

# Troubled Waters: New Aspects of Maritime and Naval History

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*Au fil des années, la Société nord-américaine pour l'histoire océanique choisit pour publication un groupe de papiers présentés lors de ses conférences annuelles, dans l'espoir que les études de ces historiens spécialisés soient appréciées et bénéficiaires autant aux disciples de l'histoire maritime qu'aux amateurs et au grand public. Cette collection, le quatrième volume de papiers à apparaître depuis 1988, est tirée des conférences tenues entre 1999 et 2005. Les papiers traitent d'une grande variété d'aventures en mer pendant périodes de paix et de guerre du début du dix-huitième jusqu'à la fin du vingtième siècle, à travers les Océans atlantique et pacifique. Le titre "eaux troubles" décrit les difficultés que bien des gens ont éprouvées une fois qu'ils ont fait métier de la navigation ou du commerce maritime. La mer est une maîtresse capricieuse, comme les marins ont découvert à maintes reprises pendant des milliers d'années. Ceux qui sont partis faire fortune par un jour calme et ensoleillé ont rarement la chance de voir le temps rester au beau fixe. À terre, en dépit du va-et-vient des temps orageux, la terra firma garde sa place, n'importe combien de malaises et difficultés soient ressentis. En mer, le malaise et le danger s'étendent en trois dimensions, et si on rajoute la faiblesse, la trahison et l'hostilité humaines à ce mélange, le résultat est en effet des eaux troubles pour tous. Ceux qui surmontent ces obstacles possèdent une combinaison variée de détermination, de compétence et de chance.*

### Introduction

Every few years the North American Society for Oceanic History selects a group of papers from its annual conferences for publication in the hope that scholars, maritime history buffs, and the reading public will enjoy and profit from the works of the historians who engage in this specialty. The previous volumes were *Ships, Seafaring and Society: Essays in Maritime and Naval History* (1988); *To Die Gallantly: The Battle of the Atlantic* (1994), and *The Navy and the Early Republic* (2001). The present selection of articles, drawn from conferences held between 1999 and 2005 concerns a wide variety of seafaring adventures in peace and war, commerce, exploitation, privateering, and efforts

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to shape warfare in adjusting to circumstances for different purposes. The title “troubled waters” appropriately describes the difficulties many have experienced once they have made seafaring their trade or livelihood. The sea is a temperamental mistress, as sailors have discovered repeatedly over thousands of years. Those who set out to make their fortune on a calm and sunny day rarely have the luck of seeing this condition last. Ashore, even though storms come and go, the terra firma stays in place, no matter how much discomfort and difficulty people suffer. At sea, discomfort and danger range in three dimensions, and if one adds human weakness, treachery, and enmity to that mix, the result is indeed troubled waters for all concerned. Those who overcome these obstacles possess in some combination determination, skill, and luck.

The first articles capture the flavor of seafaring in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the art of navigation was still in its infancy and knowledge of weather patterns was little developed. Yet men in increasing numbers put to sea, to find a life in the New World, to find and preserve wealth, or simply to make a living at the expense of others which was usually the result of privateering. Richard Warner’s fascinating tale recounts the life of ship-wrecked adventurer John Deane and the misery of his experience on Boon Island off the Maine coast. Warren Riess puts Warner’s work into perspective in a description of an underwater archaeological expedition to find and preserve the remains of Deane’s *Nottingham Galley* on Boon Island. Novelist Kenneth Roberts invested his ample talents in telling this story in *Boon Island* (1955).

The remarkably successful Spanish effort to seize land and wealth in the New World had its own tales of maritime woe in the transoceanic voyages of the treasure fleets as they sought to bring the riches of the Indies to Spain. They contended with equinoctial gales, British privateers, and the disloyalty of their own sailors. Donald Shomette’s research on the loss of the *La Galga*, and other ships of the treasure fleet in 1750 tells us much of the ordeals as they faced the perils of the Outer Banks and Assateague Island on Virginia’s Eastern Shore. This particular incident has echoes in our own time as the Spanish government claimed *La Galga*’s treasure and artifacts as its own in a U.S. Federal Court in the 1996. The U.S. Department of Justice supported the Spanish claim against the salvage firm Sea Hunt and the Virginia Marine Resources Commission. An appeals court upheld the Spanish claim in 2000, and two years later the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear a further appeal, thereby settling the case in favor of Spain. Shomette’s research reveals not only the fury of the storms but the difficulties the Spanish faced after the shipwreck on the American coast.

