

## BOOK REVIEWS

John Bowen and Martin Robson (eds.). *Shipwright 2011. The International Annual of Maritime History and Ship Modelling*. London: Anova Books, [www.anova-books.com](http://www.anova-books.com), 2010. 208 pp., illustrations. CDN \$47.95, US \$39.95, UK £30.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84486-123-1.

*Model Shipwright*, which for its first 144 issues was quarterly, became an annual publication in 2010 as *The International Annual of Maritime History and Ship Modelling*. This, the 2011 issue, is the second publication under that title continuing to use the same high quality materials, illustrations, and lavish photography. The book opens with an editorial outlining the contents of the issue, followed by an interview with Peter Goodwin, keeper and curator of HMS *Victory*, in Portsmouth. Of the 18 articles 11 deal with scratch building a range of different vessel types and scales; three articles provide tips, while the other four cover history and similar subjects, creating an excellent balance of interesting subjects, with most well illustrated with photographs, illustrations, and references.

The interview with Peter Goodwin was conducted by John Lee, publisher of Conway Maritime, discussing Goodwin's career and activities as the first keeper and curator of HMS *Victory*. He began as a civilian guide when the Royal Navy changed from using naval ratings as hosts on the ship to civilian guides who had the time to develop greater knowledge than the ratings during their short-term postings. Goodwin, having authored a number of books on technology and specific vessels

built in the age of sail, and also a model builder, was well qualified for the role of keeper/curator. Ex-RN, having served aboard surface vessels and Polaris submarines as a marine engineer artificer and, eventually *Victory*, his was a unique career, experiencing naval technology from the age of sail to the latest nuclear engineering, albeit in reverse order.

When Goodwin became keeper and curator, he found *Victory* to be essentially a bare vessel, with little or no interpretive information about the ship, how she was fought, or how the crew lived. Deciding his mission would be to tell her tale, he divided the ship on her centreline with the port side cleared for action, while the starboard side, with its gun ports closed, shows crew accommodation under more peaceable conditions. Starting by fitting out the galley, sick bay, store rooms and cabins on the orlop deck, all as they would have been fitted out and stocked, he then restored the magazines, including the Grand magazine, allowing people to walk into a magazine to see it as it would have been. Also under Goodwin's direction about 35 percent more rigging was added, bringing her closer to her full rig. The interview includes six detail photos.

Smaller scale modelling articles include a full-hulled model of the cargo liner *Benloyal* of 1959 by Bernard Baldwin, scale 1:600. Another deals with two separate waterline models, both set into modelled seas: *Stella Polaris* and *Rose* (both Norwegian motor ships), by Robert A Wilson FRSA, scale 32 feet to the inch. Representing an earlier period is HMS

*Roebuck*, a fully rigged dockyard model, also by Baldwin, scale 1:192.

More commonly used scales include “Modelling the Carron Company’s *Steam-Lighter # 10*,” a Clyde Puffer by Graham Castle at 1:32 scale and “*Syracusia* (c240BC), A Possible Reconstruction” by Alan Ludbrook, at a scale of 1:72. HMS *Bounty*, a model of Captain Bligh’s Armed Transport by John York, scale 1:48, presents an interesting framing technique by moulding the frames over a carved hull former. Next is “*Tautuna*: The Island Touring Ship” by John Laing, scale 1:48, followed by the motor tug *Nangee*, a radio-controlled working kit model built by Tom Gorman, no scale is indicated.

At even larger scales there is a truly magnificent model of a 27-foot naval whaler employing clinker (lapstrake) construction, fully rigged, with sails bent on, by R. Burnham, scale  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch to the foot. There are three fishing boat models in one article depicting development in design by William Macintosh, two are at 1:24, and one is at 3 feet to the inch; followed by a draught for the Scottish Fisheries Patrol Vessel *Vigilant* (III) by J. Pottinger. Modeller’s draughts, included in all issues since #77, became downloadable over the internet in the 2010 issue but appear to have been replaced with excellent plates in the 2011 issue, with the suggestion that they be scaled as required.

Model-building tips include “Hull Planking: A step-by-Step Guide” by John Laing, “Miniature Handrails and Deck Ladders” by Bernard Baldwin, followed by “The Painting of Ships 1750-1850: Authentic Paint Colours of Naval Vessels” by Jonathon Kinghorn.

In a general interest category there is “HMS *Warrior*: A Monitor for the Heritage Lottery Fund” by Wyn Davies, discussing the lottery grant application process and its use in Great Britain; “‘To Learn His Art’: A History of Shipwrights

and Their Apprentices, 1730-1755” by George Stephenson; and “A Historical look at Polar Opposites: Nansen and Amundsen’s *Fram* and Scott’s *Discovery*” by Rorke Bryan using models of the ships as discussion points with draughts of both vessels. “Sengokubune: Ships of the Japanese Coastal Trade” by Douglas Brooks describes the construction of a superb full-sized period vessel using traditional Japanese methods, tools and materials.

The book ends with “Book News,” reviews of current publications. It is highly recommended; a worthwhile addition to any ship-model builder’s — even maritime historian’s — library.

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Anthony Brandt. *The Man Who Ate His Boots. The Tragic History of the Search for the Northwest Passage*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, [www.knopf.knopf.com](http://www.knopf.knopf.com), 2010. 464 pp., illustrations, maps, bibliography, index. US \$28.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0-307-26392-6.

In 1985, Captain Tom Pullen, RCN retired, former captain of Canada’s only ship ever capable of year-round transit in the High Arctic, HMCS *Labrador*, complimented the arctic explorers of old, “Today’s polar ships are vastly better than those of the nineteenth century; it remains to be seen whether twentieth century polar seamen can match the qualities and attitudes of nineteenth century explorers.” While climate change has forever altered the arctic environment, even today only a fool would sail into the Far North unprepared. Vulnerability to the northern climate, with its whiteouts, frozen fog, unpredictable storms, temperatures more than 50° below zero, and massive moving ice floes make preparation essential. But one cannot discount the role of luck — a factor no explorer counts on, but all pray

for, and many who survived thank God for. Yet, as author Anthony Brandt's book makes clear, men were willing to brave the unknown, take on the elements, and search for both glory and the Northwest Passage. Even the most tragic figure, the devout John Franklin acknowledged his early luck; that his luck ran out is part of what makes his story so compelling.

Brandt's book hooks the reader with its very title, *The Man Who Ate His Boots: The Tragic History of the Search for the Northwest Passage*. Who was the man and what drove him to eat his boots? The answer is quickly given: the famous arctic explorer Sir John Franklin. A hero more for his character and fate than for his discoveries, Franklin "became the central, the emblematic figure in the quest for the Northwest Passage in the nineteenth century" (p.7). Of course, it was the search for Franklin and his men that eventually led to the discovery of the Passage and the extensive mapping of the Far North, but the tales of exploration are arguably as thrilling as the discovery itself.

Explorer Vilhjalmur Stefansson noted, "The sailor dream of five centuries: *The Near Way to the Far East is North.*" This quest for a northern water route to Asia's riches enticed dreamers and sailors, entrepreneurs and monarchs, adventurers and pirates. The Northwest Passage links the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and, in fact, consists of five main routes. The earliest exploration was in the fifteenth century, and tracing the early attempts to find the Passage sets the stage for the extraordinarily busy and dramatic nineteenth century. Finding the Passage necessitated funding, and it was John Barrow who was the force behind nineteenth-century English exploration and a commanding figure in the book. Second secretary of the Admiralty (later "permanent secretary"), Barrow was "obsessed with the Northwest Passage" (p.44), and he had the power to send

expeditions to the Arctic in England's post-Napoleonic age. Confident that an ice-free passage existed and that ice was merely coastal, Barrow sent expedition after expedition, even as men died and an ice-free passage never materialized.

Brandt called the search "tragic folly," but also noted that "tragedy can be the scene of heroism as well as arrogance and folly" (p.6). Franklin's expeditions and the subsequent expeditions to find him surely reflected this folly, arrogance, and tragedy, as well as acts of courage and heroism. Brandt skillfully brings the reader right into the dynamics of the time: between explorers and royalty, captains and the Admiralty, officers and their sailors, Englishmen and voyageurs, and Englishmen and the Inuit. In addition, he illuminated the disconnect between the expectations of those sitting comfortably at home and the realities of the unforgiving Arctic. There was fame (William Parry) and shame (John Ross); gentlemen (George Back) and pirates (William Dampier), and finally, the man who embodied both success and failure – John Franklin. While "risk is the essence of exploration" (p.140), success and failure hung in the balance, often by forces beyond any man's control. And yet, preparation and education were (and remain) vital factors in tipping the odds in favor of survival.

As Brandt noted, "To behave nobly and heroically in an obviously hopeless cause is a kind of folly, but it can also constitute greatness" (p.6). And Franklin epitomized this definition of greatness: a man present at the beginning of the searches in 1818, the man who, with 128 of his men, later disappeared and died. Franklin's final and fatal expedition began in 1845, but it was not until 1854 that his fate was finally confirmed. It was Barrow and his successors who kept the British government involved in the search – which moved from a rescue operation to that of recovering remains, relics, and records, but it was the

sheer determination of Lady Jane Franklin, who kept the search for her husband alive and whose influence “was equaled by no woman of her time and by few men” (p.392). It was in these futile attempts to find Franklin alive, and then to discover his fate and retrieve evidence, that the Northwest Passage was found. But it was not until 1903 that the complete water transit was made (by the Norwegian Roald Amundsen), and it took three years to accomplish. The first Canadian to transit the Passage was Captain Henry Larsen in the RCMP *St. Roch* in 1940-42, and the first transit in a single season was again Larsen, in 1944.

Written for the general reader, this book’s great assets are its engaging narrative, portraits of not just the main characters, but others, too — from lowly sailors to lifesaving Inuit; from descriptions of not only heroic accomplishments but desperate acts, such as cannibalism, as well. The inclusion of nineteenth- and twentieth-century maps and a detailed chronology of nineteenth-century arctic expeditions enhance the narrative, moving it beyond the compelling story to a useful book for academics. The lack of footnotes could potentially frustrate the scholar utilizing the book for research, but the excellent bibliographic descriptions for each chapter, the extensive bibliography, and the fine index more than compensate for the lack of citations.

“It is ... this tension ... between the nobility and the folly of the enterprise that makes the story so rich” (p.8), and Brandt tell the story very well. As the Arctic continues to melt, future generations will find it difficult to understand conditions so desperate as to lead men to eat their boots, and some to turn to cannibalism. This book will help them to understand.

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T.H. Breen. *American Insurgents, American Patriots: The Revolution of the People*. New York, NY: Hill and Wang, [us.macmill.com/hillandwang](http://us.macmill.com/hillandwang), 2010. 337 pp., notes, index. US \$27.00, CDN \$27.00, paper; ISBN 978-0-8090-7588-1.

During the 1960s, academics began to examine the American Revolution seriously from the perspective of “ordinary” people. Scholars investigated why and how those other than the famous Founding Fathers participated in a war for independence, and they started to consider the extent to which the conflict changed the lives of the masses. For neo-progressive historians such as Woody Holton, Jesse Lemisch, Gary Nash and Alfred Young, “ordinary” people meant poorer, uneducated workers, women, African Americans, and Native Americans. More traditional historians such as Bernard Bailyn, Jack Greene and Gordon Wood saw colonial America as being populated primarily by the middling sort, typified by white, male, yeoman farmers. Both this unquenched academic desire to capture the meaning of the American Revolution for the majority, and this unresolved confusion over the nature of ordinary colonists are manifest in T.H. Breen’s latest work.

*American Insurgents, American Patriots* is, in part, a critique of top-down portraits of the American Revolution. In no uncertain terms, Breen states “a handful of elite gentlemen arguing about political theory makes for a debating society, not a revolution.” For Breen, as for Holton, Lemisch, Nash and Young, “The patriots who are generally credited with mounting the Revolution were in fact the beneficiaries of rebellious insurgents who initially sparked resistance.” Like these other scholars, Breen wants to shift our focus away from the Founding Fathers and toward the “tens of thousands of ordinary people willing to set aside their work, homes and families to take up arms in expectation of

killing and possibly being killed” (p.4). Yet, Breen seems to agree with Bailyn, Greene and Wood that in colonial America, “ordinary” people were primarily white, male, middling, landholding agriculturalists. This tension between a desire to write a provocative bottom-up history of the American Revolution and a traditional conviction that the colonies were primarily peopled by white male landowners runs throughout the book.

