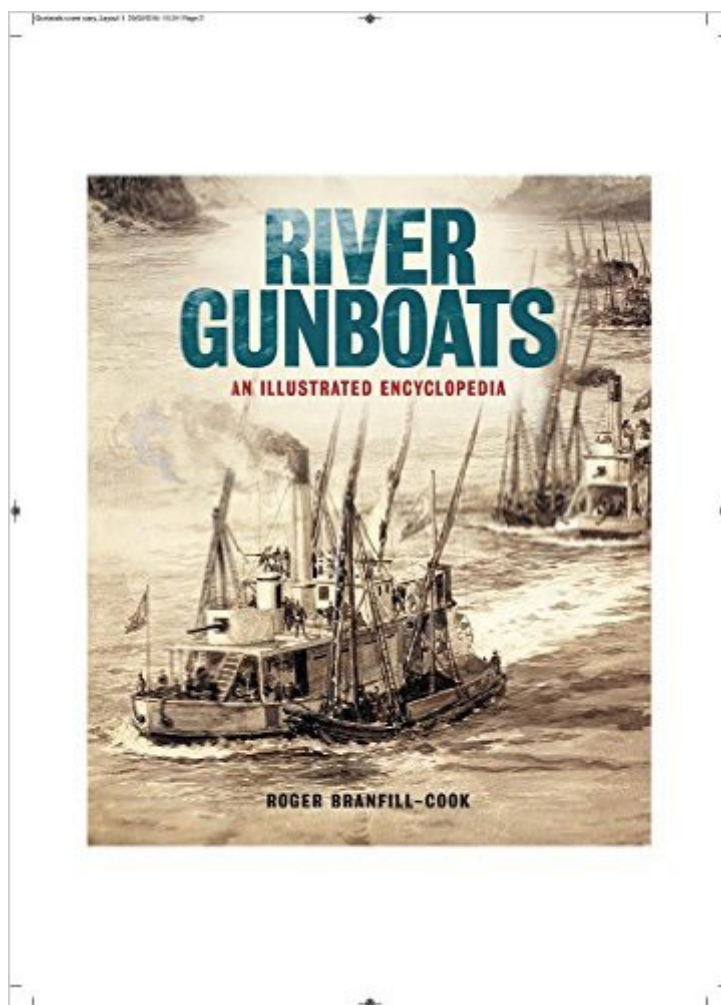


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River Gunboats: An Illustrated Encyclopedia



Synopsis

The first recorded engagement by a steam-powered warship took place on a river in 1824 when the Honourable East India Company's gunboat Diana moved into action on the Irrawaddy River in Burma. In the 150 years that followed, river gunboats played a significant part in over forty campaigns and individual actions. River gunboats proved to be the decisive factor in river campaigns of the American Civil War; in the French conquest of Indochina; during Kitchener's advance on Khartoum; and on the Rufiji and Tigris during the Great War. These warships fought for the Paris Commune; on the rivers of South America; against the Bolsheviks; and during the Second World War in the open waters of the Mediterranean; the Portuguese and American Brown Water fighting in Africa and Vietnam, respectively, rounded out the end of the twentieth century. This lavishly illustrated encyclopedia describes vessels of every nation designed as river gunboats, plus those converted river steamers which took part in combat. Maps of the river systems where they operated are included as are narratives of the principal actions involving river gunboats. Their story is brought up-to-date with data on current riverine combat vessels in service today.

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