

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

steamer, the *Huron* ran aground off Nags ^[3] Historical Center. ^[4] Head ^[3] 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 ^[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:

Gilded Age (1876-1900) ^[8]

Reconstruction (1865-1876) ^[9]

Ships ^[10]

Authors:

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Origin - location:

Dare County ^[12]

From:

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

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Links

^[1] <https://ncpedia.org/huron-uss> ^[2] <https://ncpedia.org/graveyard-atlantic> ^[3] <https://maps.google.com/maps?oe=utf-8&client=firefox-a&q=nags+head&ie=UTF-8&hq=&hnear=0x89a4e37f150554e7:0xf3e158c0a55f7781,Nags+Head,+NC&gl=us&ei=pR4ZUO6UF4Wy8QSRpoGQBA&ved=0CLoBELYD> ^[4] <http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/sh-usn/usnsh-h/huron2.htm> ^[5] <https://ncpedia.org/outer-banks> ^[6] <http://www.uslife-savingservice.org/> ^[7] <http://www.archaeology.ncdcr.gov/ncarch/underwater/huron.htm> ^[8] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/gilded-age-1876-1> ^[9] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/reconstruction> ^[10] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/ships> ^[11] <https://ncpedia.org/category/authors/carter-kathy> ^[12] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/coastal-25> ^[13] <https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/encyclopedia->