

the east coast. Their construction is described in detail in the chapter on navy yards. Apparently, warship plans produced in the Bureau of Ships were more detailed than those provided to builders in Britain by the Naval Construction Department (150). During the design stage, the Brooklyn Navy Yard carpenters built full-scale mock-ups that helped resolve the internal arrangement of individual spaces and issues such as the positioning of machinery and piping. This yard built two *Iowas* and acted as the lead yard once construction started when there were regular conferences between the three yards involved. In 1941, the President had pushed to complete nine Cleveland-class light cruisers under construction by a single yard, New York Shipbuilding, as Independence-class fast light carriers. Admiral King supported this innovative proposal. There is a fluid and comprehensive narrative about this project in the chapter about private shipyards. It highlights various aspects of their propulsion systems and the role of sub-contractors and extensive supply chains in producing a complex warship. The Independence-class joined the Pacific war at roughly the same time starting in late 1943 as the powerful Essex-class fast carriers. The author notes that the “Two Ocean Navy” plans in 1940 lacked provision for ocean-going escorts (92). Later he covers the massive programs that produced 563 destroyer escorts which started entering service late in 1943.

Warship Builders is rich in detail. The narrative describes the prodigious scale of US wartime naval construction and cites numerous dollar figures. There are, however, few attempts to relate these to a total figure in a category (e.g., assistance for facility improvements to private/navy yards or expenditures on aircraft or other weapon production).

The reader is not provided with a frame of reference to evaluate and compare various expenditures. An exception is a statistic on page 122 which shows that the total value of the 11 navy yards and industrial shore establishments in 1944 was \$12 billion, “comparable to the combined assets of General Motors, US Steel, and American Telephone and Telegraph.”

Warship Builders includes well-chosen photographs, excellent diagrams, and useful graphs. It has been produced to the usual high US Naval Institute standard with sturdy binding and clear typeface. The text is jargon-free and covers a wide span of topics in a clear manner. This is an admirable book that describes the scale of US naval shipbuilding, how it was achieved and how it compared to parallel efforts in Britain, Japan, and Germany.

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David Hobbs. *The British Carrier Strike Fleet after 1945*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Seaforth Publishing, www.seaforthpublishing.com, 2020. xvii+622 pp., illustrations, glossary, notes, bibliography, index. UK £19.99, US \$39.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-5267-8544-2. (E-book available.)

At nearly 1,000 feet long and embarked with fifth generation F-35 aircraft, the HMS *Queen Elizabeth II* is the pride of the British Fleet. The aircrew of the F-35 is comprised of a joint and combined force of US Marine aviators and Royal Air Force (RAF) pilots flying beside Royal Navy (RN) aviators. This incredible feat of engineering and military might, however, almost did not happen. *The British Carrier Strike Fleet After 1945* covers the decline and atrophy of the British fleet after the

Second World War until present day in the face of an ever-changing maritime environment and tightening fiscal constraints.

After the war, the aircraft carrier emerged as the ultimate symbol of sea power. The advent and proliferation of nuclear weapons, however, left many policy makers convinced that the aircraft carrier was an anachronism from a bygone era. Throughout the book, however, the author provides examples where the British aircraft carriers fulfilled their roles ranging from providing humanitarian aid to strike capability, and clearly defines the case for the necessity of aircraft carriers in the Royal Navy. From the North Pacific to the South Atlantic and everywhere in between, there are examples of British aircraft carriers serving as tools of international diplomacy, whether just “showing the flag” or actively extinguishing “brushfire” conflicts and war. Despite the inarguable success of aircraft carriers for imposing British will and policy, policymakers continued to gut the British carrier force. The Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands, however, served as a catalyst of change after nearly 40 years of atrophy and neglect and allowed aircraft carriers to prove their worth in the modern era.