Breen’s book focuses on the two years prior to the American Declaration of Independence, 1774 and 1775. The introduction lays out his bottom-up approach to the Revolution. Chapter one, “The Face of Colonial Society,” clearly articulates Breen’s vision of “ordinary” Americans as “the middling sort,” or “white farm families,” who comprised “70%” of the British North American population (p.25). The author further believes that most Americans were young, lived in small villages, practised evangelical Protestant Christianity, and remained loyal British subjects prior to 1760. Chapter two focuses on the 1774 *Coercive Acts*. Breen believes news of the Acts, “Like news of the 9/11 attack, the destruction of Pearl Harbor, and the bombing of Fort Sumter,” spread like wildfire and sparked conviction in the breasts of “ordinary” Americans, motivating them to violently resist British authority (p.53). For Breen, colonial reaction to the 1774 *Coercive Acts*, rather than the 1775 Battles of Lexington and Concord, or the 1776 Declaration of Independence, “represented the effectual start of the Revolution”(p.53). Chapter three examines the colonial reaction to the *Coercive Acts* in the Massachusetts countryside, the birthplace of the Revolution. Here, countryfolk raised liberty poles in protest. There were calls for economic boycotts of British manufactured goods. Patriot militia officers resigned their British military commissions. Courts were closed.

Newspapers spread the word that people were taking up arms. Mobs began attacking Loyalists, those who remained loyal to the British government. “Thousands of ordinary people — most of them farmers” became politicized in non-violent and violent ways, Breen writes (p.98). Chapter four explains how the revolutionary movement spread out from Massachusetts to other colonies. As in Eric Hobsbawm’s *Age of Revolution*, print culture plays a decisive role in Breen’s book in the extension of “bonds of sympathy, the key to effective mobilization” (p.99). While elites read pamphlets, ordinary Americans read newspaper accounts of Bostonians suffering under the *Coercive Acts*. These accounts generated sympathy among colonists outside Massachusetts and galvanized resistance to imperial oppression. Chapter five looks at the First Continental Congress that met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at the end of 1774. This was an elite meeting of the Founding Fathers, to be sure. But, according to Breen, “Popular politics on the ground forced the delegates to endorse a policy far more provocative than anything they might have anticipated before setting out for Philadelphia” (p.128). In fact, Congress publicly endorsed the Suffolk Resolves, which stated in part that colonists had the right to nullify Parliamentary laws and to violently resist the enforcement of said laws. The Founding Fathers took this step, Breen argues, because of rumours that the British had destroyed Boston and ordinary Americans had already risen up in response. Congressmen believed they needed to get out ahead of the masses, in order to control revolutionary energies. Chapter six focuses on the Continental Association, which Congress authorized late in 1774. The association established a national boycott of British goods. Crucially, according to Breen, it also created local committees to enforce the boycott in towns across America. Committees of safety

effectively decreased the value of British imports from £3,000,000 in 1774 to £220,000 one year later (p.169). Moreover, these committees represented “laboratories for republican rule” that, for the first time, provided Americans with “a revolutionary framework in which a central governing body interacted productively with local units” (p.170). Chapter seven details the various ways in which these committees enforced Congress’s Continental Association. Local officials determined for themselves how and when to act, which made the process one of give-and-take with elites in Philadelphia, rather than a top-down affair. Chapter eight explores the ways that these committees acted in moderation, which meant that the American Revolution would not end in a French-style Reign of Terror. Chapter nine presents an interesting analysis of the relationship between Protestant Christian ideals and popular politics. While the Founding Fathers drew their ideological inspiration primarily from Enlightenment thinkers, ordinary Americans were inspired by sermons that emphasized generic God-given rights that needed to be defended against tyranny. In Breen’s eloquent critique of Bailyn’s scholarship, “the people’s ideas were neither identical to those encountered in the learned pamphlets nor watered-down versions of the principles found in those formal productions” (p.241). The people had their own ideas about why they fought against the British. The concluding chapter presents contrasting perspectives on the beginning of the Revolutionary War and the end of the British Empire.

This is a very well-written effort to reach out to a wide audience. Breen’s passionate conviction that ordinary Americans made possible the Revolution imbues his writing with a verve that quickly turns pages. He consistently hammers home the point that the Revolution was not a top-down event in which educated,

wealthy elites convinced everyone else that liberty was in peril and in need of armed defense. Anyone interested in a bottom-up portrait of the Revolution will enjoy this book.

Readers who purchase a book subtitled “The Revolution of the People” will be disappointed to find precious little discussion of anyone but white, male, farmers. When they are mentioned, women are portrayed as loving wives and mothers who stayed at home and cheered their male relations’ decisions to fight against British authority (p.140). African Americans and Native Americans are wholly absent from this book, despite scholarship by Sylvia Frey, Colin Calloway and others. Day labourers, migrant workers, watermen, sailors, fishermen, and other poorer, uneducated, un-propertied citizens are also wholly absent from this bottom-up people’s history of the American Revolution. Perhaps none of these people constituted the majority of colonial Americans. But, in the absence of accurate census data for the eighteenth century, historians can only estimate percentages. Moreover, any history of “the people” in America should be polyglot and pluralistic. Yet, Breen should be congratulated on his efforts to popularize a bottom-up approach to the Revolution. His unequivocal style will carry his message home, even if his story is not as inclusive as it should be.

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Jaap R. Bruijn. *Commanders of the Dutch East India Ships in the Eighteenth Century*. (R.L. Robson-McKillop and Richard E. Unger, trans. of 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2008). Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, www.boydellandbrewer.com, 2011. xiii + 336 pp., illustrations, maps, bibliography, index, index of ship names. UK £75.00, US \$130.00, hardback; ISBN 978-1-84383-622-3.

The questions raised by the author of this book are: Who were the commanders of the Dutch East India Company's (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* or VOC) ships in the eighteenth century? What was their situation at home and at sea?

Professor Bruijn is the right man to answer these questions, for he is the "grand old man" of Dutch maritime history in general, and of the VOC in particular. For many years a professor at the University of Leiden, Bruijn trained a generation of maritime historians; under his supervision, 49 Dutch and foreign students defended their doctoral theses in maritime history. An emeritus professor since 2003, Bruijn continues to be a very energetic researcher, publishing two books in 2011— a new edition of *The Dutch Navy of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Research in Maritime History, vol. 45, St. John's, Newfoundland) and this book on the VOC commanders.

Divided in two parts of roughly equal length, the first half of the book deals with the commanders' backgrounds and life at home, while the other part describes their careers on board the East Indiamen. It concludes with comparisons with other East India companies, a general conclusion, and of course, a comprehensive bibliography and indices.

The book under review is an English translation of *Schippers van de VOC in de achttiende eeuw aan de wal en op zee*, published in Amsterdam in 2008 by

De Bataafsche Leeuw, and reprinted three times since then. The contents of the English and Dutch versions are almost the same, but, while nothing has been omitted, a helpful chapter on international comparisons has been added. The translation work seems to be of high quality.

Part One, "Commanders at Home Ashore" is an in-depth description of the captains' social background and origins, their place in society and their lives ashore, even after retirement from active service at sea. Among Bruijn's interesting conclusions is that most of the commanders came from rather humble circumstances and began their careers at sea as deckhands or sailors with the VOC. The most gifted and energetic young men would be promoted through the ranks on board, and especially those who became commanders, would have experienced a strong upward social mobility. Their socio-economic situation at sea and ashore would have improved considerably by the end of their careers. Bruijn has also investigated the commanders' administrative and commercial activities once they retired from the sea. Many crew members, however, did not get that far, because so many of them died aboard the ships, en route to, or more often, in Batavia, the Dutch East Indies, where malaria took a heavy toll.

Professor Bruijn has chosen to devote a chapter to commanders from each of the six towns where chambers of the Company were located, i.e. Enkhuizen, Hoorn, Middelburg, Delft, Rotterdam and Amsterdam. He demonstrates that in the smaller of these towns, VOC activities played a very important role, and hence the local Company commanders enjoyed considerable status, whereas in the large metropolitan centre of Amsterdam, a VOC *schipper* was no one special. Often commanders were recruited locally from the six chamber towns, but throughout the century, as more and more foreigners

manned the Dutch East Indiamen, some were even appointed commanders. A remarkable difference has been found between naval officers, often of superior background, and VOC commanders.

Professor Bruijn – and his students, who have done much of the basic research into the rich Dutch archives — have examined many of the more than one thousand eighteenth-century commanders, whose lives are depicted in great detail. While much of this information on local matters will undoubtedly interest Dutch readers, foreign readers would probably have benefited from more general remarks.

Part Two on “Commanders at Sea,” opens with remarkable chapters on how appointments and examinations were conducted. The Dutch system specifically guaranteed that everybody could apply for a position with the Company. The directors of each chamber appointed commanders, ship’s officers and petty officers, but it was necessary to pay — how much is no longer known — to obtain a post. It was also mandatory for a candidate to pass an examination in theoretical and practical navigation, for instance, to prove his skills.

The book offers a useful comparison between the normal income of commanders (monthly wages, bonuses and gratuities, free freightage) and their much more profitable private trade on the voyages out and home. Extensive private trade — including smuggling slaves, for example — also took place in the intra-Asian country trade, but this has not been investigated.

Instead, the author has turned his attention to social conditions aboard the ships, with special regard to the role of the commander. Throughout the eighteenth century, a total of 5,300 Company voyages were commanded by 1,200 commanders, as a rule without serious problems. While a few *schippers* were brutal and drunken, the directors did not seem to care much, as their only concern was to have the commander

bring the ship and cargo safely to its destination.

Compared with the British, French, Danish and Swedish companies, Dutch ships, their navigational equipment such as charts, octants etc., and the education of Dutch navigators has traditionally been criticized by historians for being more or less outdated. Professor Bruijn does not agree, even though he admits that “the VOC could not be called a pioneer in innovations in navigation” (p.292). Innovations in shipbuilding and navigation were, in fact, introduced by the VOC, but not until they had proven their worth abroad. Another factor which encumbered Dutch shipping was that VOC commanders were seldom as experienced and specialized in navigating a specific route, such as the one to Canton, as their Danish and Swedish competitors, who sailed faster and lost fewer ships and crew members.

There are a few criticisms with the book. Since there is no list of archival references, it is up to the reader to find out which documents the many footnotes refer to when they mention, for instance, “VOC 222.” It is important to know if a reference is to normative *resoluties* (e.g. Amsterdam, Proceedings, VOC 23-310) or to descriptive *scheepsjournalen* (e.g. Zeeland, Ship’s logs etc., VOC 11,407-11,450).

Even though Jaap R. Bruijn has accomplished a tremendous task, the reader misses the story of the seventeenth-century commanders dating from the establishment of the VOC in 1602. His analysis would have benefited from omitting some of the many details concerning the eighteenth century and adding, instead, more information on the commanders of the seventeenth century.

Nevertheless, *Commanders of Dutch East India Ships in the Eighteenth Century* is a very informative book. An astonishing number of sources have been scrutinized by Professor Bruijn throughout



his long and impressive career. Nobody else could have provided us with such a well written and significant account of this subject, which is so essential to both Dutch and international maritime history.

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John D. Byrn (ed.). *Naval Courts Martial, 1793-1815*. Naval Records Society, Volume 155. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, www.ashgate.com, 2009. xxix + 786 pp., glossary, documents and sources, index. US \$134.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0-7546-6781-0.

*Naval Courts Martial* offers an excellent introduction to the administration of justice in the Royal Navy during period of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. John Byrn has organized this impressive collection into four thematic chapters. The first includes trial minutes and other documents that shed light on the legal procedure of courts martial, while the other three chapters are divided according to social crimes, naval crimes, and multiple offences. Byrn defines social crime as offences that corresponded to the types of infractions dealt with ashore by common law courts, such as drunkenness, larceny, assault, and murder. Included within this chapter is a selection of documents relating to sexual crimes, specifically “buggery” and “the unnatural crime of sodomy.” The chapter on naval crimes covers transgressions against the needs of the service, which Byrn defines as encompassing insolence, desertion, loss of a ship, cowardice, neglect of duty, and mutiny. The final chapter includes cases in which the accused was charged with more than one offence; as Byrn notes, this was quite common for naval courts martial in this period. More than a third of the men included in Byrn’s sample of 1,149 defendants were accused of multiple

offences. While some of these cases were extremely serious, most entailed lesser multiple offences, such as using a ship’s boat to desert.

Dr. Byrn has succeeded in his goal of giving the reader a clear sense of the principles and procedures used by naval courts martial. In order to keep the project manageable, he employed a number of selection criteria: all documents had to have been produced between 1793 and 1815; they had to have been clear enough to permit copying at the National Archives; and they had to be no longer than ten handwritten pages. Documents that met these criteria were then selected further, so that the cases in the collection represented all types of offences before courts martial at home and foreign stations, as well as trials that produced guilty and innocent verdicts. While Byrn modernized spelling and punctuation, he was careful to include complete transcriptions of each selected case, allowing the reader to follow trials from beginning to end. Reading the court minutes in *Naval Courts Martial* is similar to reading them in their original archival form, with the added advantages of having the cases grouped thematically and fully indexed. To balance this rich qualitative evidence, Byrn offers pithy quantitative summaries at the beginning of each chapter that place the selected cases in their larger statistical contexts. He also includes the full text of the Articles of War and a glossary of technical terms.

