

## Huron, USS <sup>[1]</sup>

### Huron, USS

by Kathy Carter, 2006

The USS *Huron* remains one of the most famous shipwrecks in North Carolina's Graveyard of the Atlantic <sup>[2]</sup>. "A man-of-war



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

steamer, the *Huron* ran aground off Nags <sup>[3]</sup> Historical Center. <sup>[4]</sup> Head <sup>[3]</sup> in the early morning hours of 24 Nov. 1877 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 <sup>[5]</sup> 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 <sup>[6]</sup>, 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> <sup>[7]</sup>

#### 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> <sup>[4]</sup> (accessed August 1, 2012)

#### Subjects:

Gilded Age (1876-1900) <sup>[8]</sup>

Reconstruction (1865-1876) <sup>[9]</sup>

Ships <sup>[10]</sup>

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#### Origin - location:

Dare County <sup>[12]</sup>

#### From:

Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press. <sup>[13]</sup>

1 January 2006 | Carter, Kathy

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