During the American Revolution, the Continental Congress and the new state governments issued privateering commissions to enterprising sea captains authorizing them to cruise legitimately against British commerce. This step had the advantage of augmenting the efforts of the diminutive Continental Navy and materially rewarding the privateers’ owners and crew members. The problem facing the privateer commanders was that of finding friendly ports in France and Spain where they could dispose of their prizes during the years 1776-77, when both countries were officially neutral in the American War for Independence. Even under those conditions the American sea officers often found a friendly reception, but after the United States commissioners signed the

Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Alliance with France in 1778, they had far fewer problems disposing of their prizes in France. After Spain declared war against England in 1779, Spanish ports allowed American privateers to dispose of their prizes legally, even though that nation did not recognize American independence until 1783. In his article “The Hawke and the Dove, a Cautionary Tale,” Michael Crawford’s intriguing study discusses the legal complications that met American naval officers and how they overcame these obstacles during the “neutral period” in France and Spain. British authorities knew of the collusion between their enemy and the neutrals but could do little to force them to their will for fear of formal declarations of war that would have and eventually did unleash the military and naval forces of both powers against Great Britain.

The years immediately following the Revolutionary War were difficult for navalists in the United States. The new nation with a weak central government had the task of rebuilding its treasury, establishing its credibility in foreign affairs, restoring its overseas commerce, cementing the union of states that had survived a destructive and painful war with Great Britain. Further, it had to bind up the wounds among its own citizens, some of whom had been caught up in the civil war that was an integral part of the revolutionary experience. For several years, there was no navy because of the immense expense of building and maintaining warships, a shore establishment, as well as officers and crews to man those vessels. Eventually, as American trade expanded into the Mediterranean without the protection of escorting warships, the Barbary Coast principalities sent out warships to capture American merchantmen, confiscate their cargoes, and imprison ships’ personnel and passengers. For many this meant enslavement, loss of health, wealth, and human dignity. As word of these outrages spread to the United States, a new government under the Constitution of 1789 established a War Department and commenced, in 1794, to recreate a navy that could defend commerce on the high seas. This new navy’s ships were under construction when the first real military crisis arose. This was not, as might have been expected, the prospect of war with the Barbary states, but rather the warlike acts of another new nation, that of revolutionary France, that had injured American trade in the Caribbean. Donald Hickey, author of several works on the War of 1812, has written a succinct overview of the Quasi-War with France that explains why this undeclared war developed and how the fledgling United States government successfully dealt with this challenge in its first “limited” war. Hickey brilliantly sets the tone for the opening of the nineteenth century in this collection of maritime and naval essays.

In progressing from the Quasi-War to the Louisiana Purchase, one passes through the administrations of Presidents George Washington and John Adams to that of Thomas Jefferson and the Louisiana Purchase. This surprising acquisition of a great expanse of territory more than doubled the size of the United States and included territory that had been formerly been claimed by both Spain and France. In many ways, it was a terra incognita, a fact that motivated President Jefferson to authorize Lewis and Clark’s military exploring expedition to describe, measure, and map its extent. And, although the Louisiana Purchase had become nominally U.S. territory, there were soon many who coveted this as yet ungoverned expanse of land.

Gene Smith's article, "Preventing the Eggs of Insurrection from Hatching," explains why President Jefferson acceded to Commodore Thomas Truxtun's suggestion in 1806 that the United States establish a naval station at New Orleans as an early means of showing the flag in that distant port. New Orleans at that time was a truly cosmopolitan port that was in a strategically sensitive position. Whoever controlled New Orleans could control trade on the Mississippi River. By placing the Navy at that choke point, Jefferson acted to discourage rebellion in the form of Aaron Burr's conspiracy, began to close down the slave trade, enforced the embargo, and established the first outpost for defense of the port against the British. In effect, the Navy at New Orleans became an agent to enforce the laws of the United States as they were introduced into the territory.