Byrn offers a highly useful introductory essay. He gives a clear introduction to not only the Articles of War but also the judicial procedures and legal culture in the Royal Navy. He argues that while some naval courts martial failed to adhere fully to the law, they were the exceptions rather than the rule. Commanders of squadrons on foreign stations were reluctant to act summarily, and judge advocates and officers did not

hesitate to solicit advice from the solicitor general when necessary. Byrn explains the role of courts of inquiry (preliminary hearings that were more informal than courts martial and functioned something like a grand jury), and he notes the importance of *viva voce* testimony in a legal culture that strongly favoured oral declarations under oath to written affidavits. The overall impression left by Byrn's commentary and the collected documents is of a system of justice similar in many respects to civilian courts of law, and I hope that the volume encourages non-specialists to explore the fascinating legal history of the Royal Navy. In an era when practically everything is being converted into an on-line database of some sort, it is wonderfully refreshing to read a newly-bound volume of expertly edited primary documents. *Naval Courts Martial* is the type of versatile collection that will be useful as both a general reference tool and a guide for future historical research.

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Alejandro Colás and Bryan Mabee (eds.). *Mercenaries, Pirates, Bandits, and Empires: Private Violence in Historical Context*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, [www.cup.columbia.edu](http://www.cup.columbia.edu), 2011. x + 244 pp., notes, index. US \$63.50, cloth; ISBN 978-0-231-70208-9.

Despite the provocative title, the book under review covers a hodgepodge of topics including mercenaries, pirates, privateers, smugglers, bandits, warlords, and private security companies, but offers very little on empires or overall historical context. The thread running through the book is its focus on the uses and abuses of so-called private violence. Each of the nine chapters focuses on groups of people who regularly engaged in violence outside, or on the margins of,

state authority. Nonetheless, each of these groups — pirates, privateers, mercenaries, bandits, etc. — developed symbiotic relationships with violence and the state. Most of the authors are specialists in international relations whose primary concerns are with understanding contemporary issues; only two authors are professional historians.

The editors, Alejandro Colás and Bryan Mabee, who both teach at the University of London, provide a useful introduction that attempts to tie these otherwise disparate chapters together through a discussion of important theoretical issues that raised throughout the book. Most important, these include reassessments and challenges to the theories on state-formation, state-society relations, and the public-private dichotomy as developed by Max Weber and, more recently, by Janice Thomson. (In fact, the title of this book is derived from Thomson's 1994 book, *Mercenaries, Pirates, and Sovereigns: State-building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe*.) Specifically, many of the authors, and in particular the theoretical chapters by Patricia Owens and Tarak Barkawi, argue that no matter how much state authorities have tried to distance themselves from non-government-sanctioned (private) violence, the distinctions between soldiers, and mercenaries, privateers, and even pirates has never been clear-cut or enduring. The authors are especially critical of Thomson's too simplistic and legalistic approach to understanding privatized or "extraterritorial" violence. As several authors show, states were often deeply implicated in "non-state" violence and therefore, we cannot claim that such acts were simply illegal. Privateering, often described as "legalized piracy", is a good example of the blending of state and non-state, or public and private spheres. In fact, private violence was a double-edge sword:

in some areas and times it could support existing power structures, yet in other areas and times it could oppose state authority.

For me, and probably for most readers of this journal, the most interesting and useful chapters are those on late-seventeenth-century French privateering in the North Sea by Halvard Leira and Benjamin de Carvalho, on British piracy and privateering in the Atlantic during the long eighteenth century by Alejandro Colás and Bryan Mabee, on nineteenth-century Southeast Asian smuggling by Eric Tagliacozzo, and on contemporary private security companies in the Malacca Straits by Patrick Cullen. While Colás and Mabee focus mainly on how private means of violence were put at the disposal of the British state, Leira and Carvalho examine how the state put private forms of violence to use in the case of France. Describing privateering as the most thoroughly institutionalized form of private violence, Leira and Carvalho carefully examine the linkages between the developing French consular offices and privateering, arguing that the most important reason for the establishment of consular offices in Norway was to support privateering. They show that non-state violence such as privateering was not only initiated by the state but also by private interests. Over time, however, privateering came under increasing state control through an expanding professional consular service.

Colás and Mabee take what they call a historical-sociological approach to examine Atlantic privateering and piracy over the long eighteenth century as critical background for understanding modern international relations. In their "materialist explanation" they place privatized violence in the broader context of global economic development and mercantilist empires, further arguing that during the eighteenth century piracy, privateering, naval warfare, trade, and diplomacy were indistinguishable

from one another. For them, piracy was a "predictable political-economic consequence of a world where war and violence at sea were integral and necessary components of wealth-creation, circulation and accumulation"(p.85). They conclude that, in large measure, a decline in piracy and privateering occurred after the eighteenth century because of the withdrawal of state and merchant support.

The chapters by Tagliacozzo and Cullen focus on seaborne privatized violence in Southeast Asia. According to Tagliacozzo, although we often view smuggling as a somewhat innocuous but illegal activity, in fact, it often involved violence. In nineteenth-century Southeast Asian waters, armed men were everywhere, and opportunities for smuggling, piracy, and trade went hand in hand. This chapter highlights the use of private violence in the smuggling trade of unfarmed (illegal) opium, weapons, and humans. As the author explains, "All were utilized not only as a means to make money on the sly, but also as ways to express dissent with the growing power of colonial regimes" (p.108). Cullen's chapter examines contemporary private security companies operating in the Malacca Straits since the 1990s. This chapter highlights the complicated relationships between those companies, private shipping concerns, and local governments, and in particular, how private violence has challenged the sovereignty and authority of states in the region.

The issue of private violence is a hot topic in International Relations, and this book adds greatly to the ongoing theoretical debates in that field. All chapters are well written and well argued. Unfortunately, because so few authors develop their theories out of deeper historical understandings, the book will not be of much interest to historians. In a book that purports to understand current issues by

using the insights of a historical perspective, clearly much more needs to be done.

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Davies-Garner, Peter. *RMS Titanic: A Modelmaker's Manual*. Barnsley, S. Yorkshire: Seaforth Publishing, www.penandsword.uk, 2010. (Originally published 2008 by Naval Institute Press). x + 150 pp., illustrations, plans, appendices. US \$42.95, UK £25.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-59114-729-9.

I have built many commercially available model kits and a few scratch-built models during my life, but to see the exactness and fastidiousness of a professional model-builder is a mind-boggling experience — a quantum leap, a paradigm shift. Peter Davies-Garner is a professional model-maker but also a “rivet counter,” i.e., the smallest details are not overlooked.

In 2001 Davies-Garner undertook a two-and-half-year project to build a 1:48 scale model of RMS *Titanic* for a *Titanic* exhibition in Orlando, Florida. The model now resides in Branson, Missouri, at The *Titanic* Experience, where it is billed as the world's largest model of the *Titanic*. Ken Marschall, globally acknowledged as the world's foremost creator of *Titanic* artwork, states in the foreword that *finally* someone had done it right! No one can make a one hundred percent correct model of a ship that sank a century ago and had existed for only a very short time. There will always be those small, obscure details for which the model builder cannot find an answer and will have to make assumptions. The author mentions some of these at the appropriate moment.

Davies-Garner starts the book with a short chapter covering those fateful few hours a century ago. We all know the story, and there is nothing new here. Chapter 2

deals with the builder's and owner's models of proposed ships. The former helps both designer and builder to visualize the three-dimensional aspect of the design and the placement of plating on the bottom and sides; the latter was displayed in the owner's office or booking office to attract customers. The former could be crude in form — sometimes only half the width of the ship — whereas the latter could be very elaborate in detail, but with some artistic license allowed. Neither might represent the ship in its “as built” condition. The author addresses the various actual models of sister-ships *Olympic* and *Britannic* that do exist — there never was one of *Titanic*.

Davies-Garner describes the two methods of constructing the hull: a stacking of planks (“bread and butter”) or plank on frame, which he recommends for models greater than 1:200. That method involves a solid keel with many frames set at right-angles, like the cardboard dividers in a box for wine or liquor. In his *Titanic* model, Davies-Garner filled the spaces between the frames with 12 mm (1/2 inch) pine planks. The extreme bow and stern were solid, horizontally-laid wood laminates. Then, after much planing, filing, sanding and filling of blemishes, the hull took on the required shape. On that hull, styrene sheets the exact size of the ship's plating were added just as on the stocks at the Harland & Wolff shipyard. More than 60,000 rivets were each individually added to the hull alone in the exact arrangement according to the ship's plans. Another 32,000 rivets appear on the funnels.

After the hull, the author works his way up deck by deck, describing how he built each new item— decking, cranes, bollards, ventilators, winches, benches, drinking fountains, electrical outlets, lamps, fairleads, capstans, cowls, anchors, signs, gratings, portholes, windows, leaded glass, coaling outriggers, sounding spars, compass binnacle, and even the shuffleboard pattern.

He used little that was commercially made and bought.

I don't know who might want to build a 5.6-metre (18-foot) model of the *Titanic* but, if the book cannot be the only source, it should definitely be ONE of the sources. It would help a professional model maker with the infinitesimal details of any large-scale ship model. The manual would also enable any amateur building a commercial kit of the *Titanic* to correct the manufacturer's mistakes; the author addresses those kits in Appendix 1. The book is required reading for any *Titanic* aficionado's library because it probably is the most authentic three-dimensional representation of the ship. Appendix 2 deals with the appropriate colours and Appendix 3 provides a list of recommended readings.

As much as the author acknowledges the efforts of six people in proof-reading the manuscript and converting it into a language which most people can understand, I would be embarrassed to be one of them. There are too many glitches in the text; e.g., where someone has only partially changed some text without removing the previous text. There are a lot of photographs, but too often, a certain aspect is pointed out but it is not visible in the photograph as reproduced. The plans need a magnifying glass to see the detail and the legend identification numbers.

Peter Davies-Garner has to be commended for his diligence, intense research, dedication, focus, patience, and skill required to produce such an exceptionally fine model. He searched out the photographic record of the *Titanic* and of the *Olympic*, knew the subtle differences between the two ships, and obeyed what he saw in those photos. Reading the book makes me want to jump into my car and head to Missouri to see the model.

David H. Gray  
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Andrew S. Erickson, Lyle J. Goldstein, and Nan Li (eds.). *China, the United States and 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Sea Power: Defining a Maritime Security Partnership*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.nip.org, 2010. 514 pp. notes, tables, maps, index. US \$47.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-59114-243-0.

It is the melancholy fate of a handful of newly published books to be instantly marginalized, their careful research and earnest arguments seemingly overtaken by events. So it is with *China, the United States and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sea Power*, a collection of essays by twenty contributors, all but five of whom are academics in the U.S. and China (the others are either private sector consultants or flag officers). The gist of their argument is that both nations have willingly placed themselves within a dense web of international cooperative agreements that includes not only the Law of the Sea (to which the U.S. has agreed but has yet to formally ratify) but also, efforts to combat terrorism and piracy, promote search and rescue, enforce international fisheries regulations, and the safety of cargo container transportation. Chinese authors emphasize their nation's commitment to a peaceful and harmonious international order. A spirit of determined optimism pervades the essays.

The book appears at a time when the pages of *The Naval War College Review* and *The Naval Institute Proceedings* (to say nothing of *The New York Times* and *Washington Post*) are filled with somber essays depicting the rapid rise and unknown intentions of the Chinese Peoples' Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). In recent months and years, the PLAN has rattled its sabre, alienating and frightening its eight neighbors around the rims of the Yellow and China Seas and disturbing Washington policy makers. Contrary to previous assumptions that the PLAN is designed

mainly to protect China's coastal ports and cities, China has announced the incipient deployment of its first aircraft carrier (a 65,000 ton Soviet cast-off). Chinese warships have recently slipped beyond Asia's inner island chain stretching from Japan to the Philippines to deploy in the Western Pacific. At the same time, Beijing has announced the development of a long-range "aircraft carrier killer" missile, whose only foreseeable target can be American flat-tops. China has also escalated confrontations and claims over the several South China Sea island groups claimed by Vietnam and the Philippines respectively. Much of this latter tension is due to varying national interpretations of the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) established by the Law of the Sea. Guifang (Julia) Xue sets forth China's position clearly and forcefully. As a coastal state "bordering three semi-enclosed seas, China found itself disadvantaged in enjoying full entitlements under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and "in contrast to the worldwide acceptance of the EEZ regime, China hesitated to implement it" (p.177). Rather, China implemented its own expansive definition of its EEZ through a series of domestic laws.

