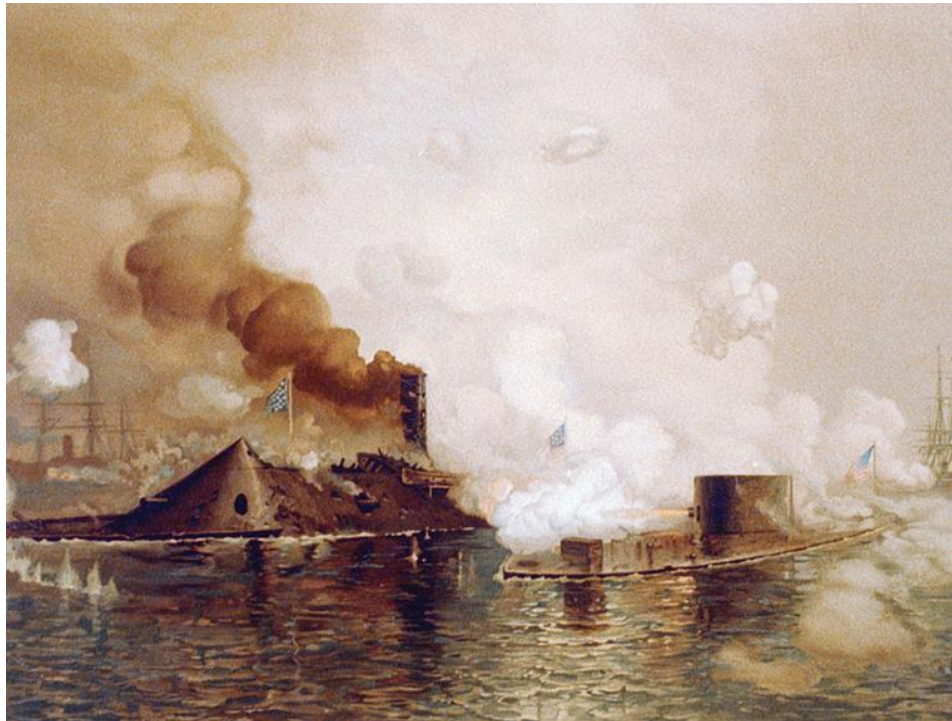


Section 5. Vicksburg: A Besieged City



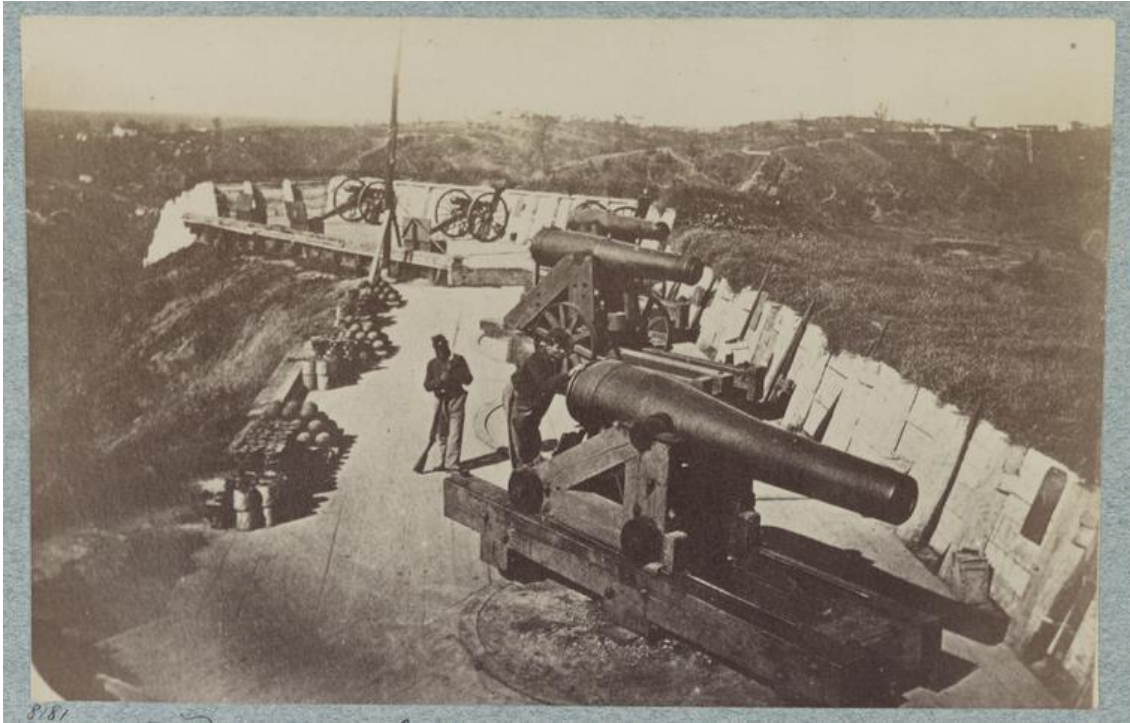
- Early in the war, Union forces withdrew from the navy yard in Norfolk, Virginia, but they left behind a warship named the *Merrimac*.
- **The Confederacy, which began the war with no navy, covered the wooden *Merrimac* with iron plates and added a powerful ram to its prow.**
- In response, the Union navy built its own ironclad ship called the *Monitor* in less than 100 days.
- **The battle of the *Merrimac* and the *Monitor* demonstrated that ironclad ships were superior to wooden vessels.**

Section 5. Vicksburg: A Besieged City



- The Union now controlled both ends of the Mississippi, which prevented the South from moving men and supplies up and down the river.
- However, the North was similarly unable to move along the river, as long as the Confederates continued to control one key location—Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Section 5. Vicksburg: A Besieged City



- Located on a bluff overlooking a hairpin turn in the Mississippi River, the town of Vicksburg was easy to defend and difficult to capture.
- Whoever held Vicksburg could, with a few well-placed cannons, control movement along the Mississippi.

Section 5. Vicksburg: A Besieged City



- In May 1863, General Ulysses S. Grant battled his way to Vicksburg with the needed army, and for six weeks.
- Union gunboats shelled the city from the river while Grant's army bombarded it from land.

Section 5. Vicksburg: A Besieged City



- Low on food and supplies, Vicksburg surrendered on July 4, 1863. The Mississippi was now a Union waterway, and the Confederacy was divided in two.

Section 6. Fort Wagner: African Americans and the War



- Early in the war, abolitionists had urged Congress to recruit African Americans for the army. At first, most Northerners regarded the conflict as “a white man's war,” but **Congress finally opened the door to black recruits in 1862.**

Section 6. Fort Wagner: African Americans and the War



- Massachusetts was one of the first states to organize black regiments. The most famous was the 54th Massachusetts Infantry, commanded by Colonel Robert Gould Shaw.

Section 6. Fort Wagner: African Americans and the War



- The assault on Fort Wagner was an impossible mission. To reach the fort, troops had to cross 200 yards of open, sandy beach as rifle and cannon fire poured down on them.
- After losing nearly half of their men, the survivors of the 54th regiment retreated, but their bravery won them widespread respect.

Section 6. Fort Wagner: African Americans and the War



- Black soldiers often received little training and poor equipment.
- They also risked death or enslavement if captured. Still, African Americans fought with great courage to save the Union.