Most students of early American history understand that privateers played an important role in the War of 1812. Merchant entrepreneurs in the age of sail acted from motives that were both patriotic and self-serving. Even if the Britannia's Royal Navy "ruled the waves," its ships could not be everywhere at all times. Even when the U.S. Navy's ships were blockaded in harbor, privateers from Baltimore could often escape the Virginia Capes, passing through the blockade by stealth or by swift sailing, in pilot schooners converted for war. They captured many a British merchantman, sent London's insurance rates sky high, and helped make war unpopular among war weary Englishmen. But what happened to the privateers after the Treaty of Ghent terminated the war in 1815? Fred Hopkins's article provides answers to this question, pointing out that for privateer captains devoted to their calling, there were other wars to fight and more money to be made. Numerous former Baltimore privateer captains sought out naval or privateer commissions from the newly independent states of Latin America, principally Venezuela and Colombia on the Caribbean littoral and in the Rio de la Plata where both Buenos Aires and the Banda Oriental (the future state of Uruguay) were rebelling against Spain.

Shifting from warfare to commerce in the early nineteenth century, the United States' merchant fleet spread its sails worldwide after the War of 1812, enjoying a rapid expansion in the carrying trade not only to Europe, but into the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, and the Far East. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Americans who opened the direct trade with China exchanged tons of ginseng roots for the silks, ceramics, nankeens, and teas that the American market craved. During the 1790s, American merchants learned that the Chinese had an equally strong desire for the lush fur of the sea otter found on the northwest Pacific coast. The first American ships to exploit the Northwest fur trade with China came from New England. These doughty seafarers rounded Cape Horn, braved a dangerous bar at the mouth of the Columbia River, ventured into the interior to trade with Native Americans and then carried their goods to Canton. In "The Mystery of the Brig *Owhyhee's* Anchor," James Mockford relates a strange tale that links a ruling Native Hawaiian dynasty to one of these fur-trading men from Boston. This in turn is tied to the spread of a then unknown mosquito-borne disease that devastated the Clackamas Indians of the Columbia River valley.

With commerce burgeoning in the antebellum period, American farmers in the middle Atlantic and southern tidewater states were experimenting with methods to

rejuvenate exhausted plantation soils that had been devoted to tobacco monoculture for nearly 150 years. This created a demand for the importation of fertilizer known as guano, essentially bird-droppings, that had accumulated over hundreds of years on small islands off the west coast of South America. The merchants of Baltimore began to import Peruvian guano as early as 1832, and by 1860, imports amounted to nearly 100,000 tons annually. Its popularity survived the Civil War and lasted until the turn of the twentieth century when processed fertilizers began to make inroads. The malodorous, nearly toxic guano cargoes made the extraction, loading, and unloading of the fertilizer a difficult and deadly business for ships' crews and native laborers. Peter Leshner's article "A Load of Guano: Baltimore and the Fertilizer Trade in the Nineteenth Century" provides a highly interesting account of the growth of this trade and its importance for Baltimore.

With the advent of the Civil War, the Union Navy attempted to interdict much of the coastal and riverine shipping of the Confederate States. Lacking the essentials of a formally organized navy, the Confederacy had to improvise from the first. Secretary of the Navy Stephen D. Mallory encouraged U.S. Navy officers of southern origin to resign their commissions and to establish a navy for the South. He sent former U.S. Navy Commander James D. Bulloch to England to search out and purchase ships that could be converted into high seas raiders. He also sought out sea captains willing to run the Union blockade to bring needed supplies for the Confederacy. Others, such as naval architect John L. Porter, set to work designing ironclad rams, the first of which was CSS *Virginia* (formerly *USS Merrimack*). Mallory urged the development of mine warfare, embodied in the Torpedo Bureau, to discourage Union warships from invading southern rivers.

When the Union blocking ships captured key defense works along the southern coast and established blockades off the inlets, bays, and sounds, they came into contact with slaves who lived and worked along creeks, rivers, bays and sounds of the South. Some of them worked the waters as a way of supplementing their families' meager plantation diets, while the more adventurous became well known as skilled coastal pilots. The shifting sandbanks of these waterways demanded a nearly daily familiarity with changing conditions. Without this knowledge, a ship's master could easily run hard aground, risking ship, cargo, and lives to the whims of tide and current. Vessels of both Union and Confederate navies needed pilots, whether white or black, free or slave, to ensure the success of their operations. Maurice Melton's "Two Georgia Coast Pilots and the Capture of the USS *Water Witch*" reveals a great deal about the southern maritime culture and how it affected the fortunes of the Union and Confederate Navies on the Georgia Coast. In particular, he documents the Confederate capture of that famous Yankee steam frigate in Ossabaw Sound between Ossabaw Island and the Georgia mainland about 15 miles due south of Savannah.