Is China truly desirous of harmonious maritime relations with the international community? Or do its military and naval leaders feel themselves hemmed in by the U.S. and immediate maritime neighbours, and thus feel inclined to break out of an unbearable geo-military and -political situation? The authors and editors are concerned not with swaying public opinion but rather in presenting arguments that "will help policy makers on both sides of the Pacific to chart a new course for enhanced U.S.-China maritime cooperation sufficiently compelling to weather occasional storms of bilateral discord" (p xxvii). Fair enough. Reading the essays, the naval scholar is inevitably driven to

recall the rise of the last aggressive Pacific naval power, Japan. In that long-ago world of the early twentieth century, there was no international system worthy of the name and certainly no restraints on a nation's appetites through multilateral agreements. Above all, there was no overarching global economy with all of its built-in restraints on rash national behaviour. Japan was free to define its expansive goals and objectives as it pleased. Fortunately, contemporary China and the rest of the global community are enmeshed in an international economic and political system whose benefits, so far at least, far outweigh any attraction of unilateral military or naval expansion or aggression. Yet there exists another, and more disturbing, scenario from the emergence of advanced industrial navies a century ago that should give naval planners and policy makers pause as they contemplate the rise of the PLAN. Kaiser Wilhelm II and his equally ambitious secretary of state of the Imperial German Naval Office, Alfred von Tirpitz, wanted a great fleet to demonstrate their thrusting new nation's steadily growing international political and economic power, especially against Great Britain, the world's greatest maritime nation. But they could never decide how large the fleet should be, what it was intended for, nor how it should be deployed, if at all, on the world ocean. The result was an Imperial Navy just large enough to excite fear and jealousy among Germany's neighbours and chief rival without attaining sufficient power to exert its will (in roughly 19 years of active life, major units of the *Hochseeflotte* made only one foray into the Atlantic). China's PLAN is roughly at the point where the Imperial German Navy was immediately following the Second Naval Bill of 1900; large enough to excite international concern, yet sufficiently uncertain as to goals and objectives to generate no little suspicion and even malice among its neighbours and the

United States. It is far too early to discern China's maritime aims with the kind of clarity claimed by the contributors to this intriguing, but in the end, unsatisfactory book

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Jan Glete. *Swedish Naval Administration, 1521-1721. Resource Flows and Organisational Capabilities*. Series: The Northern World, 46. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, www.brill.nl, 2009. xxiv + 816 pp., maps, tables, diagrams, notes, appendices, bibliography, index. Euro €198.00, US \$293.00, cloth; ISBN 978-90-04-17916-5.

During the late twentieth- and early twenty-first-centuries, Professor Jan Glete (1947-2009) of the University of Stockholm was one of the world's most insightful and innovative thinkers about early modern naval history. Initially trained as an historian of twentieth century Swedish industry and banking, Glete's initial work in comparative naval history first came to the scholarly world's attention with his massive two-volume work, *Navies and Nations: Warships, Navies and State Building in Europe and America, 1500-1860* (1993). Among other things, this key work helped to solve one of the longstanding conundrums in naval studies: how to quantitatively compare and contrast warships of different nations during the sailing navy era. At the same time, *Navies and Nations* laid the basis for two subsequent works: *Warfare at Sea, 1500-1650: Maritime Conflicts and the Transformation of Europe* (London, 2000), a comparative study that placed navies within a broad context of state formation, economic, and technological change, and *War and the State in Early Modern Europe: Spain, the Dutch Republic, and Sweden as*

*fiscal-military states, 1500-1600* (London, 2002) that examined the rise of permanent navies as part of the political, social, and economic transformation of early modern Europe. Some of his many insights are succinctly summarized in his ten contributions to the *Oxford Encyclopaedia of Maritime History* (2007).

*Swedish Naval Administration, 1521-1721* is the great scholarly work that crowns Jan Glete's series of immensely important books and articles on early modern European navies. Sadly, he did not live to see this volume in final form, as it is in many ways his most important major work. This study provides a completely new and convincing reinterpretation of Swedish naval history in the context of Swedish and Scandinavian history, providing the Swedish perspective and the international complement to Martin Bellamy's *Christian IV and his Navy: A Political and Administrative History of the Danish Navy, 1596-1648* (2006). At the same time, Glete provides a new and stimulating model and case study in understanding the growth, development, sustainment, and operations of a national navy that is notably different from the model of the rival Atlantic powers and the development of global transoceanic empires. Thus, from a number of different perspectives, it is a work that every serious naval scholar should read and consider with care as a source of stimulating approaches. To obtain them, however, most scholars will be dependent on the wisdom of acquisitions librarians in the major research libraries that can afford and are willing to purchase this volume and the subsequent generosity of those same institutions to provide their copy on inter-library loan to the needy.

Noting that his work provides a different perspective on domestic political interaction, warfare, and the growth of the early modern state, Glete opens his study by focusing on the four key words around

which his study is organised: *violence*, *protection*, *organisation*, (the capability to use resources), and *institutions* (the prevailing local rules and context for human interaction). He goes on to point out that navies have generally been left out of the narratives and explanations of European state formation and then he rectifies those earlier omissions by showing that navies are inherently complex organizations and states that those states that operate navies need to possess a degree of stability and sophistication to maintain them successfully. States, he points out, are not only agglomerations of human, financial, and material resources under a centralized control, but also centres of competencies that transform resources into structures with new capabilities. States with stronger and more efficient organizations could more effectively organize and project resources and power over long distances and, in that way, could dominate weaker state organizations.

Glete's book on *Swedish Naval Administration* outlines the development of the Swedish state over a two-century period as it transformed the organizational capabilities of a primarily agrarian and peasant society to develop scarce maritime and mercantile resources into a sustainable and effective operational force. He shows that the Swedish dynastic state searched for primarily cheap domestic resources to develop a strong naval power and used organizational, rather than maritime capabilities to transform resources. In studying the Swedish Navy, Glete analyzed it as a complex of core competencies that handled a flow of external resources (manpower, social authority, food, timber, metals, sailcloth, hemp, etc.) and transformed them into sea power. Sweden compensated for its lack of indigenous maritime resources, which easily transform into naval power, by its organizational competence to raise and to transform other

resources into effective naval power.

In terms of Swedish history, Glete points out that at the outset of the period, sixteenth-century Sweden was unusual among northern European states in that it was the only one having a permanent army and a navy, both financed through an effective internal system of taxation. Swedish naval power existed, Glete concludes, because Swedish peasants were willing to provide a number of things to the dynastic state: they were willing to pay taxation in the form of cutting and transporting wood to the dockyards, providing food to seamen, and sending men to serve in the navy. Swedish merchants were willing to pay customs duties on trade that provided finance resources, and the aristocrats and nobility altered their focus on local power to participate in the administration and command of the king's state-wide organization for maintaining and operating permanent armed forces.

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Stephen High (ed.). *Occupied St. John's. A Social History of a City at War*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press, www.mqup.ca, 2010. xv + 320 pp., illustrations, maps, tables, notes, index. CDN \$45.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0-7735-3750-7.

The striking title catches one off guard, for one never really thinks of St. John's as having been "occupied," except perhaps by the likes of itinerant Vikings and Basque fishermen. Intriguing indeed, for in fact during the Second World War, St. John's did undergo an extraordinary "friendly invasion" by Americans and Canadians. The impact of this invasion—variously described as "breath-taking," "impressive," "overwhelming" and "transformative," altered the city and its environs in



fundamental ways. Precisely how these changes came about, and how they shaped Newfoundland is the subject of this important book.

Edited by the co-director of the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling at Concordia University, this multi-authored volume draws heavily on oral history to provide otherwise hidden textures to an historical account. Indeed, the book's approach resonates with the ideas of Newfoundland novelist Michael Crummey who observed during an interview on his newest novel *Galore* (2009) that Newfoundland has been an oral culture for about three hundred years. This tradition, he continued, is "like the cultural DNA" of Newfoundland. It's where you find what is "true." The editor has enhanced the enterprise by having each of the contributors read the manuscript of each of the chapters as these developed through the pre-publication process of story-telling. Clearly, this has been a productive collaboration drawing on a range of expertise from grantsmanship to archival sleuthing, interviewing and writing. The result is both balanced and graphic, and gives the impression of having been written seamlessly by a single author.

The volume is accentuated by a wide selection of judiciously chosen wartime black and white photos. Some of these are from public archives and museums, and others from private collections and family albums. They have lost none of their crispness. Though most of the photographers remain anonymous, it is good to have identified the frequently-cited images by the otherwise little-known wartime photographer, Lieutenant Alice Ducile Talman. It's a pleasure to browse through all these photos, pausing to examine one or the other, and to ponder the human fates they portray. One is struck by the youthfulness of the players on the St. John's stage, by the hardiness of the older

generations portrayed, and by the rapid technological and urban development of the city and harbour itself. The only splash of visual colour is the water colour illustration entitled "Posted to Newfie" by Canadian war artist Paul Goranson which is reproduced on the front cover. (It is printed in black and white within the text itself.) Judging by the narratives and the photos, life for the 40,000 inhabitants of St. John's was a bleak, parochial and sectarian business—until the "Yanks" and the Canadians arrived and set up their own counter-culture. What had been, as a U.S. serviceman wrote home, "like a Chicago slum," became in the course of the war a radically changed society. American movies, money and music competed with the indigenous British colonial culture; jazz on the *Voice of the United States (VOUS)* vied with hymns on the *Voice of Newfoundland (VONF)*; social and sexual mores changed; the Allies' hastily knocked-together bases and camps competed with the island's own ramshackle housing. Indeed, as the world came in—the compelling triad of Canadians, Americans, and foreign crews of international shipping—the world of Newfoundland opened up. Of course, Newfoundlanders had long since travelled abroad. They had fought during the First World War at great personal cost on European battlefields and on many oceans and seas; they had always made music, danced and enjoyed their own popular culture. What emerges from this study is the wide range of synergies involved in changing Newfoundland's self-understanding, and the way it came to view and deal with all those from "away."

The first part of the study, "North America's First Line of Defence," examines in two chapters the telling impact on Newfoundland society triggered by the arrival of Allied forces and their infrastructure. These two narratives—"Building a Wartime Landscape"

(Christopher A. Sharpe and A.J. Shawyer) and “From Defended Harbour to Transatlantic Base” (Paul Collins) — establish the historical background for what follows. The second part, entitled “Remembering Wartime St. John’s,” consists of four chapters on four major themes: childhood experience of the war as now remembered by adults (Barbara Lorenzkowski), the “Friendly Invasion” in retrospect (Steven High), Newfoundland’s popular culture of the day (Jeff A. Webb), and the exemplary work of Mona Wilson and the Canadian Red Cross (Gillian Poulter and Douglas O. Baldwin). The final chapter (Ken Coates and William R. Morrison) then sets the whole engaging story in a global context. In summary, “In World War II, St. John’s became the epicentre of a tripartite militarization: it experienced a declining British connection, a strengthening tie to the Canadian armed forces, and a dramatic and impressive American military presence” (p.268). Indeed, “St. John’s was an active participant in one of the most pivotal events of the twentieth century: the emergence of the United States on the world stage.” Perhaps equally important, as the editor explains early on, all of the contributors to this volume conclude “that the usual distinction between “home front” and “battle front” in North America is largely irrelevant in wartime St. John’s” (p.18). This volume goes a long way in demonstrating how public opinion, memory and family stories contributed to this perception.

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Stephen J. Hornsby. *Surveyors of Empire: Samuel Holland, J.F.W. Des Barres, and the Making of The Atlantic Neptune*. Carleton Library Series 221, Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen’s University Press, www.mqup.ca, 2011. 269 pp., illustrations, maps,

appendices, notes, bibliography, index. CDN \$65.00, US \$59.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0-7735-3815-3.

This book deals with the work of Samuel Johannes Holland (1729-1801) and Joseph Frederick Walle Des Barres (1729-1824), surveyors of Eastern Canada and the Northeastern part of America. Holland was born in the city of Deventer in the Dutch Republic, and following a brief career in Dutch artillery, including working as a surveyor of fortifications, he accompanied his patron, the Duke of Richmond, to Canada. Des Barres, a protestant, was born in Montbéliard, France, near the Swiss border. After studying drafting and mathematics at the University of Basle, Des Barres was trained in surveying and mapmaking at the Military Academy in Woolwich, England. He joined the Royal American Regiment and left for North America. There the two men became prominent surveyors, producing maps and charts that later appeared in *The Atlantic Neptune*, a four-volume atlas of the coast of North America, roughly between Nova Scotia and New Orleans. It was the outcome of the largest eighteenth-century surveying project, and it was completed before the founding of the Hydrographic Office of the Royal Navy, in 1795. Its name was inspired by *Le Neptune François*, a sea-atlas of the French coasts that had been reissued in 1753. The survey was a joint effort of the Board of Trade and the Admiralty. After it was completed, Des Barres moved to London, where he oversaw the engraving and printing of the atlas, starting in 1777, and published under direction of the Admiralty. The charts and maps—on Mercator’s projection and based on Greenwich prime meridian — were immediately brought into use by the British in the American War of Independence.

