



Ironclad of the Roanoke: Gilbert Elliott's Albemarle

Robert G. Elliott

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Almost every student of Confederate Naval history has heard of the Confederate Ironclad Albemarle, built in eastern North Carolina on a corn field along the Roanoke River near Scotland Neck. Not only was the ship instrumental in assisting the Confederate recapture of Plymouth, North Carolina, but also she served to repel the Union Flotilla holding the western limits of Albemarle Sound. Though severely outnumbered, the Albemarle was successful in stopping the Union Navy advance on May 5, 1864. Here is the story of why the vessel was built, how she was built, with what, and by whom. Correspondence of Gilbert Elliott, the contractor; Commander James W. Cooke, C.S.N., her skipper; Stephen R. Mallory, Secretary of the Confederate Navy, and many others has revealed the feelings and actions of those involved in that remarkable feat. Wartime politics almost prevented her launching, and later did prevent her being used to force the Union Navy from Albemarle Sound. Picture a youth of eighteen building vessels under contract to the Confederate Navy. He managed a shipyard, ordered materials, negotiated financing, hired craftsmen, managed his employer's business and personal holdings, cared for his family, and earned the respect and admiration of the Secretary of the Confederate Navy. This book combines the history of both the Confederate Ironclad Albemarle, and of her renowned builder, Gilbert Elliott.

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