Shifting attention to the southwest Pacific Ocean, Australian maritime historian Steve Mullins focuses on the late nineteenth century pearl-shelling industry that was brought into being by demand for mother of pearl buttons in Europe and the United States. The extraction of raw material from the ocean or islands in an undeveloped part of the world had much in common with the guano trade off South America or the harvesting

of oysters on the east coast of the United States. It was difficult work, requiring physical strength, endurance, and depended on maritime skills to bring the products to market. Thus, this business required native Pacific islanders (pearl shellers), shipmasters, and merchants to extract, transport, and process the shell into a commercially marketable product. Once the ships had arrived at the shelling grounds, the natives placed in luggers or cutters would free dive to collect the shells. With the passage of time and the availability of improved technology, masters equipped the divers for full dress hard-hat (helmet) diving. The pearl shelling industry centered on wherever the most valuable shell could be found, in this case it was the *pinctada maxima* in the Torres Strait that became the most valuable shell in the world because of its beautiful color and hardness. The size of the oyster shell was huge in comparison to any other shell available and caused a sensation in European and American markets when it first appeared in the 1860s. The average size of the oyster shell was six to twelve inches, much larger than oysters harvested elsewhere.

Mullins's unusual topic examines the management of the pearl shelling trade and the labor problems that developed at that time in a relatively remote part of the world. A shocking incident involving the schooner *Franz* during 1872-73 brought attention to abuses in the trade. The tendency of pearl-shelling ship masters to exploit the labor of native Polynesians offended the sensibilities of representatives of the London Missionary Society. Royal Navy patrols, such as that of Captain John Moresby in HMS *Basilisk*, brought the most exploitive aspect of pearl shelling known as "blackbirding" (virtual enslavement of Pacific islanders) under Australian regulation.

During this same period of time, the United States Navy was sinking into a period of prolonged neglect from which it did not emerge until the middle 1880s. With the end of the Civil War, the nation's attention focused on internal industrial development and expansion into the open spaces west of the Mississippi River. The Navy, having reached its largest extent in terms of ships and personnel by 1865, drastically cut back its expenditures, sold off unneeded ships, and largely reverted to its former sailing navy activities, showing the flag and being ready to protect the interests of American business and citizens abroad. The advanced ship designs and propulsion experiments of Chief Engineer Benjamin Isherwood lay dormant for another generation to rediscover. In the 1880s, however, a combination of technological and intellectual changes developed, ushering in a period of unprecedented naval growth during peacetime.

Following an age of national unification and industrial advances, the great powers of Europe became more competitive on the international scene. They began to vie with one another in a race to conquer and annex colonies in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia to increase their access to raw materials, new markets, and national prestige. A rising generation of naval officers and politicians in the United States made it their business to advocate a similar path for the United States. To become a great power, they argued, this nation must have a respectable, well-armed navy that could compare and contend favorably with those under construction in Western Europe. Between 1883 and 1898, these sentiments became increasingly popular as international crises multiplied and European states meddled in areas such as the Caribbean that the United States had

traditionally treated as its own sphere of influence. Politicians, industrialists, and progressive naval officers worked in combination to develop newer and stronger armor, breech-loading naval guns, improved fire-control methods, more powerful steam propulsion plants, and faster ships. Within the brief span of fifteen years, the naval industrial complex produced a renewed U.S. Navy, a battle fleet that could be used in major engagements with other advanced navies.

The establishment of the Naval Institute (1873) and the Naval War College (1884) enabled American naval officers to join the trend toward professionalization that was in vogue in Western Europe. Alfred Thayer Mahan's seminal *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* (1890) emphasized the need for a modern battle fleet that could outfight potential rivals. The threat of a naval war with Chile, possessing a small but modern fleet, provided impetus. During the 1890s, the navy's inventory of capital ships grew rapidly, adding ships with greater than 10,000 tons displacement and main batteries on the centerline. In a series of crises, the U.S. used its growing naval strength to encourage a coup d'état in Hawaii (1893) and to discourage British intervention in Venezuela (1895). A civil war between Cuban rebels and Spanish overlords provoked tensions between the United States and Spain. The explosion and sinking of the battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor provided a pretext for war, exploited by the press. The navy's victories in 1898 against the Spanish fleets in Manila harbor and off Santiago de Cuba signaled the arrival of American naval power on the world's stage.

