyard Phelps was of the Old Navy and the New. As a midshipman and junior officer he served under sail off West Africa, in the War with Mexico, and in the Mediterranean and Caribbean. As a senior officer in the river squadrons of the Civil War he saw combat at its closest. Phelps, a native of Chardon, Ohio, was a prolific and observant correspondent. His private letters, to his wife, his father, and to political patrons and other naval officers, are among the most compelling and descriptive extant. The heart of Ironclad Captain are these letters, which Jay Slagle has set in context through the judicious use of published documents, memoirs, and scholarly histories of the navy. The result is a small history of the navy and its officer corps for the middle third of the nineteenth century.