

Bengal. Following their successes in the early months of 1942, the Japanese also expected to be able to operate with impunity in the Indian Ocean and stifle trade, particularly the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf to Australia, which would restrict operations being conducted from Australia by Allied forces.

To counter the Japanese actions, the Royal Navy rushed forces to the eastern Indian Ocean. Vice Admiral Sommerville arrived in Ceylon on 24 March 1942 and set up his headquarters there. He also wisely established his main operational base at Addu Atoll (in the Maldives), thus creating a “fleet in being” but one that could protect the sea lines of communication in the Indian Ocean, particularly the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf. The Royal Air Force also began to move available aircraft from the Middle East to India and Ceylon, while any available Dutch or Australian aircraft were also sent to Ceylon. Thus, the stage was set for the Japanese naval operations against Ceylon, and other locations, in the Indian Ocean in April 1942. The second portion of the campaign is described in Volume 2 of this series and I look forward to reading it in due course.

Michal Piegzik has produced a very good analysis of the Japanese thrust westwards into the Indian Ocean. This campaign is often over-shadowed by the campaign in the Pacific, but the essential flow of logistics support to India, to support the British campaign in Burma, helped prevent a potential Indian uprising. Additionally, maintenance of the sea lines of communication to Australia meant that Allied forces could use the continent as a safe springboard to commence offensive operations in the Pacific.

While the book is extremely well illustrated with photographs and graphics of Japanese aircraft, it is quite light on maps which would enhance the narrative. That said, it is still highly recommended.

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Douglas Porch. *Defeat and Division: France at War, 1939-1942*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, www.cambridge.org, 2022. xvii+725 pp., illustrations, maps, endnotes, bibliography, index. US \$32.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-107-04746-4. (E-book available.)

This book by Monterey’s Naval Postgraduate School professor emeritus, Douglas Porch, is the first of two volumes on France in the Cambridge University Press *Armies of the Second World War* monograph series. It follows up on Elizabeth Greenhalgh’s contribution on the French army in the well-received *Armies of the Great War* series. Military historians chosen for their expertise and knowledge of original sources and the latest scholarship

and literature provide insightful narratives at the national level in allied and political contexts. Unlike Greenhalgh, who only gave passing mention to the *Marine nationale* (reflecting the limited French naval contribution during the First World War), Porch's study is a wider examination of France's society and military preparedness going into the Second World War and its performance and travails in the face of defeat, that gives the French navy a prominent place in relation to the army and its support to the Vichy regime. Porch takes the story farther than George Melton's *From Versailles to Mers el-Kébir* (Naval Institute Press, 2015) and appropriately ends with the scuttling of the French fleet at Toulon in November 1942 in the wake of the Allied invasion of North Africa during Operation TORCH and German occupation of what remained of France proper. The Free French, renamed Fighting French, under Charles de Gaulle also built up military and naval wings to further political objectives that looked toward liberation and restoration of French republican government and imperial power.

The book is divided into ten chronological and thematic chapters, each roughly sixty pages in length containing headings and sub-headings and a conclusion at the end. Porch explains that there was no one French army, but instead, many iterations: the mobilized army that fought the 1940 battles destined for captivity as prisoners of war, the armistice army created by Vichy to maintain internal order and increasingly associated with questionable policies such as roundup of French Jews and refugees, the volunteers recruited into a short-lived anti-Bolshevik legion (LVF) to fight for the Germans on the Eastern Front against the Soviets, military and civilian personnel who escaped occupied France and rallied around de Gaulle in Great Britain, and the sizeable military forces in Vichy-controlled colonies such as North Africa with large indigenous components. By contrast, the *Marine nationale* under the leadership of Admiral François Darlan largely backed the collaborationist Vichy government of the aged Marshal Philippe Pétain. Though late to rearmament, the French navy boasted a sizeable force of fast battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and submarines, with a capable naval air arm, mostly land-based. Deployment in the Mediterranean and in specific operations, such as the landings in Norway, followed pre-war plans and arrangements with the British until the signing of the armistice with Nazi Germany which allowed Vichy to retain its fleet in return for certain conditions and neutrality. Winston Churchill's controversial decision to have the Royal Navy attack French fleet units near Oran at the Mers el-Kébir anchorage (Operation Catapult) on 3 July 1940 cost the lives of 1300 French sailors, created a great deal of indignation, and reinforced anti-British sentiment. Only a limited number of warships, sailors, and senior officers had arrived in Great Britain to continue fighting and after the British forcibly seized some vessels, many French asked to be

repatriated back to Vichy France. Understandably, further calls for French warships to come over to the Allied cause went unheeded because the French navy and its leadership became increasingly influential and intertwined within Vichy. An attempted joint British-Free French seaborne assault on Dakar in French West Africa ended in disappointment, though the retaking of Vichy-French-held Madagascar and the small French territorial islands of Saint Pierre and Miquelon off the south coast of Newfoundland proved more productive.