Following the Spanish American War, the navy's expansion continued. By 1901, sixty ships of all classes were in the fleet, including battleships, cruisers, destroyers, gunboats, and submarines. Naval experts then rated the U.S. Navy fourth in the world behind Britain, France, and Russia. Soon Germany overtook all but Britain in tonnage, but the U.S. ranked higher than Germany in the number of capital ships. In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt judged it was time to make a show of force in the Pacific, where the U.S. fleet was weakest, in order to make an impression on Japan's growing navy. Sixteen battleships made a round-the-world cruise, not returning until 1909. The "Great White Fleet" made a dramatic showing. Roosevelt also pushed competition with the leading European navies by convincing Congress to authorize the building of the "Dreadnought" battleships, incorporating the change from coal to oil. The first ship of that class was *Michigan*, commissioned in 1910, followed by *Nevada* and *Oklahoma*. The navy purchased its earliest submarines in this era, commissioning *Holland* in 1900. Test pilot Eugene Ely was the first pilot to be launched from the deck of a ship (*Birmingham*). Ely also landed an aircraft on a ship (*Pennsylvania*) for the first time in 1911. The navy also realized it was time to strengthen its leadership structure by creating the post of Chief of Naval Operations. Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels selected Admiral William S. Benson as the first officer to be given that responsibility in 1915.

The outbreak of World War I among the great powers of Western Europe in 1914 raised the possibility that the United States might be drawn into a conflict not of its own making. Still, President Woodrow Wilson resisted calls for involvement from internationally minded politicians. He had pledged in his election campaign of 1912 to accomplish much needed domestic reforms; participation in a European war was far from

being one of his goals. As the war lengthened and spread to Africa and Asia, Wilson's foreign policy became that of neutrality. He wanted to deal fairly with both sides, to avoid military involvement, and to bring an end to the fighting as soon as possible. In this, he had strong support from Congress, but late in the final year of his first term, Wilson came under increasing pressure to tilt toward the Allies. Germany's resort to submarine blockade of the British Isles and ultimately to unrestricted undersea warfare posed a great danger not only to British shipping, but also to American merchantmen steaming unprotected on the high seas. With Wilson's encouragement, Congress passed the Naval Appropriations Act of 1916, enabling a large though gradual increase in the size of the navy.

In his essay " 'The Little Navy' " Faction in the House of Representatives, Opposition to Naval Expansion, 1913-1916," Stephen Svonavec points out that representatives of Wilson's own party opposed the expansion of the navy, even at a time when military preparedness seemed an appropriate stance for the administration. These men had earlier opposed President Theodore Roosevelt's determination to build a larger navy. Their opposition came in the person of "Big Navy" Republican proponents such as Massachusetts Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and "Big Navy" Democrat Richmond Hobson of Alabama. The "Little Navy" group's rationale for opposing the construction bill included budgetary concerns, commitment to peace through disarmament, and a belief that the United States could achieve its international aims without resorting to militarism and navalism. While the "Big Navy" advocates finally won the congressional battle, circumstances prevented building the kind of navy they had envisioned. After the United States entered the war in April 1917, the British pointed out that what they needed was not more battleships, but smaller vessels of the destroyer and sub chaser variety to protect commerce against the devastating German U-boat campaign that was threatening to eliminate their merchant fleet. As Svonavec notes, it was ironic that despite the Little Navy faction's defeat, the U.S. government advocated and achieved their goals during the postwar naval disarmament conferences.

During the ensuing twenty year interwar period, the United States demobilized and withdrew from major involvement in world affairs, but at the same time military and naval planners kept an eye on the possibility of a future war with Japan whose threat potential had emerged during the first two decades of the century. Japanese Imperial foreign policy seemingly aimed at expansion into the central and southwestern Pacific islands. From the League of Nations in 1919, Japan received a mandate (trusteeship) to rule the former German island colonies in Micronesia. These included the Caroline, Marshall, and Palau Groups, excepting Guam which remained under United States control. During these years leading up to World War II, the Japanese violated the terms of the mandate by fortifying the islands.

As a result of the Spanish American War, the United States had ousted the Spanish rulers of the Philippine Islands and asserted military and political control in 1898. At a peace conference in Paris in 1899, the Spanish government ceded the Philippines and Guam to the United States which thereby became a colonial power. Soon, however, Philipinos, who thought they should have been granted self rule, rose up

in rebellion. After defeating Emilio Aguinaldo's three-year guerilla insurrection, the U.S. maintained control of the Islands until 1935. In that year, with the establishment of the Commonwealth of the Philippines, the United States turned over political government to the Philipinos, with the promise of eventual independence being granted in 1945. During this period, the Americans retained control of the Philippine government's military and foreign affairs. In 1935, President Manuel L. Quezon invited Major General Douglas MacArthur to accept the rank of Field Marshal and the command of the Philippine Army. MacArthur, who had stepped down as Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, gladly accepted the opportunity to return to the Philippines where his father had once been the Military Governor.