In the introductory chapter, Hornsby sketches the commercial, political

and military situation in North America that led to the need for accurate charts and maps. He introduces and discusses the various surveyors who included James Cook, in Canada, and the German immigrant De Brahm, who surveyed the southern parts of the North American coast. The second chapter covers in great detail the surveys by Holland and Des Barres, in the area between Nova Scotia and the city of New York. The next chapter discusses the actual surveying, and provides the layman with a clear, easy-to-understand explanation of how that was done. It also includes paragraphs on the scientific instruments that were used, and on the types of ships that were employed and where they were built; it deals with locally recruited pilots—often Acadians—and topics such as discipline and punishment on the surveying vessels. In chapter four, the plans and descriptions resulting from Holland's and Des Barres' efforts are dealt with. The use of these plans for the settlement of immigrants is discussed in chapter five; Holland and Des Barres were among the new inhabitants, after acquiring large sections of land. In chapter six, the printing and publishing process of *The Atlantic Neptune*, directed by Des Barres in London, is discussed.

There are some minor points of criticism for *Surveyors of Empire*. Although this is not a biography of Holland and Des Barres, I would like to have learned a little more about their private lives. When quoted after being invited to become surveyor-general of the province of Quebec, Holland mentions bringing along his "whole family" (p.205). Up until then we did not even know that he was married, and it is not brought up thereafter. And it is also not until almost the end of the book that we, by chance, learn that De Barres had a son (p.211) whose name, James Luttrell, is not included in the Register. There is confusion over the meaning of the words quadrant and octant (pp.110-111). The "quadrant"

mentioned for finding the noon altitude of the sun for calculating latitude was no doubt a "Hadley's quadrant," or octant. But the "astronomical quadrant or equal altitude instrument of two feet radius" used by Holland on St John's Island (now Prince Edward Island) was very probably not an octant, as suggested by the author. More likely, it was a (portable) non-reflecting quadrant placed on a stand, of the kind used by astronomers rather than mariners. Further along, the author states that in 1766 Holland replaced Hadley's 18-inch quadrant (octant) made by Heath and Wing, with a superior example made by John Bird. More likely this was one of Bird's sextants, of the same type that, at that time, was used by Cook in the Pacific. Elsewhere the author does acknowledge the presence and use of sextants (pp.180 and 191). When discussing the distribution of charts from the *Neptune* in 1780, the list of political recipients includes both the Duke of Northumberland and Lord Percy, who were very likely the same people. Unfortunately, neither name is found in the Register, which is also missing some other names and page numbers.

Despite these shortcomings, *Surveyors of Empire* is without doubt a valuable contribution to the history of the cartography and hydrography of North America in the eighteenth century. It highlights the contributions of Holland, Cook, and also less-known contributors to *The Atlantic Neptune*, which is usually associated with Des Barres only because of his role as editor and compiler. Although at the time, because of the political and economic situation, eastern Canada and New England were more significant than the coast further south, one would hope for a similar study of the southern part included in the *Neptune*. *Surveyors of Empire* has been superbly produced with a large number of high-quality, full-colour illustrations. The maps and charts have been beautifully

reproduced, and I have rarely seen such a series of excellent explanatory maps.

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Alan Huffman. *Sultana: Surviving the Civil War, Prison, and the Worst Maritime Disaster in American History*. New York, NY: Harper Collins, www.harpercollins.com, 2009. xix + 300 pp, bibliography, index. CDN \$18.95, paper; ISBN 978-0-06-147056-1.

American freelance journalist Alan Huffman follows the popular history trail of the victims of the explosion of the privately-owned steamboat *Sultana* at 1:45a.m. on 27 April 1865. The *Sultana*, packed to 600 percent capacity by allegedly corrupt and incompetent soldiers and privately-employed crewmen, suffered a boiler explosion despite repairs executed before its departure from Camp Fisk en route to Memphis. An estimated 1,300 passengers (civilians, politicians, children and, more topically, paroled Union prisoners of war) lost their lives that night on the Mississippi River in a fiery, watery, and generally ignominious manner. Huffman's tale begins at an airport in Atlanta, Georgia, where his observation of veterans returning from the conflict in the Middle East swirls backward in time to antebellum America and ends in a modern geriatric facility with a conversation between the author and his late father. Huffman begins *Sultana* with a poignant question: What actually *is* survival?

In September 1863, Romulus Tolbert and John Maddox, mere youths, joined an ill-fated Union regiment: soon after their enlistment, they were captured and imprisoned in desperate circumstances. At the prisons of Cahaba and Andersonville, thousands of men were held inside walls surrounding an area of less than ten acres. Westerners would not experience similar

conditions again until the Russian Revolution, and perhaps, more notably for North Americans, the Holocaust. Huffman's tale follows a loosely-connected account of similar stories of Civil War veterans that culminates in the sinking of the *Sultana*. Tracing the stories of more than a dozen soldiers, Huffman narrates the experience of being a half-drowned soldier in the Mississippi before allowing his chosen group of soldiers to tell their tales of patriotism, capture and woe, which fill most of the book. He emphasizes the terrible conditions in the prison camps, drawing the gory details from diary entries, preserved letters home, disability pension applications and the occasional published memoir. It is apparent that Huffman utilizes this tragic literary device to accentuate the final disaster.

Once the primary players are released from prison and are finally heading to their respective homes, Huffman introduces a sub-plot of intrigue, incompetence and inhumanity that results in the destruction of the two-year-old steamboat. A lazy (and generally absent) captain permits a corrupt former officer to take on passengers. This man had been deemed unfit for duty some time before, but rather than being discharged, had been placed on duty at Camp Fisk, where most of the parolees from Cahaba and Andersonville boarded the *Sultana*, enabling him to take bribes and subsequently over-load the boat. Huffman relates the difficulties encountered by the crew of the steamboat en route, from the initial rupturing and patching of the boilers and pipes at Camp Fisk (and again at Memphis). He describes how more than 700 tired, ill and otherwise infirm parolees boarded the boat, and then depicts them panicking frantically in the face of hissing steam and exploding, burning bulkheads.

The *Sultana* had been designed for no more than 600 passengers, but realistically could accommodate

approximately 400 people. The final rough tally (Huffman explains that the post-Lincoln government did not consider it necessary to make a full accounting of the incident) was 1,700 dead in the water, and roughly 700 more who made it to shore, though more than half died within days. Based upon these numbers, Huffman claims that the sinking of the *Sultana* is the most harrowing maritime disaster in American history. Huffman's initial question, "What is survival?" is answered by his examination of Tolbert and Maddox's descent into old age and infirmity upon returning home, an historical crusade of sorts that Huffman pursues with greater apparent vivacity than any other aspect of the book. His characterization of the essence of survival involves the physical aspect of surviving. For the elderly and the veterans of war, having survived all the trials and tribulations life could throw at them, they age, and become conscious of the betrayal of their own bodies and the loss of faculties that nothing else they have encountered has been able to steal from them.

The memoirs and details that give the book its substance forge a connection between the reader and the half-dozen or so characters Hoffman focuses on throughout the book. Their capture and deaths in prison, or on their penultimate journey home, jerk one's heartstrings. This is a good thing for a social history, memoir or a tragic-romance novel, but perhaps not such a strength in a book billed as a maritime history. The weaknesses in Huffman's approach are evident but are so briefly addressed by the author that it seems to this reviewer that Huffman attempted to "glaze-over" his methodological errors.

Huffman contends that no state or federal government launched a serious inquest into the incident (apart from the possible exception of Indiana). Within months, he says, newspapers dropped the

*Sultana* story in favour of Lincoln's assassination and the hunt for John Wilkes Booth. While seemingly aggravated by this lack of attention, Huffman's duty as a historian was to trace and explicate the processes of government that failed the survivors of the *Sultana* disaster. The historical value of his work would have been greatly improved had he pursued and related his research in a more cohesive manner, following individuals to a common locus rather than addressing them in groups. Had he focussed on a few select individuals as a case-study, rather than seeming to toss new characters randomly into the mix, Huffman would have been that much closer to achieving an approximation of a formal historical account. While he does briefly examine the rationale for his methods, he nevertheless renders his tale in a manner that is not at all cohesive. Huffman's empathy with the victims and the survivors leads him overlook many of the original subjects of his research and concentrate on his personal favourites, Tolbert and Maddox, two neighbours who survived the prisons, the explosion and the days of waiting in the frigid waters of the Mississippi together, and who both survived to ripe old ages.

From a more critical perspective, Huffman pays lip-service to established historiographical practices, adding only a brief bibliography and an index to supplement the novel-like readability of *Sultana*, lending credibility to his work. The bibliography is divided into sections (which this reviewer found useful): books, diaries and periodicals, web sites, and other sources. Government documents and independent libraries are mentioned, but are not discussed or referenced in any great detail, leaving researchers attempting to use *Sultana* as a guide for comprehensive research material sorely disappointed. Alan Huffman tells his tale in a manner befitting a work of remarkably well-researched

historical fiction: the lack of figures, maps and plates reinforces this impression, particularly considering the complexities of the geo-political nature of Civil War-era America. Huffman's approach to the writing and presentation of *Sultana* is tantamount, unfortunately, to yellow journalism, rendering a volume of potentially great use for Civil War historians (and to a lesser extent, naval/maritime historians) into the historian's equivalent of a CNN or Fox News exposé.

In short, Alan Huffman's *Sultana* is an excellent light read, a beautiful example of humanitarian social history, but as a volume of scholarly American Civil War or maritime history, it falls far short of what one would expect. It is, nevertheless, a heart-felt critique of the valuation of society upon the trials and tribulations of veterans and the elderly.

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Brian Lavery. *Empire of the Seas. How the Navy forged the Modern World*. London: Anova Books, www.anovabooks.com, 2009. 272 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. UK £20.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84486-109-5.

As this handsomely-illustrated book was written to accompany the popular BBC series on the British navy, it is both a light read and generally supportive of the role the navy assumed from the clash with Spain in the sixteenth century to the inter-war era of the 1920s. The author, an award-winning and prolific authority, especially on the sailing navy, acted as the series consultant.

The principal thesis underlying Lavery's account is his belief that, as the navy was an extremely expensive force to maintain, Parliament was constantly asked to vote funds for its upkeep and expansion. The more frequently the country was at war,

the greater the role the Commons acquired as it voted taxes and approved public borrowing. It was the House of Commons which led the reform of Parliament, which in time, led to an expanded franchise and electoral democracy, for which an increasingly expensive navy was the remote cause.

Much can be claimed on behalf of the navy ... but as an instrument for the spread of democracy ... That is a stretch! Naval successes against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, for instance, did not advance democracy, but helped secure aristocratic privilege and the French monarchy. By his own admission, Lavery knows that the officer corps became more class-exclusive in the post-Nelson navy than earlier. He seems not to understand that British successes at sea thereafter tended to reinforce not democracy, but measures to delay its emergence, even in the so-called white colonies of settlement. "Liberty" may have been an English watchword long before 1800, but never "Equality," let alone "Fraternity."

Lavery's account leads eventually to Nelson's victory over the combined French and Spanish fleet off Trafalgar in 1805. With peace in 1815, the fleet went into decline, with 90percent of warships decommissioned. What was left bombarded Algiers (1817), defeated the Turks (1827) with the help of the French and Russian squadrons, invaded the Crimea (1854-56), China (1841), Egypt (1882) and helped conquer the Boer republic in South Africa (1899-1902). Though it was all pretty sordid, Lavery confines his criticism to the Opium Wars with China (p.207).

These events occurred as the navy gradually transformed itself from sail to steam, from wooden walls to iron and steel, with heavily-armoured warships powered by domestic coal and imported oil. Events culminated during the Great War (1914-18), when Imperial Germany sought to challenge

the Grand Fleet. The battleship encounter, which was expected, proved a great disappointment to Britain, while the unexpected role of the submarine came close to severing Britain's trade routes, whose protection had long been the Navy's principal role.

A book of this sort is bound to contain a few slips that the editors should have corrected. The Protestant Reformation in England is dated 1630 (p.17). The *Invincible* was taken in 1747 not 1748 (p.111) as stated in the caption. James Cook, though multi-talented, did not pilot Admiral Saunders' fleet up the St. Lawrence in 1759 (p.120). This difficult task was performed by Augustin Raby, a Quebec resident.

