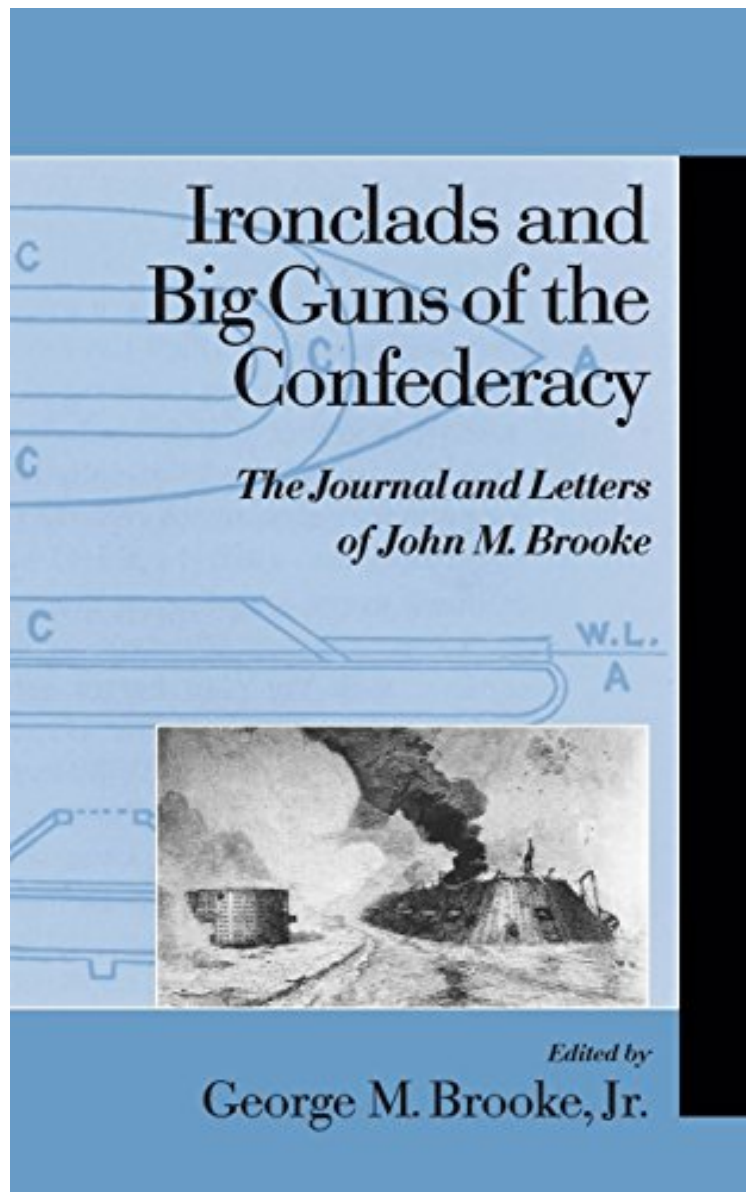


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Ironclads and Big Guns of the Confederacy : The Journal and Letters of John M. Brooke (Studies in Maritime History)

George M. Brooke Jr.

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George M. Brooke Jr. : Ironclads and Big Guns of the Confederacy : The Journal and Letters of John M. Brooke (Studies in Maritime History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ironclads and Big Guns of the Confederacy : The Journal and Letters of John M. Brooke (Studies

in Maritime History):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Bravo!By The DivaAn absolute "must read" for anyone who is even half-way serious about Confederate naval ordnance and their ironclads. It contains information about the construction of Brooke's rifled cannon and their test results against armored targets that are unavailable anywhere else, as well as the testing that resulted in the sloped composite armor scheme that was used on the CSN's ironclads. You will soon realize that many "bloggers/ commentators" on the various American Civil War websites haven't bothered to read this fine compilation. Brooke's diary entries, letters and papers also provide a unique insight into the personal difficulties with which he had to contend while undertaking a herculean task (a wife who struggled with TB though a pregnancy and ultimately died from the disease during the war...the death of a daughter....the loss of friends and relatives...etc.), as well as how the ebb and flow of the fortunes of war affected him, his family and those around them. Most of all, however, I must say that this compilation impressed me the most in exposing the sheer genius of an unassuming man who found himself cast by history into such turbulent times. While I was somewhat aware of how impressive Brooke's rifled cannon were, before I read this book I never really appreciated the brilliant mind that John Mercer Brooke possessed, nor his humanity. Bravo!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy elk11060A very thorough treatment of an important part of the Confederacy's development of large artillery.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Confederate Navy cannon and projectile designer.By MICHAEL J ODONNELLA combination of detailed research and a competent writing style makes this book a pleasure to read. I recommend it to anyone interested in the South's struggle to properly arm its Navy in the new era of ironclads.

Loaded with previously unavailable information about the Confederate Navy's effort to supply its fledgling forces, the wartime diaries and letters of John M. Brooke (1826-1906) tell the neglected story of the Confederate naval ordnance office, its innovations, and its strategic vision. As Confederate commander of ordnance and hydrography in Richmond, Virginia, during the Civil War, Brooke numbered among the military officers who resigned their U.S. commissions and went South to join the Confederate forces at the onset of conflict. A twenty-year veteran of the United States Navy who had been appointed a midshipman at the age of fourteen, Brooke was a largely self-taught military scientist whose inventions included the Brooke Deep-Sea Sounding Lead. In addition to his achievements as an inventor, Brooke was a draftsman, diarist, and inveterate letter-writer. His copious correspondence about military and personal matters from the war yields detailed and often unexpected insights into the Confederacy's naval operations. Charged with developing a vessel that could break the Union blockade, Brooke raised the Merrimack, a wooden vessel scuttled by the Union Navy, and outfitted it with a

About the AuthorGEORGE M. BROOKE, JR., is professor emeritus of history at the Virginia Military Institute and the grandson of John M. Brooke. A veteran of World War II, Brooke is the author of *John M. Brooke, Naval Scientist and Educator* and *John M. Brooke's Pacific and Japanese Adventure, 1858-1860*. He lives in Lexington, Virginia.