

final three chapters of the book, deal with “The Reckoning” (317), “Why Pearl Harbor Matters” (328) and “Kimmel and Short: Responsibility Misplaced?” (352). All are well-written and interesting complements to the more technical and operations-centric core of the book. That said, the chapter on Kimmel and Short, commanders of the United States Navy’s Pacific Fleet and Army forces in Hawaii respectively, should have come before “Why Pearl Harbor Matters” at the very least, if not before “The Reckoning.” These two chapters conveyed more of an air of conclusion-like writing, although they are not named as such. Positioning the chapter about Kimmel and Short at the very end felt like introducing substantial ideas and positions after neatly wrapping up the story. My reading experience was not bettered by this positioning of the chapters.

I understand the author’s focus and thesis, and appreciate the logical way it is set out in his introduction. This primed my reading experience and gave me a few tidbits of stories I could expect to learn more about throughout the book. That said, for all of the personal narrative and technical detail found in this book, it is a shame that no female perspective, particularly that of nurses who worked under fire that day, is included. There is in fact no mention of any medical personnel who were serving at Pearl Harbor while attention is accorded to male ranks from all service branches. Similarly, civilians are included in casualty counts (318), but no narrative account is shared. With such an important part of the result of the attack being the hardening of American sentiment toward Japan, it is curious that this perspective was not explored further. In addition, it would have been nice to see citations for the numerous archival documents referenced throughout the book, but the Bibliography simply groups them under “Archival Documents” and leaves us to do the legwork to locate them ourselves should we wish.

Overall, this reader highly recommends this book to those interested in naval strategy, the history of the Pacific War, and those open to insightful re-examinations of well-known history.

Rebecca Murray  
Ottawa, Ontario

**Stone, Richard. *Bristol and the Birth of the Atlantic Economy, 1500-1700*  
Boydell & Brewer, 2024**

250 pp., graphs, charts, tables, appendices, notes, bibliography, index  
ISBN 9781837650538 (hardcover) £80.00, US\$110.00; 9781787445413  
(e-book) £19.00

Richard Stone’s work is of fundamental importance for all who are interested in the origins of the Atlantic trade. Of his new findings, which emphatically are

not mere revisionist history, he disarmingly says, he has been “standing on the shoulders of giants, holding a laptop” (19).

Stone has meticulously set aside many of the previously accepted conventions of the origins of trans-Atlantic trade using sources that while always available had not been accessible – the Port Books and their predecessors the Particular Accounts (all held at The National Archives at Kew), supplemented by the Wharfage Books and other official records of port activity. The Port Books “were the detailed records submitted by the customs officers at every port... With the obvious exception of smuggled goods, every consignment exported from or imported into the country was recorded in these books, along with a wealth of supporting detail, such as the type of commodity, the duty it paid, its weight, number or volume, and the containers that housed it, the name of the owner, and a varying amount of detail about his (or occasionally her) occupation and nationality. In addition the books provide the name of the ship, her master, home port, immediate port of origin or destination, and usually her tonnage” (16). Eleven of these books were transcribed to Excel spreadsheets (just one volume took three months). The sheer mass of information they contained meant that previous use had been limited to spot checks. However, once a series had been digitized, computer analysis became possible. Stone’s new work is groundbreaking. In his technical appendices, Stone discusses the problems of inputting data, varying weights and measures, the value of goods, inflation and adjustment, and finally the invisible trade such as smuggling.

Stone is now a senior lecturer at the University of Bristol. He began his research on Bristol trade with his doctoral work, completed at Bristol in 2012. This book covers the two centuries from Columbus’s voyage to the end of the English slave trade monopoly of the Royal African Company. The focussed chapters are subdivided into discrete topics and further split with subject headings, which makes it easy to use. It is a nice book to read. Statistical data is clearly presented in pie charts, bar graphs and tables as appropriate.

The Tudor and Stuart period had once been described as an economic dark age (F.J. Fisher, 1957). This is obviously not the case. Spanish gold and silver from South and Central America financed consumer demand for many products shipped from Bristol, beginning with cloth. Merchants experimented with Mediterranean markets but the American trade proved to be more successful and more valuable. Stone forcefully makes the point that the experience of London trade cannot be extrapolated to Bristol. Westward looking, it never had London’s volume of trade with Antwerp; therefore the collapse of that trade did not cause them to look elsewhere. Bristol merchants were already developing their own markets. Possibly the most important finding is the early involvement of Bristol in the slave trade. Although the

monopoly of the Royal African Company made it illegal, the first recorded slave voyage from Bristol was in 1662. Records during the Civil War period are incomplete but supplementary records showing returning cargoes suggest Bristol slaving voyages began earlier. The slave trade became the basis for a significant increase in tobacco and sugar imports from the American colonies and the Caribbean that are recorded. Stone also details Bristol's trade with Ireland and other Severn ports, particularly Gloucester.

Stone's pioneering work has shown the need for further individual port studies using computer analysis that can provide a better understanding of English trade and commercial activity.

William Glover  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

**Wade, Lewis. *Privilege, Economy and State in Old Regime France: Marine Insurance, War and the Atlantic Empire under Louis XIV***

**Boydell & Brewer, 2023**

376 pp., illustrations, maps, graphs, appendices, notes, bibliography, index  
ISBN 9781837650217 (softcover) £32.99, US\$39.95; 9781800108813  
(e-book) open access

This work is award winning. The thesis on which it is based won the British Commission for Maritime History's Boydell and Brewer Prize in 2021 for the best doctoral thesis in maritime history, and the ensuing publication received the inaugural Society for the Study of French History First Book Prize in 2025.

Wade examines two separate and unsuccessful attempts begun first by Colbert and then his son to create a marine insurance market in Paris. Now forgotten, trying to lure business away from Amsterdam was part of Colbert's overall policy to develop French commerce along mercantilist lines. Wade explores the question of why this failed within the larger context of state-commercial relations in Louis XIV's France. He writes, "Put simply, this book posits that marine insurance offers a distinctive and multifaceted vantage point from which to study life in the Old Regime, thereby facilitating new insights into the absolute monarchy that will interest students and scholars of social, political and economic history alike. Specifically, through studying marine insurance – a powerful tool of commercial risk management --- the book proposes a new conceptualisation of absolutism itself as a system of risk management, whereby the absolute monarchy shifted the risks of its policies onto its subjects" (3-4).

The introduction offers a preliminary discussion under the headings "Absolutism, credible commitment and economic development," "Insurance