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Rebecca Berens Matzke. *Deterrence through Strength. British Naval Power and Foreign Policy under Pax Britannica*. Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, www.nebraskapress.uni.edu, 2011. x + 306pp., notes, bibliography, index. US \$45.00, cloth; ISBN 978-0-8032-3514-4.

In a time when the US Navy can "project" fleets, including gigantic warships, and spend immense sums doing so, it seems only natural to doubt whether minnows, mostly concentrated in European waters, and costing in all £5-10 million a year, could ever have exercised a global naval authority. But Professor Matzke remains convinced of the potency and influence of the British Royal Navy during the *Pax Britannica* and the reality of the *Pax* itself. Most contentiously, she argues the *Pax* extended to Europe, and that the reluctance of the great continental powers to go to war with each other in the nineteenth century owed less than one might think to general political and economic circumstances and

more to fear of British warships. Here, we should note, she avowedly bases herself on the work of Andrew Lambert, who has made great play of the enormous political advantages that Britain supposedly gained from nineteenth-century shifts in the balance from land to naval power, thanks to developments in steam propulsion and ordnance.

Matzke's argument rests largely on three case studies, all taken from about 1838-1846, dealing first with Anglo-American relations, second, the "Opium War" between Britain and China, third, in what is effectively a treatment of British naval influence in St Petersburg and Paris, the Syrian crisis of 1839-41. These are well-chosen to offer a variety of type and situation of rival state and of different responses to British power. By contrast, the period in question might well seem narrow, but we are assured it represents the whole of the period of the *Pax* — taken to be about 1815-1880 — since it shared the same kind of shift in the balance from land to naval power.

To understand the argument fully, we have to see the particular force given to the word "deterrence." Purists might not see it as applicable to the period in question. First, to the modern reader there is necessarily something of a carry-over of meaning from *nuclear* deterrence, by false association enhancing in our minds the potency of the Royal Navy during the *Pax*. Second, it was anyway at best a neologism in the 1830s: the OED allows the earlier word "deterrent" its first recorded use only in 1829, inevitably by Jeremy Bentham. Matzke does not offer us an example of a contemporary statesman using either word, except in a translation from the Chinese. Perhaps, though, that is pedantry: a definition is offered which one might say reasonably describes the principle underlying Whitehall's actions: Britain could promise "enough destructive force to

convince its opponents to do what Britain wanted” (p.32). But that allows some dangerous ambiguity. The author tells us there had been a clear change in the basis of naval power, the force available having become far more rapid and deadly in action. There were now unprecedented means of attack against not simply traditional sailing navies but also shore installations, as evinced by the victorious naval bombardment in 1840 of St Jean d’Acre — a fortress that famously had withstood Napoleon! Yet Matzke gives relatively little attention to the alleged new methods. Regularly, when describing the threat exerted by the Royal Navy, she sees a combination of means, including trade interception and blockade, and does not clearly draw out where it was the “new” type of threat that influenced hostile policy-makers. That undermines the identification of “deterrence.” For though one might ascribe more anodyne definitions, there is a necessary element of immediacy found strongly in the word; take Bentham’s understanding of “deterrent”: “*a punishment which... is sure, speedy and severe.*” One should draw a distinction between a kind of force that implies “you cannot defeat us, and will ultimately suffer” and the one threatening “we shall strike back at you immediately.” The first is fundamental to British naval power from the eighteenth century to the 1930s. It is to be found in Matzke’s sample decade: she quotes Lord John Russell arguing: the French “never can beat us on the sea for any time” (p.181), a less than imminent threat of retribution. The second has to be found underpinning the Pax Britannica if the word ‘deterrence’ is to be validated: that is also needed if the argument of the book is to stand; yet it is not brought out.

Apart from a more direct treatment of the new means, one would also like more attention given to those who were allegedly deterred. Reference to, for instance,

Howard Fuller’s *Clad in Iron* (Praeger, 2008) — not cited by Matzke — suggests great volatility of popular U.S. reaction to the prospect of naval aggression against coastal towns, from “spasmodic attacks of the Shakes” (p.225), when the lone *Alabama* was concerned, to pure insouciance about the whole British ironclad fleet. For a more seasoned observer, we can refer to Bismarck and his famous dismissal of British power during the Schleswig-Holstein crisis. Surely, British influence was not potent only beyond the wading-distance of the Prussian police; but Bismarck’s example implies that the great continental European powers might simply ignore naval factors. Of course, one may well respond that much more might be said on perceptions of what the Royal Navy might do. Certainly, *les gens sérieux* in Paris, Berlin, St Petersburg and Washington need closer attention. As so often, the Archives beckon.

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David McLean. *Surgeons of the Fleet. The Royal Navy and its Medics from Trafalgar to Jutland*. I.B. Tauris Publishers, www.ibtauris.com, 2010. xiv + 296 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography. UK £27.50, cloth; ISBN 978-1-845885-284-6.

In his book, *Surgeons of the Fleet. The Royal Navy and its Medics from Trafalgar to Jutland*, David McLean begins by paying homage to J.J. Keevil whose masterful multi-volume *Medicine and the Navy 1200-1900* is mandatory reading for anyone interested in health and health care for the men who helped Britannia rule the waves. Keevil’s work was published in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and subsequent medical historians have re-examined his findings and built upon his work. McLean attempts to add new layers to our



understanding of the challenges of naval health care during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in this extremely readable new offering.

McLean states that this “book is largely a study of medical practice in the navy from the accounts and perspectives of those who administered it, manned its hospitals, tended its sick afloat, repaired its wounded...” (p.xiii). He emphasizes the role of those in various facets of naval health care who had to improvise and persevere, in war and in peace, often with less than adequate resources or personnel. This, then, is a tale of resourcefulness and endurance by individuals and, whatever its deficiencies (financial and otherwise), by a naval organization which tried to keep its men in fighting form.

The fact that the majority of seamen died from diseases and not battle wounds was a constant throughout the early modern period and into the modern era. Even those who are familiar with the challenges of the armed forces and health care issues may still be struck by how enduring many of these problems were. Scurvy was the great killer of early modern seamen and this scourge lasted into the nineteenth century. Even when old foes were vanquished, new ones emerged to take their place — most notably tuberculosis. Venereal disease was more inclined to compromise the fighting forces but it was a massive problem, effecting thousands. Dysentery and fevers hampered the health of seamen for centuries. As the navy expanded during the era under examination, thousands more men served their country and the fate of empires rested on the outcome of these protracted global conflicts.

Despite the setbacks, McLean makes a clear case that seamen were becoming healthier over time. This development seemed unlikely at the dawn of the modern era, when naval medical

practitioners had to function as surgeons, physicians and apothecaries, and the state of nursing was far from the profession it would become. As the navy contracted after the Napoleonic wars, later conflicts, like the Crimean War, revealed the inadequacies of naval health care which seemed more about coping than curing.

When they came, improvements to medical knowledge and care were piecemeal. Names like Lind, Trotter and Blane are familiar to those who are acquainted with naval medicine during early modern times, but McLean brings to the fore men like William Burnett (1779-1861) who was the Director General of Britain’s Naval Medical Department from 1841 until his retirement in 1855. McLean demonstrates Burnett was an incredibly efficient administrator who not only emphasized record-keeping but also encouraged scientific research among naval surgeons. Nevertheless, convincing talented medical students that the navy was a viable career option remained an uphill battle.

Hospitals were a key aspect of naval health care at home and abroad, with the former providing much better care. Nurses were typically women of questionable habits and backgrounds, but this changed in the mid-nineteenth century. The emergence of nursing as an acceptable career for middle class women was an important trend in health care in general. We tend to associate this shift almost exclusively with Florence Nightingale and her efforts during the Crimean war, but Mclean claims this development was underway previously. Sir John Liddell, Burnett’s successor as Director-General of the Medical Department of the Navy, was anxious to facilitate this and condemned many of the practices that his predecessors had tolerated prior to the mid-nineteenth century. McLean also claims demographic changes in Victorian society paved the way: a surplus of half a million British women by

1860 created conditions where even the “respectable” women would have to find a way to earn a living. Nightingale’s advocacy of a professional nursing corps was a welcome change from the drunken matrons of earlier years and provided another career option for single, middle-class women who did not wish to become governesses or teachers. While the problems of the navy’s hospitals went considerably deeper, Liddell’s advocacy of a professional nursing corps was forward thinking and bore fruit over time.

McLean’s engaging narrative details the considerable efforts to recruit talented — or at least able — medical practitioners and health care workers to tend the wounded and sick military personnel. Even by the end of the period McLean covers, however, the argument is still being made to sceptical listeners on the eve of the Great War that all the deficiencies of previous decades had been put right. War exposed once again the shortage of qualified medical personnel in the navy during a critical time of conflict. The army still looked preferable as a career for those graduating from medical schools despite efforts to make the navy seem comparable in terms of advancement, pay and facilities. The army outpaced the navy in its use of female professional nurses as well. Thus, the navy’s medical personnel and facilities seemed destined to lag behind what was required. Having said this, by the time of the Great War, health care for naval seamen was lightyears away from what it had been a century before during the Napoleonic wars, although the spectre of disease still loomed large.

McLean has produced is a remarkably readable and accessible book which will be appreciated by general readers and scholars alike. While crediting the reformers within the navy who recognized the problems and sought, in their way, to remedy them, he does not gloss over

the ongoing deficiencies of individuals and the naval medical system. This book is a valuable addition to our existing knowledge of medicine and the navy.

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R. W. H. Miller. *Priest in Deep Water: Charles Plomer Hopkins and the 1911 Seamen’s Strike*. Cambridge, U.K.: Lutterworth Press, www.lutterworth.com, 2010. 226 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. UK £25.50, paper; ISBN 978-0-7188-9232-6.

If you are interested in the history of the British seafarer’s labour movement, the 1911 seamen’s strike, the conjunction of religion and life afloat, religion’s involvement in organizing labour, and seafarers’ unions in colonial India, R. W. H. Miller has written a book for you. The book, *Priest in Deep Water*, is the story of Brother Charles Plomer Hopkins and his involvement in the 1911 British (and international) seamen’s strike. This book started life as a Masters thesis and then went on to form a portion of Father Miller’s Ph.D. dissertation. Miller tells his audience that he has expanded the research, reworked the academic language to a more readable style and restructured the narrative flow. Indeed, he has produced a well structured, easily-read book.

Miller interweaves Hopkins’ life with the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century struggle to establish and gain recognition for seamen’s labour guilds and unions. The author provides the reader with the necessary background to the rough life of the era’s merchant seafarers by drawing on Samuel Plimsoll’s 1873 book, *Our Seamen: An Appeal*, supplemented by a brief discussion of the various acts of Parliament governing life afloat. Havelock Wilson’s work on behalf of sailors, as a

Member of Parliament and his union activity is described to give the context for the seamen's lot in the early years of the twentieth century.

Hopkins' connection with the sea and those who worked afloat has an air of being "bred in the bone", as his father was an American river pilot married to a British woman. The couple took their children to Burma where Hopkins' father found work. Returning to Burma after being educated in England, Hopkins served as a church organist in the early 1880s. The loss of the merchant vessel *Cassiope* with all hands in 1884 was the major event that brought Hopkins down to the docks to advocate for the seamen. The ship sank as a result of the captain's gradual raising of load line (the mark on the hull that, when the water reached it, indicated the ship had reach its cargo-carrying capacity) in order to carry more goods. The desire for profit drowned the crew when high seas drove the overloaded ship under. Shortly after this event, Hopkins was given the post of Port Chaplain and began his unique ministry to seamen that would occupy the rest of his life.

In 1888, malaria forced him to move to London to recover his health. It is here that Hopkins was influenced by Reverend A. Osborne Jay, a Christian Socialist who used the idea of a social club to provide a place to escape the horrors of poverty experienced in the parish of Shoreditch. Once back in South East Asia, Hopkins was appointed as Port Chaplain of Calcutta and his involvement in organizing seamen became the major focus of his ministry. He organized a guild centered on hospitality offered at his own lodgings. He became involved in numerous civil litigations by seamen against their ships' owners and captains and in defence of seamen falsely accused of misbehaviours by their captains. Hopkins began his own brotherhood community, the Seamen

Friendly Society of St. Paul to advance his ministry and labour-organizing activities. He also began writing about the seamen's experience, serving as publisher and editor of several journals, most notably *The Messenger*. Wilson frequently quotes from this later source, revealing Hopkins' "take-no-prisoners" approach to exposing abuses by ship owners. His unionizing involvement so annoyed and angered the Shipping Federation (the ship owners' association) that they levelled false charges of sexual abuse of a 13-year-old against him. He successfully defended himself from the claim and filed suit leading to his total vindication, but the damage to his reputation was done. The church officials in India also had had enough of his heavy focus on unionizing activity. Hopkins returned to England in 1894 under a cloud of suspicion that, for the church, never lifted.

