does a good job of highlighting these stories in an accessible manner for readers and in suggesting further avenues for those interested in the story.

Adam Coombs
Ottawa, Ontario

Macfarlane, Daniel. *The Lives of Lake Ontario: An Environmental History*
McGill-Queen's University Press, 2024
268 pp., maps, photographs
ISBN 9780228022237 (hardcover) CA$34.95; 780228026549 (softcover) CA$29.95

The latest work by Daniel Macfarlane, *The Lives of Lake Ontario: An Environmental History*, is an engaging read no matter the reader's background or affinity for lakes. Positioned as "a transborder environmental and water history of the easternmost of the Great Lakes" (5), Macfarlane expertly uses the body of water as the nexus around which to tell a story of the relationship between the lake and the people, animals, and places that surround and inhabit it. That said, anyone with a place in their heart for a nearby or far-flung body of water, be it a river, lake, pond, or ocean should take interest in this work. There are applications and lessons beyond the Great Lakes region that should concern us all. This book should prove relatively easy to read and enjoyable for someone brand new to environmental studies or maritime history. Macfarlane has succeeded in marrying the academic and thought-provoking with the popular in his work.

Organized by subject, such as canals, cities, energy, and fisheries, the story of the lives of this Great Lake is not presented chronologically. On more than one occasion, I mused as to whether I might have preferred a chronological approach to the various subjects, but upon completing the book, found I preferred the subject-based approach. Organizing the book this way allowed me to appreciate the subject or ponder specific questions and considerations better than if all subjects had been discussed within a purely chronological approach. This approach is especially helpful for topics I was less familiar with – such as energy – demonstrating that Macfarlane has produced a work that a wide range of readers from different fields can engage with. That said, Macfarlane's order of said subjects is chronologically appropriate, beginning with glaciers and capping off with chapters dedicated to pollution and regulation – potent reminders as to the long-term effects of human activity.

Throughout the work Macfarlane includes Indigenous perspectives in a way that is respectful and authentic. The author also notes, as appropriate,

the interventions by women and locals as opposed to those – usually white men – in elected chambers, business towers and the bureaucracy. Similarly, Macfarlane achieves his objective of telling a transborder story as he includes considerations from every shore of the lake and multiple perspectives. I did feel as though the emphasis was on Canadian questions and considerations, but Macfarlane addresses this imbalance thoughtfully and I, as a reader, believe that he has presented a full and diligently researched work that tells the story well.

What struck me the most while reading and again justified the order of treatment of subjects despite a non-chronological approach, is the radical change that the lake has undergone in such a short period of time. So often we are presented with the history of settlement as a history of improvement, but this "life story" of one of the Great Lakes shows us very clearly that not all change in and around the lake has been in the best interests of the water, the surrounding land, or the people and species who live, work, and play there. This will stay with me as I consider other environmental history works and my own interactions with lakes and bodies of water.

I was surprised to discover that one of the most interesting chapters was about invasive species. As a lake-goer in Ontario, I am no stranger to zebra mussels and found Macfarlane's discussion of fisheries and invasives revealing. Presented back-to-back with a chapter about pollution, it was really intriguing to think about the ways that we as a society have used the lake have impacted the different species found within it. It is a stark reminder of how we cannot have it all without a startling impact – one that our ancestors could not have predicted.

The author has written a relatively concise, readable work that should be of interest to lake-goers across the continent and environmental historians alike. Macfarlane uses mostly clear, plain language, explaining technical terms as necessary and diligently citing his sources throughout. The personable authority with which he writes is clear and admirable. His command of various topics, inter-related but diverse, demonstrates a vast knowledge and understanding of this life story. His use of a combination of maps, data representations, and imagery help to illustrate the concepts he presents in a way that should help readers from a variety of backgrounds engage with the text in a meaningful way.

In guise of conclusion, I will repeat some of Macfarlane's words: "We do not seem collectively willing to make the necessary sacrifices or systemic changes to our unsustainable lifestyles, political economies, and ways of thinking" (203). Here Macfarlane is referring to the future of the lake and our collective ability to ensure it has a future that reflects what we as a society want

and need from it. And yet, as he demonstrates throughout the work, there have always been those voices advocating for change but not always the follow-through. I sincerely hope, as a woman who grew up next to the ocean and is now a lake-goer in Ontario, that we can find balance going forward between our "right-now" socio-cultural urges and long-term environmental needs.

Rebecca Murray
Ottawa, Ontario

Maclean, Roderick G. ***Never to Return: Convoys to Russia in the Second World War***
PointMedia, 2025
224 pp., illustrations, diagrams, maps, bibliography, facsimiles, index
ISBN: 9781036903268 (softcover) CA$36.00

This is the story of a few young people from the west of Scotland and their vessels in the Battle of the Barents Sea during the most perilous convoys to Russia, when the outcome of World War Two hung in the balance and when weather was most dangerous. It is also an incisive history of that last great sea battle in the Arctic Ocean, which helped decide the fate of the Allied effort to supply Russian forces on the Eastern Front. The impetus for writing the book is given by the author while tracing his connection with the major character, David MacDonald, by recalling his mother's statement that she repeated each New Year's Eve: "David was lost tonight." The book is a result of that quest to know what happened in his last hours.

The scene of David's death, destroyer HMS *Achates*, is introduced early in the book. That story begins with its construction and continues through its war service, including being mined prior to the Russian convoys and reconstructed. A photograph of *Achates* being towed backward gives mute testimony of brutal violence of sea warfare, with the ratings' quarters in the fo'c'sle completely blown off. A connection is made also between the people and islands of Scotland and one location in particular, Loch Ewe, which was selected as a safe anchorage and became the UK terminus of what was known as "The Murmansk Run."

Chapters are short, dealing with the stories of the actors and their vessels and the events of the battle in their strategic framework. The story of the merchant ships and their organization is told by focusing on the person of the Commodore. Somehow this book knits together the strategic and tactical levels of the battle and most detailed, personal experiences of individual sailors and the vessels they sailed in, specifically *Achates* and the rescue ship