

# LECTURE Series

Friday, October 9, 2026

7 pm, Eastern / 4 pm, Pacific

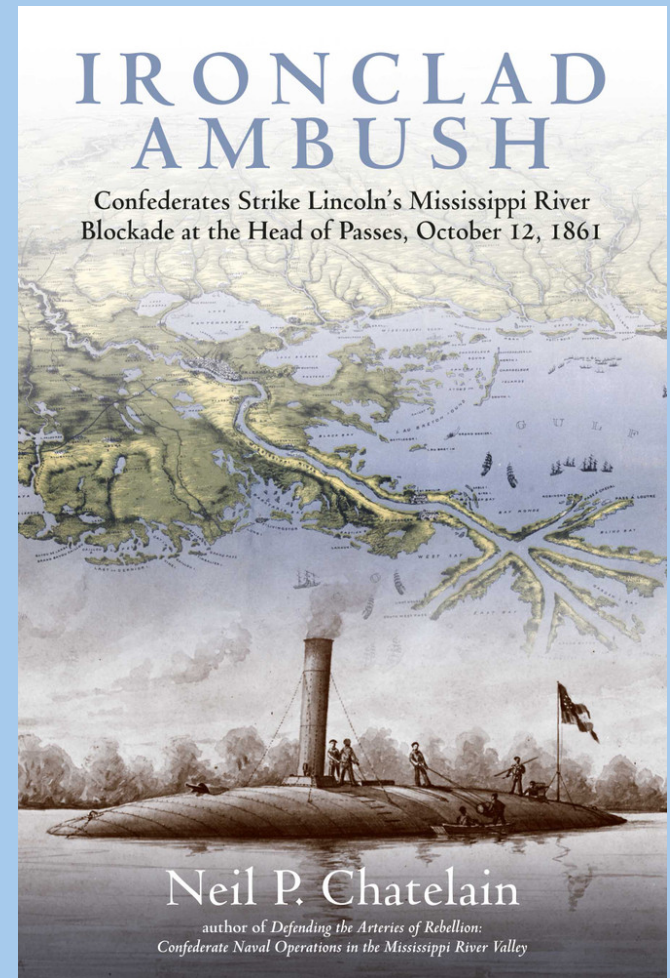
*with Neil P. Chatelain*

## IRONCLAD AMBUSH

Confederates Strike Lincoln's Mississippi River  
Blockade at the Head of Passes, Oct. 12, 1861

The Battle of the Head of Passes marked the Civil War's first major fleet engagement. The Southern privateer ironclad ram Manassas rammed USS Richmond, and as the Federals retreated toward the Gulf, two blockaders ran aground and crews abandoned ship as Confederate gunboats closed in. The clash represented the Confederacy's first major naval victory, the first use of an ironclad in North American waters, and the first direct challenge to Abraham Lincoln's blockade.

Chatelain draws on voices from all sides—including ship captains, junior officers, enlisted sailors, lighthouse keepers, and civilians across southeastern Louisiana



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