In view of the sensitive juxtaposition of Japanese mandates, the United States' Pacific territories, and Japan's growing naval power, the U.S. military prepared contingency plans to reinforce and defend the Philippines and Guam in case of war with Japan. During the 1920s and 1930s, the United States army and navy developed a number of color-coded war plans to outline potential U.S. strategies for a variety of hypothetical war scenarios. The War Department withdrew these plans in 1939, in favor of five "Rainbow Plans" in order to meet the threat of a two-ocean war against multiple enemies. The best-known of these plans (although they were secret at the time) is "War Plan Orange," a plan for war with Japan which was the basis (in part) for the campaign against Japan in World War II.

Charles Dana Gibson and Kay Gibson's article, "Attempts to Supply the Philippines by Sea, 1942" deals with the U.S. Army's struggle to reinforce General Douglas MacArthur's Philippine and U.S. Army components after the sudden, overwhelming Japanese invasion in 1942. In relating the ultimate failure of these efforts, the Gibsons demonstrate how difficult, if not impossible, the U.S. Army's resupply task was in the face of the Japanese domination of air and sea surrounding the Philippines and the Indonesian Archipelago to the southwest.

As the pace of war in the Pacific rapidly increased, U.S. naval forces extended their reach into the South Pacific to protect the sea line of communications from Hawaii to New Zealand and Australia. The Japanese Navy at that time was pushing forces south into the Coral Sea, aiming at conquering New Guinea and threatening Australia. The U.S. Navy sent carrier task forces into the Coral Sea, attacked the Japanese invasion forces at Lae and Salamaua at eastern New Guinea, leading to the Battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942. The Japanese withdrew their damaged fleet from the Coral Sea, but within a few months they pushed invasion forces down the "slot" of the Solomon Islands. At the Battle of Midway in June 1942, the U.S. Navy ambushed and sank four Japanese carriers, losing one of its own in the process, and thus created one of the turning points of the war. From then on, the Japanese acted on the defensive, trying to protect their far flung island empire. In August 1942, Americans carried out an invasion of their own, landing marines on the islands of Guadalacanal and Tulagi in the eastern Solomon Islands. Meanwhile, U. S. Army and Army Air Forces units had transited to Australia. Then under General MacArthur's Southwest Pacific command, these troops began the long, difficult, costly job of recapturing territory seized by the Japanese in the Indonesian and Philippine

archipelagoes.

One of the unique naval tasks these forces carried out was to provide air-sea rescue services for allied aviators when their planes crashed at sea among these far-flung islands. As it happened, the U.S. Navy only rarely could provide these rescue services, so the Army Air Forces created their own rescue service and purchased the fast, well equipped "crash boats" to carry out these tasks. In a unique account, naval architect Jean E. Buhler relates how these crash boats came into existence. As the lead designer of the Miami Shipbuilding Company by the end of the war, Buhler is well-qualified to document this process. His memoir, "Development of the 63-foot Aircraft Rescue Boat," describes how the design evolved through various stages to comply with the requirements not only for the U.S. Navy and Army Air Forces, but also for Great Britain, Soviet Russia, and other allies during World War II. Readers interested in how these boats were used when they reached their destinations should read Earl A. McCandlish's *Crash Boat: Wartime Missions of the P-399, Guadalcanal to the Philippines* (2000).

The widening of the war placed tremendous demands on the American economy and armed forces, necessitating the mobilization of thousands of American women to the war effort, to work in industrial plants and perform tasks previously handled only by men in many occupations. In World War I, in addition to nurses, enlisted women took over many tasks, as typists, file clerks, telephone operators, intelligence specialists, and workers in munitions factories. All told, approximately 11,800 women served in the Navy, all as enlisted nurses or yeoman (popularly called "yeomanettes"). After the armistice in 1918, personnel policy soon reverted to prewar conditions. During the period between the wars, Naval Reserve legislation limited participation only to males. It took a new crisis to reopen the door to females in uniform. Seven months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Congress passed and President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an act authorizing the creation of a new corps of Navy Reserve officers denominated "Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service," or WAVES, as they were commonly called. There was an immediate response. Within a year 27,000 women had answered the call to the Navy's colors. By 1945, there were over 8,000 female officers and some 80,000 enlisted women in the WAVES. The jobs they performed, such as gunnery instructor, aviation mechanics mate, and radio operator, were much more widely varied than those of Navy women in World War I.

