

to maintain the delicate balance of power. Thompson was involved in all those negotiations, with increasing responsibilities, with his experiences already “at the sharp end.” This is a lighter, although very cognizant view of that esoteric world. (For a very detailed view of that world and progress of the RN into the acquisition of SSBN boats, see *The Silent Deep*, by Peter Hennessy & James Jinks; Penguin, 2019; reviewed TNM XXVI, no. 2, April 2016.) For those with only a general interest in those developments, Thompson provides an excellent overview, from a user’s perspective. The author, with his rather unusual background training perspective, gives the reader both a clear understanding as to why the RN has only a few nuclear boats while providing an interesting and wryly amusing tale to follow.

My only criticisms of the book, especially from a reviewer’s perspective, are its lack of any index and the somewhat casual and uninformative chapter headings – “Corporate Constipation,” “Walter Mitty,” “War and Peace,” which are not helpful. But it makes for enjoyable reading, which includes a bit of poetry and some looks at familiar naval life of appointments afloat and ashore. Much recommended.

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Kazushige Todaka and the Kure Maritime Museum (ed.), Robert D. Eldridge (translation). *Battleships and Battle Cruisers: Selected Photos from the Archives of the Kure Maritime Museum*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2020. 222 pp., illustrations, tables. US \$75.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-68247-498-3.

Recently translated into English for the

first time, this work is a photographic compendium of the Imperial Japanese Navy’s (IJN) battleships and battle cruisers from the Meiji era through to the end of the Second World War. Translated by Robert D. Eldridge and Graham B. Leonard, this is a continuation of the Kure Naval Museum’s English rendition and expansion of Shizuo Fukui’s two-volume photographic compendium, *Japanese Naval Vessels, 1869-1945*. Sharing an identical preface and image note with the other volumes, *Battleships and Battle Cruisers* offers rare, large-scale views of vessels purchased, built, and captured by the Japanese during the aforementioned time period, and images of uncompleted ships and the *Kaga* prior to her conversion to an aircraft carrier. As part of the work’s expansion, all images are given a full page for increased clarity, with text kept largely to a minimum. Photograph labels follow the same format as previous volumes, listing the image’s identification number, ship’s name, and class (if applicable), and a one- or two-line caption containing the date and a short description. A standardized listing of ship specifications and a brief summary of the Kure Maritime Museum round out the work.

The photographs and vessels are divided into three distinct sections related to both the evolution of warship design and the geopolitical position of Japan. The first, “Until the Russo-Japanese Sea Battles,” documents the 14 capital ships of the Imperial Japanese fleet in service from 1878 to 1905 over the course of 42 pages. Despite the section’s title, this includes six ships of the Imperial Russian Navy captured during the Russo-Japanese War. These particular vessels actually provide some of the most interesting early images, with photographs of the battle-damaged ships as they were captured positioned immediately across

from their restored condition under the Japanese flag. Most of these early images are quite crisp and detailed, with one of the only ones to have a grainy quality actually being an image of the Japanese battle line engaged during the Battle of the Yalu River, which is quite understandable (21).

The second section, "Until the Building of the Dreadnoughts," is the smallest, with 38 pages covering the ten capital ships placed in service from 1906 to 1912. As with the previous section, this includes not only pre-dreadnoughts and cruisers, but the semi-dreadnought Satsuma class and dreadnought Kawachi class ships as well. There also are several shots of the vessels under construction, marking the shift from foreign construction yards to native Japanese shipyards. The foreign influence on design is still clearly visible at this point. Images include an impressive view of the *Settsu* delivering a test broadside in 1912, and the more humanizing elements of laundry day aboard the *Hizen* and *Kurama*, where the sheer volume of uniforms seen hanging on lines helps to illustrate the size of the crews better than mere numbers (45, 66, 84).

