

end of the naval architectural dynasty (as he notes, neither of his two sons were named Robert, nor were they directed towards the ship design profession), it is a particularly fitting segue that the company has transitioned to employee-ownership.

In sum, this is a beautifully produced and well-written book that will appeal very much to all who admire tugs and desire to learn more of the process that shapes them.

Richard Greenwood
Victoria, British Columbia

Ermino Bagnasco and Augusto de Toro. *Italian Battleships. Conte di Cavour and Duilio Classes 1911-1956*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Seaforth Publishing, www.seaforthpublishing.com, 2021. 280 pp., illustrations, appendices, bibliography, index. UK £45.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-5267-9987-6.

This work is a continuation of the analysis of Second World War-era Italian battleships begun by the authors with their 2011 study of the Littorio Class from 1937 to 1948. This book covers the five ships of the preceding Conte di Cavour and Duilio Classes along with relevant discussions of the Regia Marina's first battleship, *Dante Alighieri*. Originally published in Italian as a two-volume set, the research by Bagnasco and de Toro fills in a large gap in the historiography of the Italian surface fleet, made possible by the increase in period sources not available to scholars for some time. As with their previous work, they offer an analysis of relevant Italian naval policies, pre- and post-modernization technical descriptions, and an accounting of the vessels' service careers. The latter predominately focuses on the Second World War era, as this was the most active and detailed portion of their service lives. Appendices on 1940-1956 colour schemes, wartime gunnery performance, wartime movements, and sustained damage round out the work, followed by a bibliography and index.

The work is essentially divided into two parts, with the initial eight chapters of technical data, naval policies and pre-war careers making up the first half, and the wartime careers, post-war fates, and final conclusions comprising the second half. The subject matter is presented chronologically, albeit with the post-modernization interwar era seeing the Cavour and Duilio classes separated into their own internally chronological chapters. The background of Italian battleship construction is well covered, giving one a good understanding of the perceived external threats from France, internal pressures, and cost issues encountered by the Italian Navy in the early years of the twentieth century. The Technical Description chapter does a solid job of breaking down and

explaining the various primary armaments and design features employed on both ship classes, and is further expanded upon in the modernization chapters. There are several highly detailed, if not sometimes small, blueprints of the class leaders presented, offering overall views, detailed cross sections to highlight areas such as leak-prone compartment's in the *Cavour's* rebuilt bow, and profile comparisons from different points in the ships' service lives (81, 86). The effect of the interwar naval treaties on Italian policy and design is also addressed, and the tabulated results of interwar gunnery and their analysis offers a nice insight into the Regia Marina's perception of vessel effectiveness in the years leading up to the Second World War.

The Second World War (and brief post-war section) chapters are treated largely as a five-part ninth chapter, with discussion of the raising of the *Cavour* and the authors' final thoughts at the conclusion. The wartime activities are rather well documented in fifty-six pages, covering the period of May 1940 to September 1943. Subsections cover key movements, operations, and employment decisions, to include opposition actions against British operations and decisions taken in the closing days before the Armistice. The covering of the famed Taranto Raid from the Italian perspective is especially interesting, as it is more often than not solely focused on the actions of the attacking British pilots. Also notable is the protection duties for convoys supporting the North African Campaign, another often overlooked component of the surface fleet's duties. The 1943 internment of the now "co-belligerent" fleet in Malta is covered as well, along with a relatively brief coverage of the post-1947 treaty fates of all ships save *Giulio Cesare*, whose transfer to the Soviets and sinking is covered in more detail. Throughout all of this, Bagnasco and de Toro thoroughly drive home their analysis that the rebuilt *Cavours*, despite their structural flaws and undesirable shell dispersion, still represented the "best technical solution achievable" and offered a reasonable response to the French fleet's Dunkerque (239). Their objections to the 1937 modernization of the *Duilio* class along the same lines are also well thought out, given the five years of experience with the *Cavours* and the evolution of both technology and opposing fleets that occurred over the same period.

The four appendices are also worthy of note, as they offer more minutia types of details that are important but flow much more smoothly when removed from the main text. The section on ship camouflage is impressive, with detailed waterline profile drawings depicting the various vessels in the assorted paint schemes they wore throughout their service, paired with a small collection of original colour photographs. Equally notable are the appendices on wartime gunnery performance, movements, and sustained damage, which the former offering good comparative data to pre-war gunnery drill records in the main text and the latter two offering more detailed facets of the vessels'

combat chronologies for scholars and those wishing to plot positioning at certain points in time.

There are a few possible improvements. Early on there are three photographs of foreign vessels that seem oddly placed or irrelevant, with an image of the French warship *Courbet* appearing 15 pages after its brief mention and two images of HMS *Barham* without any direct textual reference to the ship. (11, 26, 65, 67) There is also a pre-war image of a training exercise broadside from *Cavour* mixed in the wartime account, though this is probably done as a representative example. The modernized ship drawings' deck plans and their keys, while fascinating, are small due to the constriction of the vertical page size. Having a fold-out type expansion for these drawings would be helpful, so as to make the numbering of the smaller compartments more visible and allow for more appreciation of their detail. (94-95, 98-103, 127-134) Finally, the tenth chapter on *Cavour's* raising after the Taranto Raid could be inserted into the chronology of the previous chapter, either as fully integrated information or as a grey backgrounded insert similar to that used in the multi-page discussions on the salvage of *da Vinci* and the ceding/sinking of the *Giulio Cesare*. This would assist with the flow of the work, and match the earlier discourses of long-term salvage operations. These points are by no means detrimental to the work, but could help improve a second edition should the authors expand the text in the future.

Italian Battleships is a welcome addition to the historiography of the Regia Marina's surface fleet, and an excellent English language research tool for both Italian battleship construction and their performance during the Second World War, the latter topic often overshadowed by the more familiar Kriegsmarine. Bagnasco and de Toro do a solid job of documenting the now-extinct Conte di Cavour and Duilio classes, managing to pack a surprisingly large amount of technical and chronological data into the 267 main pages of text. Their work is definitely a welcome addition to both English and Italian language scholarship on the subject, especially for those researching the Mediterranean theatre of the Second World War.

Charles Ross Patterson II
Yorktown, Virginia

Robert D. Banks. *Warriors and Warships. Conflict on the Great Lakes and the Legacy of Point Frederick*. Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press, www.dundurnpress.ca, 2023. 368 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. CDN \$59.99, hardback; ISBN 978-1 45975-77-7. (E-book available.)

On one level this volume is local history. In fact, it might be described as local,