

Huron, USS ^[1]

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by Kathy Carter, 2006

The USS *Huron* remains one of the most famous shipwrecks in North Carolina's ["Graveyard of the Atlantic"](#)^[2]. A man-of-war



USS Huron (1875-1877).
Image courtesy of the Naval

Historical Center.

While on a routine survey expedition from New York to the Caribbean via Key West, a failure to adjust course to account for a slight eastward curve of the coastline caused the 541-ton, steam-powered ship to ground on a reef just off the beach. High seas broke apart the barkentine-rigged vessel over the course of the predawn hours. Of 16 officers aboard only 4 survived, and 85 of 115 crewmen perished.

The wreck happened just two miles from one of seven lifesaving stations erected on the [Outer Banks](#)^[5] in 1874, but it occurred after the lifesaving season of the summer and fall had ended; observers on the beach could do little more than watch the *Huron's* destruction. Mourned nationally, the tragedy led to reforms in the [U.S. Lifesaving Service](#)^[6], including extension of the lifesaving patrol season and construction of additional lifesaving stations along North Carolina's coast and elsewhere. The remains of the vessel lie submerged off Nags Head.

References:

Joe A. Mobley, *Ship Ashore!: The U.S. Lifesavers of Coastal North Carolina* (1994).

David Stick, *Graveyard of the Atlantic: Shipwrecks of the North Carolina Coast* (1952).

Additional Resources:

USS *Huron*, North Carolina Office of State Archaeology: <http://www.archaeology.ncdcr.gov/ncarch/underwater/huron.htm> ^[7]

Image Credit:

USS Huron (1875-1877). Image courtesy of the Naval Historical Center. Available from <http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/sh-usn/usnsh-h/huron2.htm> ^[4] (accessed August 1, 2012)

Subjects:

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Authors:

[Carter, Kathy](#) ^[11]

Origin - location:

[Dare County](#) ^[12]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[13]

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