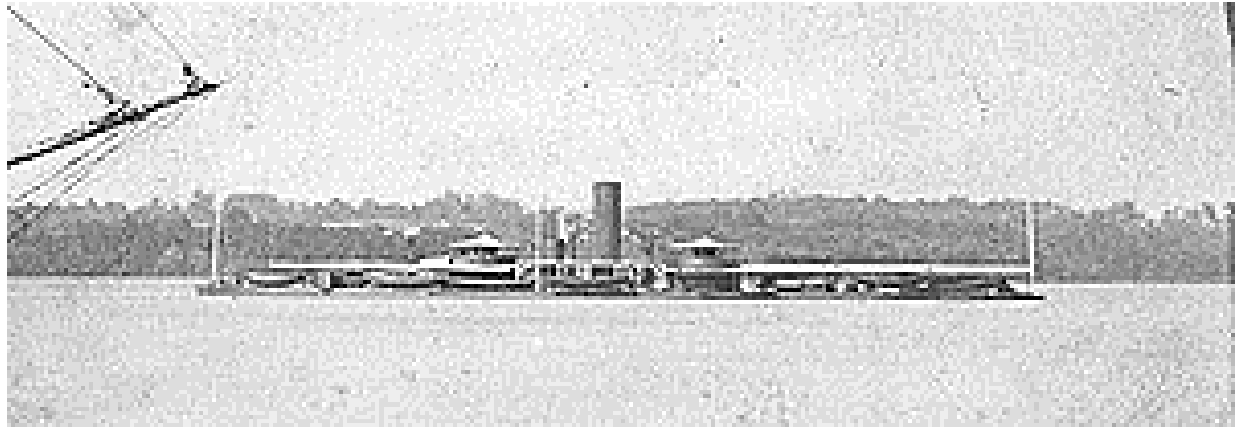


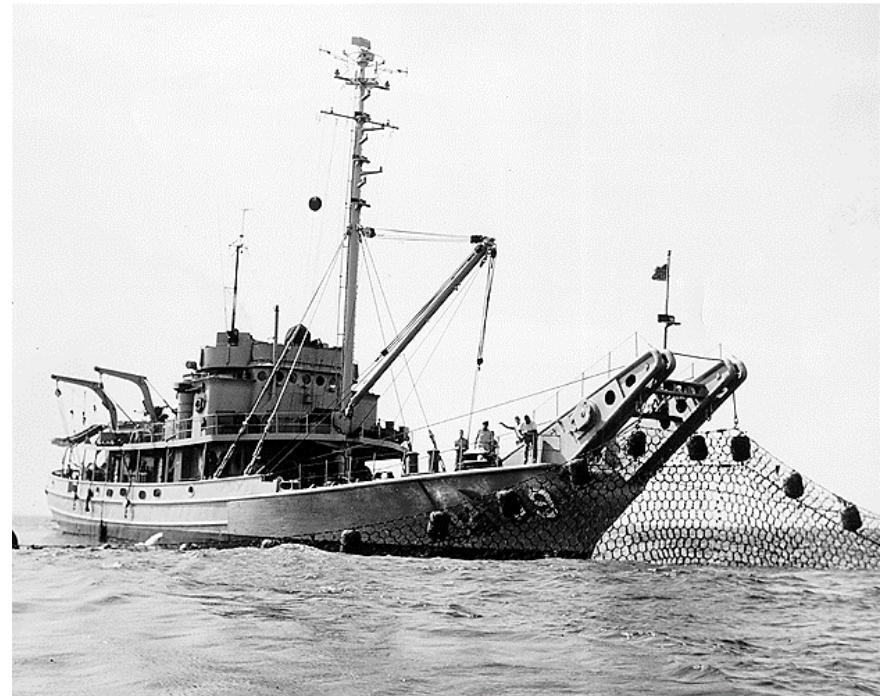
Ships are named for many different things. US Navy ships run the gamut from large battleships named for states to small vessels without a name – just a hull number. The Navy has a lot of ships, and when they get down to bestowing names some small places or people are so honored.

Tonawanda has two ships bearing that name. The first was a monitor vessel built during the Civil War and named for Tonawanda Creek. Think of the original Monitor – only bigger. The ship and her three sisters were caught in a time when ship designs and armament were rapidly evolving. The *Tonawanda* was already obsolete when it was completed in October 1865. She never saw service in the war and was quickly retired in December 1865. Almost a year later, the ship was reactivated, renamed *Amphitrite*, and assigned to the Naval Academy as a training vessel. Her wooden hull rotted quickly away, and the *Tonawanda* was sold for scrap in 1873.



The second *Tonawanda* fared much better. Built as a Cohoes-class net tender, the ship was completed at Green Bay, Wisconsin and commissioned on 9 May 1945 as AN-89. Fifteen of these type vessels were built and served first as intended to manage anti-submarine nets – but they were also utility vessels that could do every odd assignment that came their way.

Just like its namesake the *Tonawanda* arrived in California just as WW II ended. After some months of miscellaneous duty – she was placed in the reserve fleet at Orange, Texas. Recommissioned in 1952, the *Tonawanda* participated in nautical experiments, tactics, and the science of mine warfare. *Tonawanda* was finally written off December 18, 1959 and leased to the government of Haiti in 1960. The lease morphed into a sale, re-named the *John Jacques Dessalines* (MH- 10), and served into the late 1970's before vanishing into obscurity.



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