

walk the plank, but rarely, given the tight labor market for pirates. Contrary to legend, they distributed their treasure, rather than burying it. Tattoos were common, although more for identification of bodies than as works of art. Pirates were an ethnically diverse group, with French, Dutch, English, and Blacks mingling and fighting against each other. At their peak, the pool of pirates probably numbered in the low thousands.

I particularly enjoyed the discussion of legends known by name, but, to me at least, little understood. The *Flying Dutchman*, a ghost ship doomed to sail the seas for eternity, may have had its origins in a man-o'-war sunk off the Cape of Good Hope. The origins of "Davy Jones' Locker" are more obscure, but theories are advanced. Of particular value for students of the colonial era in general is the explanation of the distinguishing characteristics of the three types of colonies in British North America. Royal colonies, such as Virginia, were run by Crown-appointed governors with legal structures mimicking those of England. Proprietary colonies, such as Pennsylvania, were established by land grants to wealthy investors to attract settlement for the production of goods. And Charter colonies, such as Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island, had residents who were tied to English law while having the freedom to create their own governments.

The Select List of Pirates is a valuable aid in keeping individuals straight. Maps, drawings and paintings supplement the text. References are well footnoted. The index helps readers find specific topics, and the bibliography is a useful guide for future reading.

With just 300 pages, this is an easy but informative and entertaining read. It dispels some myths without stripping pirates of their mythical lore. The book makes its subjects real people, who lived real lives, without resorting to glamorization or condemnation. This work places pirates within their milieu, amidst the wars, colonies, and commerce of their age. I recommend *The Pirates' Code* to those seeking to understand the Golden Age of Piracy.

Jim Gallen
St. Louis, Missouri

William Smith. *Churchill's Arctic Convoys: Strength Triumphs over Adversity*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen and Sword, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2022. 247 pp., illustrations, appendix, tables, notes, bibliography, index. UK £25.00, US \$42.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-39907-229-8.

This history of the Arctic convoys from Britain and America to the northern ports of the Soviet Union during the Second World War is focused on the logistical effort to supply the Soviets within the context of political and

diplomatic decision-making. The history depicted is top-down: the decisions as recorded in original documents direct the resulting action at the operational level. It details also how the strategy and tactics of the naval forces escorting the Arctic convoys were affected by events in the wider war.

The book is based mostly on archival records, like the minutes and reports of the various committees and especially correspondence of major participants like Winston Churchill, Franklin Roosevelt, Joseph Stalin, and tother top-level diplomatic and naval decision-makers. These include ambassadors and foreign ministers like Stafford Cripps, British ambassador to Moscow, and Anthony Eden, British foreign minister, and their Soviet and American opposite numbers, including Ivan Maisky and Vyacheslav Molotov. Senior naval officers are mostly British, such as Admiral Dudley Pound, given that the naval effort was mostly British. The German air and naval effort to stop the convoys is gleaned from the Fuhrer Directives and Conferences on Naval Affairs, German Naval Staff Operations Division War Diaries, and the pronouncements of *Kriegsmarine* Commanders-in-Chief Erich Raeder and, later, Karl Doenitz.

The bulk of the work consists of the texts or extracts of the original communications in the form of telegrams and letters amongst the participants with the author's commentary on them and the events described. This format of interspersing the documents and analysis lends immediacy and detail to the decision-making process on both sides and links it with the action as it occurred. Many exchanges are between Churchill and Roosevelt since the British were involved in all aspects of supply initially, as well as the task of escorting convoys throughout. Both leaders had a deep understanding of naval affairs and grasp of the strategy of fighting the war globally.

The work opens with the events surrounding the attack by Germany on the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941 and Churchill's radio announcement to the nation of his intention to support the Soviets by sending war material of every kind by a series of convoys to the northern ports of Murmansk and Archangel. In a letter to Stalin, he optimistically declared, "We intend to run a continuous cycle of convoys leaving every ten days" (p. 11). Following this is an account of the Anglo-American (Beaverbrook/Harriman) Mission to survey requirements for assistance to the Soviet war effort.

Chapter 2, "The German Response," shows the growing realization on the part of the German High Command that the supplies carried by the convoys materially affected the Soviet ground campaign with a resulting pivot away from the Atlantic to Norway of aircraft, submarines, and major surface units, especially battleship *Tirpitz*, resulting in the scattering and destruction of convoy PQ17.

Two chapters are devoted to shipping and logistics, given that most of

the materials and weapons originated in North America and their transport across the Atlantic needed to be coordinated with the largely British escorting forces. The disposition of warships, in turn, is shown to have depended on the requirements of other theatres, notably the landings in North Africa, Sicily, and Normandy, and, most particularly, the Battle of the Atlantic.

This book is written in a concise but highly readable style. Themes covered in detail include vital information not usually reported on, like: communications, including mail service as well as radio; attempts to provide air cover based in Northern Russia, including fighters and torpedo bombers; and the treatment of Allied personnel, including sailors and aircrew. The amount of logistical and operational detail makes for slow going for the general reader, who particularly would benefit from a list of initialisms and acronyms. A list of code names for operations exists in the index, and a note on the naming of convoys is in the Appendix.

The Bibliography and Notes are very brief, and citations are extremely cryptic. It is often unclear from the note the citation reference. Secondary sources include a restricted set of the most important published works, like Churchill's *History of the Second World War*, Roosevelt's *Papers*, and Roskill's *The War at Sea, 1939-45*. Photographs are mostly formal, staged shots of senior officials in full uniform, showing lots of gold braid. Churchill appears in eleven of a total of fifty photographs. A few are well-known group photographs of Allied leaders at conferences like Casablanca and Tehran.

The author has a 42-year career in "Royal Navy, Joint Service, and NATO logistics," so detail of the loading, routing, and handling of the cargoes of the merchant ships is the strong suit of the work. Operational history is sketchy. A common problem is the mis-designation of surface ship types. "Battleship *Renown*" (p. 181) was a battlecruiser; *Scharnhorst* is listed in the index as a "KMS Cruiser" when it was a battlecruiser; also, USS *Augusta* is listed as a battleship, whereas it was a cruiser.

I have to reserve judgement on the analysis because I am unable to decipher many of the too-cryptic citations that should link to original sources. But the work repeats the common prejudice that Soviet treatment of Allied service people ("vexatious formalities") was partially due to paranoia. A reading of the correspondence of the Bentham family would show this paranoia to be well-justified in an earlier period and likely since, as the naval personnel of all nations, but historically and notably Britain, have been involved in spying. The work is very Churchill-heavy. For example, the five-page index has one page devoted to him.

Ian Dew

Thunder Bay, Ontario