The final section, "The Peak of the Era of Battleships," is where the work truly shines. The 14 capital ships completed between 1913 and 1942 are rendered across 120 pages, showcasing construction, trials, modernizations, and even the model of the *Kaga*'s original battleship design (186). Deck and superstructure close-up shots of several vessels are provided, usually in the context of a modernization or weapons test, which provide a high-quality view of many details not often discernible from the standard profile shot. The evolution of ship design away from the European pattern to a more distinctly Japanese design is also well documented, with the majority of these warships undergoing

refits in the interwar period to acquire the now iconic Pagoda Mast superstructures and trunked funnels that became a hallmark of wartime IJN vessels. The battleships *Yamato* and *Musashi*, the only designs completed after the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922, are documented even though they received a complete separate volume within this collection solely for themselves. Interestingly, the book includes shots of the construction of the *Tosa* and *Kaga*, as both were supposed to be built as battleships prior to the aforementioned Treaty. For the *Kaga*, destined for conversion to an aircraft carrier, this consists of a single image of the launched hull. For the doomed *Tosa*, there are four images of launching and towing operations for disposal as an armor testing target ship.

The final 15 pages comprise the vessels' Technical Specifications and abbreviated service histories. Three ships are represented on each page, with their individual columns listing vessel name, type, length, beam, draught, displacement, speed, armament, propulsion, boilers, and power in an upper block. An asterisk is placed beside the names of those ships captured or taken as war prizes. This is followed by information regarding each ship's planning date, builder, and major construction milestones. Finally, an extremely simplified timeline of primary events rounds out the section. Six ships, described but not illustrated are *Amagi*, *Akagi*, *Takao*, *Atago*, *Shinano*, and Warship No. 111. None of these vessels were completed as battleships or battle cruisers, with the majority being scrapped and two being converted to aircraft carriers.

A few possible improvements come to mind. There appears to be one or two translation errors and photographs out of chronological order, most notable being a statement that the *Mikasa* is vis-

ible “sinking” in a photograph taken ten months after she had sunk at her moorings (22). Photographs of said sinking are also not documented in this work save for the heavily obscured view in the aforementioned photograph, which is surprising. The lack of images for the six partially completed or converted vessels in the Specifications section also appears to be an oversight, as several images do exist, such as the *Amagi* in her slip after the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1925. Finally, a note about the naming conventions of the ships would be appreciated, as all battleships were named after either Japan or a specific province, and battle cruisers after specific Japanese mountains.

Battleships and Battle Cruisers is an excellent continuation of this series of Imperial Japanese Navy image repositories, characterized by impressive clear and detailed photographs not often encountered in English language sources. The inclusion of early vessels and modernization images clearly showcases the origins and evolutions of Japanese naval design from beginning to end, from foreign-built warships to the iconic IJN *Yamato* and her sister ship *Musashi*. This work is a welcome addition for scholarly researchers, naval historians, and detail-oriented ship modelers alike.

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Kazushige Todaka and the Kure Maritime Museum (ed.), Robert D. Eldridge and Graham B. Leonard (translation). *Destroyers: Selected Photos from the Archives of the Kure Maritime Museum*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2020. 229 pp., illustrations, tables. US \$75.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-59114-630-8.

Part of the recent effort by the Kure Naval Museum to translate and expand Shizuo Fukui’s two-volume photographic compendium, *Japanese Naval Vessels, 1869-1945* into a more delineated English language format, this work is a visual record of the Imperial Japanese Navy’s destroyers, escort ships, torpedo boats, submarine chasers, and patrol boats from the turn of the century to the end of the Second World War. Paired with captions and tables translated by Robert D. Eldridge and Graham B. Leonard, *Destroyers* provides full page images of the aforementioned vessels, often taken in profile. There are a small number of images that share pages, but these are unusual. The minimalist labels follow the same format as other volumes, listing the image’s identification number, ship’s name and class (if applicable), and a one- or two-line caption containing the date and possibly a short description. Standardized ship and class specifications followed by a brief summary of the Kure Maritime Museum conclude the work.-

The photographs are divided into five subsections by ship type, with a vast majority of images naturally consisting of destroyers. The first subsection of the work covers 104 First Class Destroyers, while the second subsection covers 12 Second Class and seven Third Class vessels. Given the sheer volume of ships covered, most are represented by a single profile image, with just 21 of the 123 destroyers having multiple views. This limits the views largely to profile shots, with few images of construction, modifications, or improvements. The *Fubuki* and *Shiranui* have some of the more interesting dockyard images, with highly detailed sectional views of work on the vessels’ decks during 1936 and 1942, respectively (46, 94-95). Three detail shots of the *Harutsuki* at the end of the war are collected