

1: Full text of "From Metternich to Hitler"

From sail to steam: the final development and passing of the sailing ship / by H. Moyses-Bartlett Staples Press for the Historical Association London Australian/Harvard Citation Moyses-Bartlett, Hubert.

By the end of that same century they had become low, noisy vessels covered by a haze of dark smoke. This transition was considered inconceivable at the beginning and inevitable by the end. Almost all the ships in use today are powered by machinery. The transition from sail occurred in the first half of the 19th Century, with a few notable exceptions. Although the transition to steam was occurring in most of the developed navies at the same time, this Entry will concentrate on the US Navy. There were steamships active in both of the Opium Wars in China, and the Crimean War fought in and around the Black Sea; in all cases they still served alongside ships powered only by sail. The massive naval involvement in the US Civil War, the Union blockade, Confederate raiders and blockade runners all served to accelerate the development of the steam warship. The Industrial Revolution In the 18th Century a series of machines were designed to improve efficiency in the garment industry, including the spinning jenny, spinning frame and cotton gin. Many of the mills were located next to fast-moving rivers and streams to provide the power for these machines; other sources of power came from wind, animals and even men turning the main shaft. A better source of power was needed. In England a crude steam engine was being used to pump water from the mines. When a young mechanic named James Watt was asked to repair one of these engines in he began developing ways to improve their efficiency. The basic elements of the modern steam engine were introduced and, for the next hundred years, new ways would be found to use this source of power. The great cost and weight of a boiler and engine limited the application until new ideas were developed. She carried goods and passengers between New York City and Albany almost miles up-river. Early Steam in the US Navy The first steam vessel in the US Navy was named the Demologos 1, but was soon renamed the Fulton after her designer, who had passed away before her first sea trials in She had been built as a defence for the harbour of New York, with the hope she could drive away the ships of the British blockade. The War of had ended several months before she was ready for service. The Fulton was built with a large well along her centreline protecting her single paddle-wheel from enemy fire. She was designated a crew of men to serve the pound 2 guns mounted on her gun-deck. She spent her career as a receiving ship in New York providing a barracks for sailors waiting to be assigned to an active ship. The Fulton was destroyed by an accident in her powder magazine on 4 June, The resulting explosion killed 30 men and injured several others. She was purchased by the navy in December, for service in the West Indies against pirates. Before employing her on active service the navy insisted on outfitting her with masts and sails as a precaution against engine failure. She proved quite capable of entering the small estuaries where the pirates lurked, and was the first steam vessel used by the US Navy in combat. She became a favourite of Commodore David Porter, who made several trips to the capital at Washington in her. In July, the Sea Gull was inspected and found unfit for further duty at sea. She was sent to Philadelphia, and served there as a receiving ship until she was sold for scrap in The next steamship was built by the navy and commissioned in The Fulton II was a small ship equipped with paddle-wheels on both sides and mounted with only four cannons. She was an experimental ship, but saw active service until she was laid up at Pensacola, Florida in She was captured by Confederate forces at the start of the Civil War. When the harbour was abandoned, near the the end of the war, the Fulton II was destroyed. A pair of side-wheel steamers, the Mississippi and Missouri were commissioned in and respectively. The careless handling of turpentine near the hot machinery caused a fire that destroyed the Missouri at Gibraltar in The screw steamer Princeton followed in 4. Her main advantage over her predecessors was that the screw or propeller was below the waterline and safe from damage. She was also equipped with two large cannons called the Oregon and the Peacemaker. While conveying the President and many of his cabinet on the Potomac River in February, , the Peacemaker exploded, killing the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Navy among others. Six frigates of the Merrimack class were commissioned, starting in The Hartford and Pensacola followed in , each with its own improvements on the earlier design. The majority of ships in commission were still powered by sail. The

