

Ironclads at Hampton Roads

Timetable

June 15, 1855 – The *USS Merrimack* is launched in Boston.

Saturday, April 20, 1861 --Under pressure from local militia the commandant of Gosport reluctantly gives orders to start burning the facility while scuttling ships. The *Pawnee* arrives, too late to save the ships. Much of the fires are extinguished as soon as occupied by the Rebels, resulting in one of the greatest naval disasters prior to the 20th Century. Across the bay, the 4th Massachusetts arrives to reinforce the defenses of Fort Monroe.

Monday, April 22, 1861 Several hundred governmental clerks and officers in the armed services, including the commandant of the Washington Naval Yards as well as the upper echelon of officers at Gosport, resign en masse.

Monday, May 13, 1861 – Under cover of a violent electrical storm, and at the risk of another riot, Benjamin Butler moves in force to occupy Baltimore. Winfield Scott scolds Butler for such a rash move and has him transferred to a less delicate command at Hampton Roads, including Fort Monroe.

May 30, 1861 – The Confederates salvage the *Merrimack*.

January 30, 1862 – The Federals launch the *USS Monitor*.

March 6, 1862 – The *USS Monitor* begins her maiden voyage to Hampton Roads.

March 8, 1862 – On the same day that the *USS Monitor* arrives at Hampton Roads, the newly renamed *CSS Virginia* attacks the blockading fleet in the Hampton Roads.

March 9, 1862 – The *CSS Virginia* and the *USS Monitor* clash to a draw in the battle of Hampton Roads.

May 11, 1862 – Because the *CSS Virginia* cannot easily maneuver in the James River where it is essentially boxed in, the Rebels decide to scuttle it.



December 31, 1862 – Being highly unseaworthy in rough waters, the *USS Monitor* sinks off Cape Hatteras, NC, while being towed in a severe storm with the loss of four officers and 16 crewmen.