

admirable book exhumes a fascinating, largely forgotten story. It is an excellent contribution to maritime history literature.

Louis Arthur Norton
West Simsbury, Connecticut

John Knight. *The Magnetism of Antarctica—The Ross Expedition 1839-1843*. Caithness, UK: Whittles Publishing, www.whittlespublishing.com, 2023. 256 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. UK £18.99, paper; ISBN 978-1-84995-501-0.

The historiography of Antarctic expeditions includes an abundance of scholarly publications on the so-called heroic age of Antarctic exploration, yet is surprisingly limited when it comes to any expedition that set sail towards the Southern Ocean and Antarctica prior to the last decades of the nineteenth century. Therefore, John Knight's new book on James Clark Ross' and Francis Crozier's 1839-1843 expedition closes a substantial gap in the historiography of early Antarctic research and exploration.

Moreover, the book does not limit itself to a traditional historical report on the expedition but provides carefully researched biographies of the members of the expedition and, thus, helps explain who explored those parts of the Southern Ocean that today still carry the names of Ross and Crozier. Finally, with the Ross/Crozier expedition of 1839-43 being the first expedition of the Royal Navy to this part of the globe since James Cook circumnavigated Antarctica seventy years earlier and the last prior to the heroic age, it helps us understand why the Royal Navy did not engage more actively in Antarctic research throughout the nineteenth century.

Divided into three main sections, Knight's book opens with a carefully researched history of Ross' entire expedition as well as its aims and goals: namely, research into the magnetic field of the Earth and its effects on compasses. Knight follows Ross and Crozier from Madeira to St. Helena, Cape Town, Kerguelen Island, New Zealand, Australia, the Falkland Islands, the Ross Sea and the Erebus and Terror volcanoes in Antarctica, and deep into the Weddell Sea. He describes clearly what it meant to explore these areas with two, comparably small, wooden sailing ships without any auxiliary engines. For every reader fortunate enough to know these waters firsthand, it is obvious what an achievement this expedition was. For those unfamiliar with the region, Knight makes it abundantly clear that this was not just an average expedition, but a major breakthrough for navigation and Antarctic exploration.

The second part of the book is devoted to the sailors participating in the expedition. Unlike many authors, Knight does not limit himself to Ross and

Crozier as the commanding officers of the two expedition vessels, but provides carefully-researched biographical sketches of many of the participants. This help readers understand why every journey to the far south was (and is) dependent on the entire crew, not just the leader.

The third section of the book titled ‘The Ships and their Sailors’ is a unique attempt to link the expedition to the Royal Navy (RN) at large. Although Knight does not use the term, he provides a quasi-network analysis of the ships and sailors by listing not just the names of the crew but all the RN ships they had served in. While casual readers might find the first two sections more enjoyable, this third part has the greatest analytical depth for the professional maritime and/or polar historian. It illustrates that it was not necessarily the well-known naval ships that were the breeding grounds for the successful exploration of uncharted territories and scientific work carried out by the Royal Navy.

No matter one’s interest – in the history of the expedition itself, the stories of the crew members or the network analysis of ships and their crews within the context of the Royal Navy, Knight’s book does not disappoint. As a professional polar historian, I find it closes an important gap in the existing historiography by drawing the expedition out of the shadows of the better-known expeditions of the period. Maritime and/or naval historians will gain an appreciation of how the Royal Navy contributed to the development of navigation and, especially, the use of the magnetic field of the Earth in this context. Finally, the armchair traveller will enjoy exploring one of the last uncharted corners of the globe.

Knight’s new book can easily be recommended to anyone reading for business or pleasure. A few months prior to reviewing this book, I was fortunate enough to sail more or less precisely on the same course as the last leg of the expedition in the Weddell Sea, south of Snowhill Island. After reading how Ross and Crozier sailed these waters 180 years before in small wooden sailing ships instead of a modern expedition vessel, I have the utmost respect for their crews. I am also grateful to the author for bringing details of the expedition to light and adding Ross and Crozier’s names to the list of worthy Antarctic explorers such as Amundsen, Scott, or Shackleton. It might be too much to expect that Knight’s new book will make their names as familiar, but at least it will help to change the perception that “heroes” of Antarctic research existed only during the “heroic” age. It should also help us understand that a “hero” always required a crew, whose names might be forgotten, but without whom the objective could have never been achieved.

It could be argued that many recent publications on Antarctic history have contributed little new to the existing body of knowledge of Antarctic research and history. Fortunately, *The Magnetism of Antarctica* opens up a new perspective on Antarctic exploration and thus, it should have a place in every

library dealing with the history of Antarctica, whether institutional or personal.

Ingo Heidbrink
Norfolk, Virginia

Angus Konstam. *Warships in the Baltic Campaign 1918-20: The Royal Navy takes on the Bolsheviks*. Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2022. 48 pp., illustrations, maps, bibliography, index. UK £11.99, US \$19.00, CDN \$25.00, paper; ISBN 978-1-47285-166-6.

This work is the 305th volume in Osprey Publishing's New Vanguard Series and author Angus Konstam's 83rd contribution to the Osprey catalog in which Konstam seeks to offer a concise examination of the Royal Navy's participation in the Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War's Baltic theater. This is done in a manner similar to the Osprey Campaign series, examining the background of the conflict, a summation of the campaign itself, and an overview of the British and Soviet warships involved. Period paintings and photographs are used to depict the various commanders and warships, backed up with modern ship profile and digital image renderings. The work does not have a traditional analytic conclusion but offers a further reading style bibliography and a quick reference index at the end.

The first half of the work is largely a chronological study, following the background of the collapse of the Eastern Front, the Soviet push into the ancient Estonian and Latvian states, and the resultant naval aide from the Royal Navy. It then flows into a discussion of the campaign itself, with a discussion of both major naval actions and land actions which directly or indirectly affected the actions of the Royal Navy. Examples of the latter include the actions of still operational German military units fighting in the Baltic region and attempts to relieve targets besieged by Soviet ground forces via bombardment. Operation RK, a daring strike on the Soviet naval base at Kronstadt by British Coastal Motor Boats, is given suitably detailed coverage, with the resultant hesitancy of the Soviets from carrying out sorties from the base reminiscent of the German High Seas Fleet after Jutland just a few years before.

This timeline approach then shifts to examinations of the Soviet and British fleets present in the Baltic. While this does result in the retreading of some earlier information from the background and campaign sections due to the discussion of vessels' service history, it does provide more detail into the conditions of the warships involved, the support facilities, and, in the case of the Soviets, the perceptions of their British opponents on the eve of hostilities. Profiles are provided for ten of the warships involved, offering digital reconstructions of their wartime appearances in a way not achievable