John Ericsson Encyclopedia Article

John Ericsson

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John Ericsson

1803-1889

Swedish-born American engineer who influenced the design of warships. Building the first successful screw propeller in 1836, he immigrated to the United States three years later. He helped produce the *Princeton,* a unique steam-powered warship with engines and boilers below the water surface. Ericsson is best known for his production of the USS *Monitor,* an iron-clad that withstood the Confederate ship *Virginia,* reinforcing Union support for the navy. Ericsson also refined structural plans for additional ironclads.