Charles Hopkins' meeting with Havelock Wilson, Member of Parliament and leader of the National Sailors and Firemen's Union (NSFU) in 1900, takes on a mythic form. Wilson's patented oratorical challenge, when speaking to a crowd of seamen who might not see his efforts as work, was to offer to pay any seaman who would take the podium and speak. Hopkins, dressed as a seaman, stepped forward to take the challenge. While the two had previously corresponded, they had not yet met, and it seems that Hopkins was having a bit of fun, literally at Wilson's expense. The verbally skilled Hopkins spoke with knowledge and passion. The two men became friends, and Hopkins began his involvement in the NSFU. This involvement reached its highest point (and the book's subtitle) when he represented the British union's interest at the international conference of seamen's unions in 1911 and worked to organize the British seamen's strike of 1911. He announced the strike and was involved in many of the local

negotiations which eventually brought the strike to an end. The Shipping Federation fought hard to keep from recognizing the unions, but in the end, gave way to that key demand. Union activity occupied the rest of Hopkins' life, until his death in 1922.

The church context in which Hopkins found himself embroiled involved two different elements. One was his preference for High Church ceremony, thus placing him in the minority of the "High" versus "Low" Anglican struggle that took place in the Church of England in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The other was that his appointment as a Chaplain was made in a colony and by Church rules, he could not engage in a ministry in Britain without approval of his local Bishop. His union activity and the dark cloud of suspicion that followed him home from India ruled out any chance that his Bishop, Randall Thomas Davidson, would ever grant such permission.

If there is one potentially daunting problem with the book, it is the lack of archival material available for certain portions of Hopkins' life. Miller laments these gaps at several points (the first comes in the Preface, p. 7). Where the evidence is thin, the supposition thickens, drawing on circumstantial evidence to fill in the blank. An example occurs in Chapter 7 concerning the years before the 1911 strike. Miller suggests that the post-1911 NSFU record shows Hopkins was very familiar with union protocol and procedure, which Miller assumes was learnt in the pre-1911 period, thus concluding that Hopkins was heavily involved in NSFU matters prior to the strike (p.139). While slightly disturbing, this issue does not detract from the majority of the book which is solidly supported by good evidence. Miller's use of newspapers is extensive, providing great detail on select events in Hopkins' life, and providing the contextual background in which Hopkins lived.

The author's own involvement in The Missions to Seamen and the Apostleship of the Sea gives him added insight into the nature of ministering to seafarers. His academic and practical religious grounding clearly informs the portions of the book which address the "High" and "Low" Anglican debate at the turn of the twentieth century and the politics of church appointments. Both of these juggernauts enveloped Hopkins' experience of religious ministry and of working with the labour issues of seamen.

I found the printing of ship's names in all capitals, rather than with underlining or in italics, disruptive to smooth reading. The four tables containing statistics referred to in the text are helpful but lack numbering or titles, and are of the most basic box design, detracting from the professional quality of the rest of the book. The eight black and white photographs and two prints are properly placed, supporting the surrounding text. The fact that there are only two photos of Hopkins (both from the last half of his life) reminds the reader of the lack of archival information about him.

As stated above, this book is aimed at those interested in the history of the British seafarer's labour movement, the 1911 seamen's strike, the conjunction of religion and life afloat, religion's involvement in organizing labour, and seafarer's unions in colonial India. While the book does touch on all of this, its greatest strength lies with the three chapters that deal with Hopkins' time in Burma and India. For anyone interested in the colonial experience of seafarer's labour organizing, this book is a must-read.

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Robert C. Parsons. *Cape Race: Stories from the Coast that Sank the Titanic*. St. John's, NL: Flanker Press, www.flankerpress.com, 2011. xiii + 263 pp., illustrations, index of ships. CDN \$19.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-926881-06-5.

Robert C. Parsons, acclaimed author of Atlantic Canada stories, offers 48 accounts detailing the harrowing and dangerous route along Cape Race, Newfoundland, in the North Atlantic. Relying largely on newspaper records and interviews, this book shows how this particular geographic area has presented some of the most threatening and treacherous waters in the Atlantic. Parsons' selected sagas, beginning in 1840 with the sinking of the brig *Florence*, and ending with the 1960 floundering of the steel vessel *Jennie Barno*, clearly depict how the south-eastern tip of the Avalon Peninsula has claimed the distinction of both graveyard and "a most dangerous coast" (pp.2-3).

The vignettes in *Cape Race* detail how this important route in the Great Circle, where transatlantic shipping lines made their way to and from North America to northern Europe, presented dense fog blinding ship navigators, rocky shoals tearing into ships, and icebergs seemingly waiting to mutilate unsuspecting vessels. Parsons also explains how sailors, shippers, and residents of the Cape dealt with their horrific environment. In response to these dangers, England's Imperial Government constructed the first lighthouse in 1856. As ships continued to falter due to fog and ice, the lighthouse was upgraded with a rotating light in 1866, with a steam whistle in 1872, with an air-operated whistle in 1907, and finally, with a diesel-powered foghorn in 1963. Simultaneously, technological inventions to aid communication also helped to answer the numerous calls for help emanating from those suffering at sea. In 1866, the first trans-Atlantic cable line

was laid in Newfoundland and in 1904, a Marconi wireless station was established in the Cape Race lighthouse. It was at that station in 1912 that the *Titanic's* first distress signals were heard.

Parsons clearly depicts the dangers experienced by captains, sailors and passengers travelling around Cape Race. Each chapter offers a plainly-written vignette about a particular wreck along the coast as well as efforts to save those on board and salvage the cargo. Those navigating Cape Race faced great dangers well into the twentieth century, from natural calamities to German U-boats. Even as safety technology advanced along with better warning signals and boat technology, the threat of shipwreck persisted for sailors even though loss of life diminished.

The author presents interesting accounts of what life was like for those living on the coast and near the Cape Race lighthouse. If Parsons admires the sailors who faced the wrath of the seas, he portrays those living in the vicinity of Cape Race as of even hardier stock, willing to risk their own lives to save others. Their efforts included offering warm shelter and food to stranded sailors as well as participating in rescue missions that could involve attaching themselves to ropes to propel themselves over rocky cliffs into roaring waves or taking boats into boiling seas. Interestingly, *Cape Race* also shows how many locals benefited or saw the benefits of taking goods from a deserted and wrecked vessel. Ship wrackers, people who salvaged what they could from the wreckage, appear as important, though not always legal, members of the community's economy and history despite the criticisms of ship owners and legal authorities. For example, in a 1934 interview, George J. Hewitt, who had been lightkeeper at Cape Race for ten years, asserted that such salvagers were "great," echoing the historical importance of these people who bolstered the local economy,

their own well-being, and prevented usable goods from going down with the ships (p.213).

Overall, *Cape Race* is entertaining but the reader should note this is not an academic study but rather, a popular account of maritime history. Parsons does not posit any thesis other than revealing the maritime disasters around Cape Race. It does not include traditional citation format nor does it include a bibliography. The 48 short chapters that average five pages in length underscore the work as a popular narrative.

The book contains some minor discrepancies. The heading of the last chapter dates Parson's last wreck as occurring in August 1950, but the chapter states the wreck occurred on August 14, 1960. Pernambuco, Brazil, is mentioned in several chapters, though it is not until chapter 38 that Parsons mentions the renaming of Pernambuco to Recife, which is still a bit misleading, since Recife is a city in the state of Pernambuco, Brazil. As well, Perth Amboy is mistakenly placed in New York instead of New Jersey (p.197).

A helpful addition for people not familiar with the region would be a map describing the location of Cape Race and the other referenced areas. Parsons includes many interesting illustrations and pictures ranging from contemporary newspaper clippings to pictures of people and vessels discussed, but the reader can easily become lost in the variety of names of different capes, towns, and regions.

In sum, this book is an entertaining and clear recounting of the sad, amusing, and frightening history of ship wrecks occurring off Cape Race, Newfoundland. Parsons' storytelling of the perils is accessible to any interested readers.

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Geoff Puddefoot. *Ready for Anything. The Royal Fleet Auxiliary 1905-1950*. Seaforth Publishing, [www.seaforthpublishing.com](http://www.seaforthpublishing.com), 2010. xiii + 224 pp., illustrations, tables, appendices, bibliography, index. UK £25.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-84832-074-1.

Arguably, the Achilles heel of deployed naval forces is logistics — or, as in the title of the official history of US Navy (USN) logistics afloat in the Pacific in the Second World War — *Beans, Bullets and Black Oil*. Even in this age of the U.S. Navy's nuclear-powered aircraft-carrier battle groups, crews still need food, ammunition must be supplied/replenished and non-nuclear-powered ships need fuel. In the days of sail and the strategy of blockading the coastline of an enemy, the blockading ships needed occasional at-sea replenishment of their food and provisions since they could not enter a hostile port. Thus the concept of the Fleet Train — an organized system of non-combatant merchant ships bringing such necessary provisions to the deployed fleet — was born. Early in the twentieth century, the British Admiralty recognized the advantages of having its own dedicated ships to provide the key elements of the Fleet Train. Consequently, in 1905, the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) was formally established for that purpose.

In this book, the title of which is one of the unofficial mottos of the RFA (a play on the initials), the author gives an overview of the first 45 years of the service. It is a companion to his earlier book which covers the period after the Second World War, thus allowing for a small chronological overlap between the two books.

The book is effectively divided into two main segments — the first five chapters deal with the period from 1905 until 1939, while the subsequent five chapters focus on the Second World War years. A final short chapter discusses key organizational and technical changes in the immediate post-war

years. In describing the early period, the author delves into the difficulties the Admiralty encountered. They were trying to operate a naval force as well as establishing a mobile logistics support force to be integrated with the Royal Navy. This force was a quasi-mercantile fleet and brought with it issues pertaining to the rules and regulations that affected merchant shipping, especially those concerning ship ownership. As the author points out, many of these issues lingered until well after the war. By comparison, the U.S. Navy (USN) operated its auxiliaries as naval ships with naval crews from the outset and avoided many of the pitfalls that befell the Admiralty. Puddefoot does not fully address why the British chose to set up the organization in the way that they did.

Among the key functions expected of the RFA was refuelling warships at sea. The author gives this a fairly extensive treatment, describing some of the very early trials which were conducted prior to the formation of the RFA. Despite some ill-advised attempts at coaling while under way early on, this concept did not become practical until oil-fuelled warships were the norm. Even then, despite some relatively successful trials as early as 1906, the Royal Navy did not implement the technique on a widespread basis until well into the Second World War. Apart from the attitude in certain quarters of the Admiralty (as late as 1938) that only destroyers would need this capability as the operations of all other ships "...will not usually preclude them from oiling at a sheltered base..." (pp.81-82), there were problems. For example, the technology of the hoses and refuelling rigs in use at the time were not resolved (and Britain would not resolve them completely until the late 1940s with German equipment in the captured Kriegsmarine supply ship *Nordmark*). By that time, the USN was producing fast tankers capable of refuelling ships of all classes from destroyer to aircraft

carriers at speeds as high as 19 knots.

The latter part of the book dealing with the Second World War changes pace. Here the emphasis is more on the exploits of individual ships and the operations in which they participated as well as technical details of the modifications made to some ships to meet wartime requirements. The author quotes extensively from first-hand accounts and deals with each theatre of war separately. He also examines the impact on the Royal Navy of exposure to how the USN used its fleet train when the British Pacific Fleet joined with the USN in operations against Japan in the closing days of the war. A series of useful and detailed appendices completes the volume.

While this is an interesting story, it is very much a popular history and perhaps reflects a certain unevenness as a result. There is not a lot of analysis, and it would have been useful to learn more about the British personnel structure and career progression, especially for readers unfamiliar with British merchant shipping practice. It is obvious, and the author tacitly acknowledges it, that there was not a lot of "meat" in what the RFA was doing in the period between the wars. It became essentially a shipping service run by the Admiralty to provide fuel and stores to far-flung, as well as local, British naval bases. To provide some context, the author inserts a geo-political narrative as a background into which he seeks to weave the impact of world events on the RFA. Sometimes this works, but too often it distracts from the main theme. Nevertheless, the book makes a useful contribution in that it tells a story of a part of the Royal Navy that is not widely known beyond those directly involved.

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Richard Radune. *Sound Rising*. Branford, CT: Research in Time Publications, www.researchintimepublications.com, 2011. 308 pp. maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. US \$20.00, paper: ISBN 978-0-9764341-1-5.