The Navy Department selected Mildred McAfee, the president of Wellesley College, as the first director of the WAVES, with rank of lieutenant commander in the Naval Reserve. She thus became the Navy's first female line officer on 3 August 1942, attaining the rank of captain in November 1943. These were the first steps in the lengthy process of integration of women into the U.S. Navy on a permanent basis. Evelyn Cherpak's article, "The WAVES in World War II Oral History Project," focuses particularly on enlisted women veterans of that war. Her effort to secure these interviews provides a valuable resource because previous oral history projects have given prominence only to women officers in the Navy.

Over forty years ago, the U.S. Navy's sailors and marines became deeply involved in fighting the prolonged Vietnam War. The United States had supported the

French colonial administration that fought the Viet Minh in a losing war in the early 1950s. Ten years after the signing of the Geneva Accords that ended the French Indochina war, the United States took up arms to support the South Vietnamese government that had been created in the wake of the Geneva conference. This turned out to be an extremely frustrating experience for the officers and enlisted personnel of the United States armed forces. The American investment in this war was massive, putting hundreds of thousands of troops and sailors into the fray, handling the latest, most sophisticated weapons. American sailors and marines fought hard and well, if not always successfully, whether as aircraft carrier drivers, naval aviators, surface warriors, special forces operatives, or naval intelligence agents. In these forces the United States possessed one of the world's most powerful strategic weapons – sea power. The enemy, North Vietnam's regular army, worked closely with sympathizers in South Vietnam, and was supported by Communist China and Soviet Russia. The irony of this situation is found in the non-existence of the enemy's sea power; yet, the United States did not possess the political will to use all the sea power instruments at its disposal. Nearly all the enemy's logistical support entered North Vietnam by sea on board ships sent from the Soviet Union and China to Haiphong, the seaport of Hanoi. The logical countervailing strategy should have been the interdiction of the enemy's sea lines of communication. The U.S. Navy's air, surface, and submarine forces would have found it a straight-forward task to sink these vessels with missiles, torpedoes, and mines. That is what naval forces are trained and equipped to do, yet President Lyndon Johnson and his closest advisors shrank from using the Navy in this way. To do so would have undertaken a calculated risk that the Soviet Union and China would not have responded in kind or sent massive land forces into Vietnam. This evidently was a risk that President Johnson was unwilling to take. Frank Uhlig, Jr., a naval veteran, former senior editor at the U.S. Naval Institute and editor of *The Naval Review*, has written "The Navy in the Vietnam War," an essay that is an analytical memoir scrutinizing what went wrong for the U.S. Navy. This is a conflict that still troubles many Americans, as their country is deeply involved in yet another foreign adventure, this time in the Middle East, in which sea power plays an important supporting yet nearly invisible role.

The articles contained in *Troubled Waters* are a reflection of contemporary trends in maritime history. While the topics vary one from another, offering differing periods, places, and people, their authors are filling the gaps that exist in the published record on maritime and naval subjects. They provide a needed educational outreach. Academic courses on naval and maritime topics have largely disappeared from college and university curricula. The continuing purpose of organizations such as the North American Society for Oceanic History and the Canadian Society for Nautical Research is that of encouraging research and publication on maritime history and heritage, a subject still finding and educating audiences at a time when seafaring is distant to many whose attention is drawn to many other topics in this electronic age. Occasionally disasters such as tsunamis, hurricanes, typhoons, shipwrecks, and oil spillages bring the public's attention back to the sea for a few hours or days, but how quickly public attention is drawn away from the sea! It is a sad comment on our times that when weather forecasts are presented on television, viewers hear barely a word about the impact of weather at

sea, despite the fact that thousands of warships, container ships, commercial fishermen and recreational vessels are out on the deep at all times. So it is essential that those who can bear witness on seafaring do so, by writing, speaking, and teaching. The proceedings articles contained in *Troubled Waters* are some of the important means through which our maritime and naval specialists reach out to the public.

William S. Dudley