

Matthew Flinders, Gillian Dooley and Philippa Sandall. *Trim, The Cartographer's Cat. The ship's cat who helped Flinders map Australia*. London, UK: Bloomsbury Publishing, www.bloomsbury.com, 2020. 128 pp., illustrations, maps, notes. US \$24.99, cloth; ISBN 978-1-47296-722-0. (E-book available.)

An entertaining and easy read about a ship's cat and one of the world's eminent cartographers. I was not sure what I would find inside this book but was pleasantly surprised by the content and style. Being a naval officer, the story of Matthew Flinders was not unknown to me (for a midshipman in Flinders Division at the Royal Australian Naval College in the 1980s, his biography was standard reading) but information concerning his cat 'Trim' was virtually unknown. This book does an excellent job in raising Trim from an obscure oddity to one of much greater importance in the early history of Australia.

Flinders was a young naval officer and skilled cartographer when he embarked on a mammoth task which was to conduct several surveys charting the coastline of Terra Australis (and it was he who gave the continent its name 'Australia'). The Dutch had charted some parts of the northern and west coasts, as well as a portion of Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania) in the 1600 and 1700s. James Cook sailed along the east coast in 1770, but there were as many gaps as there was coastline on the charts of the day.

Trim was born at sea onboard HMS *Reliance* in 1797 in which Flinders was serving; he was one of the ship's cats kept onboard to catch the rats and mice that plagued all sailing vessels of the era. The cat's task was simple—catch the rodents before they ate too much of the ships provisions; especially ships

biscuits which were part of the staple diet of the seafarers.

In 1798 Flinders and George Bass circumnavigated Tasmania in the sloop *Norfolk*, proving it was an island and naming the water separating it from the mainland as Bass Strait. In 1799 Flinders sailed north exploring the Australian east coast and took Trim with him to 'guard' the ships bread. When Flinders returned to England in 1800, Trim accompanied him and lived at his home. Both Flinders and Trim, however, grew restless and returned to the southern continent for more exploration.

Arriving at the penal colony of Port Jackson in 1801 (not much more than a decade after it has been founded in 1788), Flinders took on the task of circumnavigating the entire continent in HMS *Investigator*; thus producing the first chart of the continent. Trim continued to endear himself to Flinders, and the crew, with his many antics and particularly, climbing into the rigging to observe the reefing of sails (but then needing to be carried down as cats are poorer at coming down from heights). The cat would also sit with the officers when they had their meals (as they had better food than the crew) and frequently stole portions of meat; often straight off their forks.

Trim survived storms, shipwreck and near starvation but it was while returning to England in 1804, with Flinders, that he met his demise while both were held as prisoners of the French on the island of Mauritius. Flinders was moved to write Trim's story and this document (*A Biographical Tribute to the Memory of Trim*) survived and returned with Flinders to England and is now in the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich.

This quaint and quirky book tells the story of Trim from both Flinders'

and Trim's point of view (crafted by Philippa Sandall and Gillian Dooley), while also enlightening the reader on the colonization and exploration of the Great Southern Land. *Trim—The Cartographers Cat* is a quality hard cover publication, very well illustrated and highly recommended.

Of note is that Flinders died on 19 July 1814—the day after his magnum opus, *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, was published. His memory, however, lives on in Australia with his name perpetuated by a mountain range, an island, a university, a hotel, a harbour pilot vessel and a former survey vessel of the Royal Australian Navy. His portrait has graced stamps, banknotes and Wedgewood plates and there are no less than six statues of him around the world—several of which have a statue of Trim close by.

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Peter Hore (ed.) *The Trafalgar Chronicle*, New Series 4. Barnsley, S. York: Seaforth Publishing, www.seaforthpublishing.com, 2019. 239 pp., illustrations, maps, tables, biographies, notes. UK £20.00, paper; ISBN 978-1-5267-5950-4.

The subtitle of the *Trafalgar Chronicle* reads, *Dedicated to Naval History in the Nelson Era*. This is exacting what the ongoing series has provided to help fill in the larger context in which Nelson served. The events that influenced his experience, but in which he may have had only a tangential involvement, the officers influenced by Nelson, directly and indirectly, those who served in his ships, on other ships in squadrons he commanded, and those whom he never met. This edition continues this service with 21 articles.

The volume is dominated by a se-

ries of brief biographies of naval officers, some who served with Nelson, others who did not, constituting ten essays. They include Admiral George Augustus Westphal (by Tom S. Iampietro), and his brother Admiral Philip Westphal (by T. Jeremy Waters), Admiral of the Fleet Sir Provo Wallis (by Jeremy B. Utt), Lieutenant Richard Bulkeley (by Jack R Satterfield), Admiral Sir Manley Dixon and one on Rear-Admiral Thomas T Tucker (both by Andrew Z. Frederick), Captain William G. Rutherford (by Anna Kiefer), Rear-Admiral John Peyton (by Barry Jolly), Captain Conway Shipley (by Rui R. Filipe), and Captain John Perkins (by Douglas Hamilton). Some essays, such as the piece on Admiral of the Fleet Wallis, cover well-known ground, while others explore people who fell into obscurity in the shadows of contemporaries, the best example here is Philip Westphal, whose own brother George's career eclipsed his own.

Of the ten biographies, this reviewer found Rui Ribolhos Filipe's account of the short, yet full career of Captain Conway Shipley the most intriguing ("The Beach of the English Dead: Remembering Captain Conway Shipley"). A native of Denbighshire, a follower of Earl Spencer, he saw his first action at the Battle of the Glorious First of June. After serving as lieutenant on a variety of ships, he was made commander of the frigate *Nymphe*, in 1807. On the night of 22/23 April 1808, while blockading the French and several Portuguese vessels in the Tagus, Shipley led a cutting-out party to seize the 54 gun *Princesa Carlota*. Things went terribly wrong, as the tide prevented them from reaching the Portuguese ship. Changing target to the brig *Gaivota do Mar*, Shipley was killed as he scaled the side of the ship, throwing his men into some confusion. The attack failed, and Ship-