

the media's portrayals of pirates in the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

There's little to criticize about this book. Its two maps; one depicting incidents of piracy reported to the British Press between November 1827 and May 1828, and the other representing the *Defensor de Pedro's* piracy voyage with ships attacked for the same period, could be more effectively presented by overlaying one with the other and including the dates of the attacks. Researchers and students of pirate history have much to gain from this study. Besides its close telling of several stories mostly absent from the secondary literature on piracy, the book draws on a wide range of primary evidence including trial papers and witness accounts. The select bibliography offers an excellent guide to the best available sources on both the 1828 attack and incidents of piracy elsewhere in the nineteenth-century Atlantic, including numerous British and American newspaper articles. As one of very few studies to question the conventional understanding of Atlantic world piracy as having been all but eradicated by the early decades of the eighteenth century, this book is important and worthy of our attention.

Michael F. Dove
St. Thomas, Ontario

Kev Darling. *Fleet Air Arm Carrier War*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen and Sword Aviation, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk (Originally published 2009), 2022. 352 pp., illustrations, appendices, bibliography, index. UK £19.99, US \$39.95 paper, ISBN 978-1-39907-500-8.

Kev Darling's history of the Fleet Air Arm (FAA) is a testament to the enduring popularity of works about British naval aviation. Originally published in 2009, its reprinting suggests that the interest in the subject has not been satisfied by the dozens of new books that have been written about it since, not to mention the many older works also still in print. Its reappearance thus raises a pair of questions: to whom is it designed to appeal, and how does it compare to the already substantial number of works available?

On a spectrum ranging from narrowly-focused academic studies to glossy, picture-laden surveys geared towards the popular market, Darling's book can be placed on the latter end of it. Though the title suggests that his book is only about the FAA, his first chapter offers a history of British naval aviation up to the start of the Second World War. Darling follows this with three chapters about the FAA during the war that divide his coverage by theatre, another three chapters offering more detailed coverage of the FAA's service during the Korean War, and two final chapters summarizing the FAA's history down to

the early twenty-first century. All of this is recounted with a generous number of pictures of airplanes, aircraft carriers, and aircraft operations, so many that the reader will find one on nearly every other page of the main text. Though these are all in black and white, any readers tiring of the dichromatic drabness of the text will find relief with a separate section offering 16 pages of gorgeous, full-colour photos of FAA planes and helicopters, either in flight or parked on the ground. In this respect, the book is truly a feast for the eyes.

All of these images are intended to supplement Darling's text. Yet not even the lavish use of illustrations can distract from the many flaws in this book. The first of these is its organization. Though the chapters are arranged in chronological order, the information within them is all over the place. As early as in the first chapter, which is subtitled 'From the Start to 1939', Darling summarizes the various classes of aircraft carrier built up through the 1950s, followed by a description of the aircraft of the era that ends with the Harrier jump jet. This creates an excessive amount of repetition, as numerous details are repeated throughout the text. Darling's detail on page 28 about the first HMS *Eagle*'s origin as a converted Chilean battleship, for example, is one that he regards of such significance that he offers it again on page 39, and then again in a photo caption on page 73. And while many details recur over several chapters, others, such as the sinking of the HMS *Hermes* in the Indian Ocean in April 1942 are left out altogether, as Darling picks up his coverage of naval aviation in that theatre with the arrival of the escort carrier HMS *Battler* on 26 October 1943 (and not 22 September, as Darling claims).

Most of this should have been caught by a sharp-eyed editor before publication. Unfortunately, not only was the initial publication poorly edited, but the reprint appears free of any editorial intervention as well. The text is pockmarked throughout with errors that neither the author nor the publisher corrected before they reissued the book. Some of these, such as the one on page 11 dating Eugene Ely's historic flight off of the USS *Birmingham* to 4 November 1910 rather than 14 November, are likely typographical in nature. Yet there are several, such as the identification of Luftwaffe field marshal Albert Kesselring as an 'admiral' on page 94, for which the blame must rest squarely with the author. And whether the numerous inaccuracies in the index are the result of sloppy indexing before the book's original publication or the failure to adjust to changes in the layout of the text for the reprinted edition, the result either way is to make it practically worthless as a tool for the reader.

Taken together, these flaws make Darling's book greatly inferior to the many alternatives available to readers today. Scholars would do far better to turn to David Hobbs's excellent series of works on the history of British naval aviation, which are similarly well endowed with illustrations, but which accompany texts that are far superior in every respect to what is offered here.

And while the more casual reader may enjoy the photographs and Darling's efforts to capture in his narrative something of the drama of aviation-assisted naval warfare in the twentieth century, with so many options from which to choose it is unnecessary to steer them towards his unreliable account. In the end, there is no good reason to recommend this book to anyone interested in this subject.

Mark Klobas
Phoenix, Arizona

Douglas C. Dildy and Ryan K. Noppen. *German and Italian Aircraft Carriers of World War II*. Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2022. 48 pp., illustrations, tables, bibliography, index. UK £11.99, US \$19.00, CDN \$25.00, paper; ISBN 978-1-4728-4676-1.

Number 306 in Osprey's New Vanguard Series, and the first Osprey collaboration by authors Douglas C. Dildy and Ryan K. Noppen, *German and Italian Aircraft Carriers of World War II* offers an introductory examination of the German and Italian naval attempts at aircraft carrier programs. The book is divided into two distinct parts, with each containing a chronological analysis of the respective nations' efforts, accompanied by period photographs, profile renderings of the various proposed vessels, and data tables for relevant equipment and airframes. As is typical for Osprey works, a selected bibliography and index are provided at the end for further study and quick reference.

Lacking a comprehensive introduction, the text dives directly into the narrative of German carrier development. This constitutes over two-thirds of the work, totaling 29 pages compared to the 14-page Italian section. The development of German seaplane carriers and the beginnings of conversion carrier projects during the First World War provide a background to the efforts of the Kriegsmarine years later, with the majority of the section naturally focusing on the never-completed *Graf Zeppelin* and her associated aircraft designs. The political bickering and changes of leadership that hampered Germany's one wartime carrier are well documented, and the frustrations of Admiral Rader are well represented. The detailed focus on carrier aircraft designs is also appreciated, especially with the notations on the actual service of constructed airframes as the war progressed and the *Graf Zeppelin* was left to rust. The section finishes with an examination of the planned 1942 wartime conversion projects of ocean liners and unfinished cruisers into additional carriers, with information tables and profile drawings provided to better illustrate their unrealized potentials. No real section conclusion is given before