

with comfortable large-font print. Notes are voluminous. The bibliography is thoughtfully arranged; for instance, primary sources are divided into unpublished and published. Sources include a wide selection of publications and primary sources, like Hudson's Bay Company post logs and other documentation. Tables show individual vessels engaged and economic indicators of the trade.

Graphics are weak. There are three sketch maps. Inside the front cover is a projection of the globe with the ships' route from Boston round Cape Horn; up the coast of the Americas to the range of the sea otter; from California to Alaska; to Hawaii for supplies and on to China; and finishing the voyage by continuing west to reach home port by completing the circumnavigation. The second map is of the approaches to Canton. The third map, inside the back cover, presents the West Coast, showing the outline of physical features of the coast, major Indigenous communities, and trading posts.

The book is highly successful in that it transmits a huge amount of information and provides extensive tools to help us understand, verify, and continue pursuing the many questions raised. Some of the author's conclusions are highly questionable: if the rosy picture painted is accurate (307), what happened so that by 1867, scant years later, communities had been wiped out wholesale by epidemics and the residential school system could begin?

This book deserves to be read by scholars studying the West Coast of North America or the termini of the fur trade: China and Boston/Western Europe. Anyone interested in Canadian studies or living in Western Canada, most especially in British Columbia, should read this book to understand their own history. Libraries in Canada need at least one copy, remembering that time is required to read this work.

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Goodall, Stanley; edited by Ian Buxton. *Diary of a Wartime Naval Constructor*

Seaforth Publishing, 2022

xi + 307 pp., illustrations, index

ISBN 9781399082709 (hardcover) CA\$53.82

Biographies and autobiographies of naval constructors are fairly rare beasts. While there is a wealth of tales of naval daring and many "biographies" of individual ships, there are fewer books that feature the naval constructor

creators of those fleets. In the British context there are two excellent books which tell the collective tale of naval ship design and construction (D.K. Brown's *A Century of Naval Construction: The History of the Royal Corps of Naval Constructors* and D. Leggett's *Shaping the Royal Navy: Technology, Authority and Naval Architecture c. 1830-1906*), but only a handful that view the enterprise from the viewpoint of a single individual. These include Frederic Manning's *The Life of Sir William White*, Sir Eustace Tennyson d'Eyncourt's autobiography *A Shipbuilder's Yarn*, R.J. Daniel's autobiography *The End of an Era*, and K.J. Rawson's *Ever the Apprentice: The Memoirs of a Perpetual Learner*. The first three of these were heads of the Royal Corps of Naval Constructors (RCNC), the design and procurement arm of the Admiralty.

To this select group we now have a new addition in the form of the edited wartime diaries of Sir Stanley Goodall, Head of the RCNC and Director of Naval Construction (DNC), 1936–1944. From January 1944 he continued as Assistant Controller (Warship Production) – “albeit now taking Sundays off,” per Buxton – retiring 31 October 1945 after 46 years in Admiralty service.

In D.K. Brown's history of the RCNC, Goodall is described as “probably the most outstanding warship designer of all time.” Certainly the span of his career gave him ample opportunity to develop and practice his craft. Goodall joined the Royal Navy as an engineering officer cadet in 1899 but then became a naval constructor student in 1901, likely transferring because of the low pay and status of naval engineers compared with the executive branch. His time in the RCNC spanned to the conclusion of the Second World War with the dawn of atomic weapons.

Editor Ian Buxton's introductory chapters admirably lay the essential groundwork. He provides a summary biography of Goodall, an outline of the structure and function of the RCNC, an explanation of the warship procurement process and output through the war, discussion of the Controller's department and its constituent parts, and a listing of senior Admiralty officials 1939–45. The book also includes 31 potted biographies of key people in the RCNC, the Royal Navy, and industry. There is also a wealth of ship pictures, all with ample and informative captions.

The pith of the book is of course in Goodall's diary entries for the time period 6 January 1939–22 December 1945 (roughly a quarter of the whole diary). This is definitely not an easy read, having never been intended for publication, but written more as an *aide-mémoire*. Editor Buxton has performed a heroic service in deciphering the shorthand references to individuals and offices, as well as providing excellent illuminating asides.