Clipper Ships In a strange twist of fate, even as the technology of steam power was becoming practical, the development of sail power was also reaching its own zenith. Huge ships with acres of sails were developed for the China trade and the gold boom in California. Less than three months were required for a voyage from New York to California, even though it still included the treacherous rounding of Cape Horn, off the southern tip of the Americas. Carrying fuel for an engine reduced the valuable space for paying cargo, and was an expense that could not be justified. Commercial sail is still used today in some Third World nations. Almost half of the officers had resigned their commissions to serve with the Confederacy. Several of the ships were also lost to the Rebels as the Southern ports were abandoned. The navy began a program of purchasing ships and arming them, as well as an aggressive building program. Seamen and officers were recruited to man the new armada. Almost all of the vessels purchased were powered by sail, although several steam ferries and river boats were added to the squadrons. Most of the newly built ships were steam-powered. The Ironclads The idea of armouring ships with iron was not a new one. The French had clad the screw-powered *La Gloire* with iron plates. Although she had been intended to be a new class of ship, her design was just a modification of an existing class of ships of the line, with the upper gun-deck removed to compensate for the weight of the iron plates. Neither of these ships had been in combat. When the US Navy abandoned its Gosport Shipyard in Norfolk, Virginia, the ships that could not be removed were burned, including the screw frigate *Merrimack*. The Union responded by building the *USS Monitor*, a low-decked ship with two guns mounted in a revolving turret. As the war progressed, the Union produced dozens of *Monitor*-style ships, many including a second gun-turret. The Confederacy built several more casement-style ironclads for harbour defence. On the rivers, the lighter river boats could not support the weight of thick iron plates, and thin sheet metal was used instead. Although these specialised craft were solely powered by their steam engines, the seagoing craft continued to carry masts and sails as auxiliary power. Both were wooden vessels, almost equal in size and armament. The Union ship had hung iron chains down her sides for additional protection from the incoming shot. After an hour-long fight, the *Alabama* began to slip below the waves, fatally damaged. The survivors were rescued by the victor and a British yacht, the *Deerhound*. As the war progressed the navy became more dependent on steam power. By the end of the war, only a small number of pure sailing ships remained in commission, and, as the size of the fleet was reduced back to a peacetime level, they were all retired. The Dreadnoughts The evolution of the steam warship continued throughout the second half of the 19th Century. Masts and sails were reduced; eventually all that remained were small signal masts and platforms for the look-outs. Steel replaced iron, producing stronger hulls. Engines were improved in both reliability and efficiency: As the 19th Century proceeded, all of the industrial nations of the West modernised and increased the size of their navies. In the Far East, Japan also joined in the race for naval supremacy. The resulting conflicts must be left for other Entries. One of the most publicised events of the steam navy was the explosion on 15 February, that destroyed the battleship *Maine* in the harbour of Havana, Cuba. No one knew at the time what had caused the disaster, but the press were clamouring for a war with Spain – an unknown saboteur was blamed. The war with Spain was eventually declared, resulting in Cuban independence and both the Philippine Islands and Puerto Rico joining the US as protectorates. Many today believe the true cause of the explosion was a fire started in the coal bunker by spontaneous combustion. In the British commissioned the battleship *Dreadnought*. This ship would revolutionise ship design for the next half-century. With all her main guns of the same size, the distribution of shells was simplified. Her engines had been replaced by steam turbines, increasing speed and efficiency. It was not until the Aircraft carrier came to prominence in the Second World War that the *Dreadnought* style of battleship would be reduced to a secondary role in the fleets of the world. These in effect forbade the building of new mechanically-powered warships. In order to train her naval cadets and the marine division of the Hitler Youth, Germany built three sailing ships: At the end of the Second World War, these ships were seized as reparation for the cost of the war: The *Gorch Fock* was renamed the *Tovarishch* and used as a training ship by the Soviet Union, and later served under the Ukrainian flag, until Today she has regained her original name and is a museum ship in Stralsund, Germany. She is still conducting training cruises every summer, manned by the cadets from the Academy. She replaced the *Danmark*, a Danish training ship that had been in American waters at the outbreak of the war. She had been used by the Coast Guard throughout the war

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and was returned to Denmark after peace had been finalised. She is also still involved in sail training. The Germans also built the Mircea in Hamburg for the Romanian navy. Except for a short time that this ship was in the possession of the Soviet Union, she has remained an active training ship in the Romanian navy. Other navies, including Colombia and Chile, have built or restored large sailing ships for training. Many students studying oceanography spend a semester at sea under sail.

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This strategy would not have been possible under sail because of a ship's inability to sail into the wind. After an hour-long fight, the Alabama began to slip below the waves, fatally damaged. The survivors were rescued by the victor and a British yacht, the Deerhound.

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