The essence of the book is the decline of British sea power exemplified by the ill-fated *CVA-01* project. Policymaking along with interservice tribalism between armed services would ultimately lead to the cancellation of the project. The *CVA-01* was designed as a conventionally powered aircraft carrier that would have looked remarkably similar to any United States aircraft carrier today. Instead, shrinking pocketbooks and feuding between the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force served as a budgetary flashpoint; a flashpoint that continues to ignite today with the same

intensity in the United States. The end result of this interservice rivalry and narrowminded policymaking resulted in the cancellation of *CVA-01* and thus, any attempt by the Royal Navy to have a “true” carrier—that is, a carrier fitted with an arresting gear and catapults. The cancellation forced the Royal Navy to innovate and adapt new technologies for future carrier projects. They focused on developing smaller carriers and pioneered the development and implementation of the iconic “ski jump” seen on British, Chinese, Indian, and Russian aircraft carriers today. In addition to carrier strike capability, the book delves into the RN’s adoption and implementation of early air warning (AEW) and antisubmarine warfare (ASW), two fields of warfare that are becoming increasingly important in modern naval combat.

Hobbs presents his information objectively so that his personal biases are not apparent until the last chapter entitled “reflections,” where he explains what he hoped the British carrier fleet would have been in the modern era. Despite envisioning a different carrier fleet for modern day use, the author does not short change due credit and pride for Britain’s new-found embrace of aircraft carriers and its renewed emphasis on sea control.

While primarily about policymaking, the book does not disappoint aviation lovers. From the propeller-driven war heroes and Cold-War workhorses to the state-of-the-art fighter jets, the author covers the entire spectrum of naval aircraft and capabilities developed and used by the Royal Navy for aircraft carrier operations. For the rotor-heads out there, the book also covers British naval rotor aviation evolution and even offers a rare insight into how British helicopters perform the airborne search and surveillance control (ASaC), a role per-

formed by the fixed wing E-2 Hawkeye aircraft in the United States. Nor does the book skimp on technical details. While some readers may get lost in the litany of technical details along with the vast list of missions, ship names, aircraft, and weapon systems, the textbook style presentation of information provides a rich resource of information and case examples. Hobbs also covers several novel concepts in naval aviation, including examples where the RN landed jets without landing gear on an aircraft carrier equipped with a rubber deck and the proposal of carrier-borne rocket fighters designed to intercept and shoot down high-altitude Soviet bombers.

After decades of neglect, the Royal Navy's adoption of the F-35 fighter jet and deployment of HMS *Queen Elizabeth II* aircraft carrier indicate that policy makers have finally taken the lessons of sea power, especially through aircraft carriers, to heart and that the aircraft carrier is here to stay. This book is a must-read for those wondering if aircraft carriers are just expensive relics from the past or essential tools for international diplomacy, for now and into the future.

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Nicholas James Kaizer. *Revenge in the Name of Honour: The Royal Navy's Quest for Vengeance in the Single-Ship Actions of the War of 1812*. Warwick, UK: Helion & Company, www.helion.co.uk, 2020. xxi+217 pp., illustrations, maps, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. UK £25.00, paper; ISBN 978-1-912866-72-4.

While the War of 1812 commemorations are now a long six years behind us, the subject matter continues (and

will continue) to produce fertile ground for academic study. In particular, the single-ship actions between British and American frigates and brigs have persisted in fascinating the amateur and professional historian alike ever since the events themselves unfolded. Nicholas Kaizer, a young historian whose Master's thesis for Dalhousie University forms the core of this book, attempts to bring a fresh view to these ship-on-ship actions. The result is a well-researched, thoughtful endeavour.

Single-ship actions at the start of the War of 1812 saw the loss of three British frigates and a brig, a stark contrast to Britain's reputation of dominance over the French and Spanish fleets in European waters. This rough start continued throughout the war, but was somewhat offset by a handful of British victories. Kaizer takes each engagement and works through the action in some detail, comparing ship armament and handling. The aftermath and the letter home to the Admiralty explaining the defeat, plus the ensuing courts martial are all recounted. Kaizer holds that the defeats were a significant blow to the sense of professional and personal honour of the officers of the British navy. Common to all was an expressed eagerness to engage the enemy, the struggle to gain or maintain the weather gauge, the ship-shattering American gunnery supremacy, and fighting to the point where continuance would have spilt British blood with no hope of victory. All defeated officers felt they could have won if luck had favoured them rather than their foe. Though much has been made by other historians over the armament differences between the British and American vessels, the author points out that most ships carried more guns than they were rated for, often leading to a more equal number of guns, though overall superiority in weight of