

some instances, even family members of slaveholders. Some did so out of a sense of altruism, others demanded compensation. Some of the names and their stories will be familiar to readers, such as escapees Harriet Tubman (who became an Underground Railroad ‘stationmaster’) and Frederick Douglass, or railroad stationmaster William Still, or Robert Smalls who commandeered a Confederate gunboat to obtain freedom; but others will undoubtedly be relatively unknown. Eye-catching is the sheer audacity of people like Captain Albert Fountain or the mysterious schooner captain who Still only referred to as B, both of whom took great risks in repeatedly secreting people aboard their vessels and away to freedom.

The opportunities for seaborne escape were well known to Southern authorities to the extent that escape attempts by slaves working on the docks were almost expected, but such was the value of the work that they performed, that the risk was accepted. It was virtually assumed that a missing slave in a coastal community had attempted to escape by boat. Measures were put in place to thwart escape attempts: boats were searched before departing, free Black sailors had their freedom of movement restricted, and punishment for absconders and those that assisted them were harsh, while rewards were given to those who revealed them. But, as the book makes quite clear, these measures were no deterrent.

The text is aimed primarily at an academic audience but is accessible enough for general readership. Indeed, I make no claim to be an expert on American slavery or the Underground Railroad, but I found the text to be both informative and, for the most part, engaging throughout. Some chapters are better than others, as may be expected when a book has multiple contributors, and while there is some minor repetition, all the contributors offer something unique about the respective areas they cover. All chapters are very well researched with extensive footnotes giving the text intellectual vigour. I do not know that this book will inspire new scholarship into the Saltwater Underground Railroad, but it certainly helps to raise awareness of its existence and of those who were involved. Highly recommended.

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Conrad Waters (ed.). *Seaforth World Naval Review 2022*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.nip.org, 2021. 192 pp., illustrations, tables, notes. US \$60.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-68247-746-5.

Authoritative and trusted annual reviews of international navies and naval forces published by private independent editors using open sources and

industry contacts have a long tradition. Brassey was one of the first, and Janes built an entire business model from the original naval annual conceived and illustrated by its founder, Fred Jane. Access to Janes' products, which cater predominantly to professionals, is very expensive and now available mostly in digital formats. That has left room for a reasonably priced, traditional book format which, like Brassey's before it, draws upon regular and guest contributors, experts in their respective fields, and targets a broader audience. The *Seaforth World Naval Review*, now in its thirteenth yearly iteration, is still under founding editor Conrad Waters. Waters, a lawyer and a banker, is known for his knowledge and interest in contemporary naval affairs, and has also published on the design, construction, and technical history of British cruisers reviewed previously in this journal (2019, XXIX no. 3, pp. 418-420). Previous years of the *Seaforth* annual naval review were covered by the late Charles Douglas Maginley, a long-time CNRS member and one of TNM's stalwart book reviewers who died in September 2020.

As noted by Maginley's last review of the 2020 edition (2019, XXIX no. 3, pp. 420-422), the structure and format share a consistent style with the other annuals in the series. The book comprises four distinct sections. The first section, an introductory overview, and second section, world fleet reviews divided into regions, offer focused, in-depth reviews of the navies of Sri Lanka, Spain, and the United Kingdom. They are written by contributing authors and curated by Waters. These parts are really the substance of the book. A third section examines some representative warship classes of interest, and a fourth section features a regular review by David Hobbs on developments in naval aviation and other technological reviews on optronics by technical guru Norman Friedman and greater automation in mine countermeasures by regular contributor Richard Scott. The last three sections are each divided into chapters or articles that carry a subordinate numbered heading to the parent section. Numerous tables provide comparative figures as well as numbers and data for the navies under discussion. Therefore, the *Seaforth World Naval Review* combines some characteristics of a reference source that follows an organized structure with a readable narrative that presents a considerable level of detailed information. Notes are provided at the end of the individual chapters, but there is no index provided, the same as previous annuals. Accompanying ship line drawings are done by John Jordan, another author and illustrator of technical histories and editor of Osprey's *Warship* historical annual.

Trends in world naval developments and particular navies are clearly identified throughout the discussion. The United States remains the clear leader in terms of defence spending on navies, total numbers of warships, and capabilities incorporating the latest advanced technology. Though other countries such as China, India, and Russia with geopolitical ambitions are

catching up or crafting a fleet mix suited to their own regional and global needs. The US Navy has fallen below the psychological threshold of 300 warships, a far cry from the anchor for Admiral Mike Mullen's aspirational 1,000 ship global maritime partnership navy, and due to a couple notable project fails, continuing fiscal pressures, and unexpected losses such as the fire-devastated amphibious assault ship *Bonhomme Richard*, is relying on a gracefully maturing fleet with occasional additions and replacements. Richard Scott's focused chapter describes replacement of the USN's versatile landing craft air cushion with a newer improved model, worked out and designed in-house and delivered through a commercial arrangement in a contract with supplier Textron. Building the next generation of ballistic missile and attack nuclear submarines constitutes the next significant bound. Even Brazil is eyeing its own nuclear attack submarine, as a follow-on to construction of four diesel-electric boats of the French *Scorpène* design. China gets lumped in with other major regional powers in Asia and the Pacific, although it is hard to see how Australia can compare to China, or even the significant fleet additions and upgrades happening in Japan and South Korea. Each of those countries possess industrial bases and funding commitments to undertake substantial naval programmes, the Republic of Korea Navy entering the preliminary design stages for a 30,000 tonne CVX aircraft carrier and the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force creating an expanded fleet of state-of-the-art submarines and surface warships. The obvious concern is China whose People's Liberation Army Navy continues to build out in quantity and quality in the surface, sub-surface, and amphibious domains. A Type 003 aircraft carrier, China's third and largest, is taking shape at a state shipyard near Shanghai at the mouth of the Yangtze River, expected to enter service sometime in 2024 at the earliest. The USN and its allies in the region see China's navy as a likely rival and competitor, especially in regard to disputes over Taiwan and the South China Sea.

