

(Download pdf ebook) The Sinking of the USS Cairo

# The Sinking of the USS Cairo

*John C. Wideman*

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**John C. Wideman : The Sinking of the USS Cairo** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Sinking of the USS Cairo:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Glenn D. HoxieBeing from Vicksburg this book held some details I did not know.

In 1862 a Confederate team torpedoed the Union's showpiece gunboat, the USS Cairo. It sank into the Yazoo River in minutes and rested there for 102 years, until it was salvaged in 1964 to become a premier exhibit at the Vicksburg National Military Park. This is the story of the USS Cairo. Using family oral history and newly examined documents found in the US National Archives, this text aims to disprove some previous theories and to correct factual errors found in earlier reports, including details of the weapon, identification of the torpedo crew, and illustrations of the five gunboats that engaged in the Yazoo battles.

From Library JournalThe mystery surrounding the sinking of the USS Cairo in 1862 by an underwater mine is convincingly solved by Wideman, a criminal and civil investigator. His narrative of the Confederate Secret Service's clandestine war on the Union army and navy makes absorbing reading. The exploits of Capt. Zere McDaniel and his fellow secret service agents have been recounted before, most notably in Milton Perry's *Infernal Machines* (1965) and Philip Van Doren Stern's *Secret Missions of the Civil War* (1959), but it is Wideman's description of their "MacGyver-

like" ability to fashion unconventional weapons from the materials at hand that brings them so vividly to life. A testimony to Wideman's investigative skills and a fine contribution to Civil War research, this is recommended for academic libraries.- Lawrence E. Ellis, Newberry Coll. Lib., S.C. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From the Inside Flap Previously untold, the true story of the Union ironclad, the first man-of-war sunk in combat by a naval torpedo From the Back Cover The objective was that of curbing the Union navy's runaway successes in western rivers. In 1862, in one of the South's most amazing secret operations, a Confederate team, using newly invented explosive mines, blew up the USS Cairo, one of the Union's most feared ironclad gunboats. It sank within minutes. The USS Cairo is the only remaining vessel from the Union navy's river fleet. For 102 years the ironclad rested deep in the mud of the Yazoo River. In 1964 it was rediscovered and salvaged. Now the USS Cairo is one of the premier exhibits at the Vicksburg National Military Park. This historic vessel, its entire cargo of weapons and personal effects, and its role in the war continue to spark the imaginations of Civil War buffs and thousands of tourists. Here, for the first time, in a carefully documented study is the entire story of the Confederate Secret Service team that sank the USS Cairo. With family oral histories never before consulted and with newly examined documents from the National Archives The Sinking of the USS Cairo disproves some previous theories and corrects factual errors found in earlier reports. It shows conclusively that the Cairo was not sunk by "an electrically detonated mine" but by a different method. Also, it identifies the members of the Confederate crew, whose names supposedly were "lost to history". For the first time in a book about this river war, there are illustrations of all five gunboats that were engaged in this action. Told from the Confederate perspective for the first time, this refocused story of the Cairo is a significant addition to the history of the Confederate Secret Service, to the history of the operations around Vicksburg, and to the history of the war on the western frontier.