

already impressive work.

The Aircraft Carrier Hiryū is an incredibly insightful examination of the often murky world of Imperial Japanese carrier designs. Dramiński has done an excellent job at translating the surviving blueprints and documentation into uniquely detailed views of the vessel that provide a great deal of insight into her construction, arrangement, conditions, and design limitations. As such, this is an excellent supplementary work for those studying the history of the Japanese carrier forces, the attack on Pearl Harbor, or the Battle of Midway, and is an excellent tome for model builders and those interested in marine architecture of the mid-twentieth century.

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John Fairley. *The Royal Navy in Action. Art from Dreadnought to Vengeance*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen & Sword, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2022. 160 pp, illustrations, appendices. UK £30.00, US \$60.00, hardback; ISBN 978-13990-094-92.

This attractive book uses paintings and drawings to illustrate Royal Navy operations from early actions in the opening weeks of the Great War to strikes in 2021 by the new carrier, HMS *Queen Elizabeth*, against ISIS bases in Syria. The paintings – there are ninety-six of them in colour and eight line drawings – are drawn from museums and private collections. They are grouped thematically and described by John Fairley, a television producer and author who served in the RNVR in the late 1950s. A former journalist, his text is a very readable but eclectic, running dialogue peppered with interesting details. How many of us on this side of the Atlantic, for example, are aware that Prince Andrew (long before his reputation was ruined) piloted the first helicopter to arrive to rescue survivors from the requisitioned container ship *Atlantic Conveyor* off the Falklands in 1982? Another example is how Fairley describes how war artist, Norman Wilkinson, returning from a weekend's trout fishing in Devon in 1917, was suddenly inspired about how dazzle paint could confuse an attacking U-boat (29).

Good war art can convey the essence of a situation in a dramatic manner. The text quotes a Second World War artist who believed that five hundred years in the future war art would mean far more than contemporary records (ix). This collection includes several examples of striking paintings that communicate the core of a story. Outstanding cases in point are Richard Eurich's image of survivors from a torpedoed ship (91), Philip Connard's depiction of the control room of a First World War submarine during an attack (19), and Charles Pears'

two paintings of convoys to North Russia (83, 90) and the battleship *Howe* (138). There are several striking works by William Wyllie (1851-1931) who gained a tremendous reputation during his lifetime. These include arresting images of survivors and dead bodies floating in the flotsam left by the *Lusitania*, and lovely studies of the Grand Fleet at sea and the Battle of Jutland. A terrific painting by Stephen Bone offers a three-dimensional perspective looking up the conning tower of a submarine (103). While most of the paintings depict well-known events, Fairley included two evocative water colours by G.L. Parnell, of a British fleet created in the Caspian Sea in 1919 (62). Most of the pictures are of ships, but Anthony Gross' view of a board game in progress in the claustrophobic mess deck of a troop ship during the artist's long voyage around Africa gives a vivid sense of cramped living conditions (94).

The narrative does not describe every incident depicted; nor does it talk about every war artist. Two fine paintings of First World War convoys by Herbert John Everett (23, 30) convey a palpable sense of how ships out on the ocean move and look. The images are unexplained but, according to Wikipedia, the artist did spend time at sea as a merchant ship officer; perhaps this helps explain his extraordinary ability to put the viewer out on the water. Another unexplained artist is Yuunosuke Kojima, whose dramatic view of *Prince of Wales* under attack in 1941 appears on page 115. The text includes a discussion of the role of the Western Approaches Tactical Unit in Liverpool during the Second World War, and unexpectedly for a book about war art, an appendix reproduces a document about the Western Approaches Tactical Policy in April 1943. As for Canadian content, there is a painting by Simon Fisher of Lieutenant R.H. Gray's attack on a Japanese escort in 1945 (119), and one by Arthur Lismer showing the liner *Olympic* as a transport bringing troops home to Halifax after the Great War (27).

The Royal Navy in Action presents a compelling collection of marine art spanning the years 1914-2021. Some paintings by well-known British artists like Eurich, Wilkinson, and Wyllie have appeared in other books, but most are less well known and fresh. These dramatic and evocative depictions have been superbly chosen and attractively reproduced. They are supported by a running text describing actions by the Royal Navy over the last century.

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James Goulty. *Naval Eyewitnesses: The Experiences of War 1939-45*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen & Sword Books Ltd., www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2022. xxii+208 pp., illustrations, glossary, notes, bibliography, index. UK £25.00, US \$49.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-39900-071-0. (E-book available.)