

recriminations, and British courts martial.

A Franco-Spanish coalition devised plans for a Combined Fleet. The threat of a 1779 invasion of the British Isles put pressure on the Royal Navy as Britain's primary defense. Pressure eased as dissention and illness wracked the Combined Fleet, but battles still loomed. The Spanish Fleet was defeated in the Moonlight Battle off Cape St. Vincent on 16 December 1779.

With the threat of invasion averted, Captain of the Fleet, Rear Admiral Richard Kempenfelt, turned to much needed reforms of signaling, coppersing of the fleet and organizational authority. Other challenges arose as Gibraltar needed relief and the Netherlands' declaration of war against Britain set off a war in the North Sea that proved disastrous to the Dutch economy. The narrative continues with the fall of Lord North's ministry in the wake of disappointing news from America in 1782 and concludes with an account of Admiral Viscount Howe's command of the Channel Fleet through the indecisive engagement off Cape Spartel after which Howe returned to political life on his way to becoming First Lord of the Admiralty.

Author Quintin Barry has drafted a intensely researched account, supplemented by portraits and sketches of prominent figures and tables documenting the British and French Fleets at the Battle of Ushant. The bibliography provides a guide to further reading. There is both a general index and an index of ships. Barry's experience as a retired solicitor is reflected in his account of the courts martial, as it was in *Disputed Victory*, which I also reviewed for *Northern Mariner*.

I recommend *From Ushant To Gibraltar* to readers with a deep interest in the late- eighteenth-century Royal Navy and its connection to the politics of the era. You will love the detail of cruises, actions, technological advances, officers, and enemies. With my American orientation, I have heard and read that the American Revolution was a relatively small part of a world-wide war, but this tome supports that general statement with eye-opening facts. I gained a deeper appreciation of the motives of America's French, Spanish and Dutch allies. Patient readers can derive similar benefit.

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Malcolm Batten. *Shipping on the Thames and the Port of London during the 1940s to 1980s, a Pictorial History.* Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen and Sword Transport, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2022. 232 pp. illustrations, maps, bibliography. UK £30.00, CDN \$46.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-39901-840-1. (E-book available.)

This book is a photographic record and history of the vessels that worked in and visited the River Thames during the fifty-year period making up the great transition in ships and handling. It “aims to capture some of the variety of shipping on the Thames during this period when the old pattern of ships and ship-handling gave way to the systems more familiar today” (8). The photographs also depict and the text describes the evolving infrastructure of the port of London throughout the period.

Along with a brief history of shipping on the Thames, the introduction gives the story of Reg Batten, the passionate photographer who, over a half century, took the photographs making up this work. Malcolm Batten, his son, gives details of the vessels pictured and a concise and informative account of the history of the place: the river and the docks operated by the Port of London Authority.

The photographs are high definition, black-and-white views of the vessels, docks, buildings, and handling machinery that make up the maritime life of a great trading city.

The composition of Batten’s photographs is amazingly consistent over the years. Most are half-page and a few, full-page. They impart a huge amount of information about the vessels, their crews, the docks, and communities beyond. Information for vessels photographed includes owner (shipping line); builder; current name; gross registered tonnage; date built; previous names; and date of the photograph. Some are dramatic and at least one inspired, like the Thames barge moored sitting perfectly upright on the tidal mud in the River Colne outside a flour mill (56).

Following the introduction, there are large-scale historical maps and photographs of the docks, warehouses, materials-handling, and transportation infrastructure that comprised the Port of London: The Pool of London, West India Docks, East India Docks, the Royal Docks, Tilbury, and riverside docks and moorings, as at Woolwich and Deptford. There is detailed information on the evolution of cranes and hydraulic systems powering them from the state of the art in the nineteenth century to the beginnings of containerization.

The chapters are arranged according to the types of vessels and conform to their importance in the port’s history: cargo, service, and passenger shipping. Cargo was the first function of the maritime hub of the Empire. The section entitled “Cargo Shipping” opens with the development of the distinctive Thames barge, a ubiquitous form that followed the function of operating in the shallow water, tidal rivers, and mudflats of the Thames and East Anglia. The barge was the common denominator of vessels able to carry loads of flour, hay, or gravel from a farmer’s field into the heart of the city. Larger, motorized cargo vessels include large freighters with derricks and cranes, bulk carriers, roll on-roll off and small craft, like lighterage tugs, and specialized craft, like

coastal and up-river tankers. There is a section on lighters and their launch tugs; there having been 7000 and 350 respectively to distribute sixty percent of the cargo passing through the city. Along with the large, ocean-going vessels are the host of medium and small freighters and coasters needed to collect and distribute cargo to subsidiary ports across Europe and the Mediterranean. Transportation of energy resources is a major theme with the evolution from coal to oil in the vessels and the pumping systems for locks, bridges, and cranes that use the hydraulic systems in the port and from coal to natural gas in powering the city and the country. The section "Service Vessels" presents ship-handling and ocean-going tugs; dredgers; Trinity House vessels; recovery vessels; and floating cranes. "Passenger Shipping" includes passenger liners and later, cruise ships, as well as ferries and pleasure craft. Batten takes a long, wistful look at ferries, the only type of vessel featuring a description of their service at war. "Heritage Shipping" begins with the modern career of the Thames barge as an icon of maritime life on the south coast of the UK to which four full-page photographs are devoted. In the final chapter, "Postscript Rundown and Renaissance," the author ties the past into the redevelopment of the docks in the present day in text and photographs.

The text is concise and highly readable. What emerges goes far beyond the stated objective to be a detailed geography and history of the movement of goods and people in the marine transportation system: importing energy resources like coal and oil, bulk cargoes like sugar, wine and other foods; cement and building materials. Other vessels and parts of the system export waste: garbage and sewage sludge. One small quibble occurs on page 153 where a couple of vessels are supposed to be Flower-class corvettes. Although a lot of corvettes did go into civilian service, these do not look quite right. Batten's book portrays a gigantic marine transportation system evolving through time. The Thames estuary takes in most of the south-east, including Wivenhoe and Colchester. The map section could use a key map of the whole estuary with the detailed maps as insets and more detailed bibliographic information on the maps would have also been helpful.

The physical production is superior. Acid-free paper contributes to the crispness of the images to produce something like a coffee table book. At \$46 Canadian, this book is great value for money. Libraries dedicated to economics and marine subjects should acquire it. Students of materials-handling, transportation and large-scale energy systems will gain an historical perspective.

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