

### From Sea To Cd: Full-Text Search Capability Makes Orns Faster, Easier To Use

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#### Recommended Citation

Joiner, Gary D. (2000) "From Sea To Cd: Full-Text Search Capability Makes Orns Faster, Easier To Use," *Civil War Book Review*. Vol. 2 : Iss. 3 .

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/cwbr/vol2/iss3/12>

## Review

### FROM SEA TO CD

**Full-text search capability makes ORNs faster, easier to use**

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**Summer 2000**

**Secretary of War** *The Civil War CD-ROM II: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of Rebellion*. Guild Press of Indiana, ISBN 1578600278

One of the best researchers this reviewer has known once told him that even the smell of paper and binding glue in old volumes adds to the atmosphere of historical research. As a traditional historian, I agree. However, things change.

As technological advances occur at a dizzying pace, new products arrive on the market that can be of immeasurable value to the student of history. Guild Press of Indiana is a leading source for some extraordinary products, beginning with the CD-ROM that contains all 127 books of the *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*.

Other feats are the 52-volume *Southern Historical Society Papers* and the *Atlas of the Official Records of the Civil War*, each of which is available on a single CD-ROM. This review involves another project, the **Civil War CD-ROM II: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of Rebellion**.

The complete text of all 30 volumes plus all tables, engraving, and photographs are found in this CD-ROM. It is designed for Windows 3.1 and later versions but it is highly recommended that the user have Windows 95 or Windows 98. The CD-ROM should be at least four-speed and the monitor screen resolution should be set at 1024x768 for best results. Although Guild Press doesn't mention it, the best performance will be obtained with a faster clock speed (mhz) and a plethora of RAM in the computer. This product is a thoroughbred and it likes power and speed.

## **Intuitive search engine**

The best feature about Guild Press products is the on-board search engine. It is very intuitive and easy to learn. You can request all citations of a single word, e.g. "ironclad," or a name such as "David D. Porter." Complex searches can also be performed. The software will list each volume in which results were located, displaying the information in a separate window. Simply click on a volume, and a sub-directory of results appears. The accompanying instructions are clearly written and easy to follow. The online help system is written with non-gurus in mind.

This reviewer will not throw his paper sets of the ORs into the trash bins, but he now has a powerful ally to use them to their utmost extent.

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