Boston, New York and Charleston harbours, as well as the Narragansett, Delaware, and Chesapeake Bays have been the sites of many historical maritime encounters and battles. *Sound Rising* focuses on the similar history of Long Island Sound. The “Sound,” essentially a tidal saltwater lake, stretches from Westerly, Rhode Island, westward (about 110 miles), via Westchester County and Hell Gate (anglicized old Dutch *Helegat*, meaning beautiful passage or opening) to the East River and the western entrance of New York City. To the north is the Connecticut coastline and to the south, the northern shore of Long Island. At the eastern end of Long Island are Fishers and Plum Islands and, for vessels under sail, a perilous Atlantic passage known as “The Race.” Small harbours dot the northern shore of Long Island, but most of the centre of commerce and activity is located in the communities of Connecticut. Although many of its rivers empty into the sound, only the Thames and the Connecticut Rivers are navigable to interior Connecticut ports. On the Thames are New London, Groton and Norwich; on the Connecticut are Saybrook, Essex, Middletown/Portland, Wethersfield and Hartford.

The Sound was a conduit for commerce and support for a growing population and proved important during the early years of the American colonies, particularly during the Revolutionary War. At first, it was a major site for the West Indian trade. Because of the Sound’s proximity to the port of New York, Connecticut merchants and mariners became crucial to the growth of the

industrial society that emerged on its shores. Richard Radune gives a detailed account of its history, first as an agricultural producer, then as a mercantile powerhouse and an import and export centre.

During the pre-revolutionary years, Yankee entrepreneurs created thriving business ventures but their frequent participation in smuggling to avoid British tax levies made many of them quasi-outlaws. They resisted authority and yet the population, like many others at the time, was divided between rebels, loyalists and the uncommitted. New York ultimately became a British stronghold. Meanwhile, Connecticut made vital contributions to the war effort and was called the “Provision State” by General George Washington. The state contributed men and ships to the Continental Navy, its Connecticut State navy, and a great many to the privateer fleet. The most unique and interesting were the men and vessels of the Whaleboat War, raiders who rowed whaleboats into small harbours to harass enemy shipping and capture loyalists in exchange for rebel prisoners.

The Yankees’ combined maritime forces confounded British military objectives in the area around the sound and affected their strategic plans. As evidence, Radune quotes a Connecticut newspaper summarizing part of the 1779 *British Annual Register* as follows: “[The] small cruisers, whaleboats from Connecticut coasts, which infested the Sound . . . were so watchful and constant in their depredations, and their situation afforded them such opportunity, that they nearly destroyed trade to and from New York . . . [They planned to combat] the evil by cutting off the means of depredation in the destruction of their piratical craft and . . . other vessels and their material for building” (pp.159-60). This was a scheme to lead Washington onto ground of their preference near New York, where they



could better engage and defeat him. Although British troops landed with the mission of destroying Continental Army military supplies, whaleboat warriors cut them off from their ships and prevented both support and a safe retreat. The same newspaper later stated that it was “no small difficulty to lead Washington into such an error” (p.166).

The author focuses about half the book on the Sound’s history during and around the Revolutionary War. The best-known and most costly raid was the Battle of Groton Heights under the command of Benedict Arnold where 88 Americans were killed. He then closes with the War of 1812 and its aftermath. The first of two notable maritime actions in the Sound was the April 1814 raid on Essex (then Potopaug), Connecticut. There the British burned and/or captured a number of vessels, and destroyed houses and marine supplies, and subsequently, attempted a raid on Stonington that was unsuccessful. This notable Connecticut Yankee defensive action was well publicized and used as an example of resolve in the face of an overwhelming force — a smaller-scale defense on the line of that at Fort McHenry. Ironically, since war can be profitable, the mariners of the Sound contributed to both the British in their war against Napoleon and the American Second War of Independence.

Radune identifies and organizes about two hundred years of fascinating and difficult-to-find information related to activities on or around Long Island Sound making this work a useful reference resource. A minor flaw is in the editing. The same events are repetitiously described in almost the same language in some chapters. Also, the author presents a myriad of details in his narrative. At times, it reads like he is describing a painting, brush stroke by brush stroke, with only occasional glances at the entire scene he is creating.

This makes for tedious reading, but only in places. Taken as a whole, however, *Sound Rising* is a scholarly historiography about a geographical area where significant maritime events occurred. Radune’s work would be a welcome addition in any American maritime historian’s library.

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Nicholas Evan Sarantakes. *Allies Against the Rising Sun. The United States, the British Nations and the Defeat of Imperial Japan*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, [www.kansaspress.ku.edu](http://www.kansaspress.ku.edu), 2009. xxi + 458 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$39.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0-7006-1669-5.

The publisher’s jacket notes for this book tell us that “the role of America’s British Allies in the Pacific Theatre has been largely ignored” and that the author has revisited this period “to depict the delicate dance among uneasy partners in their fight against Japan, offering the most detailed assessment ever published” of the Alliance. Whether this was really the author’s intention and how successful he has been is what this review will examine.

What the author seeks to do in this book is to examine the role of the U.K. and its Commonwealth dominions, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, in planning the defeat of Japan. He looks at why Britain, at war with Germany and Italy since 1939, was prepared to participate in the military defeat of Japan despite an increasing sense of war-weariness; at why the Commonwealth nations were also prepared to join this effort (and how their reasons for doing so reflected differing concepts of nationhood and the future world order); and at why the U.S., having borne the brunt of the struggle against Japan for three years, was prepared to accept help from their allies

rather than claim all the glory for itself.

This book is not primarily about battles on land, at sea or in the air, though there are three chapters about the land and sea actions on and around Okinawa, another on the British Pacific Fleet's actions under Admiral Halsey's command off Japan itself and also General Le May's "rain of fire" with his B-29 Superfortress bombers over Japan. Rather, it is about the battles fought between the politicians of the various allied nations and also between the main military commanders and the chiefs of staff in the U.S. and U.K. He examines the different standpoints and the reasons for these views. Interestingly, in his final chapter, the author covers what happened to these important personalities after the war. The majority of the chapters, however, covers the policy battles and the various conferences in London, Quebec and Potsdam and addresses the growing anxiety over the casualties likely to be suffered in an invasion of the Japanese homeland, one of the main reasons for President Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb to bring about the surrender that Japan was plainly unable to contemplate.

The Okinawa operations are clearly an area of particular expertise on the part of the author, an assistant professor at the Naval War College and author of two works on this topic. Perhaps this has led him to over-emphasize this campaign. Nevertheless, what Sarantakes has done overall is to remind American readers that the story of the war in the Pacific is not just a series of American battles punctuating the period between the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and the final surrender in Tokyo Bay in 1945. Other countries were involved in some of these battles and also fought the Japanese in other theatres as well.

There is no doubt that the bonds forged between the U.S., Britain and the Commonwealth Nations were a major factor in the continuation of allied cooperation in

the early Cold War period, even if one does not believe wholly in the "special relationship."

The author has produced a very readable account of how and why decisions were reached and how the personalities (and foibles) of the main players were an important aspect of the decisions. He also reveals the behind-the-scenes manoeuvring and sheer stubbornness (particularly by Churchill and Admiral E.J. King, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Navy) that was frequently part of the decision-making process. Other works have tended to gloss over the full extent of the wrangling that went on between the Allies and also between their politicians and the military commanders. The short profiles on each of the main and supporting characters add both interest and credibility to the story. Moreover, the brief accounts in the final chapter of what happened to them after the war is an unusual feature. It is a humbling fact that many of them did not live long into retirement.

The book is extremely well researched, especially in the diaries of the central participants as well as other works about them. There are nearly 50 pages of notes and references, a 17-page bibliography and a 13-page index. There is a sprinkling of photographs, mainly of the personalities and conferences but some of the ships mentioned, though sadly these (and the maps of the Okinawa campaign) are not indexed.

Whether this book is "the most detailed assessment ever published," as the publisher would have us believe, is a more difficult question. On the British side, this topic has been extensively covered by H. P. Willmott in his three-volume study of the strategic policies of the countries involved and in various other works. Other authors have also carried out a considerable amount of research on this topic in this period. This is not to criticise Prof. Sarantakes' work,

however, but rather to set it in context. Overall it is often worth following a different approach, particularly when it produces such a very readable result.

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Thomas Wildenberg and Norman Polmar. *Ship Killers. A History of the American Torpedo*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.nip.org, 2010. xvi+268 pp., illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. US \$52.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-59114-668-9.

Whether launched from a submarine, from the deck of a torpedo boat or destroyer, or dropped from an aircraft, the torpedo has been an effective anti-ship weapon for nearly one hundred years. Much has been written about weapons systems — submarines, torpedo boats, surface ships equipped with torpedo tubes, and torpedo-carrying aircraft — but little has been written about the actual torpedo itself. With *Ship Killers. A History of the American Torpedo*, accomplished naval authors Thomas Wildenberg and Norman Polmar help to fill the gap in understanding the development of a weapon that played such a major part in the Second World War.

The authors begin with the early attempts from 1775 to 1865 to develop both a submarine and a torpedo to arm the submarine. The stories of the *Turtle* in the American Revolution, the CSS *David* and *Hunley* and the USS *Albatross*, though well-known to historians, are included for completeness. The narrative then moves to the development of the true torpedo. Modern readers may be surprised that the idea which formed the basis of the torpedo as we know it came from the Austrian Navy and was refined by Englishman Robert Whitehead. The eventual success of the torpedo came to the attention of the U.S.

Navy, and it is at that point that the narrative focuses on the topic of how the American torpedo was developed and used.

Moving chronologically, the authors start with early U.S. Navy efforts to develop a torpedo, the various competing designs, and its final successful form in the 1890s. A description of the creation of the submarine — the seemingly-eternal marriage of the torpedo and its weapons system — is included. The establishment of the Naval Torpedo Station in Newport, RI, is related along with its importance to the American torpedo saga. Development of the torpedo lagged during the 1920s and 1930s due to financial pressures and isolationism, an oversight that caught up with the U.S. Navy for the first part of the Pacific War.

Much can be learned from Wildenberg's and Polmar's research. It is surprising that the U.S. Navy really only used torpedoes in combat in the Second World War, and that with mixed results. Only once during the Korean War was the American torpedo used in a combat mission; the U.S. Navy fired no torpedoes in the Spanish-American War, the First World War, or the Vietnam War.

The American torpedo saw its greatest use during the Second World War, and what a story it was. For the first two years of the Pacific War, American torpedoes were usually defective, suffering from inadequate firing pins, a magnetic exploder mechanism that failed to function as promised and torpedoes that ran too deeply to sink a ship. The problem was, in part, one of cost: even a practice torpedo is an expensive, precision instrument. Performing failure analysis (to use a modern term) on a torpedo means firing a costly weapon to its destruction. Fortunately, criticism of the American torpedoes led to investigations and ultimately, the defects were resolved. By late 1943, the U.S. Navy finally had effective torpedoes.

The uses of the torpedo in the Second World War — air-dropped, surface-launched, and submarine launched — are discussed. Another surprise awaiting the reader: the famed PT (Patrol Torpedo)-boat of that war was effective, but not with its primary weapon, the torpedo. Most successful PT-boat attacks were accomplished by means of gun armament. The torpedo bomber aircraft are also discussed. It was fortunate that U.S. Naval Aviation replaced its obsolete Douglas TBD Devastator torpedo bombers with the Grumman TBF Avenger, one of the great combat aircraft of the Second World War and arguably, the best torpedo bomber ever produced.

The chapters devoted to post-war USN torpedoes are comprehensive. Space is devoted to post-war planning to combat the Soviet submarine threat — one that was enhanced by the capture of many formerly-German navy U-boats. Atomic torpedoes and submarines are described and the many versions of the torpedo are fully detailed. One oddity is noted: the DASH — a remotely-piloted torpedo-carrying helicopter — was put into service for nine years but was taken out of service due to safety issues. The current USN torpedo, the Mark 48, is given a chapter of its own.

This book deserves the appellation, “definitive.” It is fully illustrated and contains copious details about torpedoes — range, size, weights, warheads. Numerous sidebars appear throughout the book, providing such useful bits of information as how many USN submarines were commissioned in the First World War, a comparison of the USN torpedoes with Japanese “Long Lance” torpedoes, and the number of torpedoes fired by USN submarines in the Second World War. The appendices outline torpedo fire control, experimental USN torpedoes, the various types of USN torpedoes, and maintenance problems with torpedoes.

This book can be read on two levels — historical and technical. At times the narrative is historically-focused, while at others, it reads like a USN technical manual. That mixture of historical and technical information is vital to the narrative but can throw off the reader.

Although the torpedo is being replaced by the cruise missile, it is still an effective anti-ship weapon. *Ship Killers* is a comprehensive account of the USN torpedo. Subject to the comment noted above, this book is recommended.

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