The eclectic mix of naval forces in the Indian Ocean and Africa regions ranges from small constabulary patrol to warfighting in function, India's navy being at the top of the heap. Delays of significant warship projects building in India have created gaps in the fleet and continued reliance on older ships reaching or beyond the point of their serviceable lives. This is no more apparent than in the submarine force where the desire for nuclear-powered submarines has encountered setbacks and a little more success with the indigenously-produced *Scorpène* designs under French license. Mrityunjoy Muzumdar provides a credible account of the development and current rationale for force structure in the Sri Lankan Navy, presented as a small navy in transition from a brown-water littoral force to one equipped to operate in the surrounding ocean with patrol vessels and naval air assets. South Africa continues to slowly

modernize its frigate and submarine forces, while Egypt (through a number of thoughtful purchases from foreign suppliers) has built-up a capable fleet of surface combatants and four German-sourced Type 209 submarines. Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates have also made foreign purchases to bolster naval forces in response to fears about the intentions of Iran and its harder-line posture in the Persian Gulf and surrounding region.

The context of escalating tensions and prospect of war underscores the regional review of Europe and Russia, made readily apparent by the invasion of Ukraine. In fact, the European Union and NATO have treated the conflict as almost a proxy war with Russia, by sending significant amounts of munitions and military support to the embattled and sympathetic Ukrainians trying to stem the Russian advance and save their homeland. Backed by a new National Security Strategy promulgated in July 2021, Russia is making targeted investments in new hypersonic missiles capable of exceeding Mach 8 speeds and said to be impervious to air defences, as well as its strategic submarine force capable of launching conventional and nuclear ballistic missiles, to replace current Soviet-era submarines. At the same time, procurement of surface combatants is increasingly focusing on Project 22350 blue-water frigates and Project 20380/85/86 corvettes carrying an impressive range of weapons and sensors. Nikolai Novichkov, a contributing author, furnishes more detail on the background, technical characteristics, and construction of the corvettes, which have commissioned since 2008 and entered service in the Baltic and Pacific fleets. In the first week of the war with Russia, the Ukraine navy scuttled its only frigate, the *Hetman Sahaidachney*, then under repairs at the threatened port of Mykolaiv.

Amid the Russian menace, major financial commitments and investments for navies were already underway in selected western European countries. France announced a new generation nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to replace the *Charles de Gaulle* midway through the next decade and four new strategic ballistic missile submarines to replace the existing *Le Triomphant* class starting in 2035. Though almost equal in numbers to the United Kingdom's Royal Navy post-Brexit, France's *Marine nationale* has become and will remain Europe's leading navy that meets its own requirements from domestic production as well as generating revenue from a healthy export trade in leading-edge warships and submarines. A chapter by Bruno Huriet describes a sleek class of affordable offshore patrol vessels built by France's Naval Group for Argentina. These contrast with a similar class of relatively expensive offshore patrol vessels built in the United Kingdom, covered in a chapter by Conrad Waters, destined for overseas service in British possessions, and born from the accidental need to maintain shipbuilding capacity and a skilled labour force in a time gap between finishing work on aircraft carrier blocks and starting

future planned frigates. Richard Beedall's focused chapter on rebuilding the Royal Navy strikes an optimistic note if the planned naval programme is realized by 2030, but acknowledges many problems and potential challenges in the meantime. The Italian navy, minus the nuclear components, compares favourably with relatively new FREMM frigate additions to the surface fleet and a capable submarine force, four of which are Type 212A. Alejandro Vilches, another contributing editor, showcases the force structure and warships of the *Armada Española*, Spain's navy, which faces replacing an aging fleet with new warships and submarines during a period of fiscal restraint and reassessment of the country's role in the defence of Europe. Germany and Turkey continue to add modern warships to their respective fleets through domestic shipbuilding and participate in the competition for foreign export orders. A host of smaller European countries are also covered in basic detail in the remainder of the section.

Seaforth World Naval Review 2022 continues the beloved annual series with a clear layout and beautiful, well-chosen pictures in colour and black and white. The book is recommended for both general and professional audiences interested in the latest developments in contemporary navies around the world. It ranks with Brassey and Janes as a credible authoritative reference source in the field.

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Joseph Wheelan. *Bitter Peleliu: The Forgotten Struggle on the Pacific War's Worst Battlefield*. Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2022. 336 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography. UK £25.00, US \$30.00, hardback; ISBN 978-1-4728-4950-2. (E-book available.)

The Battle of Peleliu, waged during the autumn of 1944, constituted one of the bloodiest clashes of the Pacific Theatre. Overshadowed by larger engagements including Iwo Jima and Okinawa, the battle for Peleliu nonetheless established the tactical template for Japanese forces during the closing months of the war. Moreover, the decision to carry out the battle was controversial at the time; among historians, Peleliu remains one of the most heavily debated debacles of the Second World War.

The grueling fight that would unfold for Peleliu had ironically been born of American success. By the summer of 1944, the tide of the war in the Pacific had clearly turned against the Japanese Empire. On New Guinea, Japanese forces were on their heels in the wake of successful Allied campaigns. In February, the Americans had largely neutralized the vital Japanese naval base