

training base, created from scratch in the Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia, and named HMCS *Cornwallis*. Edwards also spent a year at sea in command of an armed merchant cruiser, including a role as part of the Canadian contribution to the little-known amphibious campaign with US forces in 1942 to recapture the Aleutians.

In the earlier volume, Helen Edwards used Edwards' diaries which, while terse, conveyed a picture of his daily activities and of what was important to him. This volume is different because Edwards did not leave a similar record after 1930. The only section of *Dutchy's Diaries* based on written diaries is the chapter covering the years 1946-50, the phase of his career when Edwards was a commodore in charge of the training and manning base in Esquimalt. The section on the decade from 1930 to 1940 is based largely on contemporary newspapers. "Dutchy" (he earned the nick-name because of a penchant for being tight-fisted on dates) was an accomplished tennis player, as was his wife, and the focus of this chapter is on various tennis tournaments. During this decade Edwards served in the naval barracks in Halifax and Esquimalt, which were responsible for training schools and shore accommodation. Between 1939 and 1941 Edwards, then in the rank of commander, was responsible for the East Coast manning and training establishment in Halifax. This was a critical time when the RCN was expanding rapidly with limited numbers of experienced trainers. To provide context for this period, the author has inserted a section on HMCS *Renard*, an armed yacht assigned to the Halifax Local Defence Force used to train sailors from Edwards' schools ashore. For the wartime parts of the Edwards story, the author has written chapters based on newspaper articles, and in the case of 1943-45 (Edward's years in *Cornwallis*), the narrative also cites a few official letters that her father-in-law kept.

Dutchy's Decades, like its predecessor, *Dutchy's Diaries* (2020), is a nicely produced softcover edition. The many photographs are clearly reproduced. The table of contents is accompanied by a striking photo of the heavy cruiser HMS *Exeter* in Esquimalt during a visit in 1937. Appendices describe ships and places mentioned in the text. "Dutchy" Edwards left only sketchy and fragmentary first-hand records about his experiences after 1930. Helen Edwards has created a narrative using largely secondary sources, and because of a lack of basic information on Edwards, many of these are episodic reports about sports and social events.

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Alan Forrest. *The Death of the French Atlantic. Trade, War & Slavery in the Age of Revolution*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, www.oup.com.

com, 2020. xxx+320 pp., maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$53.00, cloth; ISBN 978-0-19-956895-6. (E-book available.)

Alan Forrest has made a timely contribution to the growing field of the Atlantic World with his book *The Death of the French Atlantic: Trade, War, and Slavery in the Age of Revolution*. Known for his robust scholarship on the French Revolution and Napoleonic era, Forrest steps off the European continent to explore the decline of French Atlantic seaports and imperial trade with the West Indies. By focusing on the slave ports of Nantes and Bordeaux, he demonstrates how intertwined French Revolutionary practices and policies – including the government’s “political neglect” and “ambivalence” toward merchant communities, intensifying conflict in the West Indies, and emergent antislavery movements – facilitated a decline in the nation’s maritime power (xii). The result is a blend of recent scholarship and archival work, emphasizing entangled empires and the movement of people and information during the Age of Revolution.

Forrest opens by examining the rise of French port cities and the politics of important merchant families. In doing so, he reveals the slave trade’s prominence before the revolution in France’s major Atlantic ports, Nantes, and Bordeaux. Merchants embraced and depended on the slave trade, tightly linking them with France’s colonial possessions, especially Saint Domingue. Forrest is correct to look to Saint Domingue as a critical element in the French economy, exploring how events in the colony reverberate back to the metropole. While Saint Domingue was undoubtedly one of the most essential French colonial possessions, one wonders about other French Atlantic colonies and their complex relationships with *both* merchants in France *and* other islands in the West Indies. In this way, one is left with a narrow view of what the French Atlantic was.

In part two, Forrest explores the French Revolution as it reverberated around the Atlantic. In the first years of the revolution, trade remained prosperous. With the outbreak of revolution in Saint Domingue in 1791 (or the Haitian Revolution), however, the tides of fortune started shifting for merchant trade in the West Indies. Unleashed by revolution in France, the rhetoric of liberty and abolition took hold in both France and the West Indies. Combined with the outbreak of war with Britain in 1793, maritime conflict and privateering, as well as widespread violence in the West Indies, the Atlantic destabilized in ways France was unprepared for, and too disunited to combat politically, economically, or militarily. Thus, as France declined as a military power in the West Indies, its merchants deteriorated as an economic power both in the islands and at its Atlantic seaports back on the continent.

Part three is the book’s most robust section, taking the reader into the

chaotic aftermath of the French Revolutionary era as it transitioned into Napoleon's rule. As Britain and the United States moved to outlaw the transatlantic slave trade and Saint Domingue gained independence, French merchants failed to adjust to changing Atlantic economic and political currents. Forrest demonstrates that what was once a region of lucrative business for the French, was now a place of lost fortunes. Unfortunately, by focusing on the merchants in France, Forrest loses sight of how the French residing in the West Indies adjusted to the new environment. If Forrest's intention is to illuminate the French Atlantic, these actors played a pivotal role in its rise and eventual decline. Enticed by the Spanish Empire's offer of free land to populate their colonial possessions throughout the 1790s and early-1800s, many French West Indies residents seized the offer. In this, Forrest missed an opportunity to explore how the French Atlantic entangled itself with the Spanish Atlantic. Does the presence of these transimperial actors reveal the short-comings of historical categories such as a French, Spanish, or British Atlantic? Current scholarship would suggest so.

In taking French history into Atlantic studies, Forrest acknowledges that historiography has been somewhat "late to the game" in the turn toward Atlantic studies. Initially led by Americanists and later joined by British and Spanish scholars, Atlantic studies has strived to place national and imperial histories into broader conversations with the events and people outside of traditional political borders. Doing so demonstrates the Atlantic's entangled and complex histories, as people, commodities, and information crisscrossed unstable and fluid boundaries. It is within this context that Forrest slightly falters with the Atlantic framework. What exactly was the French Atlantic, and who was included in it, contemporarily and historically? And what was the French Atlantic's relationship to other "Atlantics," such as the British or Spanish?

With that said, overall, *The Death of the French Atlantic: Trade, War, and Slavery in the Age of Revolution* is a good book for those looking for an introduction to the French Atlantic. Forrest's writing style makes his work equally approachable to academic and general audiences alike. Combining economic, political, and intellectual history, Forrest crafts a compelling narrative. Those interested in a purely maritime history may be disappointed. Still, anyone intrigued by the idea of the French Atlantic and a work that addresses the era's complexities will not be. Jumping between the French Atlantic seaports and the West Indies, Forrest succeeds in weaving an illuminating and informative narrative.

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