In January 1941, British MI5 arrested the head of the Free French Naval Forces (FNFL), Admiral Émile Muselier, on false charges of leaking operational information to alleged Vichy contacts. His reputation never really recovered afterwards. A subsequent falling-out with de Gaulle over leadership and policy led to Muselier's sidelining. Deprived of their own sources of supply and limited in manpower, the Free French were utterly reliant on the British, and in turn, the Americans for most equipment and the latest advances in armaments. At the insistence of American president Franklin Roosevelt, de Gaulle's Free French were left out of participation in the major invasion of North Africa, and after the landings, a backroom deal was reached with Darlan who delivered a ceasefire across Algeria and Morocco and tantalizingly promised to deliver the French fleet into Allied hands. Vice Admiral Jean de Laborde, trusting neither Darlan nor de Gaulle, decided otherwise and instead ordered the fleet in Toulon scuttled when the Germans launched Operation Anton to seize and disarm French warships. After the Paris liberation, Laborde received a death sentence from a French high court on charges of treason in relation to his wartime decisions, subsequently commuted to life imprisonment, which resulted in a few years in prison before amnesty. Meanwhile, a young monarchist resistance fighter assassinated the turncoat opportunist Darlan, thereby smoothing out strained relations between the Americans and de Gaulle, at least for the time being. As Porch points out, the French navy by late 1942 was essentially no longer a significant factor in Allied calculations and comparisons are made to the Italian fleet's switching sides a year later. Some French naval forces, however, such as the battleship *Richelieu*, refitted and finished in American navy yards, operated alongside the British and Americans during 1945 campaigns in the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean, in part to restore French prestige and relevance. The Marine nationale emerged from the wartime Vichy experience with enduring divisions in its officer corps, a tenuous material state, and once de Gaulle became head of state a renewed interest in naval power, according to Hugues Canuel (see *TNM/LMN* 31, no. 3 (Fall 2021): 360-362).

Defeat and Division is a large book with big chapters, and no doubt the second volume will deliver the same. The accompanying photographs and maps add breaks to the sometimes dense narrative. The endnotes provide

further information, particularly in regard to Muselier (a reputed opium addict) and Darlan, which adds to current knowledge and draws on original sources not otherwise familiar. In keeping with the publisher's series, the focus is mostly on the army(ies), though a surprising amount of discussion is devoted to the French navy and France's general conduct of the war in those early years to provide context. The book is recommended for readers and researchers interested in the Second World War and France's part in it.

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Stephen P. Roberts. *French Warships in the Age of Steam 1859-1914: Design, Construction, Careers and Fates*. Barnsley, South Yorks: Seaforth Publishing, www.seaforthpublishing.com (distributed by Naval Institute Press), 2021. 512 pp., illustrations, drawings, appendices, bibliography, index. US \$90.00, UK £50.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-5267-4533-0. (E-book available.)

The French navy (La Royale, Marine française, Marine nationale) is comparatively understudied in English-language scholarship, more so in the modern era than the age of sail. British naval historians studying the Royal Navy seem to have an aversion or national bias toward acknowledging that France was a serious competitor, taking the lead at times with its republican and scientific accomplishments. The main impediments holding back the French navy were economic (lack of industrial capacity in a predominantly agrarian economy), financial, and the necessity of keeping a large army for defence purposes on land. Published writings by American historians Theodore Ropp, Ray Walser, and Ronald Chalmers Hood III still remain among the few available. Canadian naval officer Hugues Canuel has added his book *The Fall and Rise of French Sea Power* (Naval Institute Press, 2021) and an article in the *Naval War College Review* (vol. 71, no. 1, (2018)) covering the period up to 1914. John Jordan, editor of the popular *Warship* annual and author of several books on types of French warships published by Seaforth Publishing, has reached out to French historians similarly interested in technical details. These new sources make full use of available French published sources and archival holdings. Stephen Roberts, who completed a PhD dissertation on the introduction of steam technology in the French navy at the University of Chicago in 1976 and edited Ropp's book for publication in 1987, provides a comprehensive catalogue of virtually every warship added to the French navy in the 55 years before the First World War. The book is part of a trilogy, the first two books prepared in collaboration with Rif Winfield dealing with French