The overwhelming impression is the scope of Goodall's daily involvements

and the pace of activity. We read of his involvement in (to name only a few) questions of ship stability, introduction of welding, debates about prefabrication using straight sections, discussions of ships' bottom painting versus fouling, and getting Admiralty schools to train women for fitting out frigates. At the same time as dealing with such technical details, he is engaged in strategic and production matters at the highest levels, balancing ship capability demands against cost and displacement limits and making frequent trips to shipyards to urge on production and attempt to redistribute shipbuilding resources to cater to shifting priorities. The pace of work was ferocious, with Goodall making passing reference to several senior officers who died of overwork.

There are a number of recurring themes: post-mortems on well-known ship losses, labour shortages, and the challenges of working with a constantly shifting company of senior naval officers. Goodall has numerous and repeated references to distractions occasioned by the good ideas club, mentioning Churchill and "the Seadrome heresy"(113), Habakkuk (with no fewer than 13 index entries), and, amid fraught discussion of accounts, the prime minister's intimation of work to be done ("hey presto & damn the expense," 170).

Goodall is very sensitive about perceived slights to the RCNC, commenting morosely on the periodic honours lists: "engineers on tap, never on top" (93), and "out of limelight except when things go wrong" (141). There are numerous references to his pet scheme to merge the RCNC into RN; the rationale is never explicitly laid out, but presumably this would give naval architects/naval constructors equal status for discussions with naval officers on ship design requirements. In his end-of-year memoranda Goodall summarizes each year and these are an interesting and pithy distillation of his concerns over that year.

Goodall's immediate post-war comments are sobering to read: on 22 May 1945 he records discussing how to be ready with Combined Operations ships for the next war. And after retirement there is a poignant note in the final memorandum (for the end of 1945) in which he notes "my study is too cold for prolonged work with this fuel shortage" (295).

Canadian readers will be interested in a number of passing references to Canada, ranging from early optimism (17 March 1941: "Marriner called quite sure Canada can build Tribals") to pessimism (20 July 1944: "VAdm BATM says he is certain Canada means to pack up on a Canadian Navy as soon as the war is over"). Then, as now, it seems that strategic commitment and will were in doubt.

There is far too much in this book to do justice in a short review. As noted, it is not an easy read, being tantalizingly cryptic in its brevity. That we are able at all to have an insight into the private thoughts and reflections of this

remarkable man, with singular responsibility at a pivotal moment of naval construction history, is a tribute owing to the editor, Ian Buxton. This will be an important reference for naval technical historians delving into this era.

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Grant, John H. *The Mystery Ships of Nova Scotia in the First World War: Q-Ships vs U-Boats in 1917*

Breton Books, 2019

128 pp., illustrations, bibliography, notes

ISBN 9781926908717 (softcover); 97819269098724 (e-book) CA\$16.95

Sometimes it is the minutiae of history that can hold the greatest interest. In what might barely pass as a footnote in a larger story, revealing details may well be found. Such is the case with John N. Grant's brief volume on the Q-ships of Nova Scotia in the Great War. This is a genuinely forgotten story for many reasons. On one level there is a fascination with the Q-ships, a topic which has seen a steady series of volumes which began in the 1920s and continues today. The use of seemingly unarmed steamers and sailing vessels as decoy vessels to lure U-boats to the surface and entice them to come within range of hidden guns aboard holds its own interest. The British Admiralty used upwards of 200 vessels in this clandestine service; it lost some 27 of them with only 14 confirmed U-boat sinkings. However, none of the volumes on the subject, to the best of my knowledge, mentions the fact that there is a Canadian component to the story.

Grant is a Nova Scotia educator with a number of local history volumes to his credit, and *The Mystery Ships* is a credit to his research skills. The volume is well-researched and footnoted and contains an impressive bibliography of volumes on Q-ships, the naval history of Canada during the period of the First World War, and local history of many of the Nova Scotia ports.

The problems of researching the story are compounded by the fact that the tiny fleet of fishing Q-ships, in spite of the fact that it operated in the coastal waters of Atlantic Canada, appears to have little, if anything, to do with the Royal Canadian Navy, but was an appendage of the Special Services Branch of the British Admiralty. The idea of Q-ships was one of the attempts to address the threat of U-boats to the sea commerce supporting Great Britain. These decoy vessels had achieved some successes in 1915 and early 1916 and, with the increased range of the German submarines and the resumption of